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Crown Prince attends Jordan-Ireland ICT Forum TechConnect

- Crown Prince says forum reflects two countries' shared ambition, robust partnership
- His Royal Highness outlines Jordan's ambitious plans to expand its digital economy

AMMAN (JT) — HRH Crown Prince Hussein, accompanied by HRH Princess Rajwa, attended on Wednesday the launch of the Jordan-Ireland ICT Forum, TechConnect, in Dublin.

The Crown Prince said the forum reflects the two countries' shared ambition and robust partnership, demonstrated by their commitment to empowering young people to build businesses and compete globally, according to a Royal Court statement.

His Royal Highness outlined Jordan's ambitious plans to expand its digital economy — a key national priority — by investing in youth, and supporting local companies to scale beyond the Kingdom's borders.

The Crown Prince highlighted the importance of building on the outcomes and productive discussions held during the forum, and of strengthening the presence of Irish companies in Jordan, as well as forging sustainable partnerships that positively impact both countries.



Photo courtesy of Royal Court

HRH Crown Prince Hussein, accompanied by HRH Princess Rajwa, attends on Wednesday the launch of the Jordan-Ireland ICT Forum, TechConnect, in Dublin

The Jordan-Ireland ICT Forum brings together representatives from Jordanian technology companies and leaders and founders of leading Irish companies across a range of technology sectors.

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Photo courtesy of Royal Court

HRH Crown Prince Hussein holds talks with Ireland President Catherine Connolly in Dublin on Wednesday

Crown Prince meets with Ireland president

AMMAN (JT) — HRH Crown Prince Hussein held talks with Ireland President Catherine Connolly in Dublin on Wednesday.

The Crown Prince conveyed His Majesty King Abdullah's regards to President Connolly, expressing Jordan's readiness to build on its friendly relations with Ireland and to strengthen cooperation, particularly in the areas of investment and exchange of expertise across various fields, according to a Royal Court statement.

His Royal Highness said that Jordan is looking forward to President Connolly's participation in the High-Level Conference on Humanity in War, which is scheduled to take place at the Dead Sea in Jordan next month.

The meeting also touched on recent developments in the region and the need to support efforts to de-escalate tensions and restore regional security, with the Crown Prince noting the convergence of views between Jordan and Ireland on many regional issues, particularly the Palestinian cause.

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JT/File

The State Security Court

SSC sentences perpetrator of terrorist attack against police personnel to death

By Rana Husseini

AMMAN — The State Security Court (SSC) on Wednesday sentenced a man to death after convicting him of murdering a police officer and injuring another in Amman earlier this month.

The SSC declared the defendant guilty of stabbing and killing Corp. Jawad Ali Salayteh, who was on duty in front of a diplomatic mission on November 5.

A second officer, Capt. Firas Ananzeh, was injured after attacking and controlling the suspect.

The defendant was found guilty of two charges, including committing terrorist acts resulting in death and committing terrorist acts using weapons under Article 7 of the Anti-Terrorism Law.

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

PM stresses improved public services during GAM visit

AMMAN (JT) — Prime Minister Jafar Hassan on Wednesday called for continued improvements in public services in the capital, stressing the need to simplify procedures, expand infrastructure projects and enhance public transport, road networks, cleanliness and environmental services.

During a visit to the Greater Amman Municipality (GAM), Hassan emphasised the need to prioritise city cleanliness, ease traffic congestion and improve urban planning to ensure tangible and sustained improvements across the capital's neighbourhoods and streets, according to a Prime Ministry statement.

The prime minister directed GAM to introduce payment facilities for citizens with outstanding municipal dues through a mechanism that takes into account the amounts owed and provides adequate repayment periods to ease their financial burdens.



Prime Ministry photo

Prime Minister Jafar Hassan on Wednesday visits the Greater Amman Municipality, where he called for continued improvements in public services in the capital simplifying procedures and expanding infrastructure projects

He also stressed the need to complete the digitalisation of municipal services, which has reached around 80 per cent, with priority given to high-demand services and their integration into the Sanad government application.

Hassan called for developing innovative traffic solutions to ease congestion and strengthening the role of GAM district directors in monitoring service quality, supervising field operations and responding to citizens' feedback.

He also highlighted the importance of modernising urban planning and zoning regulations to accommodate population growth, urging citizens to benefit from exemptions and facilities under the Cabinet-approved planning and zoning regulation to regularise unlicensed or non-compliant buildings before the deadline expires at the end of 2026.

The prime minister instructed officials to follow up on GAM's service, tourism and investment projects, implemented in cooperation with its investment arm, Amman Vision Investment and Development, and ensure their timely completion.

Key projects include the new slaughterhouse, the Amman cable car, downtown development initiatives, and the expansion of public transport and Bus Rapid Transit services.

Hassan also called for protecting heritage buildings in downtown Amman and strengthening oversight to preserve the capital's identity and architectural character.

During the visit, Hassan reviewed GAM's financial and administrative reform plans, and commended the municipality's move to issue JD400 million in Islamic sukuk, which is expected to save JD140 million in financing costs.

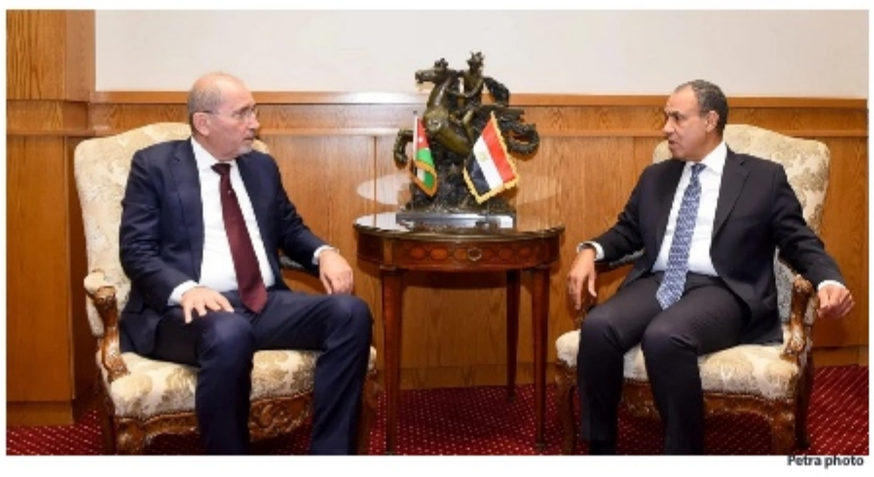
He directed officials to continue reviewing financial policies to improve efficiency and support the development of municipal services.

DIPLOMACY

Safadi, Egypt's Abdelatty reaffirm joint efforts to address regional challenges

AMMAN (JT) — Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs Ayman Safadi and Egyptian Foreign Minister Badr Abdelatty on Tuesday stressed the need for closer coordination to contain regional escalation and advance political solutions to ongoing crises.

Speaking at a joint press conference in Cairo, Safadi said that Jordan and Egypt were continuing efforts to mobilise international pressure on Israel to end its violations in the occupied Palestinian territories, ensure the delivery of adequate humanitarian aid to the Gaza Strip and implement US President Donald Trump's plan for stability in the coastal enclave, according to a Foreign Ministry statement.



Petra photo

Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs Ayman Safadi (left) and Egyptian Foreign Minister Badr Abdelatty

Safadi described the humanitarian situation in Gaza as "catastrophic", citing continued Israeli restrictions on aid deliveries and obstacles to implementing the US plan.

He also warned of growing threats in the occupied West Bank, pointing to settlement expansion, including the E1 settlement plan, economic restrictions and unprecedented settler violence, which he said were undermining prospects for a two-state solution.

Safadi said that Jordan and Egypt had agreed to promote practical international measures, including sanctions, in coordination with the Arab-Islamic Summit's ministerial committee, chaired by Saudi Arabia.

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AFD pledges continued support for water security and economic resilience

By Ilham Darwazeh

AMMAN — The French Development Agency (AFD) Group marked 20 years of cooperation with Jordan on November 25, celebrating a partnership that has expanded from infrastructure investment to broader support for water security, economic development, employment and social services.

Speaking to The Jordan Times on the occasion, Yves Guicquéro, AFD Group regional director for the Middle East, said that the partnership had evolved significantly since the agency opened its Amman office in 2006, while remaining focused on Jordan's changing development needs.



Yves Guicquéro

He said that, over the past two decades, AFD has built a portfolio of around 60 projects in the Kingdom, representing more than 2 billion euros in financing commitments. Its areas of cooperation now include water and sanitation, public services, skills development, social protection and private-sector growth.

Guicquéro identified water security as one of the partnership's most pressing priorities, noting that Jordan's renewable water availability stands at approximately 61 cubic metres per person annually, far below the 500 cubic-metre threshold defining absolute water scarcity.

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‘After 20 years in Jordan, our ambition is to turn investment, reform into visible improvements’ — AFD Regional Director

By Ilham Darwazeh





Photos courtesy of AFD

In northern Jordan, including Irbid and Ramtha, France, through AFD, has supported the rehabilitation and expansion of water networks to reduce losses and improve the efficiency of utilities

AMMAN — On the occasion of AFD Group’s 20th anniversary in Jordan, celebrated on 25 November in Amman under the theme “20 Years with Jordan — Together Forward”, and also marking the conclusion of the Ifpo–AFD Research Chair, Yves Guicquéro, AFD Group Regional Director for the Middle East, spoke to The Jordan Times about the two decades of cooperation, the partnership’s key achievements and priorities for the years ahead.

Following is the full interview:

Q1. AFD has been working with Jordan for 20 years. How has the partnership evolved, and what do you consider its most significant achievements?

When AFD opened its office in Amman in 2006, our cooperation focused on some of Jordan’s most pressing structural challenges: Water scarcity, energy and essential infrastructure. Twenty years later, the partnership is much broader. We work on water and sanitation, public services, skills and employment, social protection and private-sector development.

But what matters most is not the number of sectors. It is the continuity of the partnership and its ability to adapt. Jordan’s population has more than doubled over the past two decades, while the country has had to navigate successive regional crises and growing pressure on infrastructure, public services and natural resources. Our support has evolved with these realities.

Today, our objective is very concrete: to help Jordan invest in the services and economic opportunities that matter to people — reliable water, jobs, skills, stronger public services and a more resilient economy. This has only been possible through a relationship of trust with the Jordanian authorities, particularly the Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation.

Q2. Jordan faces severe water scarcity and climate pressures. What has AFD contributed to improving water security, particularly through water efficiency, reducing network losses, irrigation and water reuse?

Water is probably the clearest example of why our partnership matters. Jordan is one of the most water-scarce countries in the world. Renewable water availability is around 61 cubic metres per person per year — far below the 500 cubic metre threshold commonly used to define absolute water scarcity. Climate change is adding further pressure through higher temperatures, less predictable rainfall and more frequent droughts.

This means that securing new water resources is essential, but so is making better use of every cubic metre already available. In northern Jordan, including Irbid and Ramtha, France through AFD has supported the rehabilitation and expansion of water networks to reduce losses and improve the efficiency of utilities.

We also support wastewater treatment and reuse in places such as Madaba, Ramtha and Balqa. Reusing treated wastewater for irrigation matters because it reduces pressure on freshwater while supporting agriculture and rural livelihoods. In Jordan, the water, climate, food and employment challenges are closely connected: investing in water efficiency is therefore also an investment in economic resilience.

Q3. Looking ahead, what role could AFD play in major water projects such as desalination and the National Water Carrier, and how can Jordan make its water sector more climate-resilient?

The National Water Carrier is a major step for Jordan because it addresses a structural constraint that affects households, businesses and the country’s long-term economic development. France, through AFD Group, is supporting the project through sovereign financing provided by AFD and private-sector financing from Proparco to the company selected to implement it.

But a project of this scale is only one part of the answer. Jordan will also need to continue reducing network losses, improving energy efficiency in the water sector, and developing cleaner and more sustainable energy sources to meet its growing energy needs, given the sector’s high energy intensity. At the same time, expanding wastewater reuse and adapting agriculture to a hotter and drier climate.

This is also where international partnerships matter. AFD can help bring together public and private financing, European and international partners and technical expertise. The objective is not simply to finance infrastructure, but to help build a water system that can serve Jordan’s population and economy over the long term.

Q4. How much has AFD invested or mobilised in Jordan over the past 20 years, and what are the agency’s priorities for financing investment and private-sector development in the years ahead?

Since 2006, AFD has built a portfolio of around 60 projects in Jordan, representing more than 2 billion euros in financing commitments. But financing is a means, not an end. The real question is what these investments can unlock for Jordan’s economy and its people.

Job creation is a central challenge, and Jordan also needs substantial investment in infrastructure and productive sectors. This is why mobilising the private sector is increasingly important.

AFD Group can work across this spectrum: AFD finances public investment and reforms, Expertise France provides technical expertise, and Proparco finances companies and financial institutions. The National Water Carrier is a good example of this complementarity between public and private financing.

We also see potential in productive sectors such as agriculture and agri-food. Agriculture is particularly important because it creates livelihoods and jobs, contributes to food security and exports, but is also highly exposed to water scarcity and climate change. Supporting more water-efficient, higher-value agriculture can therefore address several challenges at once: jobs, economic activity, food security and climate adaptation.

Q5. How is AFD working with NGOs and civil society on cross-cutting issues such as gender equality, youth, refugees, host communities, skills development and freedom of expression?

Development is not only about infrastructure or public policy. It is also about whether people can participate in economic and public life and whether communities have the capacity to respond to change.

This is why France through AFD works with Jordanian and international civil society organisations alongside its cooperation with public institutions. Following the Syrian crisis, for example, civil-society partnerships helped us reach both refugees and vulnerable host communities, while supporting social cohesion and access to services.

Youth employment and skills are another priority. We support vocational training and pathways to employment because young Jordanians need skills that connect more directly to real opportunities in the labour market. Equality between men and women is part of the same approach: stronger participation by women is both a social objective and an economic opportunity for Jordan.

Our support to media illustrates another aspect of development. Through the QARIB programme, implemented by the French media development agency CFI, journalists and media organisations in Jordan and the region have been supported to produce professional, locally relevant information and strengthen public debate.

Q6. As AFD enters its next chapter in Jordan, what are the main challenges and opportunities you want the partnership to address over the next five to 10 years?

If we look five or ten years ahead, the question is not simply which sectors AFD will finance. It is what kind of future Jordan is trying to build, and where a long-term partner can be useful.

Jordan has shown remarkable resilience in a very difficult regional environment. But the structural challenges are clear: severe water scarcity, climate change, pressure on infrastructure and public services, and the need to create more jobs and opportunities for a young population. These challenges are interconnected.

For a Jordanian family, water security means a more reliable service at home. For a farmer, it means being able to produce with less water and cope with hotter, drier conditions. For a young person, economic modernisation needs to translate into skills and a real prospect of employment. For a business, it means reliable infrastructure, access to finance and an environment in which it can invest and grow.

This is the perspective we want to bring to the next phase of our partnership. Major infrastructure will remain essential, particularly for water. But it needs to go hand in hand with investment in people, stronger local economies, more efficient public services and greater private investment.

After 20 years in Jordan, our ambition is ultimately quite simple: to remain useful. That means helping turn investment and reform into visible improvements in people’s daily lives — more reliable services, more economic opportunities and greater resilience to the climate and regional shocks that Jordan will continue to face.

Over the past two years living in Jordan, I have had the opportunity to experience first-hand the warmth and hospitality of its people and discover the richness of its cultural and historical heritage. These experiences have deepened my appreciation for the country and its people, and reinforced my personal commitment to the work we do through AFD Group to support Jordan’s future.

Petra’s ancient knowledge finds new expression through Jordanian creativity at NOMAD Abu Dhabi

AMMAN (JT) — Beyond Petra’s rose-red façades and the iconic Treasury lies the story of a civilisation whose achievements extended far beyond monumental architecture.

From sophisticated water management systems and delicate pottery to trade networks, inscriptions and jewellery, the Nabataeans developed knowledge and craftsmanship that continue to offer inspiration for contemporary creative practices.

This dimension of Jordan’s archaeological heritage took centre stage at NOMAD Abu Dhabi 2026 through “Petra: The Continuous Archive”, that brought together seven Jordanian creatives to reinterpret the material culture of the ancient Nabataean civilisation.

The project offered an alternative perspective on Petra, exploring its continuing relevance as a source of artistic experimentation, design innovation and cultural exchange.





Al Rai photos

Items on display at ‘Petra: The Continuous Archive,’ an artistic and design project during the NOMAD Abu Dhabi 2026

The exhibition featured contemporary interpretations of Nabataean water engineering, pottery, incense trade, stone carving, writing and jewellery-making, translating ancient knowledge into sculptural lighting, furniture, ceramics, jewellery and other artistic forms.

The project was produced by BADLÉ, founded by Haya Muasher, who also served as its curator and producer, with Noor Louzi as co-producer. WUJD Art Foundation joined the initiative as its cultural partner, while the National Heritage Trust, formerly the Petra National Trust, facilitated the project.

In an interview with Al Rai, Muashersaid that the project’s starting point was not Petra’s celebrated architectural appearance, but the knowledge that made the Nabataean civilisation possible.

She said that Petra is frequently represented internationally through a single image — the Treasury — despite the extraordinary range of technical, artistic and commercial expertise that developed behind its monumental façades.

Dina Haddadin transformed the principle of a Nabataean water channel into a passage for light through sculptural lighting objects made from Jordanian granite. Architect and designer Mazen Ali explored ancient incense burners and serpent symbolism through 12 digitally designed and 3D-printed objects.

IshraqZureikat approached Petra’s history through wool in her work Excavations, using cutting and burning techniques to create textile compositions reminiscent of archaeological excavation.

In Eggshell, architect and artist Ammar Khammash revisited the Nabataeans’ exceptionally thin-walled pottery through 12 works on paper using pigments and watercolours.

Sama Saket, founder of Haswa Ceramics, presented Material Imprints, using Jordanian clay to produce ceramic tiles forming the surface of a contemporary coffee table.

Raya Qassisieh presented Tender Stems, a copper sculpture featuring intertwined flowers and delicate stems, exploring beauty, fragility, memory and preservation.

Through AMMARI Archive, Muasher also presented The Treasury, a limited-edition jewellery collection combining Jordanian clay with 18-karat gold. Produced in collaboration with Haswa Ceramics and Imseeh Jewellery, the collection included a necklace, bracelet and earrings inspired by Nabataean symbolism and inscriptions.

This article was first published in Al Rai by Faten Al Kouri.

'Jordan's UfM co-presidency highlights commitment to regional cooperation'

By Rana Husseini



Fadi Hajali

BARCELONA, Spain — Secretary General ad interim of the Union for the Mediterranean (UfM) Fadi Hajali said that Jordan plays a pivotal role in the union's work, highlighting the Kingdom's longstanding commitment to advancing its objectives.

Hajali was speaking during a press conference ahead of a meeting that saw the participation of representatives of the 43 member states of the UfM in Barcelona for the organisation's 11th Regional Forum.

Hajali noted that Jordan has held the UfM's co-presidency since 2012, reflecting its active engagement in promoting regional cooperation and achieving the union's shared goals.

"Jordanian diplomacy has worked actively to support the UfM's agenda and advance its objectives, further underscoring the Kingdom's significant role in the organisation's activities," Hajali told the press.

Hajali also highlighted the various events hosted by Jordan in connection with the UfM's work, covering a range of fields, including academia, diplomacy and science.

Taking place at a time of mounting challenges across the region, the meeting provided the countries with an opportunity to reinforce political dialogue, assess progress a year after the adoption of the Pact for the Mediterranean and the UfM Vision Statement, marking the 30th anniversary of the Barcelona Process, according to a press statement by the organisers.

The meeting also reflects on how the Euro-Mediterranean partnership can become more effective, inclusive and responsive to the region's needs, the statement said.

Interconnected issues, from conflict to socioeconomic disparities and climate change, continue to affect communities across the Mediterranean, underscoring the importance of bolstering cooperation efforts in order to deliver meaningful results, the statement added.

Despite these difficult circumstances, in the past year the UfM has launched the Rome Initiative on Water to facilitate technical assistance for sustainable water management systems as well as their design and financing, according to the statement.

It has spearheaded the Mediterranean Pavilion at COP31, once again giving the region a voice at the UN climate conference, and presented new scientific evidence on environmental migration alongside the Mediterranean Experts on Climate and Environmental Change, the statement said.

The UfM has also advanced the creation of a Euro-Mediterranean mechanism for disaster prevention, preparedness and response with the 2030 Civil Protection Action Plan, and the establishment of a permanent regional aerial operations and training hub in Paphos, Cyprus, according to the press statement.

The organisation has been working alongside the EU on the implementation of the Pact's Mediterranean University initiative and has advanced the regional Employment Action Plan with the launch of a grant scheme to support entrepreneurship and inclusive digital trade, funding projects in Algeria, Egypt, Lebanon, Palestine and Tunisia, according to the press statement.

A series of UfM Regional Forum side events took place the days prior, with a focus on the contributions of local authorities, civil society, and international and regional organisations to fostering collaboration and resilience.

Participants stressed the relevance of multilevel regional cooperation, including the increasingly prominent role of cities as indispensable actors in shaping governance and decisions, and issued a joint declaration on the significance of Euro-Mediterranean mayors in this context.

Also of note were the sessions dedicated to advancing gender equality in the Euro-Mediterranean region that brought together government representatives, civil society organisations, researchers and development partners.

The winners of two prizes, the Women Leading Change Award and the Euro-Mediterranean Women in Journalism Award, were announced. Furthermore, the Regional Agenda on Women Entrepreneurs in Agri-Food Value Chains and the InclusiveNISSA Digital Knowledge Hub on Access to Finance were launched.

Crown Prince visits Technological University Dublin



Photo courtesy of Royal Court

HRH Crown Prince Hussein visits Greenway Hub at Technological University Dublin in Ireland

AMMAN (JT) — HRH Crown Prince Hussein on Wednesday visited Greenway Hub at Technological University Dublin (TU Dublin).

During a meeting with TU Dublin President Deirdre Lillis, the Crown Prince discussed opportunities for cooperation in developing study programmes on advanced technologies, strengthening partnerships in the areas of commercialising scientific research and protecting intellectual property, and establishing university-spun-off start-ups, according to a Royal Court statement.

His Royal Highness was briefed on the innovations and services provided by start-ups that have emerged from scientific research at TU Dublin, which utilise technology and artificial intelligence in the fields of manufacturing automation, supply chains, climate, agriculture, food and medicine.

TU Dublin is a leading centre for research and innovation, with programmes that focus on linking education with practical application aimed at serving the industrial sector.

The Crown Prince was accompanied by Minister of Digital Economy and Entrepreneurship Sami Smeirat, Jordan's non-resident Ambassador to Ireland Manar Dabbas and Director of the Office of the Crown Prince Zaid Baqain.

RECOGNITION

Deputising for King, army chief honours officers for excellence in foreign military courses



JAF photo

Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Maj. Gen. Majdi Harasis on Wednesday honours officers who topped military courses in Arab and friendly countries

AMMAN (JT) — Deputising for His Majesty King Abdullah, Supreme Commander of the Jordan Armed Forces-Arab Army (JAF), Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Maj. Gen. Majdi Harasis on Wednesday honoured JAF officers who secured first place in military courses held in several Arab and friendly countries, presenting them with Royal gifts in recognition of their achievements.

Huneiti conveyed His Majesty's greetings and appreciation to the officers, congratulating them on their outstanding results, which reflect the high standards of training, qualification and competence within the armed forces, as well as the discipline and commitment they demonstrated throughout the courses, according to a JAF statement.

He said the recognition reflects the King's keenness to honour military excellence and recognise the achievements of armed forces personnel, while encouraging high achievers to continue their dedication and contribute to developing military capabilities and professionalism.

Huneiti also commended the advanced level attained by JAF personnel across various fields and specialisations, noting that the officers' top rankings in international military courses demonstrate the efficiency of Jordan's military establishment and its ability to compete and excel, while reflecting the Arab Army's distinguished standing at regional and international levels.

Energy Ministry, Sukhtian Group sign MoU to explore phosphate in Shidiya



Photo courtesy of the Ministry of Energy and Mineral Resources

The Ministry of Energy and Mineral Resources on Wednesday signs Memorandum of Understanding with Munir Sukhtian Commercial Group to explore phosphate deposits in the Shidiya area

AMMAN (JT) — The Ministry of Energy and Mineral Resources on Wednesday signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Munir Sukhtian Commercial Group to explore phosphate deposits in the Shidiya area.

Minister of Energy and Mineral Resources Saleh Kharabsheh highlighted the importance of making greater use of Jordan's natural resources, particularly phosphate, by moving beyond the export of raw materials towards developing value-added manufacturing industries that support economic growth and sustainable development.

Kharabsheh said that the MoU represents a step towards assessing the mining potential of the Shidiya area, affirming the ministry's readiness to facilitate investment procedures and coordinate with relevant entities to support mining projects, according to an Energy Ministry statement.

He also stressed the importance of organising mining operations among companies in the Kingdom to ensure complementary roles, improve project viability and avoid competition that could undermine economic feasibility. He called for expanding phosphate-based industries and diversifying production beyond conventional fertilisers.

Under the MoU, the company will conduct technical and geological exploration and evaluation across an area of approximately 115 square kilometres in Shidiya to assess its mining potential and estimate available phosphate reserves.

The company will implement a 12-month technical programme covering field exploration, sample collection, geological and geochemical analyses, three-dimensional geological modelling, mineral resource estimation, mining and cost planning, and a preliminary economic feasibility study. The programme is estimated to cost JD545,200.

The findings are expected to help identify commercially viable development opportunities and assess the potential for establishing value-added industries, including phosphoric acid production, phosphate fertilisers, specialised fertilisers and chemical derivatives.

The MoU forms part of the ministry's efforts to strengthen partnerships with the private sector and attract specialised technical expertise, with the exploration and evaluation phase serving as a basis for considering further development stages in accordance with applicable legislation.

Karak industrial estate attracts 19 projects in 18 months

AMMAN (JT) — Al Hussein Bin Abdullah II Industrial Estate in Karak Governorate has attracted 19 industrial projects over the past 18 months, bringing the total number of ventures benefitting from government investment incentives to 28 since their introduction nearly four years ago.

The Jordan Industrial Estates Corporation (JIEC) said that it is also processing five new investment applications in the final stages of contracting, with a combined projected investment value of up to JD40 million, expected to generate around 235 jobs.

The figures were announced during a media tour of the estate, which highlighted growing industrial and investment activity following amendments introduced by Prime Minister Jafar Hassan's government to the incentive package, the Jordan News Agency, Petra, reproted.

The amendments aim to enhance the competitiveness of industrial estates across the governorates, encourage the establishment of new production facilities and support the expansion of existing factories, creating jobs and stimulating local economic development.

According to JIEC data, the 28 companies benefitting from the incentives represent investments totalling approximately JD11.81 million and are expected to generate 431 jobs.

The projects comprise 11 operational factories and 17 under construction, covering sectors including food processing, plastics, engineering, garments and packaging.

JIEC Director General Oday Obeidat said attracting 19 projects within 18 months reflected the impact of the government amendments on investment activity at the estate.

He said the additional incentives had reduced establishment and operating costs and strengthened the ability of industrial estates outside Amman to attract new businesses.

The incentives include reduced prices for industrial land, lower electricity tariffs, an extended period of subsidies for local labour and additional benefits for new industrial projects meeting specific criteria.

Obeidat said the measures support the Economic Modernisation Vision's objectives of stimulating investment and creating employment opportunities outside the capital.

The number of industrial companies operating at Al Hussein Bin Abdullah II Industrial Estate has reached 54, with combined investments of approximately JD55.56 million, providing around 676 jobs for members of the local community, he added.

The five new investment applications cover the food and plastics sectors and require a combined area of approximately 137 dunnums. Once implemented, the projects are expected to attract up to JD40 million in investment and create around 235 jobs.

Obeidat said the applications reflected growing investor interest in the estate's opportunities, adding that JIEC was following up on contracting procedures and the necessary requirements to move the projects into the implementation phase.

Obeidat said JIEC was pursuing an expansion plan in Karak that includes preparing and servicing additional industrial land to accommodate growing investor demand and help factories under construction move into production.

Jordan offers condolences to Turkey over military helicopter crash



JT file

AMMAN (JT) — The Ministry of Foreign Affairs on Wednesday expressed its deepest condolences to Turkey over the victims of a Turkish military helicopter crash during a training mission.

Ministry Spokesperson Ambassador Fouad Majali affirmed Jordan's solidarity and full support for the Turkish government and people, extending heartfelt sympathies to the victims' families, according to a Foreign Ministry statement.



AFP photo

A plume of smoke rises following a reported explosion in Tehran on February 28

Eisenkot ally says Israel need not strike Iran now over chemical weapons

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (AFP) — A key ally of Israeli prime ministerial hopeful Gadi Eisenkot said on Wednesday there was no need to attack Iran immediately and questioned the caretaker government's intentions after the defence minister alleged Tehran is building chemical weapons.

Avigdor Liberman, who on Tuesday sealed a deal to enter a coalition with Eisenkot, said caretaker prime minister Benjamin Netanyahu and defence minister Israel Katz had a "lust for power" that had driven them "out of their minds".

"The statements about chemical weapons in Iran's hands are serious, but from an intelligence and operational standpoint, there is no justification for an independent Israeli attack in the immediate term," Liberman wrote on X.

Liberman, a former close aide to Netanyahu who shares his hawkish views but has become his outspoken critic, predicted that Eisenkot, a former general leading a broad alliance from right to left, would form a government soon.

"A government with a clear Jewish majority could be presented by the end of next week," Liberman, who opposes relying on lawmakers from Israel's Arab minority, told public broadcaster Kan.

Netanyahu, Israel's longest serving prime minister who has been in and out of power for three decades, has ordered two major bombing campaigns on Iran over the last year and a half in coordination with US President Donald Trump.

'A government with a clear Jewish majority could be presented by the end of next week'

Netanyahu has been threatening to return to war since the weeks leading up to Israel's October 27 election, in which his right-wing bloc lost seats but neither side won a clear majority.

But Trump, who suffered a major defeat in midterm elections earlier this month, is not believed to have signed off on resuming the war.

Israel in recent weeks has been ramping up the allegations of Iran developing chemical weapons, with the chief of the Mossad intelligence service reportedly raising the issue on a visit to Washington.

Katz said Tuesday said that Israel "must not allow" Iran's clerical state to progress on chemical weapons.

"Iran is in the process of developing chemical weapons but has not yet reached the capability to attack Israel with them," he said.

Iran has dismissed the allegations as propaganda, with foreign minister Abbas Araghchi last week calling talk of Iran planning to use chemical weapons "rubbish".

Chemical weapons carry a stigma in Iran after thousands of its citizens died in the 1980-88 Iran-Iraq war when Saddam Hussein used chemical weapons.

Supreme leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei publicly opposed developing chemical weapons. He was killed in February last year in an Israeli strike.

Saudi-led coalition says Houthi projectile hits kingdom's Jazan port



AFP photo

This aerial photograph shows a view of the Riyadh skyline on Monday

RIYADH (AFP) — The Saudi-led military coalition fighting Yemen's Houthis on Wednesday said a projectile fired by the group hit the port in the city of Jazan in the kingdom's south.

"A projectile fired by the Houthi terrorist militia fell on Jazan Port. Minor damage with no civilian casualties. Efforts are under way to determine the type of projectile," coalition spokesperson Turki Al Malki wrote on X.

The Coalition to Restore Legitimacy in Yemen said it carried out strikes at Hodeidah's port early on Wednesday, as top diplomats condemned the Houthis for targeting a civilian building in Riyadh.

A Maliki, the coalition's spokesperson, said that operational capabilities at the port on Yemen's west coast were targeted.

He was quoted in Arab News as saying that a number of other targets in Saada and Amran governorates were also destroyed.

The coalition earlier told civilians in Hodeidah to avoid the city's port, with A Maliki posting a notice to social media containing a map showing the evacuation zone.

On Tuesday, eleven people were hurt after a tower in Riyadh's King Abdullah Financial District was targeted by a Houthi drone.

Two Saudis, two Indians, three Nepalese and four Egyptians were injured in the attack, the Riyadh-based news outlet said.

A Maliki said, "The deliberate targeting of civilians and civilian objects by the terrorist Houthi militia will be met with a firm response."

The coalition also said on Wednesday that it had intercepted and destroyed several drones over the Kingdom's Eastern Province.

Last week, one of the towers at King Abdullah Financial District in Riyadh was targeted.

The attack resulted in material damage to several floors of the tower and neighbouring buildings. There were no injuries in that attack.

The coalition is supporting the internationally recognised government against the Houthi rebels who seized the Yemeni capital Sanaa in 2014.

Europeans should visit Moscow before joining Ukraine talks — Russian envoy to AFP



AFP photo

Russia's ambassador to Germany Sergei Nechayev speaks during a sit-down interview with AFP in the Russian embassy in Berlin on Tuesday

BERLIN (AFP) — Russia expects Europeans to visit Moscow to clarify their position before joining talks to end the Ukraine war, the Russian ambassador to Germany said in an interview with AFP.

After a summit with Kyiv's allies in Berlin last week, German Chancellor Friedrich Merz said Europeans would soon take part in negotiations, after several rounds of such talks between the United States, Russia and Ukraine.

Russian President Vladimir Putin said last week he had invited European leaders to Moscow for further discussions.

However, ambassador Sergei Nechayev said that the Europeans had "reacted with restraint to the proposal... to come to Moscow for preliminary discussions".

"We heard a statement — from Brussels, I believe — to the effect that the Europeans do not intend to travel to Moscow," he said.

"For our part, we remain ready to continue the dialogue and carry on with negotiations, at the very least within the trilateral format involving Russia, Ukraine and the United States."

Describing the actions of US President Donald Trump and his envoys Jared Kushner and Steve Witkoff on Ukraine as "honest", the ambassador said he saw nothing "similar on the European side".

"That is why we first want to talk with them and know precisely what their intentions are."

The Europeans are pushing for an immediate ceasefire and accuse Russia of not being interested in genuine peace negotiations.

Nechayev says the opposite is true: "We are not convinced that the Europeans want peace."

The ambassador repeated Moscow's demand — rejected in Europe — to overhaul the continent's security architecture so that it "takes our concerns into account".

According to Nechayev, Russia accepted "compromises" on Ukraine at the Trump-Putin summit in Alaska in August 2025 and said these "must remain on the table", despite allegedly being rejected by the Ukrainians and the Europeans.

The ambassador did not wish to reveal what the "compromises" actually entailed.

Nechayev also believes that the Europeans lack clarity over who will negotiate on their behalf, while noting that they have recently opted for a team made up of representatives from five countries — Germany, France, Poland, Italy and the United Kingdom — and the EU.

"Our request to Europe is this: decide what it is you want, determine whom you will appoint as negotiators, and, most importantly, clarify what you aim to achieve," he said.

Several European countries have accused Russia of being behind acts of "hybrid warfare", such as the alleged foiled drone attack at Leipzig airport in August.

Last week, three Russian missiles landed inside Poland, sparking outrage in Warsaw and a pledge of support from the NATO military alliance.

Nechayev said there was "no evidence" that Russia was responsible for either incident.

He insisted instead that Europe was "preparing for a war against Russia", pointing to the drive to rearm in several countries.

Under Merz, Germany has become Ukraine's most important military backer

His government is also spending hundreds of billions of euros to modernise a military that was underfunded for decades, citing the need to deter Russia.

VIOLENCE

Survivors grieve after Nigeria's latest deadly communal clashes

NEW BUSSA, Nigeria (AFP) — Days after communal clashes claimed dozens of lives in the far-flung villages of a volatile central Nigerian district, mud-walled food granaries still smouldered.

Except for a few stragglers, the villages were nearly deserted.

But as a police convoy rolled into the district — a nine-hour drive from Niger state capital Minna — dozens of armed vigilantes rode past, three to a motorcycle, with handmade guns dangling from their shoulders.

In Nigeria, population growth and climate change have squeezed farmland and grazing routes, resulting in herders and farmers clashing over land.

At times, hundreds have been killed across ethnic lines, with reprisals between communities common in parts of northwest and central states, where criminal gangs raid villages, kidnap residents and rustle cattle.

The raids often trigger revenge attacks by vigilantes against the ethnic groups they accuse of harbouring the criminals.

The latest raids and reprisals took place in three villages in Borgu district of Niger state.

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

The attackers — who locals said were ethnic Fulanis — 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 Gada Oli.

"For now, we have a figure of 68 deaths," said Mohammed Nasir Abdullahi, chairman of Borgu local government area where the villages are located.



AFP photo

Abdoulaye Ali, 47, turns beans in front of his shelter in the Hil Alifa camp for internally displaced persons in Cameroon's Far North Region on November 5

'Disturbing'

Fulani herder Abubakar Hassan from Wawa village lost two uncles in the vigilantes' revenge attack.

"My store of maize, copper, rice and groundnut was burnt," said Hassan. "The fire burned for three days."

Hassan is among scores of people — mostly women and children — who escaped and are now sheltering at an unused shopping centre belonging to the local emir.

With the few personal belongings salvaged from their homes, mothers dressed in veils of different shades cooked in the open in a makeshift camp while children anxiously waited to be served.

Muhammad Sani Yakubu, from Lumma Ba'are village, lost his home and farm produce in the initial bandit attack that killed 11 residents.

"We are in distress, we need government support," said Yakubu, standing near a charred mud hut with a smouldering heap inside.

Police chiefs who visited the area on Tuesday promised improved security.

"The security we are going to provide here will remain until normalcy is returned," national police deputy-inspector general Umar Shehu Nadada said, vowing to "ensure that those that have fled their communities return".

But for Muhammad Ja'ni, a 25-year-old cattle herder, the security deployment was not reassuring.

'Many Fulani are still hiding in the bush since Saturday'

He accused soldiers of breaking his two arms over suspicions that he was a bandit, after they arrested him on his way to take his sick, pregnant wife to a hospital.

"They tortured me... I told them I was just a herder," said Ja'ni, resting his bandaged arms on his drawn-up knees.

The Kambari and Fulani ethnic groups, meanwhile, grieved their losses.

The emir of Borgu, Sani Dantoro, said years of "terrorist" attacks and kidnappings in the district had transformed into tribal clashes between Kambari vigilantes and Fulani and called on the government to act.

"While we are battling with the insurgency, banditry and kidnappings...communal clashes came up again," Dantoro said.

"What is happening now is a communal clash between the Fulani and Kambari and this is disturbing," said the monarch.

Tension remained high on Tuesday as vigilantes roamed the bush in search of Fulani who fled their homes after the revenge attacks.

A security report shared with humanitarian agencies on Wednesday cited new attacks in different areas of the Borgu area.

"Many Fulani are still hiding in the bush since Saturday," Sarki Juli, a local chief in New Bussa, told police.

Army foils drug smuggling, infiltration attempts

AMMAN (JT) — The Eastern Military Region on Wednesday thwarted two separate attempts to smuggle large quantities of narcotics into Jordan using guided balloons.

Border Guard units detected the balloons attempting to cross the border within their area of responsibility and intercepted and downed them inside Jordanian territory, in coordination with security agencies and the Anti-Narcotics Department, according to a Jordan Armed Forces Arab Army (JAF) statement.

The operations resulted in the seizure of the narcotics payloads, which were handed over to the competent authorities for legal action.

Also on Tuesday evening, Border Guard units in the Northern Military Region detected an individual attempting to cross the border illegally, engaging the suspect in accordance with rules of engagement, apprehending him and referring him to the competent authorities for legal action, according to another JAF statement.

The JAF reaffirmed its commitment to confronting all smuggling and infiltration attempts along the Kingdom's borders.

The army said that it continues to monitor and develop surveillance tactics against emerging methods used in illegal operations to foil such attempts and safeguard national security, stability and sovereignty.



JAF photo

The Eastern Military Region on Wednesday thwarts two separate attempts to smuggle large quantities of narcotics using guided balloons

Jordan-Malaysia forum explores trade, investment and tourism prospects

AMMAN (JT) — The Malaysian embassy in Amman on Wednesday hosted a Jordan-Malaysia business forum to explore opportunities for expanding bilateral trade, investment and tourism, bringing together government officials, trade and investment promotion agencies, business associations and private sector representatives from both countries.

The Jordan-Malaysia strategic engagement on economy, trade, investment and tourism builds on the momentum generated by His Majesty King Abdullah's official visit to Malaysia on October 11-12, 2026, and reflects a shared commitment to translating high-level bilateral dialogue into concrete economic partnerships, the Jordan News Agency, Petra, reported.

Malaysian Ambassador to Jordan Dato' Abdul Rahman highlighted the complementary economic strengths of the two countries and their strategic positions as gateways to Southeast Asian and Middle Eastern markets.

He said bilateral trade had grown by 20.8 per cent to reach $206.62 million during January-September 2026, compared with the same period in 2025.

The event also witnessed the renewal of a memorandum of understanding (MoU) between the Malaysia External Trade Development Corporation (MATRADE) and the Jordan Enterprise Development Corporation (JEDCO), originally signed in 2000, to strengthen institutional cooperation in trade promotion, facilitate business partnerships and expand commercial opportunities for enterprises in both countries.

The programme featured three panel sessions addressing bilateral trade in key sectors, investment opportunities across West Asia and Southeast Asia, and ways to boost two-way tourism.

Participants also discussed trade diversification, cross-border investment and ways to leverage Jordan and Malaysia as strategic gateways to their respective regional markets.

The forum was organised in collaboration with the Ministry of Industry, Trade and Supply, JEDCO, the Ministry of Investment, the Jordan Tourism Board, MATRADE, the Malaysian Investment Development Authority and Tourism Malaysia.

The embassy reaffirmed its commitment to strengthening bilateral economic relations through continued engagement with the private sector and efforts to translate emerging opportunities into concrete trade, investment and business partnerships.



Petra photo

The Malaysian embassy in Amman on Wednesday hosts the Jordan-Malaysia business forum to explore opportunities for expanding bilateral trade, investment and tourism

Hejaz Railway attracts 10,802 visitors during tourist season

AMMAN (JT) — The Jordan-Hejaz Railway Corporation (JHRC) concluded its current tourist season after attracting 10,802 passengers on regular tourist trips between Amman and Jizah, while continuing work on a 3,000-square-metre railway museum in the capital and preparing to introduce new routes next season.

The corporation's seasonal closure coincides with its scheduled technical programme to rehabilitate and maintain the more than 125-year-old railway line, the Jordan News Agency, Petra, reported.

The programme also includes servicing locomotives and passenger carriages during winter to ensure they are ready for the launch of new routes targeting local and foreign visitors.



Photo courtesy of JHCR

The Jordan-Hejaz Railway Corporation (JHRC) concludes its current tourist season after attracting 10,802 passengers on regular tourist trips between Amman and Jizah

During the season, the corporation operated 77 scheduled tourist trips three times a week between the main Amman station and Jizah station, 37 kilometres south of the capital.

The trips attracted 10,802 visitors, mainly families, students from public and private schools, and members of charitable organisations. The main Amman station also received around 685 visitors of various nationalities.

In Wadi Rum, the corporation organised around 77 tourist trips in partnership with the Jordan Heritage Revival Company, attracting Jordanian, Arab and foreign visitors. Railway stations across the region also hosted 62 private photography sessions.

The corporation is also preparing to introduce new routes towards Rihab to showcase its historical ruins and ancient churches.

The Jordan-Hejaz Railway extends 452 kilometres within Jordan out of a total 1,303-kilometre network linking Damascus and Medina. The Jordanian section passes through seven main stations in Mafraq, Khirbet Al Samra, Zarqa, Amman, Jizah, Qatraneh and Maan, in addition to 23 secondary stations.

The corporation operates a fleet of eight 19th-century steam locomotives, five diesel locomotives and dozens of passenger carriages, according to the statement.

JHRC said it remains committed to expanding partnerships with municipalities, local communities and the private sector to support local economies and revive railway stations associated with the Kingdom's early history.

The corporation also highlighted the railway's historical significance, recalling that in 1921, His Majesty King Abdullah I travelled by train from Maan to Amman to declare the establishment of the Emirate of Transjordan.

As part of its corporate social responsibility programme, the corporation hosted eight university graduation projects aimed at developing the railway's heritage assets into a sustainable tourism product.



AFP photo

A woman walks along the beach as rain falls off the coast of Montevideo during a storm on November 1

Six dead as heavy rains fuelled by El Nino lash south Brazil

BRASÍLIA (AFP) — A wave of heavy rains linked to the El Nino phenomenon have battered southern Brazil, leaving six dead this week, the Parana state fire department said on Wednesday.

Images carried by local media showed streets turned into raging rivers that flooded houses and swept away cars in Parana.

Latin America's biggest nation is being hard hit by weather extremes from one of the strongest El Nino events in decades.

While rains lash the south, northern Brazil is facing severe drought, fires, and rivers drying up in the Amazon rainforest.

On Monday, an elderly couple drowned in their home near Curitiba, the capital of Parana state.

"They were caught off guard by the rapid rise in water levels, which reached approximately 1.6 metres at the site," the fire department said in a statement.

Another four people died in incidents on Tuesday and Wednesday, including a 25-year-old man who fell into a river after his motorcycle lost balance crossing a submerged bridge and a 38-year-old woman swept away by floodwaters.

Firefighters are navigating the area in a dozen boats to rescue people trapped by the floods.

According to the state government, hundreds of people have been forced from their homes due to the floods.

On Friday, the small town of Tupancireta in the neighboring state of Rio Grande do Sul was devastated in a matter of minutes by a storm with winds exceeding 100 kilometers per hour.

Five people died and 8,000 of the town's 8,600 homes were destroyed or had their roofs torn off.

El Nino is a natural climate variation that warms surface temperatures in the central and eastern equatorial Pacific Ocean, bringing worldwide changes in wind and rain patterns.

This year's episode is projected to be the strongest on record.

Brazil's two largest cities, Sao Paulo and Rio de Janeiro, have also experienced exceptional rainfall in recent months.

Rio recorded rainfall on 91 of the 132 days between July 1 and November 9, according to the municipal government, with both September and October breaking rainfall records.

Crown Prince attends Jordan-Ireland ICT Forum TechConnect

Continued from page 1

Organised by the Jordan Source programme as part of a multi-country promotional tour, the forum aims to showcase Jordan's ICT sector and explore new partnership opportunities.

Speaking at the opening session, Minister of Digital Economy and Entrepreneurship Sami Smeirat underscored the forum's value in advancing Jordan-Ireland tech and innovation ties, urging participants to leverage the opportunities created by the Jordan Forward initiative, the statement said.

Smeirat highlighted digital economy as a key pillar of the Kingdom's growth strategy, pointing to ongoing investments in advanced technology and infrastructure, education and talent development, research and innovation, and business competitiveness.

In his speech, Jordan's non-resident Ambassador to Ireland Manar Dabbas highlighted Jordan's appeal as a non-traditional investment destination, citing its competitive advantages, including a skilled labour pool, its strategic location, and a framework of legislation and trade agreements that facilitate Jordan's integration with global markets.

On the sidelines of the forum, His Royal Highness met with Jordanians working for companies in Ireland specialising in cloud computing and digital infrastructure, social media platforms and artificial intelligence in the fields of medicine, research management, human resources, and financial technology, to discuss opportunities for cooperation with Jordanian institutions.

The Crown Prince also met with representatives from 14 Jordanian companies taking part in the forum's panel discussions to discuss prospects for cooperation with Irish companies and explore opportunities for partnerships.

The forum was also attended by Director of the Office of the Crown Prince Zaid Baqain.

AFD pledges continued support for water security and economic resilience

Continued from page 1

Through projects in Irbid, Ramtha, Madaba and Balqa, he said that France, through AFD, has supported water network rehabilitation, reduced water losses and expanded wastewater treatment and reuse, particularly for irrigation.

He said that AFD is also supporting Jordan's National Water Carrier project through sovereign financing, alongside private-sector financing provided by Proparco.

Guicquéro stressed that major infrastructure must be complemented by improved water efficiency, renewable energy, wastewater reuse and climate-resilient agriculture.

Beyond infrastructure, the agency, he said, is prioritising job creation, vocational training, women's economic participation and private-sector investment. It also works with civil society organisations to support refugees, vulnerable host communities and social cohesion, while initiatives such as the QARIB programme have helped strengthen independent, professional media and public debate.

As the partnership enters its next phase, Guicquéro said Jordan's key challenges remain interconnected, including water scarcity, climate change, pressure on public services and the need to create opportunities for its young population.

"Our ambition is ultimately quite simple: to remain useful," he said, emphasising the importance of translating investment and reform into tangible improvements in people's daily lives.

Crown Prince meets with Ireland president

Continued from page 1

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

Safadi, Egypt's Abdelatty reaffirm joint efforts to address regional challenges

Continued from page 1

He added that Jordan was using the tools available under its peace treaty with Israel, alongside diplomatic efforts, to safeguard its national interests, support Palestinians in the West Bank and Jerusalem, protect Islamic and Christian holy sites and prevent Israeli extremists from using pretexts to evade their obligations.

On regional security, Safadi voiced full support for diplomatic efforts led by Egypt, Qatar and other Arab countries to address tensions involving Iran.

He rejected any disruption to maritime navigation in the Strait of Hormuz or Bab Al Mandab, citing the 1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea. He also condemned Iranian attacks on Jordan and Gulf countries, expressed Jordan's full solidarity with Saudi Arabia and denounced Houthi attacks, calling for a political solution that preserves Yemen's unity.

Abdelatty conveyed Egyptian President Abdel Fattah Al Sisi's greetings to His Majesty King Abdullah, reaffirming continued consultation between Amman and Cairo and the importance of joint Arab action to safeguard regional sovereignty and stability.

He also stressed the need to uphold the Gaza ceasefire and ensure Israel fulfils its commitments under the first phase of Trump's plan, particularly by allowing sufficient humanitarian and medical aid into the enclave and facilitating the rehabilitation of hospitals and infrastructure.

Abdelatty reaffirmed the importance of respecting the Hashemite Custodianship over Islamic and Christian holy sites in East Jerusalem, condemned Israeli and settler violations under the Fourth Geneva Convention and stressed the indispensable role of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East.

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Editor-in-Chief
Raed Omari

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

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Jordan's economy: The prime minister' perspective

By Raad Mahmoud Al-Tal

Two years after taking office, Prime Minister Jaafar Hassan addressed the House of Representatives to review the government's economic performance. His speech outlined the progress made, highlighted key economic indicators and presented major projects currently under way or planned for implementation. It also addressed some of the most pressing challenges facing the Jordanian economy, including modest growth, high unemployment, mounting public debt pressures and elevated production costs. Such a review is important, not only for understanding what has been achieved and what remains unfinished, but also because, as the prime minister acknowledged, the government is accountable to Parliament for delivering on the commitments set out in its ministerial statement.

Beyond the record of achievements, however, the speech offers insight into how the government views the economy and how it intends to address its structural challenges in the years ahead. It provides an opportunity to examine the economic thinking behind its policies and identify the priorities shaping its future direction. Three broad priorities stand out: Stimulating growth through production, developing infrastructure to attract investment and balancing development ambitions with fiscal sustainability.

The first priority is to shift towards a growth model driven more by production and investment, rather than relying predominantly on consumption and spending. This reflects an understanding that structural economic weaknesses cannot be addressed through demand stimulation alone. Sustainable growth requires a stronger productive base, higher productivity, and greater competitiveness in domestic and international markets. The government's emphasis on industrial development, reducing energy costs, supporting exports, expanding food processing and attracting investment to the governorates reflects this approach. The prime minister cited the attraction of 34 new companies to industrial cities in Karak, Tafilah and Ma'an, with investments exceeding JD62 million, alongside support programmes for hundreds of industrial and exporting companies. Ultimately, the success of these measures will depend not simply on the number of companies supported or the volume of investment attracted, but on their contribution to value added, productivity, sustainable employment and export growth.

The second priority is to view infrastructure as an essential driver of economic growth and investment, rather than simply as public expenditure on service projects. The National Water Carrier, the Aqaba–Shidiya–Ma'an railway and the development of the Risha gas field are intended to address some of the key constraints affecting the economy, particularly water and energy security, transportation and logistics costs. The underlying economic rationale is clear: Inadequate infrastructure and high operating costs weaken the competitiveness of productive sectors and discourage investment. The government's reliance on public-private partnerships also reflects an effort to mobilise additional capital and reduce direct pressure on the public budget. Nevertheless, the economic value of these projects will ultimately depend on their ability to generate returns, improve efficiency and stimulate further productive investment.

The third priority is to reconcile economic development with fiscal sustainability. The government appears to be pursuing a growth-oriented approach in which expanding economic activity and improving productivity gradually strengthen public revenues and ease pressure on public finances. This approach goes beyond addressing fiscal deficits through expenditure restraint alone. It recognises that a stronger and more productive economy can broaden the revenue base and improve the government's capacity to finance development. Yet, a fundamental challenge remains: How can major infrastructure and development projects be financed without adding unsustainable fiscal burdens or creating future liabilities that exceed their economic returns?

Taken together, these priorities point to an economic approach centred on infrastructure investment, private sector participation and the expansion of the productive base, with economic growth expected to help ease fiscal pressures. This places investment and production at the heart of the government's economic agenda. However, the success of this approach should not be measured by the number of projects announced, the scale of investment commitments, or positive headline indicators alone. Its real test will be whether it delivers higher productivity, more employment opportunities, stronger exports, improved per capita income and ultimately, sustainable economic growth.

Crackdown on Israeli settlement builders


Najla M. Shahwan

The Israeli construction of settlements which are illegal under international law, has risen sharply in recent years.

As part of the United Kingdom's leadership on protecting the viability of a two-state solution, the UK has taken firm action recently against eight Israeli construction and property development firms which will disrupt their flows of finance and ability to support further construction in the occupied West Bank.

The companies had helped plan, build, supply or market settlement housing and public infrastructure according to the British government. The sanctions include freezing the companies' assets in Britain and their representatives prohibited from serving as directors of British companies.

Criticising the move on X, Israeli foreign Minister gideon Saar wrote that Israel — as it has done in the past — will respond with "countermeasures", and that "decisions will be announced in due course".

"Israel will not bow to external pressure or change its policies as a result," Saar said, adding that they will "consider new ways to strengthen Jewish communities" in the West Bank, and "protect those involved in developing and building".

UK Foreign Secretary Ed Miliband on November 17 announced the sanctions shortly before the Israeli government was scheduled to allocate tenders for the E1 settlement bloc, which would effectively split the occupied West Bank in two, harming the prospects for a viable independent Palestinian state.

Explaining his decision, Miliband said: "Protecting the two-state solution is the north star of this government's approach. That is why my message on E1 is clear: Do not bid, do not build and do not profit from the destruction of the two-state solution.

The Foreign Office has published a list of the eight Israeli sanctioned companies.

Hours after the announcement, Israel postponed the issuing of tenders for construction in the E1 settlement in the West Bank until a new government is formed. Israeli officials insisted the decision was not in response to the sanctions.

More settlements have been approved under the four years of this Israeli government than in the previous twenty years.

Monitoring sources reported that the Israeli government has advanced or legalised over 100 new outposts and settlements across the West Bank through 2026, marking an acceleration in land — control policies while settler violence has surged in recent months, with daily attacks and harassment, sparking widespread international backlash.

On its part and following the UK, Australia announced on November 18 that it was imposing sanctions against three Israeli individuals and four entities for their involvement in "illegal settlement expansion" and for "providing support to violent settlers" in the occupied West Bank.

"We are taking these actions because the rapid expansion of settlements and settler violence are extinguishing the possibility of a two-state solution," Foreign Minister Penny Wong said in a statement.

"This includes the E1 settlement where demolitions and the displacement of Palestinians have occurred in recent weeks.

Israeli settlements in the West Bank are illegal under international law," Wong said.

"The sanctioned individuals and organisations have actively participated in the planning, coordination and establishment of new settlements, including raising funds, recruitment of volunteers and providing support to violent settlers," she added, noting that Canberra was listing an Israeli construction firm for the first time.

The Australian government listed the sanctioned Israelis, the black listed organisations and the company .

Foreign ministers from sixteen countries, have welcomed the decisions by the governments of the UK and Australia to impose the sanctions in response to the illegal Israeli settlement activities in the Occupied Palestinian Territory.

This was stated in a joint declaration issued by the foreign ministers of Egypt, Jordan, Saudi Arabia, Pakistan, Indonesia, Qatar, the United Arab Emirates, Niger, Palestine, Libya, the Maldives, Turkey, Kuwait, Algeria, Oman and Somalia. In the statement, they affirmed their support for all efforts aimed at ensuring accountability — including the implementation of appropriate international measures and the imposition of sanctions against entities and individuals responsible for settlement activities.

The ministers expressed their support for sanctioning those responsible for settlement expansion — including the "E1" settlement plan — as well as those who support, facilitate, or carry out policies of annexation and expressed hope that this decision by the UK and Australia would encourage many in the international community to follow suit.

Moreover, Israel is advancing 11 new settlement plans across several occupied West Bank governorates, combining residential expansion, industrial and commercial development, and changes to land-use and building rights.

The plans include 895 additional housing units, along with projects that strengthen the economic and service infrastructure of the settlements and expand their capacity to absorb more settlers according to the Palestinian Colonisation and Wall Resistance Commission.

The plans involve expanding settlement housing, converting agricultural land and open spaces for urban and industrial use, and developing services to support further settlement growth.

The proposed projects cover the governorates of Qalqilya, Salfit, Nablus, Ramallah and Al Bireh, and Hebron, as well as the Gush Etzion settlement bloc in the southern occupied West Bank.

In the Gush Etzion council area, a regional plan adds commercial, and service uses within public-institution plots and open public spaces. It allows commercial and community services of up to 20 per cent of the permitted building area on public-institution plots, as well as cafes, kiosks and infrastructure facilities in open areas under specific conditions. It also allows building rights to be transferred between some plots and their subdivision to be modified.

The Commission stated that the cumulative impact of the plans is the construction of a broader colonial system in which housing is linked to industry, commerce, roads and services, noting that every residential expansion requires facilities and road networks, while every industrial or service zone adds jobs and interests that entrench the settlements and drive further expansion.

It stressed that converting agricultural land and open areas into settlement neighbourhoods and facilities increases pressure on Palestinian land and restricts the growth and geographic contiguity of Palestinian communities, describing the plans as part of a continued Israeli policy to entrench the settlement presence and reshape land use, at the expense of Palestinian rights and their future on their land.

Sixteen days of activism 2026 — Jordan

By Dima Jweihan, Mohammad Miqdadi, Nicolas Burniat and Himyar Abdulmoghni

When a woman in Jordan decides to tell someone that she is being hurt, she takes one of the bravest steps of her life. What happens next decides whether she takes a second step: Whether she is believed, whether she is safe and whether anyone is held to account. That moment is what this year's 16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence is about.

From 25 November to 10 December, the world marks the campaign under the theme UNiTE to End Violence against Women and Girls: Ensure justice, protect survivors end impunity. Justice does not start in the courtroom. It starts the first time a survivor is heard, believed and treated with dignity, and it has to hold through every service she turns to after that.

Too often, it does not. Worldwide, fewer than 10 per cent of women who experience violence report it to the police, and fewer than 40 per cent seek help of any kind. Women face greater barriers to justice than men in nearly 70 per cent of countries. In much of the world, funding is moving the wrong way: In 2025, one in three organisations working to end violence against women had suspended or shut down programmes because of funding cuts.

Jordan is not untouched by these patterns. According to the most recent Population and Family Health Survey, 18 per cent of ever-married women reported experiencing at least one form of spousal violence. Of those who experienced violence, more than half neither disclosed their experience nor sought help. This silence carries significant costs for both families and the wider economy. The silence has a cost for families and for the economy alike. A 2021 study by the Jordanian National Commission for Women and the United Nations put the cost of domestic violence to Jordan at more than JD130 million a year, roughly 0.4 per cent of GDP. Jordan has also shown that it can act. The 2017 Protection from Domestic Violence Law and the 2022 amendment to Article 6 of the Constitution affirming the state's duty to protect women have strengthened the legal foundation. Over the past decade, services for survivors have expanded considerably, supported in part by international assistance that grew with the Syrian refugee response and benefitted Jordanian and refugee women alike.

Today, government institutions and civil society organisations together provide case management, psychosocial support, legal aid, safe shelter and healthcare, each reaching women the other might not. Tools such as the "Aman" case-management system, which has now tracked around 14,000 domestic violence cases, help a survivor's file follow her from one service to the next so she does not have to repeat her story each time.

Joint Op-Ed: 16 Days of Activism 2026 — Jordan

This year, Jordan took its most recent step. In June 2026 the Government launched the National Multi-Sectoral Action Plan for the Prevention of and Response to Child Protection Issues, Family Violence and Violence against Women and Girls (2026–2030). The plan, developed with support from the United Nations, is cost and disability-inclusive, and it is aligned with the Economic Modernisation Vision and the National Social Protection Strategy. Building on Jordan's experience, it brings violence against women, violence against children and family violence together as one connected problem, under one national framework, with shared indicators and a clear division of responsibilities across justice, health, social services, education and the security sector.

This approach matters because violence rarely comes in one form. The same household where a woman is abused is often a household where children witness or suffer violence. A system that sends the mother to one door and the child to another, fails both.

The plan's aim, a single national protection system rather than parallel ones is exactly what this year's global theme asks of every country.

In Jordan, these 16 Days are an opportunity to connect public awareness with practical steps to prevent violence and improve access to protection and support. The new national multisectoral strategy sets out the responsibilities of the institutions involved, helps coordinate prevention efforts, and provides a framework for strengthening referral pathways so that women and girls experiencing violence can reach the services they need.

Moreover, protection from violence against women and girls is one of the pillars in the current National Strategy for Women and its upcoming update of (2027-2030) setting strategic outcomes that represent women priorities and required reform. As the National Strategy for Women is updated, women across the governorates and the organisations they turn to for support should help identify where protection is hardest to reach and what needs to change. Monitoring progress will help identify gaps and guide improvements in how institutions work together.

The plan and the strategy are not yet protection. Over the next four years, its success will be measured in women and children who are safer and in perpetrators who are held to account. Under the theme of this year's activism, we shed light on these four priorities.

First, justice that works from the first report. Police officers, prosecutors, judges and Sharia court staff should be equipped with the training, resources, and accountability to respond quickly and without blame. Survivors should be able to count on free legal aid and on protection orders that are firmly enforced against perpetrators.

Second, integrated services that are sustainably financed, not just planned. This is now the most urgent test. As international funding linked to the refugee response declines, sustaining the services built up over the past years, including those run by civil society, has become a priority. When these services are interrupted, survivors do not stop needing help; they stop getting it.

Its costs must now be reflected in the national budget, line by line, through the gender-responsive budgeting the government has already written into its budget circulars, with predictable financing for the full network of public and civil society providers, so that what has been built is not lost.

Third, prevention that starts early. Schools, mosques and churches, media and community leaders, and men and boys themselves all have a part in challenging the belief that violence is a private family matter.

Joint Op-Ed: 16 Days of Activism 2026 – Jordan Prevention now has to cover the digital spaces where young Jordanians spend much of their lives and where harassment and blackmail increasingly start.

Fourth, data that drives decisions. Shared indicators across institutions will let Jordan see what is working, where survivors drop out of the system and where resources should go.

The Jordanian National Commission for Women, the National Council for Family Affairs, UN Women and UNFPA are committed to supporting this effort together, working with ministries, Parliament, the judiciary, sister UN agencies, and the civil society and women's organisations that have carried this cause for decades.

The 16 Days end on Human Rights Day, a reminder that a life free from violence is not a favour granted to women and girls. It is their right. Every woman who finds the courage to speak deserves a system that believes her, protects her and delivers justice. Jordan now has the plan to build that system.

Let us make it real.

Dima Jweihan is acting secretary general of the Jordanian National Commission for Women. Mohammad Miqdadi is secretary general of the National Council for Family Affairs. Nicolas Burniat is representative of UN Women Jordan. Himyar Abdulmoghni is representative of UNFPA Jordan.



AFP file photo via Getty Images

A fishing boat passes a container ship floating off the port of Los Angeles on July 17, in Los Angeles, California

US unveils proposed tariffs on major partners, including EU and China

WASHINGTON (AFP) — The United States on Wednesday unveiled proposed tariffs on 14 economies including the European Union and China, after a months-long probe into alleged excess production — the latest move by US President Donald Trump to remake Washington's trade relationships.

The duties, proposed at up to 20 per cent, come over allegations the economies "are promoting production and capacity divorced from the realities of demand and market principles", a senior US official said on condition of anonymity.

The new tariffs will need to undergo a period of public comment before taking effect, with the official adding that the proposals take existing trade deals into account.

The new levies target some of the United States' largest trading partners, including China, the European Union, India, Bangladesh, Cambodia, Indonesia, Japan, South Korea, Malaysia, Singapore, Switzerland, Taiwan, Thailand and Vietnam.

The US official made specific mention of China, for whom a 20 per cent tariff is being proposed, the joint-highest for any economy.

In a separate announcement, the US Trade Representative's office also proposed additional tariffs on goods from Brazil, including aircraft, over alleged inaction on addressing US trade concerns.

Trump's tariffs have targeted Washington's friends and foes alike, and are part of a push in his second term to remake global trade by forcing countries to buy US products or produce their goods in his country.

The latest move offers some relief for partners that earlier signed tariff deals with the Trump administration, but it could still raise temperatures as the US president prepares to host G20 leaders in Miami in December.

"We don't expect this to create tension or rancor" at the G20 summit, the senior US official said. "We actually expect that we may be signing more agreements at the G20 in the wake of these announcements."

Over-capacity concerns affect a range of sectors, from batteries to cement, chemicals to processed food, the senior US official said.

The duties could add further pressure on US businesses already squeezed by earlier tariffs, with firms now likelier to pass on costs to consumers already frustrated with the high cost of living.

Affordability was a key issue in recent midterm elections, which saw Trump's Republican Party swept out of power in both houses of Congress by Democrats.

US consumer inflation came in at 3.7 percent year-on-year in September, close to a three-year high as prices are pushed up by the effects of Trump's war on Iran, tariffs, and the massive AI investment boom.

US Federal Reserve policymakers, responsible for keeping inflation to a long-term 2 per cent target, say that most price effects of Trump's previous tariff rollout have passed through the economy — but any new levies could push prices up further.

The new tariffs are likely to come into effect in January at the earliest, the senior US official said.

Trump's latest duties come after an investigation the US Trade Representative started in March on excess manufacturing capacity and production.

The concern was whether other countries were taking actions deemed "unreasonable or discriminatory", and if they weighed on US commerce.

The probes came days after the US Supreme Court struck down Trump's previous slew of tariffs, holding that the president did not hold the authority to impose the duties using the law the White House had cited.

Trade lawyer Ryan Majerus told AFP that he expected this probe to be among "the most important" actions for the Trump administration, given its underlying concern that factories with excess capacity start operations abroad and "never get turned off, even if there's no demand".

This potentially leads to an oversupply of goods, depressed prices and a "hollowing out" of US manufacturing, he added.

The US determination is likely to face strong pushback from China and others, with Beijing long rejecting criticism that it relies too much on exports to boost its economy.

While the US Supreme Court struck down Trump's global tariffs in February, his sector-specific duties remain intact.

The new tariffs will not stack on top of those sector-specific tariffs on items like automobiles and steel, the senior US official said.

In July, Trump imposed a separate wave of tariffs on 60 economies, accusing them of insufficient action against forced labor.

For economies facing both the forced labor and excess production tariffs, the levies would not stack, the US official said. Instead, the higher rate of the two would prevail.

APC, Fertiglobe sign MoU to explore cooperation in fertiliser distribution, logistics

AMMAN (JT) — The Arab Potash Company (APC) and its European commercial and logistics arm, APC Trading & Logistics Europe AG, have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Fertiglobe to explore cooperation in fertiliser distribution, logistics and investment, initially focusing on the European market.

The agreement will also explore opportunities to expand the companies' existing presence in Australia, according to an APC statement.

The MoU was signed during the International Fertiliser Association Strategic Forum in Lisbon by APC President and CEO Maen Nsour, APC Trading & Logistics Europe AG Senior Vice President and Chief Commercial and Operations Officer Rashid Lubani, Fertiglobe CEO Ahmed El Hoshy, and Vice President of Commercial Hussein Nabil.

The agreement establishes a framework for exploring cooperation in four main areas: Fertiliser distribution, logistics, market development and potential strategic investments.

Under the MoU, the companies will examine the development of an integrated commercial model combining muriate of potash produced by APC with nitrogen fertilisers, primarily urea, produced by Fertiglobe.

The proposed model aims to provide distributors and farmers with a more comprehensive range of crop nutrients through a single supply channel, while improving shipping and storage efficiency and strengthening the companies' competitiveness in key international markets.



Photo courtesy of APC

The Arab Potash Company and its European commercial and logistics arm, APC Trading & Logistics Europe AG, have signed a memorandum of understanding with Fertiglobe to explore cooperation in fertilisers investment

The initial focus will be on Europe, where the two companies will explore ways to combine their storage, distribution and logistics capabilities to serve customers more efficiently and flexibly.

They will also examine opportunities to expand their presence and market share in Australia, building on their existing cooperation, and explore joint investments in fertiliser projects in line with their respective strategic plans.

APC chairman, Shehadah Abu Hdeib, said the agreement reflects growing international confidence in Jordanian potash and reinforces the company's position as a trusted partner in global markets.

He added that combining APC's products with Fertiglobe's portfolio would provide farmers and customers with more integrated and efficient solutions, contributing to global food security.

Abu Hdaib said the cooperation also supports the objectives of the Economic Modernisation Vision by increasing the added value of national industries and expanding their presence in international markets.

Nsour said exploring cooperation with Fertiglobe aligns with APC's plans to strengthen its presence in key international markets, particularly Europe.

He added that drawing on Fertiglobe's global capabilities and expertise would create opportunities to develop new areas of cooperation and translate the shared vision into sustainable commercial opportunities that generate added value for both companies and their customers.

Fertiglobe CEO Ahmed El Hoshy said the MoU reflects the company's continued focus on building strategic partnerships to strengthen supply chains, enhance logistics capabilities and expand its distribution and sales networks across Europe.

The cooperation aims to unlock opportunities for commercial growth and investment while enabling the delivery of more integrated solutions to customers, he added.

Lubani said the proposed cooperation would lay the groundwork for developing integrated distribution channels across Europe.

Combining the companies' shipping and storage capabilities would help reduce logistics costs and enable them to meet customers' demand for integrated fertiliser solutions more efficiently and quickly, he added.

Fertiglobe is the world's largest seaborne exporter of urea and ammonia combined and the largest nitrogen fertiliser producer in the Middle East and North Africa. It operates production facilities in the United Arab Emirates, Egypt and Algeria.

The company is ADNOC and XRG's exclusive platform for ammonia production and a major fertiliser distributor in Australia.

EasyJet profit plunges 96% as fuel prices soar

LONDON (AFP) — British no-frills airline EasyJet said on Wednesday that its annual net profit tumbled as the Middle East war sent jet fuel prices soaring, ahead of its takeover by a US private equity firm.

Profit after tax fell 96 per cent to £20 million ($26 million) in the 12 months to the end of September, compared with the same period last year, EasyJet said in a statement.

Revenue increased six per cent to £10.7 billion as passenger numbers increased 3 per cent to 96.4 million.

"This year was challenging for airlines due to the Middle East conflict and its effect on demand and fuel prices, which materially impacted our financial performance," Chief Executive Kenton Jarvis said in the group's final full-year earnings statement before the takeover.

The Middle East conflict has sharply pushed up the cost of jet fuel, hurting carriers even if many secured plenty of stocks before the start of the US-Iran war, when prices were much lower.

EasyJet's fuel bill jumped 11 per cent, or £244 million, compared with the previous year.

"Clearly this increase in fuel costs will put pressure on fares," Jarvis said during an earnings call.

The airline has hedged — or used financial instruments to lock in fuel prices — roughly 70 per cent of its fuel needs for the winter, and around 54 per cent for summer 2027.

"We've got a good hedge position to give us some protection," Jarvis said.

EasyJet shareholders this month overwhelmingly backed a £5.7 billion takeover by the US private equity firm Apollo, which the companies expect to complete in early 2027 subject to regulatory approval.

Apollo had been in a bidding war with US investment group Castlelake for EasyJet, which flies mainly across Europe.

Apollo manages more than $1 trillion in assets worldwide, and has invested in Aeromexico, Sun Country Airlines and Atlas Air.

Due to the ongoing transaction, EasyJet did not provide guidance for its 2027 financial year. Jarvis did not rule out future job cuts at EasyJet's head office after the takeover.

"EasyJet and many of its rivals have taken a big hit as consumers' ability and appetite to spend on holidays is affected by inflationary pressures and as fuel prices have soared," said Dan Coatsworth, head of markets at AJ Bell.

"Low-cost carriers, which rely on their value credentials to maintain market share, are more exposed to increased cost pressures than more premium operators whose passengers are less price sensitive," he added.

EasyJet rival Ryanair said this month that it would launch a cost-cutting drive and raise fares next year to help offset the rising fuel prices.

Richard Hunter, head of markets at Interactive Investor, said EasyJet "has reasons to be cheerful on prospects".

He pointed to its "burgeoning" package holidays business, which has "come at the right time with cost-conscious consumers searching for value packages".

He added that increasing revenue streams linked to charges for options such as personally allocated seats, additional baggage and food were also a bright spot.

"The family holiday remains almost sacrosanct and outside of normal budgetary restraints, even given the tense geopolitical backdrop and pressure on consumer spending," Hunter said.

Tech firms back in crosshairs as Huang rally reverses

HONG KONG (AFP) — Technology firms once again tumbled on Wednesday as the euphoria that greeted the return of Nvidia's Jensen Huang was washed away by the now-common panic and uncertainty over the AI boom.

News that the poster child of the artificial intelligence (AI) explosion had returned less than two weeks after resigning over extramarital affairs — including with an alleged Chinese spy — sent Asian markets into a swoon on Tuesday.

Traders were reassured about the ongoing presence of a fixer and visionary to an industry that has fuelled a tech revolution and a global economic boom.

But the mood soured no sooner than it had begun as analysts pointed to the reality that there were still huge worries about the colossal sums pumped into the AI buildout and when they would see returns, if any.

After explosive gains Tuesday, Asian stock markets were back in the doldrums.

Taipei, Tokyo and Seoul — home of most of the region's key AI-linked firms — sank 4.8 per cent, 2.8 per cent and 6.2 per cent, respectively.

That came a day after surging 9 per cent, 3.9 per cent and more than 6 per cent, respectively.

The losses were led by Taiwan's TSMC and MediaTek, Japanese chip giants Kioxia and Advantest, and South Korean titans SK hynix and Samsung.

There was also heavy selling in Hong Kong, Shanghai, Sydney, Singapore, Bangkok and Jakarta, though Wellington, Mumbai and Manila rose.

The rout followed a return to reality on Wall Street, where Nvidia — which had rocketed more than 31 per cent on Monday — shed almost 6 per cent, while AI giant Anthropic lost 6.5 per cent to fall below last week's $83 IPO price.

AMD, Intel and Micron also took a hammering after the previous day's surge.

The Nasdaq shed 1.5 per cent and the S&P 500 lost 0.5 per cent but the Dow rose, with analysts pointing out that traders were rotating into other sectors.

London, Paris and Frankfurt opened higher.

"The champagne from [the] Nvidia resurrection had barely lost its fizz before Wall Street was back reaching for the sick bags," said SPI Asset Management's Stephen Innes.

"What looked like the mother of all relief rallies has already acquired the rather less flattering characteristics of a dead-cat bounce, with the Nasdaq taking another beating [and] Nvidia surrendering a sizeable chunk of its extraordinary gains."

AMMAN STOCK EXCHANGE

بورصة عمان
Amman Stock Exchange

AMMAN (JT) — Amman Stock Exchange (ASE) trading value for Wednesday amounted to JD9.6 million spread over 4 million shares that traded through 2,955 transactions.

The ASE share price index shed 0.19 per cent, closing at 3996.56 points.

Out of 95 companies whose shares were traded, the share price of 34 companies rose while the share price of another 36 declined.

Topping the list of the companies whose shares gained the most were Arab Phoenix Holdings by 4.60 per cent, National Steel Industry by 4.27 per cent, Jordan French Insurance by 3.85 per cent, Specialised Investment Compounds by 3.75 per cent and Comprehensive Multiple Transportations Co. by 3.70 per cent.

The companies whose shares dropped the most were Jordan Vegetable Oil Industries by 5 per cent, Al Zarqa Educational and Investment by 4.78 per cent, Bindar for Islamic Finance Company by 4.65 per cent, Jordan Poultry Processing and Marketing by 4.55 per cent, and Ibn Alhaytham Hospital Company by 4.55 per cent.



Jordanians weigh up gold purchases after sharpest fall in months

Gold's slide revives demand amid forecasts of a further fall in 2027

By Hadeel El Bis

While some families regard gold as a haven for saving and preserving the value of their money, they now face a very different picture. Prices have fallen repeatedly, both locally and globally, after a wave of record highs took the yellow metal to unprecedented levels in recent months.

Some buyers are waiting for further falls to snap up a bargain, while others fear missing the chance to buy at current levels. Opinion is divided on gold's future, with many wondering whether the present decline is a temporary correction after a long rally or a sign that global market trends are shifting.

In local markets, the selling price for a gram of 21-carat gold, the most popular among buyers, stood at JD72.50, against JD69.30 for buying back from jewellers, according to Saturday's price list. The drop reflects how far the metal has moved in recent months.

A comparison shows a gram of 21-carat gold was priced at JD103.60 on 21 February, before falling to JD72.50 on 21 November. That is a fall of JD31.10 per gramme, or roughly 30 per cent in nine months.

Prices were already high in January and February: JD101 on 24 January, JD102 on 9 February and JD103.60 on 21 February, when the global ounce rose to about $5,106.

The trend did not last. Prices eased gradually over the following months, to about JD89.8 on 10 September, JD85.1 on 30 September and JD84.2 in mid-October.

In early November gold continued to slide, hitting JD80 on the 3rd. It rebounded to JD82.8 on the 11th, then entered a sharp decline in recent days that brought it to the current JD72.50.

Globally, gold lost around 9 per cent of its value in a single week, according to Rabhi Allan, head of the association of gold and jewellery traders. He estimated that the ounce had lost roughly $400 to $`450, a drop he described as large and unusual.

Allan explained that dollar strength, market anticipation of the US Federal Reserve's interest rate decision expected on 9 December, and losses on Asian stock markets had pushed some investors to sell part of their gold holdings to offset losses elsewhere, adding to the selling pressure.

Locally, he said, the fall has boosted buying in recent days, with customers split between those waiting for further declines and those who believe current prices are worth taking advantage of. Demand covers gold bars and sovereigns bought for saving and investment, as well as jewellery. He noted a pick-up in buying compared with previous days and weeks, particularly as some families prepare for next summer's engagement and wedding season.

Allan considers current prices suitable for buyers, whether for adornment or saving. He urged holders of bars and sovereigns who do not need cash not to rush to sell, and to wait for prices to improve. Gold, he stressed, should be seen as a long-term investment rather than a commodity whose purchase and sale is decided by daily movements.

Economic forecasts, by contrast, are more cautious about the metal's path. In recent television remarks, the economist Mohammad al-Rawashdeh linked the likelihood of a major fall in gold prices during 2027 to the ounce closing this year's trading below `$4,000.

He said that reaching this level at the close of trading on 31 December could mark a psychological turning point for the markets. In his estimate, it would pave the way for more profit-taking by investment funds, which could push selling beyond buying next year.

Although he acknowledged that a price correction followed by a recovery is possible, he believes the downward scenario remains more likely if the close falls below $4,000. He stressed that these forecasts remain tied to developments in global markets and monetary policy over the coming weeks.

Data from the World Gold Council shows that demand for the metal continues to diverge. Its third-quarter 2026 report shows central bank purchases of 321 tonnes, up 42 per cent year on year. Exchange-traded funds attracted inflows of about 211 tonnes in the same quarter, lifting their holdings to a record 4,256 tonnes.

By contrast, global demand for jewellery fell 17 per cent to 313 tonnes, and demand for bars and coins dropped 19 per cent, amid high prices and an unclear market direction.

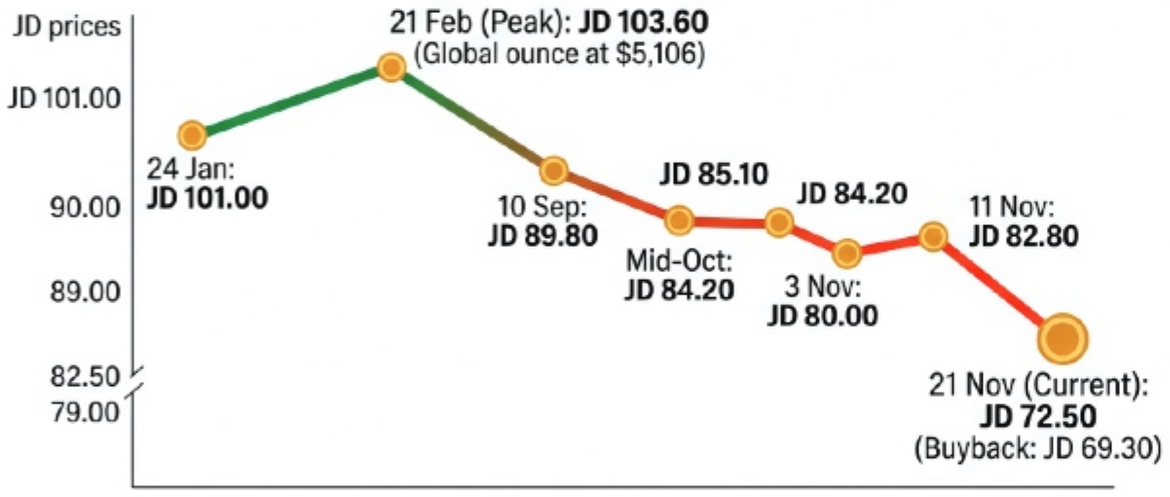
1. THE SHOCK NUMBERS

-30% Drop in local 21-karat gold prices over 9 months.

JD 31.10 Lost per gram since February's peak.

-9% Global ounce drop in a single week ($400–$450).

2. 21-KARAT GOLD PRICE SLIDE IN JORDAN



Stronger US Dollar pressuring global prices.

US Fed Rate Decision anticipated on 9 December

Asian Stock Losses forcing investors to sell gold to cover deficits.

4. THE GLOBAL DIVIDE (WORLD GOLD COUNCIL – Q3 2026)

	Segment	Volume	Change
INSTITUTIONS BUYING	Central Banks	321 tonnes	▲ +42% YoY
	Gold ETFs	+211 tonnes inflows (4,256t record total)	Record High
CONSUMERS HOLDING BACK	Jewellery Demand	313 tonnes	▼ -17%
	Bars & Coins	—-	▼ -19%

5. WHAT'S NEXT FOR 2027?

The $4,000 Threshold: Closing below $4,000/oz on 31 Dec could trigger heavy profit-taking and further drops in 2027 (Economist Mohammad al-Rawashdeh)

Market Advice: Current prices are ideal for buyers (weddings & savings), while holders should avoid panic selling (Jewellers Association)

