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## Privatisation of ministries to enhance efficiency

### STAFF REPORT

In a bid to improve efficiency and reduce the budget deficit Kuwait government is seriously contemplating privatising services of some government entities.

On top of the list is the postal and telecom sectors which have been waiting for long over due reform in order to get ahead in an increasingly digitised world as the government is working to keep pace with a growing tech savvy population that is characterised by high penetration rates.

Privatisation will mean a shrinking of the state's organisational structure, resolving deficit problems and reducing expenditure, while improving efficiency.

In keeping with Kuwait's 2035 strategy, the government has already



made great strides in its digital economy as Kuwait was among the biggest risers in a recent Global Technology Report. Regulatory reforms are being put in place to usher in an era where tech companies help speed up evolution

into a diversified knowledge-based economy. Privatisation will be part of the ambitious economic strategy that aims to deliver on past promises and new goals.

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### Regulating Speech in the New Public Square

Today, debates about public issues play out on social media, people receive their news via digital platforms, and politicians pitch their policies using these same media. The Internet is our new public square.



In the public square of old, journalists and editors served as gatekeepers and acted as referees. Human news aggregators set the agenda and provided audiences with credible information and a diversity of views. We trusted them because of the professionalism and

integrity of their editorial processes. In the new public sphere, this model of journalism – and of journalism's role in sustaining democracy – has become obsolete.

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# Bold is Beautiful

BY MERYL MATHEW  
SPECIAL TO THE TIMES

We have all been passengers on an aircraft at least once in our lives and with the global economy we live in today traveling has become as easy as flying like a bird. But the one thing that we still wonder is what happens behind the cockpit and how a flight is actually flown by a trained pilot.



“Another big challenge is having to check on the plane when it is 50-degrees hot outside. It is something I dread, but I guess these are the small things that make you tough and stronger.”



The Times Kuwait recently had the opportunity to chat with a young Bahraini pilot Arwa Janahi who spoke about her journey into becoming a pilot and revealed some of the steps that pilots go through to ensure we have a safe and pleasant flight.

Arwa, the oldest of six siblings lived an everyday life in Bahrain, graduating and taking her master's degree in finance before settling down to a rewarding career in a bank. However, she always had this feeling that something was missing in her life, there was no adventure no excitement in her desk-job. In 2010, when an opportunity came knocking in the form of a government-sponsored program to train young pilots, she took up the challenge and decided to change her career.

“Looking back today I'm very happy with the decision I made, and I truly consider it a great blessing to have had the opportunity to become a pilot. Who I have become today as a person and in my career was only because I had the courage to seize the opportunity when it presented itself,” said Arwa at the start of our conversation.

“Regarding my flights, I fly both long- and short-haul flights. Both flights need a pilot's full attention with the only difference being that in a long-haul you get more time in between the take-off, cruise and landing, so you get breaks to relax and get refreshed. Whereas in short-haul, each stage comes soon after the other. It is like being alternately stretched and compressed.

“In a routine flight, before the take-off we have to calculate the weights and the speed and make sure everything is ready for the flight to take off. We go through a certain procedure and finalize the number of passengers and weight the flight is carrying. Inputting this on the computer system gives us the exact speed at which to take off.

“Once we are at cruise altitude, we are required to make radio contact with the control towers in every air space we enter to request permission and to inform them of our passing through their air space. The route that the auto-pilot takes on cruise is already predetermined at the time of take-off based on our initial inputs and the wind speed. Wind is the biggest factor here and it determines the length and route of our flight. This is selected from a list of options the system provides us at take-off

“Then, before we begin our descent to land, the flight crew brief each other and determine our landing path; we look at our best option to land smoothly and request the control tower for landing permission. Factors such as day or night and weight are important to consider along with the sequence and instructions we receive from the tower while making our final decent. Then to make the landing we first disengage the auto-pilot as come in to land manually.”

Elaborating on her journey as a pilot and travel experiences in her career, Arwa said: Often when we have Long haul flights, like a 7 hour flight, if we exceed our normal flying hours, we get to take a layover which gives us time to get out and explore the city.

“Personally, I like to fly short-haul flights although it can be more stressful;



a two- or three-hour flight is just perfect as it gives me equal time to work and to relax. But, of course, when you want to see and explore places as a part of your work, then you need to fly long-haul flights.”

Revealing some of the challenges she faced in her career, Arwa said, “In the beginning it used to be hectic flying up and down every day. Sleeping and waking up in different cities and at different times led to my body being in constant jet lag and I always felt tired, as I had been accustomed to a routine life earlier. But then, as I progressed through my training and career I got used to it and now I can even sleep while sitting up and at any time during the day. Another big challenge is having to check on the plane when it is 50-degrees hot outside. It is something I dread, but I guess these are the small things that make you tough and stronger.”

Speaking about the training sessions that she has to regularly undergo, Arwa said, “We are required to update our pilot license every six months and this requires us to go through a test which involves a lot of reading and upgrading on anything new related to our job.

“My favourite part of these re-training exercises is the simulator tests we have to take to deal with emergencies. In these

tests, we go through every possible emergency situation, including the ones that are the least possible.

“I still remember a real emergency that I went through, at the time I was still in training. We were in the air, I was sitting right next to the Senior Training Captain and he was about to ask me questions from the instruction manuals. Suddenly the glass in front of the cockpit cracked all the way from one side to the other. It was just my fourth or fifth flight, and of course I started to freak out, and all I could do was to cover my face with my iPad and look at the captain.

“He was the calmest person that I had ever met, even after the outer glass cracked completely he calmly asked me if I wanted to move to the back seat and let the Safety First Officer take my place. They then handled the situation in a very calm and professional manner.

Describing her choice of career, she concluded by saying, “I can never really be tired of this life and I never felt the need to be in just one place. I have done the 9-5 job which was fantastic, but this feeling of being free and not being constrained to live in just one city is a blessing. It allows you to experience a different city almost every day, to interact with different cultures and people; this is something I cherish a lot in my life.”



## Sri Lankan Ambassador celebrates country's National Day

To commemorate the 71st Anniversary of the Independence of Sri Lanka, the Ambassador of Sri Lanka to Kuwait H.E. Kandeepan Balasubramaniam hosted a reception at the Regency Hotel on 7 February.

Kuwaiti Minister of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs and Minister of State for Municipal Affairs Fahd Al-Shula was the chief guest on the occasion.

Addressing the large gathering of diplomats, invited guests and prominent members of the Sri Lankan community Ambassador Bala praised the long standing excellent relations between the two countries. He further applauded the dynamic

vision of H H the Amir, who was highly respected as a humanitarian leader of the world who is working tirelessly for peace in the region.

Ambassador also briefed the guests on the bilateral trade between the two countries and the growing preference of Sri Lanka as one of the most preferred tourism destination from Kuwait. Marking the joyous occasion was a fashion show that highlighted the best of Sri Lankan fashion, in addition to dance performances of traditional folklore by professional artists in an array of colorful costumes. The Independence movement in Sri Lanka started as a peaceful political



movement that worked towards achieving independence and self-rule for Ceylon from the British Empire.

On 4 February, 1948, Ceylon was granted independence as the

Dominion of Ceylon. Dominion status within the British Commonwealth was retained for the next 24 years until 22 May, 1972, when the country became a republic and was

henceforth named the Republic of Sri Lanka. The country honors those who played a major role in the Sri Lankan independence struggle as National Heroes. Sri Lanka is known for its palm-fringed beaches, while its mountainous interior rears up in a jungle hinterland filled with elephants and leopards, rising finally to the cool highlands that grow the country's famous tea.

Speaking of culture, there are a myriad of temples and sacred relics, religious festivals and extravagant sacraments, at their most spectacular in the holy city of Kandy, home to the Buddha's tooth.



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# Dakshin Bharat Hotel offers best of South Indian cuisine



BY CHRISTINA PINTO  
STAFF REPORT

**F**alah Al Ajmi, the Kuwaiti restaurateur with a deep understanding of the finer nuances of South Indian cuisine is the driving force behind Dakshin Bharat Hotel in Fahaheel.

Al-Ajmi recently spoke with the The Times Kuwait about his dream venture, the Dakshin Bharat Hotel – about how it came to be realized, and about his aspirations to develop the brand so that it comes to embody the best of South Indian cuisine.

Al-Ajmi began by saying, "Earlier I was a ship captain, but an unfortunate accident cut short my marine career and forced me to think of an alternative line of work. I have always loved cooking and enjoyed good food, so combining my passion for cooking with my love of good food led me to the restaurant business. My family and I love Indian food, but Indian cuisine is so vast and there were plenty of Indian restaurants in Kuwait. To stand apart from the crowd, I needed to specialize in one particular cuisine."



"So I traversed various Indian states, visited the best restaurants there, and dined on some great food while getting to understand some of the techniques and procedures involved in Indian cooking. It was a difficult choice to make between the excellent foods on offer in various regions of India, but ultimately I honed in on South Indian cuisine. Once I had decided on the cuisine, then I started at the bottom and began learning all the finer points that take a good South Indian dish and makes it excellent. I even joined cooking classes to understand the various intricate nuances of South Indian cooking."

I then set about selecting a team of chefs who would help me realize my dream of

opening Dakshin Bharat Hotel. Following rigorous on the spot interviews with chefs in many Indian states, I selected the very best available to work at the restaurant. Then came the task of designing the restaurant menu to meet my high standards and expectations. I wanted to serve the best of South Indian cuisine and offer a menu that would attract even the most sophisticated palate. I worked with my talented team of chefs to replicate South Indian dishes, while retaining the essence of their flavors and their culinary roots.

To ensure the brand image and provide high-quality dishes consistently, Al-Ajmi ensures that all his staff undergo regular training and he personally makes surprise inspections to make sure everything is clean and working as planned. "Training and constant checks are very important to ensuring my food retains its consistent quality. I want my diners to feel comfortable, especially when they bring their families, and I want them to feel assured that we maintain the highest standards of hygiene and cleanliness," he said.

The same standards are enforced to every level in the restaurant, with ingredients sourced fresh from trusted vendors and the food remaining natural and healthy, with no harmful coloring or artificial flavor enhancers such as ajinomoto. "I don't want any artificial coloring in my food and I insist that my chefs cook

in a way that preserves the cornucopia of natural flavors present in Indian cuisines," he added.



"I am well aware of the Indian community's love and appreciation for good food. I want Indians, as well as Kuwaiti families to come here and experience for themselves the authentic taste of Indian dishes. I want this to be a place where people feel confident enough to bring their family and friends," he said.

The restaurateur has also started a special promotion to allow members of the Indian community from all walks of life to savor true and quality Indian food, by offering a 'Thali' selection where a substantial full meal is at a special promotional price.

Elaborating on his future plans, Al-Ajmi said, "I intend to launch a biryani festival, and also introduce seafood to the menu. In addition, I am looking at providing a traditional 'sadya' (feast) once the specialized chef joins us. I also plan to introduce a buffet option for diners shortly."

The restaurant's main dining area features sleek white walls embellished with shimmering gold colored curtains. Private cabins for families or friends to enjoy their meal in privacy are also available. Once seated, you are offered the menu on an



iPad that allows for quick browsing of all the items on offer. Dishes offered are in generous portions and reasonably priced.

Breakfast options include South Indian favorites such as Vada and Idli along with flavorful sauces. The dining options begin with a starter section that has tasty pickings from the DBH Special Puri Chat and the crisp samosas. The sea soup with chunks of well-cooked fish are another way to begin your meal.

The main dishes include among others the Bamboo biryani, the Bamboo Chicken Biryani and Dum Biryani, cooked using traditional South Indian techniques that are unique in not only the way they are cooked, but in the flavors they retain. Meanwhile the traditional Tamil Nadu Lemon rice is infused with the distinct tangy taste of lemon blended into the soft fluffy rice. Another authentic dish, this time from the South Indian state of Kerala, is the Kaapa Biryani, which is a wholesome blend of tapioca and beef, with the soft meat providing a distinct contrast to the chewy tapioca.

Vegetarians are also treated to wonderful options of freshly prepared Dal, or Mixed Vegetable Khorma, the South Indian dish that has the perfect blend of fresh vegetables flavored with coconut and spices. To round-off your meal, try the DBH Special Falooda, an ice cream concoction laden with fresh fruit.

Overall, Dakshin Bharat Hotel is an exceptional place to dine, and fulfills its promise of fantastic South Indian food.

## ICSK trumps with CBSE Award of Excellence-2019

**T**he Indian Community School Kuwait (ICSK) - Senior campus celebrated during the award of excellence ceremony held in honor of the meritorious students on 31 January. The students of classes X and XII of 2017 and 2018 batches were felicitated for the following categories: CBSE Gulf Council Awards (2017 & 2018), ICSK Toppers (2018), 100% Achievers (2018), CBSE Award of 0.1% Certificate (2018), ICSK Subject Toppers and A1 grade Achievers.

The ceremony saw the attendance of star dignitaries, Chief Guest, Dr. Radhakrishna Panicker, an eminent Consultant Pulmonologist, Al Rashed Allergy Hospital, Kuwait, Members of Board of Trustees ICSK – Shaik Abdul Rahiman (Chairman), Amer Mohamad (Hon' Secretary), Principals and Vice-Principals of ICSK Branch Schools.

The Chief Guest awarded mementos to meritorious students on behalf of the CBSE Gulf Council. The awards were presented to



brilliant students of Class XII (2018), Miss Abimathi Ananth, Master Karthikeyan Suresh, Miss Nitya Kapoor, Miss Gayathri Nair, Miss Batul Husaini

Daliwala, Master John Daniel, Miss Alefiya, Miss Sneha Sridharan, Class XII (2017), Miss Vineeta Rebecca Jacod, Master Alamelu Indira, Master

Alex Johnson, Master David Mathew and Master Gautham Prakash of Class X (2018). He also gave away mementos for 'CBSE 0.1% awards' to outstanding students, Master Gautam Prakash, Master Alvin Manoj Alex, Master Dheeraj Ramesh, Master Hussain Mustafa Shafique, Miss Sandra Shajan, Miss Aiswarya Harigopal, Miss Joshna Trissa Raju, Miss Amani Anwar Husen, Miss Kadari, Miss Jessica Henry Serrao, Master Timothy Thomas George, Miss Deena Elsa George of Class X (2018) and Master Karthikeyan Suresh, Master Nilay Praful Kumar Thummar, Master John Daniel Payyanickal, Miss Mereeba Ann Thomas of Class XII (2018).

Mementos were presented to thirteen 'Toppers' for Class XII and four for Class X, two 'Centum Scorers' for Class XII and ten for Class X and twenty three 'Subject Toppers' for Class XII and fifteen for Class X. Certificates were awarded to sixty nine 'A1 grade achievers' for Class XII and eighty eight for Class X.



# IDF holds annual 'Doc Fest 2019'

## An exhibition of Indian hospitals to be held in March

### STAFF REPORT

Indian Doctors Forum (IDF) Kuwait, an association of Indian doctors in Kuwait, organized their annual 'Doc Fest 2019', which marked the release of their annually published IDF Health Guide Volume

XV. The event was held at The Regency Hotel on 8 February, and was attended by Undersecretary of Amiri Diwan Affairs H.E. Mazen Al Essa, who was present on behalf of Chief Guest Minister for Al-Diwan Al-Amiri Affairs H.E. Sheikh Ali Al-Jarrah Al-Sabah, and the guest of honor Ambassador of India to Kuwait H.E. K. Jeeva Sagar.

Dr. Surendra Nayak, the president of IDF welcomed the audience and briefed them on the activities of the association. He also took the opportunity to thank all their well-wishers and supporters for the continuous support to the organization. Dr. Nayak announced that IDF along with the Indian Embassy and IBPC would be conducting an exhibition showcasing leading hospitals of India on 17 and 18 March, 2019. The exhibition, he said, would provide a great opportunity to see the world class standards of Indian hospitals.

In his address to the gathering, Mr. Mazen Al Essa conveyed the greetings and best wishes from H.H. The Amir of Kuwait Sheikh Sabah Al Ahmad Al Jaber Al Sabah for the success of the event.

Indian ambassador H.E. Jeeva Sagar also gave a stirring address by pointing at the noble profession of doctors and the role they play in society. He also mentioned the good work being done by the Indian Doctors Forum and expressed appreciation for their endeavors.

The event was also attended



by a galaxy of dignitaries including Ambassador of Romania H.E. Daniel Tanase, Ambassador of South Korea H.E. Hong Youngki, Ambassador of Guyana H.E. Prof. Dr. Shamir Ally and Ambassador of Botswana H.E.

Manyepedza P Lesetedi, and Kuwait Medical Association President Dr. Ahmad Thuwaini Al Enezi. There was also the attendance of Sheikhha Rasha, Sheikhha Al Dussauri, Mr Noori Al Noori, Mr Jamal al Noori

and other members of IDF. The health guide was then officially launched by Mr. Mazen Al Essa titled 'Allergic and Immunological Diseases' and has a collection of articles authored by experts in the fields.

The evening festivities began with a visual treat by artist Mr. Vilas Nayak, who was specially flown in from India. He did a splendid live painting of H.H. the Amir that drew thunderous applause. It was followed by a well-crafted program titled 'IDF Star Vision' that had the audience spell bound for the sheer entertainment and creative element in the presentation. The three-hour long entertainment came to a climax with all the doctors waving flags of Kuwait and India in a show of solidarity.

The executive committee members of IDF who were present on the occasion included Cultural Secretary Dr. Antony Sebastian Dcruz, Joint Cultural Secretary Dr. Naquib Inamdar, Treasurer Dr. Rajendra Mishra and IDF Joint General Secretary Dr. Arun Joshi and Chief Editor of the Health Guide Dr Radhakrishna Panicker



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## Experts blame overuse of tech devices for health problems in children

The overuse of mobile devices such as smartphones and tablets and lack of parental control could have detrimental effects on lives of children, a group of Kuwaiti experts have concurred. The usage of electronic devices have led to a surge in the number of children who suffer from neck and shoulder pains, headache, obesity and sleeping problems, pointed out family therapist Dr. Ahmad Abdulmalek in a speech during the fifth conference on modern childhood held at the Kuwait National Library Sunday.

He lamented that such health problems used to be linked to aging and elderly people, but now spread among children due to the use of mobile devices. Due to the numerous health issues they cause, the latest studies published by the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) recommended that children under the age of two years should not be given any devices at all, noted

Abdulmalek. He added that the AAP also suggested that over three-year-olds could be given an hour a day screen time, but not at sleeping or eating times, and under the watchful eyes of the parents.

Furthermore, Professor of Psychology at the Kuwait University Amthel Al-Howaila warned that the



electronic gadgets could gravely affect people in general and children in particular. The new technology is creating problems for people, revealing personal information, destroying human relations and isolating them from each other, she regretted.



She pointed to a steady growth in the number of children suffering from isolation and depression due to the lack of human-to-human interaction and overuse of mobile devices. Al-Howaila urged families to raise awareness in their children about the dangers of those devices and to provide them with real-world alternatives. She advised families to help their children focus on fostering their hobbies, making friendships

and healthy relations with peers and practicing sports.

For his part, Professor of Social Science and Anthropology Dr. Yaacoub Al-Kandari echoed a similar view. He noted a recent research paper he compiled showed that the more the child use smartphone, the more he or she becomes socially isolated. He stressed that the use of these technology impedes social relations, family and peers

interactions, sports practicing and learning.

Meanwhile, head of the National Society for Child Protection Dr. Siham Al-Furaih stated that electronic devices such as smart phones and tablets have become an inescapable reality. These are double-sword tools, and if parents failed to take necessary precautions and controls they could turn into absolute curse on children, Al-Furaih cautioned. She recalled that Kuwait's child protection law no. 21 of 2015 obliged parents to safeguard their children against any danger and not to use them for profiteering. The law had set tough penalties, including fines and imprisonment times, on parents who expose their children to dangers, turn them into commodities to make profits or those who fail to protect them or educate them about the impending dangers, including those related to the use of new technology, Al-Furaih said.

## ESF and KARE team up for animals

The English School Fahaheel (ESF) and KARE Q8 have teamed up to help animals in need to mark Animal Awareness Week at ESF. Students were encouraged to show their support by placing donations in specially designed boxes. Donations included cat and dog food, food bowls, blankets, leashes, cat and dog toys, cat litter, cat trees, cat litter boxes and carrying trays.

As part of Animal Awareness Week at ESF, the Sixth Form held a special Bake Sale to raise money to help animals that require surgery or special care.



## Badr Al Samaa launches special package to mark Kuwait's National & Liberation days

Badr Al Samaa Medical Centre, Farwaniya launches KD1 Body Checkup package on the occasion of Kuwait's National & Liberation days and to commemorate the 'Hala February' celebrations in the country. The KD1 checkup includes Sugar test, Cholesterol test, SGPT (Liver Screening test), Creatinine (Kidney screening test) and a Specialist Doctor Consultation. This offer is valid throughout the month of February. Badr Al Samaa urges the Kuwait community to 'Celebrate Health' with us.

Badr Al Samaa is committed to spreading the importance of 'Healthy Living' among expats in Kuwait. Many people due to their busy schedules forget to maintain their health, which includes regular checkups. There are many issues that can arise which can be treated early just by doing a body checkup every 6 months. This KD1 body checkup program will help all class of people in the community to learn about the state of their health for a very nominal cost and if issues are found, they can get a specialist doctor's treatment at the earliest.

"The expat population is encouraged to

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grab this opportunity and move towards leading a healthy life in Kuwait," said Dr. Sharath Chandran, CEO, Badr Al Samaa Medical Centre, Kuwait during the press conference arranged at Badr Al Samaa outlet.

For more information, please contact: 24759250/70/80 or 60689323



## Oncost Cash & Carry rewards members of its membership program

Oncost Cash and Carry, the first wholesale membership retail store in Kuwait, held an event last week in its Fahaheel branch to present some of its first members with their cashback rewards.

The presentation ceremony, which was held on January 17th, saw three members of the program, Shahul Hameed Alingal, Haseeb Koramman Kandy and Mohammad Albasha, receiving KD209, KD191, and KD24 respectively as cashback on their purchases made during their membership period. The ceremony was conducted in the presence of management and members from Oncost Cash & Carry, namely Chief Operating officer Mr. Remesh Ananda Das, Marketing Manager Mr. Talal Algharaballi, and Operations Manager Mr. Hassan Khalil.

In his speech, COO Mr. Ananda Das highlighted the benefits of the program and expressed his appreciation for the relationship the company has and will continue to maintain with its loyal customers.

Oncost's Membership Program, which was launched over a year ago on 1 January, 2018, provides members with up to 4 percent cashback on their purchases made during their membership period. The three patrons were among the early birds to register as members in the loyalty program, and more cashbacks are expected to be given on a daily basis, as other members complete their annual membership term.

The Membership Program seeks to reward members for their loyalty to the brand, in addition to providing them with a huge range of products at very cost-effective prices.

Oncost Cash and Carry has consistently focused on satisfying the needs of individual customers, families and professional businesses, while also strengthening its relationships with shoppers through its customer-oriented approach to business.

## Wonderful performances enchant at Sargasangamam 2019



Saradhi Kuwait successfully conducted Sargasangamam-2019 with a grand finale celebration and award ceremony on 1 February at the Indian Community School (ICSK) Auditorium, Khaitan. Sargasangamam is a yearly event of Saradhi aimed at showcasing the performances of Saradhi members from all age groups.

Over 800 participants competed in 50 events which were organized at four different venues in three days. Groups included all age groups starting from Kindergarten Sub Junior, Junior, Senior and General Categories. During the event, the Official

Flyer for the upcoming Mega Event – India Fest 2019 scheduled on 25 February, 2019 was released. The Flyer was unveiled by Ramdas Nair – Head of Retail Sales, BEC the Annual Sponsor of Saradhi along with Jayakumar N.S – Program Convener of India Fest 2019.

Sargasangamam winners were awarded with certificates and mementos while the outstanding performers from each category were bestowed with special awards and titles. Saradhi Fahaheel Unit bagged the ever rolling trophy with the maximum score. Saradhi Mangaf Unit stood second closely followed by the remaining 11 groups of Saradhi Kuwait.

## Expats paid KD176 million in health insurance in 2 years

Health Minister Sheikh Dr. Basel Al-Sabah said KD176,644,485 was collected in expat health insurance fees during the fiscal years 2015-2016 and 2016-2017.

He said lists and statistics received by the ministry are crosschecked with what is being deposited in the



ministry's Central Bank account by the contracting company with regards to this contract. He said the total annual support to the company to collect expats' health insurance fees is KD 25,000 to finance health improvement and health awareness programs presented by the ministry.



## Chinese Association celebrates Chinese New Year in style



Chinese Association in Kuwait organized a New Year welcome party in style at Holiday Inn Hotel, Salmiya. Ambassador of China to Kuwait H.E. Li Minggang graced the event along with other Kuwaiti and foreign dignitaries, in addition to a large gathering of members of the Chinese community in Kuwait.

Ambassador H.E. Li Minggang congratulated the audience on the occasion of the Chinese New Year and conveyed his regards to the foreign friends. He lauded the strength of Kuwait-China relationship as ongoing and

very strong. He mentioned the visit of H.H. Amir of Kuwait to China last year, where the two countries signed a Strategy Cooperation Partnership that aimed to work hard towards the Kuwait Vision 2035 and China 'One Belt --- One Road' huge projects.

On this occasion, talented members of the Chinese Community in Kuwait gave a performance of ballet and piano.

After the beautiful performances, the Chinese Association hosted a lavish dinner in Tang Zhao Restaurant at the Holiday Inn Salmiya.

## Q by Al-Yaqout hosts Mona Al Enezi at Revlon product launch

Q by Al-Yaqout in partnership with Revlon hosted the famous influencer and blogger Mona AlEnezi, who introduced the latest beauty care range by Revlon at its Shuwaikh lifestyle outlet on 6 February. More than 200 attendees were present, including popular beauty bloggers, and fashionistas, who interacted with their fans, beauty enthusiasts, youngsters and socialites to share tips and discuss the latest beauty trends.

The event started with the Revlon product launch by the famous influencer, followed by a presentation and live demo. Mona also hosted a Q&A for all her followers and fans present at the event, before it culminated with a raffle draw. Q store also offered exclusive promotional offers on a range of beauty products on this special occasion. Speaking on the occasion, Al-Yaqout Group CEO, Shahid Khan said, "It is indeed a great pleasure to host Ms. Mona Al Enezi, the Revlon team and all the attendees at our store. I wish the Revlon team all the very best and thank everyone associated with the event, for making it a great success."

On her part, Mona Al Enezi said, "This event took me closer to all my virtual followers and



fans, I am extremely happy to be here and want to thank the team of Q for their hospitality and for providing the vibrant ambience as well as the team of Revlon for giving this opportunity",

The prizes and the exclusive promotions offered by Q store added to the excitement for all the guests, attendees and invitees present at the event.

## Thought for the week

"The first step toward success is taken when you refuse to be a captive of the environment in which you first find yourself.

- Mark Caine



## Dundee University and DDI mark eight year of postgraduate diabetes education

The sixth Graduation ceremony on 3 February marks the successful achievements of 40 new graduates who have completed a program that aims to deliver transformational change with a specific focus on diabetes within the Kuwaiti healthcare system. These well-equipped graduates join a group of 210 total graduates across Kuwait in shaping future healthcare changes within Kuwait for the benefit of patients and their families.

Since 2011, the University of Dundee in Scotland, a world leader in clinical diabetes

care and diabetes research, in partnership with the Dasman Diabetes Institute (DDI), which was established by Kuwait Foundation for the Advancement of Sciences (KFAS) have created and delivered a Postgraduate Masters program in diabetes care, education and management.

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# My Dream Destination



BY KANEEZ IQBAL  
SPECIAL TO THE TIMES

Sitting in the travel agent's office, I listened attentively to his various recommendations of the many interesting and exciting places to go. However, most of his recommendations were tourist cities, so I insisted on more destinations. After showing me about fifty places he got tired of offering suggestions, and he finally asked in his exhausted voice,

what is your dream destination? He looked at me rather sarcastically. Well, I thought for a minute and looked at him and said, "Yes! I have a dream destination but I don't know if you can help me find that place." Then I thought to myself, "Should I really tell him about my dream destination?"

**"Traveling – it leaves you speechless, then turns you into a storyteller."**

— Ibn Battuta



My dream destination is far from the hustle and bustle of towns and cities; I want to travel to a remote place. I like to just look out of my window and

appreciate the scenic beauty of the place. I admire the huge lush mountains, steep hills and the emerald green pastures surrounding them. I look up at the blue sky as the bright sun shines rays fall over the mountains and hills.

The magic will begin when I see huge mountains looming above the cloud cover and surrounded by a vast countryside, where barley fields sit next to a broad river and white massifs guard the distant horizon.

I want to see the mountains; I want to feel the breeze blowing through the mountains and touching my cheeks. I want to hear the birds chirping, the wind blowing through the trees, and the water crashing on the rocks at points, while the birds singing is music to the ears. I want to see trees that are like beautiful fans across the landscape, their leaves swaying in the cool air and their scents are calming. They offer cover like an umbrella when it rains.

Wherever I go, I want to smell and admire the beautiful and vividly colored flowers blooming everywhere.

The lake is renowned for the bluish-green water as I ride the boat in the crystal clear waters and feel the soft water gently pushing the boat away from the coast. I feel the wilderness and am enchanted by the lush vegetation in the surrounding land, the silence and quietness of the place, where the nature is clean and the air is so pure.

When I pick the fresh fruits from the trees, they taste delicious and smell divine because it is natural and organic, away from pesticides and chemical spray. I can pick up the food from the trees and the farms and eat it; I don't bother about cleaning and cooking it.

I watch the sun go down as bright colors fade to pitch dark night only to be filled with twinkling bright stars, that is like the thousand electrifying lights and they brightly light the dark. I easily get carried away counting them. Oh my dream destination!! ...

The sight, the smell, the feel, the sound, surrounding environment affects us in many ways. According to current research, being in nature reduces anger, fear, depression and stress and increases pleasant feelings. It not only makes one feel better emotionally. It also contributes to one's overall physical wellbeing by reducing blood pressure, heart rate, muscle tension and the production of stress hormones.

In conclusion, travel destinations do not just provide pleasures such as sightseeing, but they can have an overall impact on physical and mental health as well, where they calm the senses and relax the mind.



## Gulf Air reveals Malaga Costa del Sol among new destinations for 2019

Gulf Air, the national carrier of the Kingdom of Bahrain, revealed on 6 February its first new destination for 2019 being Malaga - Costa del Sol in Spain. Commencing 14 June and operating until 15 September, 2019, Malaga will be added as a seasonal summer destination as the airline continues revealing throughout the year its further network expansion plans for 2019.

"In line with our 5 year strategy to

become the airline of choice, and in light of the recent adaptation of the new boutique business model, we are adding a seasonal destination to cater to summer's peak travel demand," said Gulf Air's CEO Krešimir Kučko. He added, "Malaga is known for its summer appeal as a holiday destination and is very popular to our customers in the region. Gulf Air is flying to a direct point in Spain for the first time and we are excited to offer this opportunity to everyone this summer."

The President of Costa del Sol Tourist Board and the Provincial Government of Malaga, Francisco Salado, has congratulated Gulf Air on the decision to introduce, for the first time, a direct flight between Bahrain and Costa del Sol. Francisco said, "The

new flight reinforces the importance of the objectives marked by the Tourist Board and its department of Connectivity & Emerging Markets.

Gulf Air and Costa del Sol Tourist Board are already working on a co-marketing plan with the aim of promoting the destination and consolidating the flight frequency and future programming, based on a successful, ongoing, strategic alliance."

Earlier in 2019, Gulf Air announced its new boutique business model concept which will reinforce its focus on product and customer experience. As already done in the hospitality industry, Gulf Air will differentiate itself as a boutique airline that is unique in the way it operates comparing to airlines that are more volume driven.



This approach will give the airline a competitive advantage that will translate in its new fleet, new Falcon Gold class offering, new exclusive products, new destinations for 2019 and its presence in the new terminal at Bahrain International Airport due to open towards the end of the year.

With the new business model concept, Gulf Air aims to grow strategically in size, expand to more boutique destinations in 2019 and continue its fleet modernization program by receiving additional 2 Boeing 787-9 Dreamliner's and 4 Airbus A320neos this year.

# The Transformation of Healthcare with AI and Machine Learning



**BY: SHEZ PARTOVI**  
MD, CM, Director of Global Business Development, Healthcare, Life Sciences and Agricultural Technology at Amazon Web Services (AWS)

The conversation around artificial intelligence (AI) and machine learning (ML) in healthcare continues to grow. Research in cutting-edge areas like machine learning continues to demonstrate that computers have the potential to predict outcomes and optimize clinical operations in a wide variety of settings.

Healthcare stands poised for a transformation driven by AI and ML, and fueled by an abundance of data sources – electronic health records, claims data, genomic sequences, medical imaging, and even embedded sensor data.

Data is the fundamental raw material required to power AI and ML systems, and is an essential ingredient that enables healthcare organizations to increase efficiency, improve outcomes, and enhance quality of life for both patients and providers. While the demands of treating patients and developing new therapies often relegate data collection and analysis to a back burner in healthcare, new tools enable developers to integrate ML and other capabilities easily into the routine process of developing and delivering treatments. Far from being an exclusive province of researchers and technology companies, AI and ML is now accessible to all. As these use cases expand, success is dependent on several ingredients. First, such initiatives require large



quantities of carefully curated, high-quality data, which may be hard to come by in healthcare where data is often complex and unstructured. High-quality data sets are required not only to operate AI and ML-driven systems, but even more importantly, to feed the training models upon which they are built.

Second, these systems need to be optimized for the compute-intensive jobs typically required by AI applications. And finally, IT resources supporting AI applications must comply with industry standards and regulations and adhere to the highest security and privacy standards to protect patient and other sensitive data.

Flatiron Health is an example of a company that has done this successfully. Flatiron Health links

clinical data from 265 oncology practices with a growing network of large academic centers and other healthcare organizations that collectively document more than 2 million cancer cases. Then, by integrating these data into AI systems, Flatiron is able to optimize care, develop new treatment regimens and discover potential new therapies. In February 2018, the Swiss pharmaceutical company Roche, an investor since 2015, acquired Flatiron outright for \$1.9 billion proving the value of AI based healthcare delivery.

A crucial technology that provides storage capacity, compute elasticity, security, and analytic capabilities needed to implement AI and ML – and drive innovation – is cloud computing. Cloud computing platforms make it easy to ingest and

process data, whether structured, unstructured, or streaming, and simplifies the process of building, training, and deploying machine learning-based models. Healthcare organizations that can use cloud computing to make themselves more efficient and effective will be the most successful in coming years, particularly as the industry shifts to value-based care.

For example, the Dutch technology company Philips is building a cloud-based healthcare platform called HealthSuite Digital Platform. HealthSuite is built on more than 21 petabytes of data from 390 million medical images, medical records, and patient generated data. HealthSuite gives providers, clinicians, data scientists, and software developers access to both the quality data and AI tools they can use to improve care in real time.

Healthcare companies, whether established or new startups, are increasingly looking to AI and ML to drive innovation and transformation at their company and across the healthcare industry. These organizations share a common goal of reducing time to discovery and insight, improving care quality and enhancing the patient and provider experience.

As the availability and volume of data sources continue to grow, the essential ingredients for AI and ML success will remain the same: high-quality data, cloud computing to remove undifferentiated heavy lifting, and ML services accessible to everyday developers. Once these foundational elements are established, AI and ML have the potential to power more efficient and effective care, enhanced decision making and the ability to drive greater value for patients and providers.

## How music can change the way you feel and act

Music is present in every part of our lives. Our spiritual rituals are framed with songs, children learn the alphabet through song and the malls and cafes we visit during our leisure time are rarely silent.

But just how much can this ever-present thing impact us -- and the way we act and feel? Research suggests music can influence us a lot. It can impact illness, depression, spending, productivity and our perception of the world.

Beside music, the paper looks at social media's role in fueling violence. The online platforms readily used by many, have given gang rivalries the chance to move online and encourage comments from supporters and opposing groups, which only adds to the pressure to react.

However, there are multiple reasons for the rise in crime, according to Pinkney. He explains that poverty, deprivation, racism, poor leadership, lack

of corporate investments, lack of opportunities and resources also contribute.

"When you've got violent behaviors that mimic something that's out there in the music or art world it's easy to jump to the conclusion that the art caused the person to become violent," he added. "But just because it's easy to conclude it doesn't mean that it's true."

Another paper, published in 2003 in the Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, reported that music can incite aggressive thoughts and feelings. During five experiments with 75 female and 70 male college students, those who heard a violent song were shown to feel more hostile than those who heard a nonviolent song, from the same artist and style.

The study showed that violent songs led to more aggressive thoughts in three different measures: More aggressive interpretations when

looking at ambiguous words, an increased speed with which people read aggressive compared to non-aggressive words and a greater proportion of people completing aggressive words when filling in blanks on forms given to them during the study.

The study adds that the outcomes of hostile thoughts could be short-lived. If the next song's lyrics are nonviolent or if some other nonviolent event occurs, the effects of violent lyrics will dissipate, states the paper.

Meanwhile, other types of music been used in attempts to prevent crime, according to musicologist Lily E. Hirsch's book "Music in American Crime Prevention and Punishment." Hirsch wrote about how classical music was used to deter loitering in her hometown of Santa Rosa, California. In 1996, she wrote, city leaders decided to play classical music to clear young people from the city's Old Courthouse Square. Many teens

didn't enjoy the music, according to Hirsch, and left the area, which encouraged the city to keep the background music playing.

The effectiveness of music as a crime prevention measure has to do with sound's construction of who we are but also with who we are not, wrote Hirsch, a visiting scholar at California State University, Bakersfield. We often identify with music based on who we think we are, Hirsch remarked.

"If you see classical music as music of the fancy, white elite, you might think, 'I am not any of those things,' and then disassociate yourself from the music," leading to, for example, leaving this area, she said. In this situation, people identify themselves in the negative -- namely, who they are not -- through certain music, Hirsch explained. People are still surprised by this usage of music, she added. But music has "always been used in a variety of ways, positive and negative," Hirsch said.

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EXCLUSIVE to THE TIMES KUWAIT

# A Mixed Economic Bag in 2019



**NOURIEL ROUBINI**

CEO of Roubini Macro Associates  
and Professor at the Stern School of  
Business, NYU.

After the synchronized global economic expansion of 2017 came the asynchronous growth of 2018, when most countries other than the United States started to experience slowdowns. Worries about US inflation, the US Federal Reserve's policy trajectory, ongoing trade wars, Italian budget and debt woes, China's slowdown, and emerging-market fragilities led to a sharp fall in global equity markets toward the end of the year.

The good news at the start of 2019 is that the risk of an outright global recession is low. The bad news is that we are heading into a year of synchronized global deceleration; growth will fall toward – and, in some cases, below – potential in most regions.

To be sure, the year started with a rally in risky assets (US and global equities) after the bloodbath of the last quarter of 2018, when worries about Fed interest-rate hikes and about Chinese and US growth tanked many markets. Since then, the Fed has pivoted toward renewed dovishness, the US has maintained solid growth, and China's macroeconomic easing has shown some promise of containing the slowdown there.

Whether these relatively positive conditions last will depend on many factors. The first thing to consider is the Fed. Markets are now pricing in the Fed's monetary-policy pause for the entire year, but the US labor market remains robust. Were wages to accelerate and produce even moderate inflation above 2%, fears of at least two more rate hikes this year would return,



possibly shocking markets and leading to a tightening of financial conditions. That, in turn, will revive concerns about US growth.

Second, as the slowdown in China continues, the government's current mix of modest monetary, credit, and fiscal stimulus could prove inadequate, given the lack of private-sector confidence and high levels of overcapacity and leverage. If worries about a Chinese slowdown resurface, markets could be severely affected. On the other hand, a stabilization of growth would duly renew market confidence. A related factor is trade. While an escalation of the Sino-American conflict would hamper global growth, a continuation of the current truce via a deal on trade would reassure markets, even as the two countries' geopolitical and technology rivalry continues to build over time.

Fourth, the eurozone is slowing down, and it remains to be seen whether it is heading toward lower potential growth or something worse. The outcome will be determined both by national-level variables – such as political developments in France,

Italy, and Germany – and broader regional and global factors.

Obviously, a “hard” Brexit would negatively affect business and investor confidence in the United Kingdom and the European Union alike. US President Donald Trump extending his trade war to the European automotive sector would severely undercut growth across the EU, not just in Germany. Finally, much will depend on how Euroskeptical parties fare in the European Parliament elections this May.

And that, in turn, will add to the uncertainties surrounding European Central Bank President Mario Draghi's successor and the future of eurozone monetary policy.

Fifth, America's dysfunctional domestic politics could add to uncertainties globally. The recent government shutdown suggests that every upcoming negotiation over the budget and the debt ceiling will turn into a partisan war of attrition. An expected report from the special counsel, Robert Mueller, may or may not lead to impeachment proceedings against Trump. And by the end of the year, the fiscal stimulus from the Republican tax cuts will become a fiscal drag, possibly weakening growth.

Sixth, equity markets in the US and elsewhere

are still overvalued, even after the recent correction. As wage costs rise, weaker US earnings and profit margins in the coming months could be an unwelcome surprise.

With highly indebted firms facing the possibility of rising short- and long-term borrowing costs, and with many tech stocks in need of further corrections, the danger of another risk-off episode and market correction can't be ruled out. Seventh, oil prices may be driven down by a coming supply glut, owing to shale production in the US, a potential regime change in Venezuela (leading to expectations of greater production over time), and failures by OPEC countries to cooperate with one another to constrain output.

While low oil prices are good for consumers, they tend to weaken US stocks and markets in oil-exporting economies, raising concerns about corporate defaults in the energy and related sectors (as happened in early 2016).

Finally, the outlook for many emerging-market economies will depend on the aforementioned global uncertainties. The chief risks include slowdowns in the US or China, higher US inflation and a subsequent tightening by the Fed, trade wars, a stronger dollar, and falling oil and commodity prices.

Though there is a cloud over the global economy, the silver lining is that it has made the major central banks more dovish, starting with the Fed and the People's Bank of China, and quickly followed by the European Central Bank, the Bank of England, the Bank of Japan, and others. Still, the fact that most central banks are in a highly accommodative position means that there is little room for additional monetary easing. And even if fiscal policy wasn't constrained in most regions of the world, stimulus tends to come only after a growth stall is already underway, and usually with a significant lag.

There may be enough positive factors to make this a relatively decent, if mediocre, year for the global economy. But if some of the negative scenarios outlined above materialize, the synchronized slowdown of 2019 could lead to a global growth stall and sharp market downturn in 2020.

## Take the UN General Assembly Seriously—but Don't Expect Results

### What is the point of the United Nations General Assembly?

The assembly—where all member states, from the United States to Kiribati, wield one vote each—has a reputation for generating more hot air than real action. It produces over 300 resolutions a year, but these lack the binding legal force of Security Council resolutions.

Assembly members discuss certain sensitive issues, such as the situations in Palestine and North Korea, annually. They scored a major success in negotiating the Sustainable Development Goals in 2015. They also chew over questions such as whether to designate 2024 the Year of Camelids. This is exciting for fans of dromedaries and llamas everywhere. But it is not the stuff of high geopolitics.

The current holder of the one-year presidency of the assembly, María Fernanda Espinosa of Ecuador, has invited a group of her predecessors to discuss the state of the world with diplomats today. The session is unlikely to dominate many headlines. But it may be worth taking seriously.

The conventional wisdom around the UN these days is that the assembly is gaining in importance. Great-power tensions have set the Security Council adrift, preventing it from resolving crises like the meltdown in Venezuela. States are turning to the assembly as an alternative venue to talk about international peace and security. Since 2012, the assembly has been particularly vocal on Syria, in part to protest gridlock at the divided Security Council. It mandated a special UN mechanism to gather evidence of Syrian war crimes in 2016.

This follows a well-established historical pattern. In the 1940s and 1950s, when great-power divisions first paralyzed the Security Council, US allies dominated the assembly. They duly stepped up to mandate the first major UN peacekeeping operation to help end the Suez crisis in 1956. During the late Cold War period, non-Western ex-colonies gained a majority in the assembly, using it to defy Washington and criticize



Israel and apartheid-era South Africa. The end of the East-West confrontation 30 years ago precipitated a steep decline in the assembly's political significance, as the US and the other veto-wielding members of the Security Council cooperated on most issues.

Now the post-Cold War consensus is splintering, and the assembly is relevant again as an alternative venue to debate international crises. Not everyone appreciates this. “The General Assembly is for small countries,” an American diplomat once told me grumpily over a drink. “We are not a small country.” But even the Trump administration pays the forum some attention. The General Assembly is a great space for governments to test their soft power, but its decisions are not a substitute for wielding hard power in the real world.

In 2017, facing criticism for its decision to move its embassy in Israel to Jerusalem, the US organized a furious push to block an assembly resolution condemning the decision. This was a lost cause, but Nikki Haley, the US representative to the UN at the time, was so pleased that 64 other ambassadors

chose not to vote against the US position that she invited them to a special party. The US returned to the assembly in December 2018 with a resolution condemning the Palestinian group Hamas, which secured 87 votes in favor to 58 against. Under the assembly's rules this fell short of the level needed for the resolution to pass, but US officials felt it was a moral victory. The US is not alone in turning to the assembly for support. Russia tabled a resolution in December condemning America's threat to quit the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces, or INF, Treaty. More strategically and strikingly, China has worked hard to get the assembly to endorse its rising influence in global affairs in general, and its Belt and Road Initiative in particular. Chinese media were chuffed last summer when Miroslav Lajcak, president of the General Assembly at the time, declared that the massive infrastructure development project reflected Beijing's “commitment to its neighbors and to the principles of the United Nations.”

British diplomats, by contrast, were stung when India outmaneuvered them at the assembly in a

contest to place a judge on the International Court of Justice in 2017. London, which is beefing up its presence at the UN as a whole to project influence after Brexit, has decided to expand its team working on General Assembly affairs in particular. So does the assembly matter again?

Perhaps. Thomas Anker Christensen, a former chief of staff to two presidents of the General Assembly, argued in a paper last year that it is becoming many states' “institution of choice for achieving results in tackling the challenges facing the world not only in the normative and development space, but progressively also regarding security-related issues.” Christensen would like to see the assembly president's office gain more resources and political clout as a result.

This is probably half-right. The Security Council's disarray is certainly boosting the assembly as another platform for multilateral cooperation, at least at the symbolic level. But the real effect of the council's dysfunction is simply to reduce the political credibility of the United Nations system.

Russia's gambit of raising the INF at the UN did nothing to stop the US from declaring its intention to withdraw from the treaty last week. The General Assembly is a great space for governments to test their soft power against one another; the US and India in particular are devoting a good deal of diplomatic muscle to countering Chinese advocacy of the Belt and Road Initiative in the forum. But the assembly's decisions are not a substitute for wielding hard power in the real world.

It is definitely worth taking the assembly's level of activism and outspokenness seriously as an indicator of international concern over the overall degradation of international cooperation, in the same way that a thermometer reading showing that you have a fever should be taken seriously.

But just as it would be ill-advised to expect the thermometer to cure that fever, it is probably unwise to think that the General Assembly offers a cure for the ills of world politics.

EXCLUSIVE to THE TIMES KUWAIT

# Dirty Money and Tainted Philanthropy



BY PETER SINGER

Professor of Bioethics at Princeton University, Laureate Professor at the University of Melbourne, and founder of the non-profit organization The Life You Can Save. His books include Practical Ethics, One World Now, and The Most Good You Can Do.

In 2017, life expectancy in the United States fell for the third successive year. The decline is occurring because an increase in the death rate for middle-aged whites is offsetting lower mortality for children and the elderly. So, why are more middle-aged American whites dying?

The Princeton economists Anne Case and Angus Deaton have pointed to the opioid epidemic as an important factor. Figures from the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention show that from 1999 to 2017, almost 218,000 people died from overdoses related to prescription opioids. During that period, the number of such deaths quintupled.

The drug most responsible for this catastrophic abuse of prescription opioids is OxyContin, produced by Purdue Pharma LP, which is reported to have made more than \$31 billion from OxyContin sales. The dominance of OxyContin among prescription opioids was not due to any inherent advantages; several carefully controlled trials concluded that it had none. It owed its success, instead, to Purdue's aggressive marketing, pioneered by Arthur Sackler.

Purdue is a privately held company that has generated enormous wealth for Sackler, his brothers Mortimer and Raymond, and their descendants. Arthur Sackler died in 1987, eight years before



became aware that it was dangerous and addictive. The company's response was to redirect the blame. In 2001 Richard Sackler, then Purdue's president, wrote in an email that the company should "hammer on the abusers in every way possible" – a comment that Joanne Peterson, who heads a support network for the families of drug abusers, said shows "blatant disregard for human life."

The Sacklers have used some of their wealth to support the arts. Their names are on wings, galleries, and other spaces at many eminent museums, including the Metropolitan and Guggenheim museums in New York, the Smithsonian in Washington, DC, the Louvre in Paris, and the Royal Academy of Arts and the Tate in London. There are also Sackler schools, institutes, libraries, or centers at Tufts, Oxford, Cambridge, Columbia, Tel Aviv, and several other universities, and a Sackler lecture at Princeton University, where I teach.

The Sackler family's fall from grace raises major ethical issues for many respected institutions. Money given decades ago, and used to build new galleries or wings, can hardly be returned. Yet many institutions now refuse to accept money from the tobacco industry, and would not keep the name of a tobacco company, or its major owner, on one of their buildings.

Nan Goldin, a photographer whose works have been displayed at the Metropolitan Museum of Art and at Harvard University's Sackler Museum, is a recovering opioid addict. She describes the Sackler name on institutions as "damning" and has organized a protest at the Sackler Wing of the Metropolitan. Maureen Kelleher, an artist whose work has been displayed on a website run by the Brooklyn Museum's Elizabeth A. Sackler Center for Feminist Art, read Patrick Radden Keefe's account of "The Family that Built an Empire of Pain" in the New Yorker, and asked for her work to be removed from the website. (Elizabeth Sackler is the daughter of Arthur Sackler.)

More than a year ago, the New York Times surveyed 21 cultural organizations that received significant sums from foundations overseen by Mortimer and Raymond Sackler, who ran Purdue when it launched OxyContin. None indicated that they would return donations or refuse future donations.

But the publicly available evidence of the Sacklers' promotion of OxyContin is now much more damning than it was a year ago. Does any institution really want to brandish the names of people whose single-minded pursuit of profit has led to so much suffering?

There are grounds for arguing that Arthur Sackler's name can remain on the wing in the Metropolitan Museum of Art that houses the spectacular Temple of Dendur. His marketing techniques breached ethical constraints on what pharmaceutical companies may do to persuade physicians to prescribe their products, but the real damage was done when these techniques were applied to a highly addictive drug like OxyContin. By that time, Arthur was dead and his heirs had sold out of Purdue. So Elizabeth Sackler, too, is not responsible for what happened afterwards.

Whether a non-profit should accept donations from Sackler family members who did benefit

from selling a drug that led to hundreds of thousands of users becoming addicts is a separate question from whether an institution should bear their names.

Those members should apologize to the victims, and to the families of those who died, and pledge to use their billions not to promote the arts, but to reduce suffering, if possible on the same scale as the suffering brought about by the accumulation of their wealth.

That would require donating to non-profits that are most effectively reducing suffering, anywhere in the world. The recipients would be justified in accepting the Sacklers' money for that purpose.

“Many institutions now refuse to accept money from the tobacco industry, and would not keep the name of a tobacco company, or its major owner, on one of their buildings.”

OxyContin was released, but he paved the way for OxyContin's success by directing his sales force to invite doctors to conferences at attractive locations in Florida, Arizona, and California, with all expenses paid. Purdue also offered them paid speaking engagements. Sales representatives received substantial bonuses that varied with the quantities of Purdue's drugs prescribed by the physicians they visited – particularly good salespeople earned bonuses of more than \$200,000.

Purdue's role in stimulating the opioid epidemic attracted the attention of federal authorities. In 2007, the company and three executives pleaded guilty to charges relating to the misbranding of OxyContin, and agreed to pay \$634 million in penalties. Until recently, however, the Sackler family has been able to avoid much of the criticism for their company's behavior. That changed last month, when the state of Massachusetts filed documents in a lawsuit against the company and 16 executives and members of the family, including Arthur Sackler's nephew, Richard Sackler. New York City and other local governments have also added individual members of the Sackler family to their lawsuits seeking compensation for damages from Purdue.

The Massachusetts lawsuit alleges that members of the Sackler family continued to push sales of the drug long after they

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EXCLUSIVE to THE TIMES KUWAIT

# Global Health Versus Online Trolls



**JUNAID NABI**

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The most frustrating part of my job as a public health scientist is the spread of false information – usually online – that overrides years of empirical research. It is difficult enough for doctors to counter medical falsehoods in face-to-face conversations with patients. It becomes even harder to do so when such fakery is transmitted via the Internet.

I recently witnessed this pattern first hand in Kashmir, where I was raised. There, parents of young children trusted videos and messages on Facebook, YouTube, or WhatsApp that spread false rumors that modern medications and vaccines were harmful, or even that they were funded by foreigners with ulterior motives. Discussions with local colleagues in pediatrics revealed how a single video or instant message with false information was enough to dissuade parents from believing in medical therapies.

Physicians in other parts of India and Pakistan have reported numerous cases in which parents, many of them well educated, refuse polio vaccinations for their children. Reports that the CIA once organized a fake vaccination drive to spy on militants in Pakistan have added to mistrust in the region. Given the high stakes involved, states sometimes resort to extreme measures, such as arresting uncooperative parents, to ensure that vulnerable communities are vaccinated.

This is just one regional example of the global threat that online misinformation poses to public health. In the United States, a recent study in the American Journal of Public Health reported how



Twitter bots and Russian trolls have skewed the public debate on vaccine effectiveness. Having examined 1.8 million tweets over a three-year period from 2014 to 2017, the study concluded that the purpose of these automated accounts was to create enough anti-vaccine content online to develop a false equivalence in the vaccination debate.

Such misinformation programs succeed for a reason. In March 2018, researchers from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology reported that false stories on Twitter spread significantly faster than true ones. Their analysis revealed how the human need for novelty, and the information's ability to evoke an emotional response, are vital in spreading false stories.

The Internet amplifies the damage caused by these "alternative facts," because it can disseminate them at massive scale and speed – a few fake or troll accounts are enough to spread misinformation to millions. And once it spreads, it is virtually impossible to retract. The role of Twitter bots and trolls

in the 2016 US elections and the United Kingdom's Brexit vote is clear. Now they have affected global health as well. If we don't take robust and coordinated steps to address this alarming trend, we may lose out on a century's worth of successes in health communication and vaccination, both of which depend on public trust.

We can take several steps to start reversing the damage. For starters, health officials and experts in both developed and developing countries need to understand how this online misinformation is eroding public trust in health programs. They also need to engage actively with global social media giants such as Facebook, Twitter, and Google, as well as major regional players including WeChat and Viber. This means working in tandem to create guidelines and protocols for how information of public interest can be disseminated safely.

In addition, social media companies can work with scientists to identify patterns and behaviors of spam accounts that try to disseminate false information on important public-health issues. Twitter, for example, has already started using machine-learning technology to limit activity from spam accounts, bots, and trolls.

More rigorous verification of accounts, from the moment of signing up, will also be a powerful

deterrent to the further expansion of automated accounts. Two-factor authentication, using an email address or phone number when signing up, is a prudent start. CAPTCHA technology requiring users to identify images of cars or street signs – something humans can do better than machines (for now, at least) – can also limit automated sign-ups and bot activity.

These precautions are unlikely to infringe upon any individual's right to voice an opinion. Public health officials must err on the side of caution when weighing free-speech rights against outright falsehoods that endanger public welfare. Abusing the anonymity provided by the Internet, spam accounts, bots, and trolls serve to disrupt and pollute available information and confuse people. Taking prudent action to avert situations where lives are at stake is a moral imperative.

Global public health took huge strides forward during the twentieth century. Further progress in the twenty-first will come not only through ground-breaking research and community work, but also through online engagement. The next battle for global health may be fought on the Internet. And by acting quickly enough to defeat the trolls, we can prevent avoidable illnesses and deaths around the world.

## Regulating Speech in the New Public Square

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Traditional media no longer play a dominant gatekeeping and agenda-setting role. Fake news can reach multiple jurisdictions at once.

But so can public and private measures that censor speech. The challenge is to redefine the parameters of civil discourse in the new public sphere without restricting pluralism. Recent examples highlight the risk of throwing the baby out with the bathwater.

Despite the ominous headlines, the influence of fake news on political decision-making appears to be limited. According to the Reuters Institute for the Study of Journalism at the University of Oxford, the reach of such content is largely restricted to groups of believers seeking to reinforce their own views and prejudices. But that does not make digital deception any less dangerous. Fake news feeds – and is fed by – polarization, and, paradoxically, the more it is discussed, the more disruptive it becomes.

That is because fake news undermines trust in all forms of media and reinforces the view that it is impossible to discern fact from fiction. When people do not know what they can believe, journalists' ability to police the powerful is weakened. This trend will only worsen as "deep-fake news" – bogus images and videos that appear real – becomes more ubiquitous.

Clearly, the vulnerabilities of the digital public sphere must be addressed. Some argue that the solution is to block questionable websites or demote search results. Facebook, for example, censors duplicitous posts and has created an

election "war room" to fight disinformation. Other global platforms, like Google and Twitter, have considered similar steps, and all three are being pressured to give authorities access to the private data of users who publish fake news or make defamatory statements. But we believe that these steps, while seemingly prudent, are deeply misguided.

At the heart of any strong democracy is a political consensus and arbitration that depends on the public's ability to debate and disagree. It is not up to private entities – or public institutions, for that matter – to censor this process. Rather, we should be working to ensure that citizens have access to a broad array of opinions and ideas and understand what they are reading, viewing, or hearing. Freedom of expression includes the right to receive and impart information without interference, which implies the corollary values of media freedom and media pluralism as enshrined in the EU's Charter of Fundamental Rights. Studies show that most people prefer reliable and pluralistic news sources; policymakers' job is to enable them to realize this preference.

A March 2018 report to the European Commission by the High-Level Group on Fake News and Online Disinformation, which one of us (de Cock Buning) chaired, offered a roadmap, and the recent European Commission Action Plan provides a good starting point. But more needs to be done. There is no silver bullet to combat disinformation. Only multi-stakeholder approaches that spread responsibility across the news ecosystem and take into account the fundamental rights involved, can provide

adequate defenses against disinformation.

For example, professional media must do more to guarantee the veracity of their coverage. Fact-checking technology can help, as long as it is kept free of political and economic influence. Google, Facebook, and Twitter should stay out of the fact-checking business.

Big Tech is starting to take responsibility by committing to a Code of Practice based on the ten key principles from the High-Level Report. But "Big Tech" can contribute in other ways, such as by providing client-based interfaces for curating legitimate news, ensuring diversity in social-media timelines, and making a high priority of reposting fact-checked information. Platforms can also improve transparency in how they use data and code algorithms. Ideally, these algorithms should give consumers more control over editorial preferences and integrate editing and fact-checking applications developed by reliable media organizations.

Platforms must also clearly identify news sources, especially paid political or commercial content. Many of these more immediate measures can and should be implemented in advance of the European Parliament election in May 2019.

We also need new international collaboration and better jurisdictional rules to ensure that laws and regulations protect victims of fake and offensive news without restricting free speech or undermining the rights of whistleblowers. In particular, these conflicts should not be legally settled where only one of the parties has effective access to justice.

Finally, platform companies should cooperate with schools, civil-society groups, and news organizations to strengthen the public's media literacy. Data show that consumers in some markets still have difficulty distinguishing fake news from real.

Well-intentioned efforts to scrub the new public square of disinformation will certainly backfire; only consumers can marginalize fake news. We cannot allow private companies or governments to decide what people should know. The history of democracy is clear on this point: pluralism, not private or public censorship, is the best guarantor of truth.



**MADELEINE DE COCK BUNING AND MIGUEL POIARES MADURO**

Madeleine de Cock Buning, Professor of Digital Politics, Economy, and Societies in the School of Transnational Governance at the European University Institute, was Chair of the European Commission's High-Level Group on Fake News and Online Disinformation. Miguel Poiars Maduro, Director of the School of Transnational Governance at the European University Institute, was a member of the European Commission High Level Group on Media Freedom and Pluralism.

# For the Ideals and Peace of Mankind



“He was a heaven-sent man for the good of mankind. Such a great man is born once in several centuries.”

This is what Vishwanath, Secretary General of the International Kim Il Sung Prize Council, Director General of the International Institute of the Juche Idea and prominent social figure in India, said about Kim Jong Il (1942-2011), eternal Chairman of the National Defence Commission of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. As he said, great are the exploits Kim Jong Il performed for the ideals and peace of mankind.

In the late 20th century, the world was plunged deeper into political turmoil with the collapse of socialism in the Soviet Union and Eastern European countries and revival of capitalism in those countries.



At this very juncture, Kim Jong Il published various works including Socialism Is a Science, in which he proved the scientific accuracy of socialism as an ideal society of humankind and the reactionary and sophistic nature of the slander against socialism. The progressive peoples, who had been groping for a true road, had a full understanding of the cause of the collapse of the socialist system in the Eastern European countries and embarked on the fresh struggle for socialism.

In April 1992, many political parties aspiring after socialism had come to Pyongyang and published a declaration, titled, Let Us Defend and Advance the Socialist Cause. From then on the socialist movement continued its advance in the world arena, and socialism became an unchangeable ideal common to humanity.

However, the DPRK, a socialist fortress in the world, became subject to the offensive of the allied imperialist forces. The use of military means against the country was under discussion and political and economic sanctions and pressure strengthened. To make matters worse, disastrous natural calamities hit the country for consecutive years, making its economic situation more strained.

No other country could have held on in such a situation. Kim Jong Il braved the manifold hardships by rousing his people. With the independent character of the country's economy strengthened, many factories and enterprises that had suspended production began to resume production. Large-scale land realignment project and many other

undertakings were conducted in the agricultural sector to boost cereal production.

Technological progresses were made; CNC machine tools were mass-produced and cutting edge was broken in the space technology. All these smashed the enemy's theory that the DPRK would implode in three days, in three months or in three years.

Holding high the banner of Songun, Kim Jong Il remarkably strengthened the country's

national defence capabilities, thus frustrating the aggressive moves for war by the imperialist forces. Hard-line military measures taken by him prevented hostile forces from igniting a war on the Korean peninsula.

If the DPRK had been the same as Iraq, former Yugoslavia or Afghanistan, it must have met a miserable fate like those countries. Kim Jong Il defended peace and security in Northeast Asia and the rest of the world.





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## Fashion tips for Short Girls

**M**any short girls don't want to draw attention to their height. While actual growth is out of the question, you can change the way you appear by knowing what not to wear. If you're wondering if your clothes don't look right because you're on the shorter side, it's entirely possible that you're just wearing the wrong trends.

From avoiding a particularly tricky print to knowing the right silhouettes to stock up on, dressing for your height comes down to a simple set of fashion guidelines. Keep reading to find out which fashion trends to avoid if you're short, and shop our top picks for petite girls at the end.

**Instead of tunic tops, try cropped silhouettes:** A cropped style can help elongate any look and is an easy way to add a flattering and on-trend dimension to your outfit. Pair it with your favorite pair of high-waist pants for an easy look that won't seem baggy.

If you want your legs to look a little longer, pair a crop top with a full skirt that's high-waisted.

**Instead of shirtdresses, try gathered or wrap dresses:** If you're on the petite side, a shirtdress can easily swallow you up and make it look like you're accidentally wearing an oversize style. Try a gathered or wrap dress instead to ensure that your look is falling just right.

**Instead of oversize layering, try tailored layering like suiting separates:**

A well-tailored chic pantsuit looks good on any body type, but especially on someone petite. A sleek blazer and

suiting pants are a great dressier option for someone on the shorter side.

**Instead of horizontal stripes, try vertical stripes:** Horizontal stripes typically give a widening illusion while vertical stripes are elongating. So, the latter is a sophisticated go-to for shorter girls. However, if you really want to wear horizontal stripes, choose items that have sparse horizontal fully stripes. When in doubt, go for separates. Splitting up the stripes will less likely overwhelm your figure.

**Instead of boxy tops, try corsets and structured shaping:** Structured tops are a guaranteed way to make sure you're showing off your figure and not getting swallowed by oversize pieces.

**Instead of printed jumpsuits, try solid-colored one-pieces:** Solid colors are often considered more flattering and give an overall statement look rather than loud prints that can overwhelm a small figure.

**Instead of loose-fitting jeans, try straight-leg denim:** Don't drown yourself in oversize denim. Instead, opt for a straight-leg fit that still gives the illusion of bagginess while remaining more formfitting.

**Instead of tea-length dresses, try hemlines that hit above the knee:** A

shorter hemline lends itself to the look of longer legs. If you pair it with some high heels, you'll be looking taller in no time. Midi skirts can cut shorter legs in the wrong place, opt instead for a miniskirt to elongate your frame.

**Instead of mid-calf boots, try ankle boots:** Mid-calf or knee-high boots cut your legs off in places that are less flattering. Try ankle boots instead to flatter your legs by being less covered up.



## Making a Sustainable Transition' with Joseph & Alexander

**S**ustainability is no new subject on the global agenda. In the context of fashion, it refers to clothing that does not put undue strain on the environment right from the harvesting of raw materials to end use.

Speaking strictly from an environmental perspective, creating any type of clothing sustainably involves farming, harvesting, processing and transport of materials without the use of harmful pesticides, toxic dyes

or fossil fuels. The idea may sound rather simple, but the process isn't. And nor is the transition for consumers. It isn't only designers who must change their production habits, it's a sticking point for shoppers and their purchasing habits, too.



Reportedly topped only by oil, the fashion industry is contributing to major environmental destruction – mainly because consumers insist on buying so many clothes at such cheap prices. Alternatives do exist. The solution lies in buying less and choosing

better quality items that are made as ethically as possible. With this in mind, keeping sustainability at the forefront of decision making has found its way to the heart of Alana Sorokin's life's work.



Born of a deep love and respect for the ocean, and brought to life by the quirky, marine-inspired designs of talented street artists, Sorokin launched chic childrens' wear brand Joseph & Alexander in 2018, with recycled fabrics made from ocean plastics. If you consciously decide to purchase a garment made using a recycled material

derived from plastic waste or an exciting new fibre, such as cruelty-free leather made in a lab, you are supporting start-up companies creating new markets, and avoiding the toxic impacts associated with conventional textiles.

Conceptualised to ignite curiosity within the minds of its youngest wearers, each piece is designed to spark an 'educational conversation' around critical world issues. Championing environmental action is at the heart of the brand. Operating consciously using recycled fabric from ocean plastics, eco-friendly ink and reusable packaging, each collection depicts awareness-raising narratives of minimizing our environmental footprint, and having fun whilst doing so.

Switching to more ethical fashion options does take forethought, but the health and survival of the planet depends on it.

## Guide to disguising a breakout



**C**lear skin is one of those forever goals, but breakouts are inevitable. Sure, some pros may say that one way to treat a blemish is to let your skin breathe and go makeup free — but that's not always an option. There's a reason why concealer exists after all, right? Learning how to cover up breakouts with makeup is tricky enough on smooth skin, but try navigating a huge, red, irritated pimple — not the easiest thing to do. With the right tools, a little patience and some good advice, you can both conceal and treat a breakout with ease.

**Be smart about skin care:** What you do under you makeup will affect how well your base wears and how visible your blemish will be. Some skin care ingredients, particularly those used to treat breakouts, may not play nice with your makeup. It may be a bit of trial and error, but the best place to start is with a thin layer of whatever skin care product you're using to bring down your blemish.

You'll also want to avoid any treatment serums, moisturizers or primers that are oil-based or contain oils. These might actually break down the makeup quickly. Stick with oil-free formulas, which in many cases is better for acne-prone skin anyway. Go heavier with your breakout treatments at night, that way by morning the inflammation will hopefully be reduced, and makeup will cover better. Make sure you moisturize really well, even the pimple. It's producing oil because it's probably craving moisture, something that only water can provide.

**Layer lightly:** When skin isn't cooperating, you may be tempted to just coat your entire face in foundation, but that may cause your coverage efforts to look more obvious. Instead, only conceal the area that needs the coverage. The best thing to do with a pimple is to apply the least amount of makeup to it. Use your foundation and see if that covers it. If not, that's when you go back over the spot with a concealer.

Concealer will give you more coverage, but only apply it to areas where you need it. And although you don't want to do too many layers on top of your blemish, a thin veil of primer beforehand may actually help even out the texture differences a pimple creates. Matte formulas are best for breakout-prone skin.

**Keep it clean:** It may sound obvious, but you want to keep breakouts free from further irritation. So using your fingers to apply makeup should be avoided. Also, don't try to massage the area or pop the pimple. This will only cause it to get more inflamed and bigger.

Keep the area as sanitary as possible by using a freshly cleaned brush — not one you have been using for the past two weeks or not even the tip of a makeup sponge. You want something that is completely clean so that you're not just spreading bacteria around and causing more pimples.

**Avoid caking:** When applying a translucent powder to set your makeup, use a small fluffy eyeshadow brush to dust that spot where the pimple is. Throughout the day, avoid touch-ups as much as possible. Carry blotting sheets to soak up any excess oil. If you absolutely have to powder, do it sparingly, no more than two to three times a day. The key for this is using the least amount of product. Only apply what you need and build the coverage only on top of the pimple and diffuse out the edges to blend into the rest of your skin. Cakeyness only happens when there is too much powder, so blotting sheets should be your saving grace. Just remember to place and lift [the blotter] and don't rub the pimple.

# Huawei CBG opens Kuwait's first ever 'Huawei Experience Store'



**H**uawei Consumer Business Group (CBG) launched its flagship Huawei Experience Store (HES) in Kuwait's most prestigious venue, The Avenues Mall, Electra, Phase 4.

The launch was attended by Deputy General Director Mohamad Yaqoub of Kuwait Direct Investment Promotion Authority (KDIPA), Cheng Yongru, Commercial Consul of China to Kuwait, Aref Al-Yousifi, CEO of Easa Hussain Al-Yousifi & Sons Co. and Gene Jiao, President of Huawei CBG, Middle East and Africa. Consumers thronged the outlet for a full retail experience, which includes access to Huawei's latest products and services under one roof. All new products will now be available for pre-booking and

sale at the same time as their respective global/regional launch.

The opening of the first brand store in Kuwait represents Huawei's commitment to deliver breakthrough technologies and become closer to their consumers. The store provides an immersive experience and exceptional customer service that is to set new industry standards in innovation, representing another step that Huawei is taking in the Kuwaiti market. This reflects Huawei's positive business outlook and goal of becoming an end-to-end solutions provider, offering consumers more convenient and smarter ways to connect the various aspects of their lives.

Commenting on the opening of Huawei's



first flagship store in Kuwait, Gene Jiao, President of Huawei Consumer Business Group, said: "At Huawei, we are always eager to expand our reach and presence in new markets across the world and Kuwait is an important market to us, with a very big tech-savvy population that is enthusiastic to discover the latest advancements technology

has to offer. This is reflected in an IDC report that shows Kuwait was a big driver in the smartphone shipment market in the region, with a growth of 2.6 percent in Q3 2018."

The Huawei Experience Store is open daily from 10am - 10pm, Sunday to Saturday, the Avenues, Phase 4. Electra.



## Privatisation of ministries to enhance efficiency

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The New Kuwait's strategy's seven pillars are public administration, economy, infrastructure, living environment, health care, human capital and global position.

Each pillar has associated objectives and collectively the aim is to reduce red tape, broaden the economy beyond the reliance on oil revenues, improve infrastructure and build more homes for citizens, invest in developing skilled Kuwaiti health workers, as well as improved medical facilities, reform schools to give their children the skills to thrive in competitive private sector roles and enhance Kuwait's position as a regional leader in culture, diplomacy, trade and philanthropy. However the International Monetary Fund recently urged Kuwait to implement further

economic reforms which include reducing the public wage bill (approx 19 percent of GDP) to encourage nationals to seek opportunities in the private sector, thereby enhancing its productivity and competitiveness.

IMF has been urging Kuwait to gradually phase out fuel, electricity, and water subsidies as they encourage excessive consumption and widen the budget deficit.

To achieve the government's stated intentions to transition its role in the economy from an operator to regulator, from wealth distribution to wealth creation, and to entrust the economy to the private sector, the government has identified four private sector enablers which are privatisation programmes, public private partnership initiatives, enhancing the role of small and medium-sized enterprises and promotion of foreign and local direct investments.

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