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Growing up smoking, an epidemic health hazard

THE TIMES KUWAIT REPORT

consumption of cigarettes in Kuwait is a whopping 1,849 cigarettes. This ranks Kuwait second in the Middle-East region, next only to Lebanon, where average per capita consumption is 1,955 cigarettes, but ahead of Libya, which ranked third regionally with 1,764 cigarettes consumed per capita annually. By comparison, the average per capita consumption of cigarettes in Saudi Arabia is 485, and that in the United Arab Emirates is 438.

Now in its seventh-edition, the 'Tobacco Atlas' — a joint anti-tobacco initiative by leading global public health organization, Vital Strategies, and the Tobacconomics team at the University of Illinois at Chicago (UIC) in the United States — makes for a compelling read from start to finish.

Data from the Tobacco Atlas show



that nearly nine million people around the world succumbed to smoking and tobacco related illnesses in 2019. Despite this sobering fact, more than 1.3 billion people worldwide still

smoke tobacco, while an additional 200 million use other tobacco products. This finding reiterates studies by the World Health Organization (WHO) and others that show tobacco consumption

impacts the lives of nearly 20 percent of the current global population, and that 23 percent of adults worldwide are tobacco users

Estimates on the prevalence of smoking in Kuwait by the WHO notes that close to 18 percent of the adult population smoke cigarettes or other tobacco-related products. Even more alarming for Kuwait is the high prevalence of smoking among adolescents in Kuwait. A cross-sectional study published in 2020 on tobacco usage among adolescents in 11th and 12th grades in Kuwait revealed that 68 percent of male and 21 percent of female students smoke or had used tobacco products at one time or another. The mean-age for initiation of smoking in Kuwait was also found to be 17.5 years.

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Domestic recruitment offices threaten to shut down



Decision by the Ministry of Commerce and Industry to fix the fees that domestic worker recruitment offices are allowed to charge for providing household workers, has led to

owners of several such offices threatening to shut down their business and return the license to the ministry.

Earlier the ministry had ordered that offices recruiting and providing domestic workers to households should not charge more than KD890 per worker, including the travel cost and fees for conducting PCR tests.

Owners of recruitment offices expressed their dissatisfaction with the ministry's decision during a press conference they held last week at the Costa del Sol Hotel. They highlighted the negative repercussions stemming from the ministry's decision to impose a maximum fee that recruitment offices could charge clients.

Owner of a recruitment office and a

specialist in domestic labor affairs, Bassam Al-Shammari, said: "The decision by the Ministry of Commerce to regulate the fees that recruitment offices could charge clients, was an ill-conceived decision that is having negative repercussions on the market. He added that the ministry's decision also constituted an interference in labor market concepts of supply and demand.

Al-Shammari warned that if the ministry continues to insist on following the charges it has set arbitrarily. It would lead to a complete breakdown of the domestic worker recruitment system. He noted that the maximum fee set by the ministry was totally inadequate to meet the rising costs,

including in airline tickets, the recruitment process, and in charges levied by worker supplying countries. Al-Shammari pointed out that many domestic worker recruitment offices will not be able to cover their expenses, especially after nearly two years of devastation that the industry suffered following the COVID-19 global pandemic.

Another owner of one of the recruitment companies, Nayef Lamas, announced, "If this flawed decision continues, then within two weeks from now, we will hand over the licenses to practice the activity to the Ministry of Commerce and stop the recruitment process completely and go to other projects that are more beneficial and less problematic."



LuLu Hypermarket holds promotion to start summer in style

LuLu Hypermarket, the destination of choice for discerning shoppers in the region, launched a special 'Beauty World' promotion, on 2 June at all its outlets in Kuwait.



The promotion, which is part of the brand's 'Back to Home' celebrations, provides customers with the beauty products and accessories essential to kick-off the summer season in suave style.

The week-long promotion that began on

1 June and runs till 7 June, was inaugurated at the LuLu Hypermarket outlet in Salmiya Mall by five of the leading fashionistas and online influencers in Kuwait. The inauguration ceremony, which was held in the presence of LuLu management in Kuwait, and high-level officials from companies supporting the event, was attended by a large gathering of shoppers and well-wishers of the hypermarket.

Fashionistas and stylists were also on hand at the inauguration event to provide customers with demonstrations of tips and tricks in applying beauty products with flair and sophistication.

Beauty World, which celebrates the concept of 'looking and feeling good all through summer', offers customers special prices and discounts throughout the promotion period on a wide range of cosmetics, perfumes, health, fitness and beauty products.

Among the top supporters of the 'Beauty World' promotion at LuLu Hypermarket are P&G, Nivea, Gillette, Revlon, Babyliss, Braun, Panasonic, Labello, Banana Boat, Intuition, and Oral B.

The week-long Beauty World promotion is yet another demonstration of LuLu Hypermarket's commitment to providing customers with world-class products at competitive prices, and making shopping at any of the brands' outlets across Kuwait an enjoyable and exciting experience.



MPW announces consultancy tender for Gulf Railway project

Ministry of Public Works (MPW) has announced that the project plans in 2022-2023 for the Public Authority for Roads and Land Transport (PART) will include a tender for consultancy work on the long delayed Kuwait segment of the pan-Gulf railway project.

Explaining the objectives of the consultancy tender, the MPW said it would include the "study and engineering design for the Kuwait segment of the Gulf track and the facilities related to it for a total length of 111km. The ministry indicated that the scope of the consultancy work is to "study and design the first phase of the pan-Gulf railway project, and the preparation of special and general conditions for the project."

The MPW added that the duration of this tender would be for a period of 12 months, and that it will be offered to global consulting offices through a public offering based on the specific conditions set by PART. The ministry clarified that the consultancy project was being put forward for global tendering, as local companies in Kuwait have so far not implemented a vital project of this magnitude.

It is noteworthy that the Kuwait segment of the Gulf Railway project is part of a larger



railway system proposed to link the six Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries. The larger project, often referred to as 'GCC Railway', will have a rail network with a total length of 2,117 km stretching from Kuwait City, and passing through Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Qatar, the UAE and ending at Oman's Sohar Port.

The project, which is expected to enhance sustainability efforts, boost connectivity between the GCC states, and result in wider economic benefits for the region, is estimated to cost in excess of US\$15 billion, of which Kuwait's share is projected to be around KD300 million.



Fifth Ring Road diversions to remain for two years

Traffic diversions set up in recent months, as part of the ongoing road intersection project on Fifth-Ring Road, are to continue until the completion of the project scheduled for 2024, said the Public Authority for Roads and Land Transport (PART) in a statement last week.

The Authority noted that the project — at the intersection of Damascus Street, opposite Al-Surra and Al-Rawda, Al-Salam and Al-Siddiq, and which falls within the works of Phase Two of the South Surra Development Project — had achieved only 5.2 percent completion as of the end of March.

Another infrastructure report out last week, this time from the Ministry of Public Works, on the status of project work completion at the new Kuwait International Airport T2 Phase 1, reveals that until the end of this April, 61.8 percent of the airport project had been completed

The report also indicated the project is being

built on an area of 180,000 square meters, and can accommodate 25 million passengers annually. Additionally, the new airport will have 51 aircraft air gates for embarking and disembarking of passengers, as well as utilize environmentally friendly materials throughout the construction process, and employ solar panels to meet part of the energy needs of the airport.

The ministry report added that the project also includes two transit hotels linked to the main building, lounges for first and business class passengers, a reception hall for VIPs, a building for the central power station, and a building for a water tank. The ministry stressed its keenness to speed up implementation of the project, and to accelerate the completion of various sites and other works related to the project, and to coordinate with the contractors so as to overcome any obstacles facing completion of the project to schedule.



Poland - Kuwait relations remain robust

H.E. Pawel Lechowicz
Ambassador of Poland

By Reaven D'Souza
Managing Editor

Ambassador of Poland H.E. Pawel Lechowicz comes across as a calm and composed diplomat with a keen sense of observation on developments around the world. In a recent exclusive interview with the Managing Editor of The Times Kuwait, Ambassador Lechowicz spoke at length on the strong Polish-Kuwaiti relations that exist and continue to grow in various domains. He pointed to the huge potential for state entities, private companies and individuals in Kuwait to invest in his country, and underscored that Poland was among few countries in the European Union (EU) that has consistently demonstrated positive GDP growth over the past nearly three decades. He also noted that there was ample space for more Polish companies to be involved in Kuwait's strategic Vision 2035 development plan.

The ambassador began the informative interview by disclosing what led him to choose diplomacy as a career, and how his university graduation in history primed him for a job in the diplomatic cadre of his country.

"For me, working in diplomacy is the perfect combination of a career that allows you to explore and discover the world, but also a career of public service and purposeful work. I graduated in history, and international relations have always been an area of deep interest to me.

Since the start of my career, I have traveled extensively and worked in the Embassy of Poland in Washington DC, and I have very good memories of this period. I have been in Kuwait since 2018 and would like to underline that Kuwait and the people here have given me a very warm welcome and made my stay here an enjoyable and fruitful experience.

Regionally, Kuwait is the first Gulf country that Poland established diplomatic relations with in 1963. Polish-Kuwaiti relations are robust and devoid of any misunderstandings. This creates excellent conditions for further cooperation. I hope that our good cooperation will continue. An example of these good

relations is the recent humanitarian aid donated by Kuwait for Ukrainian refugees currently in Poland. I would like to once again express my gratitude to His Highness the Amir and to His Highness the Crown Prince for this gesture. Since the start of the war in Ukraine, more than 3.6 million displaced Ukrainians have arrived in Poland. The Government has reacted rapidly, granting them the right of temporary residence



“The Polish economy has been growing uninterrupted for 28 years, during which time it has almost tripled its size as measured by real GDP. According to a report by McKinsey and a coverage in 'Forbes' magazine, Poland has a chance to develop at an annual rate of even 5 percent and to double the value of its economy by 2030.”

and access to key public services such as health and education, as well as social assistance, and housing. It is worth noting that places of accommodation were set up not only by the government, but a large number of private

Polish homes have also hosted and provided shelter to the refugees.

Shifting from political and diplomatic ties between the two countries to bilateral relations in other fields, including in investments and the economy, as well as his efforts to enhance them since taking charge, the envoy noted: "Poland is an important and dynamic market located in the heart of Central Europe. Exporters and investors are drawn to Poland due to the country's large population, well-educated and competitive workforce, strong prospects for economic growth and location in the center of Europe."

"The Polish economy has been growing uninterrupted for 28 straight years now, during which time it has almost tripled its size as measured by real GDP. According to a report by McKinsey and a coverage in 'Forbes' magazine, Poland has a chance to develop at an annual rate of even 5 percent and to double the value of its economy by 2030. One of the greatest advantages of the Polish economy is its diversity. The Polish economy has also proven to be one of the most resilient in the European Union (EU) during the COVID-19 crisis. Polish GDP returned to pre-pandemic levels as recently as Q2 2021. The Polish Central Statistical Office now estimates that Poland's GDP in the first quarter of 2022 was 8.5 percent higher than a year earlier.

"We are also currently working on accrediting Polish universities in Kuwait. Our universities are ready to welcome students from Kuwait. Currently hundreds of students from Saudi Arabia, but much less from Kuwait, are studying in Polish universities. One of the obstacles is lack of a formal Kuwaiti accreditation for our entities, but we are working on it.

"In addition, there is strong potential for expanding Polish-Kuwaiti cooperation in new areas related to technology. Poland has developed a number of valuable technologies, including for the oil and gas industry, as well as green technologies we can share with Kuwait.

"According to data for 2020, despite the difficult situation related to the global COVID-19



pandemic, there was a noticeable increase in our trade with Kuwait — by nearly 27 percent compared to 2019, on both sides: the Polish export (+27%) and import (+14%).

"Our turnover reached more than US\$100 million last year but we believe that we can still achieve more. Moreover, we are always interested in intensifying trade with Kuwait. Recently I took part in the agri-food products export forum in Poland. I tried to present to Polish exporters the immense business possibilities in Kuwait.

"Poland also sees an opportunity to expand cooperation between our countries by involving Polish companies in projects related to Kuwait's Vision 2035 development plan. As part of this plan to develop the country, the Kuwaiti government is implementing a number of mega projects worth approximately US\$130 billion, which creates potential opportunities for interested Polish companies.

Turning to tourism in his country, its rich history, culture and heritage, and to the variety of natural scenic surroundings, the ambassador stated: "Poland is a country with a long tradition of over a thousand years and a turbulent history.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 5

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Cabinet discusses food security, monkeypox



During a special meeting convened on Tuesday, 31 May, the Cabinet reviewed the food security situation in the country and the objectives of an ad hoc ministerial committee tasked with looking into the matter, including efforts to ensure adequate availability of major staples.

Following the meeting, the Cabinet noted that although the food situation in the country remained stable, there was a need to make all efforts to ensure sufficient stock of food continued to flow into the country for regular supplies to the market,

as well as to maintain Kuwait's strategic food reserves.

On a related note, it was reported in the media that the Minister of Commerce and Industry Fahd Al-Shariaan was planning to meet with Indian Ambassador H.E. Sibi George, to discuss the wheat ban that India recently imposed in the wake of a shortage in wheat witnessed in the local domestic market.

Minister Al-Shariaan is expected to request Ambassador George to persuade India to exclude Kuwait from the wheat export ban, in line with India's decision to lift the wheat ban for a few countries.

Al-Shariaan's request to India is said to come from within the framework of broader measures taken by Kuwait to ensure the continuation of grain flows to Kuwait in light of the deficits facing most global markets due to recent geopolitical developments.

The Cabinet during its extraordinary meeting on Tuesday also reviewed the health situation in Kuwait, and assured the public that the country still remained free of

any cases of monkeypox infection.

Monkeypox is a viral infection that is generally found in west and central African regions. However, over the last couple of months, cases of monkeypox infection have been reported in several EU countries and in the United States. The absence of monkeypox so far in Kuwait, underlines the stringent precautions that are in place at the country's borders and at strategic locations to keep the virus at bay.

Speaking following the extraordinary Cabinet meeting, Minister of Health, Dr. Khalid Al-Saeed said that an analysis of global statistics on the spread of monkeypox reveals that the virus has appeared in a growing number of countries, but that it had so far not infiltrated Kuwait.

Meanwhile, data presented by the Ministry of Commerce and Industry to the Economic Committee of the Council of Ministers shows a fall in strategic stocks of basic commodities, relative to the same period last year.

Availability of frozen chicken has dwindled

the most with reserves only sufficient to last for about 15 days if supplied to the entire population, but could extend to a month if supplied only to ration-card holders. On the other hand there are sufficient stocks of lentils to last for a month if supplied to the entire population, but it could be extended to 60 days if reserved only for ration-card holders.

Ministry officials are said to be keeping a wary eye on stocks of other essentials, including infant formula, barley and several other products. In the meantime, it was reported that the country has egg in quantities equivalent to 130 percent of the volume of daily domestic consumption, which means that there is a surplus of 30 percent over the need for consumption.

The ad hoc ministerial committee formed to enhance the food security system, is said to have evaluated the situation and recommended the country take measures along five main axes — ensure availability of the commodity, its accessibility, its safety, its health quality and its price stability.

Grand Hyper launches Big Win Car Promotion



Grand Hypermarket launched Mega Promotion "Big Win 5 Chevrolet Captiva Cars" at their outlets across Kuwait. Customers who purchase above 5KD from any of their 26 outlets or by online or mobile app can participate in this 60 days long mega campaign and will get a chance to win a Chevrolet Captiva car.

The Big Win Car promotion is completely digitalized and the coupons will be virtual, so customers will be enrolled to the draw automatically by capturing their name and contact details through registered Grand Hyper loyalty card 'GrandMe'. And, grand hyper mobile app users can view their digital coupon details through the application.

"Grand Hypermarket's car promotion reflects Grand family's commitment to their loyal customers, so the customers are offered prizes as well quality products at best prices.

In addition to that, as the part of expansion, Grand is opening their new outlet at Hawalli Block 7, Muthanna street in the end of May 2022 and 4 more stores in next two months" said Mr. Ayyoob Kachery, Regional Director, Grand Hyper Kuwait.

"Grand Hyper has recently launched their Online Shopping Mobile App for making the shopping hassle-free. Thousands of satisfied customers are using the mobile app for home delivery of their favorite products at affordable price in the market. The Grand management expressed their gratitude to all the users of the app who have given it a warm acceptance". Mr. Suneer PC, CEO, Gand Hyper, Kuwait added in the statement. Our commitment to responsible retailing is an important business principle and a key element that defines our brand; said Mr. Thehseer Ali, Director of Retail Operations.



Four women appointed to Municipal Council

The Cabinet in its weekly meeting last Tuesday, approved a draft decree appointing Sharifa Al-Shalfan, Alyaa Al-Faresi, Munira Al-Amir and Farah Al-Roumi as the nominated Municipal Council members, along with Ismael Behbehani and Abdullatif Al-Daie.

Expressing her pleasure at the appointment, Minister of State for Municipality Affairs and Minister of State for Communications and IT Affairs, Rana Al-Fares, remarked that the appointment of four

women as council members was a "historic precedent" and underscored the need to empower more women in all fields.

In a press statement on the occasion, Minister Al-Fares said that empowering Kuwaiti women through selecting those skilled and qualified, and helping them practice their role in the council, was a long overdue need of women. She wished all success to the new members at the Municipal Council.

MoI launches e-service for police clearance

Last week, the General Department of Criminal Evidence, an affiliate of the Ministry of Interior (MoI), in cooperation with the ministry's General Department of Information Systems, launched an electronic service (e-service) to issue the criminal status of individuals through a QR code on the 'Sahel' application, which can be used both inside and outside the country.

The General Department of Public Relations and Security Media at MoI said in a statement issued on the occasion that the service was based on the directives of the First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior, retired Lieutenant-General Sheikh Ahmad Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, and under the follow-up of the Undersecretary of the Ministry, Lieutenant-General Anwar Al-Barjas.

The statement underlined the ministry's keenness to launch this new service to effectively contribute to the success of the country's efforts in digital transformation, to save effort and time for all citizens and residents, and enable them to complete their



transactions with ease.

The service also comes in line with the ministry's strategy aimed at automating all services provided to the public in line with the technical and technological leaps that sectors in the security establishment witnessed in recent months.

MoH opens 11 primary healthcare centers to help quit smoking

The Ministry of Health announced the update of the work plan for the cessation of smoking clinics in 11 primary health care centers distributed in various health regions.

On the occasion of the celebrations of the World No Tobacco Day, the Director of the Central Department of Primary Health Care, Dr. Dina Al-Dhubaib, said clinics

will provide assistance in cooperation with the Central Department of Primary Health Care and the National Program for Tobacco Control, reports a local Arabic daily.

Al-Dhubaib gave the names of following centers where the service is available -- Abdullah Abdulhadi Health Centers, Ali Thunayan Al-Ghanim and Abdul Rahman Abdul-Mughni in the Capital Health District, Al-Rabiah Health Center in the Farwaniya District, Rumaithiya Health Center, Hawalli Al-Gharbi in the Hawalli District, Al-Oyoun in the Jahra District, Al-Dhahr and East Al-Ahmadi in the Al-Ahmadi Health District.



Construction sector to register strong growth over next five years

Despite facing numerous challenges related to time, cost overruns, and bureaucratic delays, the construction sector in Kuwait is poised to register robust growth over the short to medium term.

A new report from Verified Market Research, a global market research and business intelligence firm, shows that the Kuwaiti construction industry, which is growing at a rapid pace, will witness an annual average growth of more than 6 percent over the 2022-2025 period, and is projected to be valued at over US\$9 billion by 2028.

The local construction market includes a wide range of activities that cover upcoming, ongoing, and proposed construction projects in different sectors, including commercial, residential, industrial construction, infrastructure

transportation, energy, and utilities. When coupled with the government's programs to promote the development of economic zones, logistic cities, transport, and renewable energy infrastructure, the Kuwaiti construction field is estimated to post strong rebound in the post-COVID era.

The industry is further buoyed and supported by reforms to diversify the economy away from hydrocarbons. However, the current growth rate of the Kuwaiti construction market is accompanied by certain challenges that continue to stifle the industry's performance at full capacity. Companies that intend to rise above the competition within the Kuwaiti market need to adopt the right technology solutions that could prove to be a game-changer, said Belal Ibrahim Hamouda, General Manager in

Kuwait of Grand International Company (GIC), a regional construction firm.

Kuwait is also a fast-emerging IT hub within the Middle East and GCC regions. With the country's 2035 Vision, the nation is poised to become a financial and commercial center within the region. The rapid development in network connectivity, increased support from government bodies, high adoption of latest cloud services have been strong drivers for the growth of the Kuwait IT industry. Additionally, the private sector's approach towards adopting the latest in IT solutions, particularly within the construction industry, is a strong indicator of how far the industry will go in the near future.

"For an industry to grow at an unprecedented rate, it requires strong infrastructural, government, and policy



support. Kuwait has the ideal combination of all three. Therefore, we believe that the country is on its way to becoming the financial and commercial hub within the Middle East in the years to come," added Abhilash Nair, Regional Manager of GIC.

Oil sector awards multi-billion dollar construction projects

Latest report from the Middle East Economic Digest (MEED), shows that over the past 15 years, Kuwait oil sector has signed contracts for oil and gas projects worth over KD15 billion in value.

According to data provided by MEED, the largest contracts for oil and gas projects was in 2016, when the sector awarded contracts worth a total of KD1.3 billion. In this regard it is worth remembering that the hike in contract values came in conjunction with the decision by the

parent holding company, Kuwait Petroleum Corporation and its subsidiaries, to increase the country's production capacity of oil and gas.

It is worth noting that prior to 2015 the contract awards were worth only a total of KD400 million. In 2017 and 2018, the sector awarded oil and gas projects worth KD180 million, and during 2019 contracts worth KD147 million were signed. NO new contracts were signed in 2020 due to emergence of the



COVID-19 global pandemic and its negative repercussions on projects in Kuwait.

On a related note, Kuwait Oil Company recently floated a tender for a project to modernize the gas and condensate network in oil facilities in eastern Kuwait, which is the second modernization contract to be offered for the gas and condensate network in this region. The company has set 30 August as the deadline for submitting bids.

Poland - Kuwait relations remain robust

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3

This is evidenced by the numerous monuments of ancient settlement, defensive, sacral or industrial architecture. The multitude and variety of those sights attract visitors from all over the world, and all of whom are kindly and professionally welcomed.

Moreover, there is something for everyone in Poland! There are numerous castles, palaces and mansions, mostly surrounded by historic and beautifully maintained gardens. Naturally, it is worth starting your adventure with castles and palaces from the most famous, largest, and those entered into the UNESCO World Heritage list, or having great significance for the cultural and historical heritage of our country. Among these are: The Wawel Royal Castle, the Royal Castle in Warsaw, the Castle in Malbork.

"There are also many archaeological sites (e.g., the Archaeological Museum in Biskupin, the Slavs and Vikings Center in Wolin), mighty forts and fortifications erected for military purposes, monuments of technology and industry, including the UNESCO-listed salt mines in Wieliczka and Bochnia, wooden architectures, all of which create a rich array of opportunities to visit our country.

"These edifices have been created throughout history, under different conditions, often as a result of the clash of influences between Western European and Eastern cultures. Today, those historical sites are offered to our guests as attractions or products of special value. Some serve as museums, and some are used directly to serve visitors as hotels or conference centers.

Additionally, for nature-loving tourists there are plenty of sites to see. These include national parks, over 120 landscape parks, numerous urban parks and gardens, and those embedded in the landscape of small towns, villages and green areas. The tourist will see coastal and mountain, lowland and upland landscapes; they will see rivers, ponds and lakes, forests, woods and primeval forests. There is a lot to see in Poland

and every tourist will find something special for themselves. "Poland and Kuwait also cooperate on many other levels, for example through the agreement on cultural cooperation the Polish-Kuwaiti Archaeological Mission has been conducting excavations in Kuwait. The Center of Mediterranean Archaeology of the University of Warsaw established successful cooperation with the Kuwait National Council for Culture, Arts and Literature (NCCAL). The Kuwaiti-Polish Archaeological Mission headed by Prof. Piotr Bieliński discovered at the Bahra 1 site in Kuwait a structure that may be interpreted as a cultic building from the 6th millennium BC. If further research confirms these observations, this will be the oldest building of such function not just in Kuwait but in the whole Gulf region.

"Additionally in Kuwait there are Polish musicians, who are actively participating in the artistic life of Kuwait. They also closely collaborate with the Embassy and we hosted several musical events in our premises.

"Moreover in June, in collaboration with the NCCAL we will organize an exhibition about the life of Waclaw Seweryn Rzewuski in Ahmad Al-Adwani Art Gallery. The life and work of Rzewuski provides a unique bridge linking two worlds, Polish and Arab. Getting to know the story of our Polish hero, we begin to understand that although these worlds seem to be very different, on many planes they were capable of becoming very close indeed. Rzewuski was a person who transferred European values and ideas to Arab ground and Arab values and ideas to European ground. The story of Rzewuski's life provides material of no less impact than that of Lawrence of Arabia, while descriptions of his adventures and travels in the Middle East provide all but complete film scripts or strips, no less absorbing than those relating the adventures of Indiana Jones."

Ambassador Le concluded the interview by extending his congratulations to the Kuwaiti leadership, the Government, and to the people of Kuwait, and his best wishes for peace and prosperity to prevail in Kuwait.



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Thought “ The world will not be destroyed
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doing anything.

— Albert Einstein

The consequences of emotional eating

Ask Mira: Eating Right to Live Happy & Healthy



For many people, their eating habits fluctuate based on their emotions. They binge in excess or sometimes on unhealthy foods when they are sad, angry, frustrated and even when they are in a good mood, or want to celebrate. It is even a kind of punishment, you feel bad about yourself and you eat in excess to punish yourself even more. Or, you follow a strict diet to lose weight, but something triggers a relapse so you binge on fried foods. Then you feel guilty because you have strayed from your diet restrictions in a minute. This behavior makes sense with the term called emotional eating.

What is emotional eating?

Eating when you are emotional, rather than when you are hungry is something most people do occasionally including me. It starts to be a problem when it becomes abnormal and you feel that it is out of your control. You start to feel that you cannot stop eating or indulging in your favorite unhealthy snacks. This type of eating



is a major reason why some people gain weight and become overweight. The most common emotional triggers for overeating are boredom, anger, sadness, happiness, anxiety, loneliness, stress, low self-esteem, disappointment and frustration. Ask the question, "Am I hungry now or Am I eating for another reason?"

Usually, when you eat because of your emotions, you are too happy or sad to feel whether you are actually hungry or not, so you find it difficult to recognize the feeling of fullness, because you are under the effect of the emotions of this specific moment.

Here are some ways to exert self-control over your

emotional eating.

Keep a food diary: When you feel that you are eating too much and often because of your emotions, keep a food diary for a week. Include the time you eat, the reasons for eating and evaluate your emotions after eating. It is a hard exercise, but a food diary can give you an idea of how often you eat for reasons other than hunger.

Look for an activity that helps channel your emotions: Find an activity that brings you the mental and psychological comfort that you would otherwise find in food, whether its sugary or salty items.

For example, you can run on the treadmill when you are angry or stressed. Any intense activity can secrete endorphines, and these hormones will make you feel relaxed and eventually will block your cravings.

If you are eating because you are happy, replace that with activities that bring you feelings of joy about yourself like shopping, friendly outings or calling a friend.

Break your dependence on unhealthy food items: When you think happiness, it is chocolate. When you think sadness, and stress it can be chips. You can change all these habits by turning your snacks into healthy ones.

If you want something sweet, you can try a fruit salad, yogurt with some fruits or breakfast bar for example, instead of chocolate cakes or doughnuts.

Also, a small amount of nuts and almonds gives you the feeling of fullness for a longer time, even more than biscuits. What about a whole grain toast, with jam on the top? It is a great option to have as well as it is sweet and nutritious.

Before you go sleep, have a cup of skim milk or low-fat plain yogurt. It will calm you down at night.

Feel hungry: People, who are emotional eaters, often lose the sense of hunger. They are always full because they tend to snack a lot.

Feeling the hunger before meals is an excellent factor that contributes to weight loss or weight maintenance. So eat your main meals when you are hungry and let your snacks be light and healthy.

And, when you feel that you are losing control towards food, be sure to ask yourself this pertinent question: 'Am I still hungry or Am I eating for another reason?'

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Mira is a go-to source for nutrition and wellness and has joined The Times Kuwait team in a new weekly column discussing nutrition and answering queries. You can send in your questions to infotimeskuwait@gmail.com

RECIPE

Broccoli-Potato Soup



This is a thick and creamy soup with chunky pieces of broccoli and potatoes that is made with absolutely no cream, making it a great and healthy way to eat your veggies..

Preparation Time: 30min.
Serving: 3

Ingredients

- 1tbsp olive oil or other vegetable oil
- 1tsp.chopped ginger
- 1 large potato
- 1 L vegetable stock
- 250 g broccoli
- 1 tsp onion/garlic powder
- 1 pinch black pepper
- 1 tsp vinegar

For garnishing:

- Fried potato sticks and broccoli florets,
- Chilli flakes/ sesame seeds

Directions

- Heat up olive oil in a pan. Add chopped ginger and sauté well before introducing small cubed potatoes.
- Add half a litre of vegetable stock. Bring everything to boil and simmer for 10 minutes.
- Add broccoli and the other half liter of vegetable stock. Let it simmer for approximately 10 minutes
- Transfer your soup to a blender.
- Add onion/garlic powder followed by salt and vinegar with a dash of black pepper powder.
- Blend until perfectly smooth.
- Garnish the blend with fried potatoes sticks and fried broccoli florets. Sprinkle a few chilli flakes and sesame seeds before serving with accompaniments such as bread, salads, corn breads, biscuits...etc.



Chef Chhaya Thakker



Indian Chef Chhaya Thakker, who has a huge following online on WhatsApp and YouTube will be sharing her favorite recipes and cooking tips with readers of The Times Kuwait. For feedback, you can write to editortimeskuwait@gmail.com



Ambassador highlights strong French-Kuwaiti relations

The visit to Kuwait last week by the French frigate Surkuf was an important event as it helped enhance military cooperation and further strengthen bilateral ties, said French Ambassador H.E. Claire Le Flecher.

The ambassador was speaking to the media on the sidelines of a reception she held at her residence for the frigate crew at the conclusion of their successful visit to Kuwait. The ambassador proudly recalled

the role of French forces in liberating Kuwait following the Iraqi invasion in 1990, and French support for Kuwait's sovereignty and its just rights.

She also pointed to the presence of French soldiers and officers at the Arifjan base in Kuwait, in addition to the large number of French soldiers and technicians who are training members of the Kuwaiti armed forces to use the Caracal helicopters.

She revealed that the frigate's crew met

with the Kuwaiti side on two occasions, to discuss the security of the Gulf, explaining that the frigate "Surkuf" is part of a European operation to ensure the smooth flow of navigation in the Gulf waters, a peaceful process aimed at ensuring the smooth flow of navigation. It has no other objectives.

For his part, the French military attache in Kuwait, Colonel Olivier Bassoh, revealed that his country has delivered to Kuwait 26 Caracal helicopters so far, and the remaining four will be delivered before the end of this year, as part of the deal concluded between the two countries.

He also noted that the technical training of the Kuwaiti pilots had been completed, and tactical training was ongoing and would be concluded over time.

The commander of the frigate, Edouard de Vallee, said that Kuwait is a major partner of France in the region and every time a new French naval vessel is deployed, it visits Kuwait. He added, "Our mission is to be

present in the region to provide assistance to those in need of partners and friends

On another note related to development of Kuwait-French relations, on Sunday, while inaugurating the French cultural exhibition titled 'Kuwait and France — Friendship along Two Centuries', Ambassador Le Flecher praised the depth of friendly relations between both countries in all fields. The documentary exhibition was organized by the French Research Centre of the Arabian Peninsula (CEFREPA) in collaboration with Kuwait's National Council for Culture, Arts and Literature (NCCAL). The exhibition showcased documents dating back to the early contacts between both countries, long before the current diplomatic relations were established with Kuwait following its independence in 1961.

Speaking following a tour of the exhibition, the ambassador said, "It looks as if a journey through time," adding that she was very delighted to inaugurate it.



Sadu House hosts Indian handloom exhibition

An Indian Handloom exhibition held at the Sadu House last week attracted considerable interest from citizens and residents who were impressed by the diverse and rich fabrics on display.

The exhibition was jointly inaugurated by Indian Ambassador H.E. Sibi George and Assistant Secretary-General for Cultural Affairs at the National Council for Culture Arts and Letters (NCCAL), Dr. Bader Al-Duwaish.

Speaking on the occasion, Ambassador George said: "This exhibition is organized as part of the 60th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between India and Kuwait. The strong connect between India and Kuwait in the textile industry, particu-

larly in the handloom sector, is very visible at this exhibition at the Sadu House museum. For many generations, Kuwaiti weavers were importing dyes from India, and as such I am happy that this exhibition is being held at Sadu House today. I thank NCCAL and Sadu House for their support."

Indian handloom industry products are known for their unique designs and finesse. The industry has a strong infrastructure with about 2.4 million looms of varied designs and construction, indicating significant production capacity. The export of handloom products from India is valued at around US\$350 million annually. Nearly 15 percent of cloth production in India is from the handloom sector.



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Indian Embassy celebrates World Bicycle Day

Embassy of India organized a bicycle rally to mark the 'World Bicycle Day' on 3 June 2022 as part of 'Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav' initiative that celebrates 75 years of India's Independence, and the 60th anniversary of establishment of diplomatic relations between India and Kuwait, to highlight the simplicity, affordability, reliability, environment friendly bicycle

transportation, which in addition fosters health and wellness.

Ambassador of India H.E. Sibi George in his inaugural remarks spoke about the importance of the 75th anniversary of India's independence and paid floral tributes at the statue of the Father of the Nation, Mahatma Gandhi. He said that the bicycle rally is part of the efforts to gen-

erate awareness about the several measures that India has taken for environment protection. Bicycle enthusiasts from the Indian diaspora joined Team India in Kuwait in the Bicycle Rally.

The bicycle rally is a prologue to the 'India Environment Week' which will be held from 5 to 9 June. to celebrate India's achievements on climate action, highlight the flora and fauna of

India, share information on India and its natural environment. It will also include quiz contests, as well as painting and drawing competitions, and virtual presentations, and a grand finale with Indian Classical Dances on 9 June,

Indian Embassy invites all friends of India and the Indian community to participate in celebrating the Indian Environmental Week.



BSK holds event to honor local media

British School of Kuwait (BSK) organized a Press and media awards event on 25 May at the BSK campus. Media Director Kefah Al Mutawa inaugurated the event with his opening remarks and introductions, which was followed by Marketing, Admissions and Communications Manager, Emma Bowie, delivering the welcome address.

lowed by a poetry recitation from his student Ahmad Al Najdi, year 7 with his own composition entitled The Press. It then continued with more fun and entertainment including a quiz organized by Lucian and Refaat along with games and a raffle draw.

This was followed by a drama monologue performed by Daniel Al-Begain, Year 10 with



a LAMDA performance piece titled 'Opening Night' by Caroline Petherbridge. The winners of the quiz, games and raffle draw were then announced and the prizes were given out to all the winners.

BSK Founder and Director, Madam Vera Al Mutawa MBE then gave a speech on the event and this was followed by the press awards being presented by Madam Vera Al Mutawa and Miss Bowie to The Times Kuwait, Al Qabas, Al Anba, Arab Times, Al Seyassah, Al Jarida, Annahar and Al Rai.

The event concluded with a vote of thanks by Mr. Kefah Al Mutawa followed by some light refreshments.



The event started with some music by Miss t Director of Performance Music, Emily Jeffcot, then played her two beautiful renditions, the first the hornpipe by G.F.Handel, followed by Nassam Alaynal Hawa, Fairouz. After that Arabic teacher Adnan Fares, had a few words fol-



Jazeera Airways promotes travel to Vienna



Jazeera Airways along with the Austrian National Tourist Office and local travel agents and business partners held an event to promote tourism in Vienna as well as the rest of Austria.

Giving a presentation about Austria and its natural gems, Director for the Middle East and South East Asia at the Austrian National Tourist Office, Robert Gröblacher, said that tourists can now easily travel to Austria as vaccination and PCR tests are no longer required. He said: "We are very happy to be welcoming visitors to Austria to enjoy all that its rich history, culture and unique nature has to offer."

One of the leading tourist destinations in the world, Austria was ranked the 11th most visited country with over 150 million overnight tourists visiting the country in 2019, of which 1.3 million were tourists from GCC countries.

The country offers visitors plenty of new experiences that range from hiking and biking trails, adventure sports opportunities, family-friendly activities, secret mountain getaways, rustic huts serving traditional Austrian foods, luxury Alpine stays, private wellness temples in the heart of Austria's rich nature, and many other experiences.

Gröblacher said: "Austria is also one of the safest countries in the world, and with its rich

landscape, was ranked 11th on the Travel and Tourism Competitiveness Index in 2019. Its capital, Vienna, was ranked as the greenest capital in the world with its woods, grassland, parks and gardens accounting for around half its area. It was also named the city with the highest quality of living for 10 consecutive years."



For his part, the spokesperson for Jazeera Airways added that Jazeera is launching yet another new tourist destination for its customers to enjoy a restrictions-free vacation this summer. Austria offers them great active and relaxing escapes, ideal for the whole family. We look forward to flying them with direct flights from Kuwait to Vienna, with flights to Vienna being operated on Mondays and Thursdays, starting from 23 June.



Sheikha Intisar Al-Sabah awarded national insignia by Belgian monarch



His Majesty King Philippe of the Belgians has awarded the insignia of Knight in the Order of the Crown (Chevalier de l'Ordre de la Couronne) to philanthropist, social entrepreneur, author, film producer, and columnist, Sheikha Intisar Al-Sabah, a princess in the ruling Al-Sabah Family of Kuwait.

The prestigious Belgian insignia was awarded to Sheikha Intisa at her residence on 31 May by the Ambassador of Belgium to Kuwait H.E. Marc Trenteseau, on behalf of His Majesty King Philippe.

The honor is awarded in recognition of Sheikha Intisar's humanitarian and philanthropic work in the fields of education through positive psychology, women's self-empowerment, and bottom-up peacebuilding efforts, both in the Arab world and globally.

Sheikha Intisar, founder of Intisar Foundation, Alnowair, and Bareec, said following the decoration ceremony, "I am beyond grateful to His Majesty King Philippe of the Belgians, Her Majesty Queen Mathilde, and the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Kingdom of Belgium for recognizing and commending my work. I have been committed to building a more peaceful Arab world by encouraging positivity among young people and providing psychological support to Arab women traumatized by war and violence. It is because I am a firm believer that achieving better mental health and applying positive psychology can significantly contribute to humanity's greatest cause, Peace, and enable it to flowchart from the Arab world, reaching and affecting all of humankind. I am therefore pleased that the Kingdom of Belgium considers that my life's work attests to my devotion to the ideas of unity, tolerance, and human rights."

Speaking on the occasion Ambassador of Belgium H.E. Marc Trenteseau said: "Of course Belgium and Kuwait are good trading partners, but more than that, we share common values, like the necessity of good neighborly relations, the primacy of international law on the rule of the jungle, respect for individuals and Human Rights. Furthermore, the respect of gender equality, the alleviation of sufferings of innocent victims of human violence is of paramount importance to the Belgian Authorities. This award acknowledges the considerable service given by the princess and her foundation to these values and to the cause of victims of war in Arab countries throughout the years, especially women and children.

"Her endeavor and dedication are well known and are much valued by the Belgian Authorities and by their Majesties, King Philippe and Queen Mathilde. It is therefore a great pleasure for me as Ambassador of Belgium to the State of

Kuwait to bestow upon Princess Intisar Al-Sabah the decoration of Chevalier de la Couronne (Knight of the Crown) on behalf of his majesty King Philippe."

Throughout her life, Sheikha Intisar has been dedicating her time and effort to humanitarian causes related to health, education, women's empowerment, child protection, and human rights.

In the MENA region, she is known for her active humanitarian work towards a vision of a peaceful Arab world and for being a very ardent defender of children, young people, and women, bringing much needed relief to those in need, especially due to the continuous periods of violence in Arab countries over recent decades.

The Intisar Foundation established by Sheikha Intisar is the first charitable organization to provide drama therapy sessions to women traumatized by war and violence in the Arab world, and is a registered Charity Commission for England and Wales. Intisar Foundation has been hailed for developing and introducing an innovative and scientifically-proven approach to the field of bottom-up peacebuilding that effects a long-term, systemic change by enabling the psychological recovery and self-empowerment of women traumatized by war and violence. Furthermore, Sheikha Intisar has launched the 'One Million Arab Women initiative', a 30-year-plan to alleviate psychological trauma in one million Arab women.

To date, Intisar Foundation has implemented over 174+ virtual and field drama therapy sessions, reaching hundreds of women in Lebanon and Jordan and thousands of indirect beneficiaries. In addition, the foundation has published research papers in international journals which confirm the qualitative and quantitative impact of drama therapy on vulnerable populations. Furthermore, the foundation plans to expand the pool of qualified drama therapists in the Middle East by providing scholarships for female Arab students at the USEK, Lebanon.

Karima Anbar, CEO, Intisar Foundation, added, "Sheikha Intisar Al Sabah

has an impressive track record when it comes to making a difference. As the CEO of Intisar Foundation, I am proud to be part of her mission where we developed a pioneering and innovative bottom-up peace-building process. Research findings prove that women's

by transforming positive psychology research findings into interactive programs and behavioral campaigns.

Alnowair till date has engaged 2.5 million people across four programs and 220 campaigns becoming a pioneering example for Kuwait's neigh-

mented their work to the United Nations. In January 2020, Sheikha Intisar provided an overview of the impact of positive psychology on academia, as well as social behavior on mental well-being of students, as well as teachers in the schools that have implemented the program.

Gaja Kruchlik, Director, Alnowair, said, "Sheikha Intisar Al Sabah, and her belief in the human potential and positivity as a driving force in making the world a thriving place has left an everlasting impact on me, on my team and all the people whose lives she has touched. For the past ten years, we at Alnowair have been working on bringing positive social behavioral change in Kuwait, and we are very proud of the fact that today through meaningful steps, sustained deliberation, and collaborative work, we have helped make mental health and its importance a household subject in Kuwait."

Bareec has conducted over 20 training programs and reached more than 500 educators. Bareec is being implemented in 47 public high schools, reaching more than 11,600 learners. It has been included in the human development state plan of New Kuwait Vision 2035 by the Supreme Council for Planning and Development and has been approved by the Ministry of Education of Kuwait in its new five-year plan for the development of education.

Rokaya Ali Hussain, Director General, Bareec, said, "With an unprecedented passion, Sheikha Intisar smartly and scientifically motivated state officials for Bareec to become part of the State of Kuwait Development Plan. In collaboration with the Ministry of Education, the number of public high schools applying for the program grew exponentially to 47 schools, training more than 500 teachers and reaching out to more than 11,600 students. Bareec became a daily fulfilling activity that educators, learners and parents could harvest its ripe fruit immediately after implementation."

In a belief that media and art are particularly effective in influencing behavior and attitudes, Sheikha Intisar has also been committing her work as an author, film producer, and columnist to spread the message of peace, humanity, and social responsibility as the main pillars of any meaningful change across the world. Her media publications, published art books, and released award winning films have been promoting wellbeing and personal growth, high ethical standards and values, her Kuwaiti heritage, as well as furthering women's empowerment in the Arab world and beyond.

To learn more about Sheikha Intisar Al Sabah, please visit her website <https://intisaralsabah.com/>



psychological health affects the entire household. By self-empowering women, we ensure that future generations and communities are resilient and less prone to violence and we contribute to building a bottom-up peace process. This medal is very well deserved by Sheikha Intisar as she contributes to making this world a better and more peaceful place every day."

Founded in 2013, Alnowair is Sheikha's Intisar and the region's first nonprofit organization dedicated to promoting positive psychology and positivity as a way of living that leads to overall mental wellbeing. Alnowair's aim is to bring a positive social behavioral change across the community, in fields of education and environment

boring countries. Meanwhile, the organization's educational program titled 'Boomerang' works on eliminating bullying in schools through the use of applied theater. The program has till date positively impacted 15,100 students, 264 real life victims, bullies and by-standers across 33 private schools. Workplace wellbeing program 'Yellowworks' empowers employees and executive management with tools to increase their positive outlook and contribute towards positive organizational culture. The program has till date positively impacted teams of six major telecom, banking and real estate sector organizations in Kuwait.

Bareec is the first and only educational NGO from Kuwait to have pre-





Italian Embassy holds reception to celebrate National Day

Ambassador of Italy H.E. Carlo Balducci held a gala reception at the Crowne Plaza Hotel last week to mark the 76th Anniversary of the National Day of the Italian Republic.

A large gathering of diplomats, businessmen, professionals and prominent Kuwaiti citizens attended the event. Addressing the gathering Ambassador Balducci pointed out that in December, Kuwait and Italy celebrated 60 years of extraordinary friendship with a series of events in Kuwait, including musical concerts, art and architectural exhibitions that underlined the mutual cooperation, rich history and strong interaction between the two countries.



He added that "this year they also started with a rich cultural agenda, with different programs and activities such as concerts, seminars, art, gastronomy and events that keep bringing more of Italy to Kuwait, with the aim of providing Kuwaitis with the opportunity to enjoy what Italy is famous for worldwide, as well as to discover different sectors where our country has an international leading position.

As you all know, Italy is a cultural mega-power". After addressing the gathering the ambassador along with the chief guest Deputy Foreign Minister, Ambassador Al-Dhafri, cut the ceremonial cake to mark the occasion.

Growing up smoking, an epidemic health hazard

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

To replenish the large number of smokers who annually fall victim to their noxious products, tobacco companies have increasingly been targeting young children and adolescents in countries with lax anti-smoking regulations. Younger children are especially vulnerable to tactics employed by tobacco companies that lure them to begin smoking, as many of them do not understand, or underestimate, the harmful health consequences of tobacco use.

The Global Youth Tobacco Surveillance (GYTS), an initiative by the WHO focuses on youth aged 13-15 and collects information on their interaction with tobacco in schools, and their exposure to enticements to begin smoking. The GYTS survey initiated in 2016 by the Ministry of Health (MoH) in Kuwait found startlingly that 24 percent of boys, and 10 percent of girls in this age group currently used tobacco products of one form or another.

The survey further showed that the percentage of students who saw anti-smoking advertisements was 59 percent, while those who saw pro-tobacco messages was 39 percent. The study also revealed that 93 percent of current cigarette smokers in this age group obtained cigarettes by buying them from a store, shop, or vendor, and that 78 percent were not denied the product because of their young age.

Relative to a similar study conducted in 2001, there was a drop in prevalence of smoking among both boys and girls, as well as their exposure to pro-tobacco campaigns over the interim 15 years. While this is encouraging, the rise in number of students enrolled in schools over this period means that the lower ratio is not reflected in the actual number of those becoming lured to smoking at a young age.

Nonetheless, much of the reduction in smoking prevalence recorded among children in recent years can be attributed to greater awareness on the deleterious impact of tobacco products on health, as well as from increased monitoring by parents and school authorities of their wards, and more stringent and robust application of laws and rules regulating advertising, and sale of tobacco products to those below the age of 21.

Kuwait has had anti-smoking laws since the mid-1990s. Article 3 of Law 15 of 1995 states that: "The sale or presentation of cigarettes and types of tobacco and its derivatives to people below the age of 21 in shops, markets and means

of transportations shall be prohibited." Article 6 of the same law also states: "Promotions and advertising for cigarettes and other tobacco products in all their forms is prohibited in the country." However, many of these recommendations were not implemented, and even when they are introduced there has been very little robust enforcement of the law, or at best half-hearted token gestures.

Assertive anti-smoking policies by states, campaigns by civil society organizations, and greater awareness among the public of the harmful effects of tobacco have led to a reduction in the prevalence of tobacco usage in many countries over the past two decades. Nevertheless, the rise in global population during this period also means that the decrease in prevalence has not translated into a significant lowering in the number of people whose lives are impacted by the direct and indirect use of tobacco and related products.

In 2020, despite emergence of the COVID-19 pandemic, global tobacco companies sold more than five trillion cigarettes worldwide, raking-in over US\$60 billion in annual gross profits. Tobacco industry's marketing and sales of cigarettes and allied products leads to catastrophic results for individuals, families, public health systems, and to the economies of countries worldwide. In 2019, the consumption of tobacco products led to nearly \$2 trillion in economic damages globally.

The US-based Institute for Health Metrics and Evaluation (IHME) in their annual Global Burden of Disease study for 2019, estimates that 8.7 million people die prematurely from tobacco use every year. Of those deaths 7.7 million were attributed to direct consequences of smoking, while 1.3 million non-smokers also died from exposure to second-hand smoke. The IHME database on Kuwait shows that smoking was among the leading risk factors for death in the country, with 1,524 people losing their lives to smoking in 2019, and an additional 357 dying from exposure to second-hand smoke.

Data from the Tobacco Atlas and other international sites on tobacco usage serves as an eye-opener on global tobacco companies and on the functioning of their unscrupulous industry that makes humongous annual profits from knowingly producing and purveying deadly products that damages the health and kills their consumers. To address the tobacco epidemic WHO Member States adopted the WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (WHO FCTC) in 2003. Four years later in

2007, WHO launched MPOWER, a cost-effective initiative that countries could introduce to scale up implementation of provisions of the WHO FCTC.

Among the six MPOWER measures outlined by WHO is one to increase taxes on tobacco and related products. A sufficiently large tax increase plays a significant role in lowering the prevalence of smoking, as it will raise tobacco product prices and make them less affordable, thereby discouraging initiation, encouraging quitting, and driving down consumption.

Unfortunately it tends to be the least implemented of the MPOWER steps. Political pressure from tobacco company lobbyists, and unfounded fears raised by the tobacco industry of job losses among local workers engaged in



production and marketing of tobacco, as well as loss of tax revenues, have detracted many governments from imposing or increasing taxes on tobacco and related products.

As part of its FCTC initiative, the WHO recommends that excise taxes make up at least three-quarters of the price of the most popular brands of tobacco. Despite the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) agreement in 2016 to implement a harmonized excise tax at the rate of 100 percent of retail price on all tobacco products, Kuwait has been reluctant to introduce any such excise taxes. However, in April it was reported that the government was now considering imposing a selective tax of 10 to 25 percent on a handful of goods, including tobacco and related products.

Anti-tobacco organizations and campaigners have often called for implementing a specific, uniform excise tax of at least 100 percent on all tobacco products, which should be gradually

increased in line with the country's GDP growth. The relationship between excise tax on tobacco products, the price of a popular cigarette brand packet and smoking prevalence in a country was evident in a recent study conducted among GCC states. In Kuwait, which levies zero excise tax on tobacco, the price of a popular packet of cigarettes is \$2.78, and the prevalence of smoking among the adult population is 18 percent.

In the other five GCC states that have introduced 100 percent excise tax on tobacco, the price of a similar brand of cigarette and the smoking prevalence among adults were as follows: In Bahrain, a cigarette pack cost \$6.12 and prevalence of smoking was 13 percent; in Oman it was respectively \$5.72 and 7 percent; Qatar it was \$6.04 and 10 percent prevalence; Saudi Arabia it cost \$6.69 and 11 percent; and in the UAE it was \$5.78 and prevalence of smoking is 9 percent. The zero excise duty and low price of a pack of cigarettes, certainly had an influence on the high prevalence of smoking in Kuwait relative to other GCC states.

It needs to be pointed out that even the 100 percent excise tax imposed by other GCC countries is still less than that recommended by the WHO. For example, the 100 percent excise tax on tobacco leads to only a 50 percent increase in the total retail price of a packet of cigarettes, which is less than the WHO's recommended figure of 75 percent. The 25 percent excise duty that Kuwait is considering is unlikely to discourage current smokers or wannabe smokers from reaching for a pack at their nearest 'Bakala'.

World No Tobacco Day, observed on 31 May every year, is an opportunity to raise public awareness on the damage and death caused by consuming any kind of tobacco products. It is also a chance to highlight the fallacious argument touted by tobacco companies on so-called 'safe alternatives' to cigarette smoking such as e-cigarettes and smokeless cigarettes.

Electronic nicotine delivery systems (ENDS) and electronic non-nicotine delivery systems (ENNDS), commonly referred to as e-cigarettes, heat a liquid to create an aerosol that users then inhale. These liquids do not contain tobacco, but many contain nicotine, the addictive chemical in tobacco, as well as other chemicals and remain unsafe and harmful to health. Remember, there is no such thing as a safe tobacco product; the best safety measure is to stop smoking now, or even better, never start smoking as a child or adult.

French ambassador urges full support to Ukraine



French Ambassador H.E. Claire LeFlecher, expressed her country's conviction that the cause of Ukraine is just and deserves full support of the world community. She also praised Kuwait's early, clear and decisive support for the Ukrainian people.

The ambassador was quoted in local media as saying at a gathering, "We are all gathered here to express deep feelings of sadness and sympathy for the unjustified destruction and atrocities suffered by the Ukrainian people, who became victims of

the barbaric unjustified aggression on their country".

She added that Ukraine's territorial integrity, the identity of its citizens and even its existence as a free and sovereign state are all in danger, as happened to Kuwait 30

years ago, when it was invaded by a powerful and brutal neighbor.

She expressed her conviction that Ukraine would eventually triumph, because it was fully mobilized to defend its territory and existence, in many different ways.

PAM conducts inspection of construction sites

The Occupational Safety Center of the Public Authority of Manpower (PAM) began surprise inspection campaigns to round up violators who do not comply with the decision of workers not engaging in any work under direct sunlight from 12 noon to 4pm. The decision issued by the concerned authorities, which came into effect from 1 June and will extend to 31 August, is taken in the best interest of those who work outdoors.

According to media reports, the PAM inspection campaign recorded 40 violations and it was found that around 48 percent of the violators at construction sites were illegally engaged workers who were on domestic worker visas.

During the campaign, headed by Hamad Al-Makhial, in the South Abdullah Al-Mubarak area, where there is heavy construction activity going on, the team was able to detect 50 violating sites, in which 40 violations were recorded against 13 workers (Article 18), and 19 others who were domestic workers (Article 20).

Speaking to the media, Al-Makhial stressed the inspection campaign's keenness on ensuring the safety of workers without harming projects and the interests of employers, pointing out that the implementation of the decision comes in compliance with international charters and agreements ratified by Kuwait to preserve labor rights.

He added that PAM will follow all legal procedures against violators, as the occurrence of the violation and its repetition will expose the owner to legal accountability, and the consequent closure of the file of the company involved in addition to the imposition of financial fines.

For its part, the Workers' Committee in the Kuwait Society for Human Rights and the head of the 'The Heat Kills Them' campaign, Mashari Al-Sanad, called for the necessity of following up on workers who violate the decision to prevent employment during the afternoon, including by those who work as cleaners for Kuwait Municipality".

Al-Sanad pointed out that the Municipality



is also required to follow up and monitor the cleaning companies, apply the law and abide by the decision to ban the employment of workers under direct sunlight, calling for shifting their work to the evening shift.

Lulu Hypermarket lauds winners of Food Fest competitions



Lulu Hypermarket, the retailer of choice in the Region, held a prize distribution ceremony on 1 June at the Dajeej outlet of the hypermarket, to announce and award prizes to winners of the recent Food Fest 2022 competitions.

The prizes were presented to the winners by some of the leading chefs in the country, in the presence of top management of Lulu Hypermarket in Kuwait, and a large gathering of shoppers and competition participants.

Food Fest 2022, which ran at all outlets of Lulu Hypermarket in Kuwait from 25 May to 1 June, offered shoppers the opportunity to purchase a wide variety of food items at amazing discounts and special prizes.



The week-long Food Fest was also marked by several competitions and contests that allowed participants to display their cooking talents and food presentation creativity. Winners of the main Cookery Contests, in Indian, Arabic, Italian/Continental and ASEAN cuisines, as well as a contest in the Desserts category, were presented at the prize distribution event.

The competitions were judged in live cooking contests by a panel of eminent chefs, and the first prize winner in each category received a gift voucher worth KD100. The second prize winners were presented with gift vouchers worth KD75, while the third prize winners received gift vouchers for KD50.

Winners of the other competitions held as part of the Food Fest 2022, including Wow The Master Chef, Junior Chef, Taste And Win, Health Food Competition, and Cake Challenges Contest, as well as consolation prizes to other participants, were already presented earlier.

The excitement and interest of shoppers during the festival, as well as the superb selection of food items available at very competitive prices, meant that everyone who visited and shopped at the week-long Lulu Food Fest 2022 was a winner.

Kuwait turns 'killing field' of stray cats and dogs

Local media and social media platforms were abuzz last week with reports and images of stray cats and dogs put to death in inhumane ways, including by killing these animals using poisonous food, which is a heinous way of removing them as they endure suffering for several days before they eventu-

ally die. Despite warnings by the authorities against killing and maiming stray animals, the fact that the practice continues unabated, and has increased in recent months, is a sorry reflection of social mores and attitude to animals in general.

While there is no doubt that the large number of stray cats, dogs and other animals wandering the streets poses a potential threat to the health and safety of people, there are many humane ways of tackling the issue.

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EXCLUSIVE to THE TIMES KUWAIT

Dismantling the Fossil-Fuel Economy



Nikki Reisch and Lili Fuhr

Nikki Reisch is Director of the Climate and Energy Program at the Center for International Environmental Law.

Lili Fuhr is Deputy Director of the Climate and Energy Program at the Center for International Environmental Law.



Dialogues that are supposed to inform the summit's outcome.

This omission is no accident. The fossil-fuel lobby has decades of experience sowing doubt about the damage the industry is causing and obscuring the link between fossil fuels and the toxic chemicals used in industrial agriculture and plastic products. When outright denial has not worked, the industry has touted false solutions, including speculative technological fixes, market mechanisms with gigantic loopholes, and misleading 'net-zero' pledges. The goal is to divert political attention from the urgent action needed to end reliance on fossil fuels and scale-up proven approaches, like renewable energy, agroecology, and plastic reduction and reuse.

Such transformative action is precisely what Stockholm+50 must deliver. Participating governments and decision-makers must acknowledge that fossil fuels are the main driver of the triple crisis we face, and they must set a bold agenda for halting fossil-fuel expansion, ensuring a rapid and equitable decline of oil, gas, and coal, and accelerating a just transition to a fossil-free future.

One possible feature of such an agenda would be a Fossil Fuel Non-Proliferation Treaty — an initiative that has attracted wide support, including from thousands of civil-society organizations, hundreds of scientists and parliamentarians, more than 100 Nobel laureates, and dozens of municipal governments. To spur progress, a broad range of stakeholders, including representatives of indigenous communities, governments, international institutions, and academia, will gather the day before Stockholm+50 for the Pre-Summit on the Global Just Transition from Fossil Fuels.

In parallel with the Stockholm meeting, an intergovernmental negotiating committee, convened by the UN Environment Programme, is gathering in Dakar to develop a legally binding global plastics treaty. Crucially, the treaty will have to take a comprehensive approach that addresses the full plastic life cycle, beginning with fossil-fuel extraction.

If we have learned one thing in the 50 years since the first Stockholm conference, it is that a future tied to fossil fuels is no future at all. To tackle the converging crises of climate change, biodiversity loss, and petrochemical and plastic pollution, Stockholm+50 has no alternative but to confront oil, gas, and coal head-on.

Our planet is facing a triple crisis of climate, nature, and pollution, with one common cause: the fossil-fuel economy. Oil, gas, and coal are at the root of runaway climate disruption, widespread biodiversity loss, and pervasive plastic pollution. The conclusion is clear and must be paramount when political leaders gather in Stockholm this week to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the first United Nations Conference on the Human Environment. Any effort to address these existential threats to human and ecological health will mean little as long as the fossil-fuel economy remains intact.

As UN Secretary-General António Guterres recently noted, fossil fuels are choking our planet. In the last decade, their combustion accounted for 86 percent of global carbon dioxide emissions, for which just a few actors bear overwhelming responsibility. In fact, nearly two-thirds of all CO₂ emitted since the Industrial Revolution can be traced to just 90 polluters, mostly the largest fossil-fuel producers.

Yet, rather than rein in the polluters, the world's governments are currently planning to allow more than twice as much fossil-fuel production in 2030 than would be consistent with the goal — agreed under the 2015 Paris climate agreement — of limiting global warming to 1.5° Celsius above pre-industrial levels. And when it comes to the damage wrought by fossil fuels, higher global temperatures and intensifying extreme weather events are only the beginning.

Last year, the UN Special Rapporteur on Toxics and Human Rights, Marcos A. Orellana, affirmed what frontline communities have long known: fossil-fuel production generates toxic compounds and pollutes air, water, and soil. Air pollution from burning fossil fuels was responsible for about one in five deaths worldwide in 2018. Moreover,

oil and gas are the building blocks of the toxic chemicals, pesticides, and synthetic fertilizers that are pushing ecosystems and species to extinction. These fossil-fuel-based products perpetuate an economic and agro-industrial model that drives deforestation, destroys biodiversity, and threatens human health.

Fossil fuels are also behind the proliferation of plastics, which are accumulating in even the most remote areas of the planet, from the top of Mount

the world's biggest fossil-fuel companies enriched Russia's government by an estimated \$95.4 billion. Russia's revenues from energy exports have soared since the invasion of Ukraine in February, which drove up prices. And big Western oil companies, cashing in on the conflict, have raked in record profits.

Instead of facing accountability, the oil and gas industry and its allies are exploiting the Ukraine crisis to push for even more drilling, fracking, and exports of liquefied

“ The fossil-fuel lobby has decades of experience sowing doubt about the damage the industry is causing and obscuring the link between fossil fuels and the toxic chemicals used in industrial agriculture and plastic products. ”

Everest to the bottom of the Mariana Trench. Ninety-nine percent of all plastics are made from chemicals derived from fossil fuels, predominantly oil and gas. The production of petrochemical feedstocks for plastics and the use of fossil fuels throughout the plastics value chain are boosting demand for oil and gas and exposing millions of people to toxic pollution.

As if that were not enough, fossil fuels foment and fund violent conflict around the world. The fossil-fuel economy is enabling Russian President Vladimir Putin's war in Ukraine and the humanitarian crisis it has created. In the seven years after Russia illegally annexed Crimea, eight of

natural gas (LNG) all around the world. But new fossil-fuel infrastructure, which will take years to bring online, will do nothing to address the current energy crisis. Instead, it will only deepen the world's dependence on fossil fuels, enhance producers' ability to wreak havoc on people and the planet, and push a climate-safe future further out of reach.

As world leaders gather for Stockholm+50, breaking our addiction to fossil fuels should be the top priority. Yet fossil fuels are conspicuously absent from the official concept note and agenda, and they are barely mentioned in the background papers of the three Leadership

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Greece

Guardian of civilization's dawn

Often called the cradle of Western civilization, Greece has been influential in charting the development and progress of humanity from ancient times to the modern world. Today, the country is among the most visited in the world with figures from the World Tourism Organization showing that in 2019 Greece attracted over 35 million international visitors.

From the ancient wonders and modern city life of Athens to distant islands off the mainland, a visit to Greece can sometimes feel overwhelming. Attempting to visit all the attractive sites and places of interest in Greece in one go is just not possible. The list of attractions and must-visit places can stretch from A to Z, and include popular ones such as Athens, Corfu, Crete, Delphi, Knossos, Meteora, Mycenae, Mykonos, Olympia, Rhodes, Santorini, Skyros, and Zakynthos, as well as less well-known out of way places and islands.



Beautiful street view in Kos Island. Kos Island is popular tourist destination in Greece.

If you do not have the time for a long leisurely visit to Greece to take in all that the country offers, your best bet would be to break down a short visit to either focus on a specific region or theme. The blue beauty of the Grecian Peninsula with its view of scattered islands, the country's storied heritage and ancient history, its innumerable archeological monuments, temples and ruins that trace human history to the start of civilization, have been around for ages and are going nowhere in a hurry. So you can afford to plan and space your trips to this wondrous land.

Located in southeastern Europe with thousands of islands throughout the Aegean and Ionian seas, Greece is the land that has had the greatest influence on civilization over the eons. As the birthplace of drama, democracy, Western science and medicine, Greece offers a welcome balance of traditional and contemporary life.

The rich culture and history of Greece is reflected in the 18 UNESCO World Heritage Sites located here, which makes it among countries with the largest number of heritage sites in the world. Though ancient sites and monuments

Greece Santorini island iconic view with blue churches oia village

often take the limelight, and it is still easy to find traditional villages with brilliant white buildings and roaming donkeys, Greece is not just about ancient archeological sites.

The country, which is well known for its myriad beautiful beaches, from the black sands of Santorini to the party resorts of Mykonos, is also rich in wildlife and biodiversity. Besides claiming one of the largest varieties of wild fauna in Europe, the country also boasts over 6,000 species and subspecies of the native plants and accounting for nearly 50 percent of the native plants of Europe.

To make this summer a memorable one, plan a trip to one of the world's greatest cultural lands. Greece balances its past, present and future in a way that very few other countries can claim to do successfully. Let this land with its endless miles of aquamarine coastline, sun-bleached ancient ruins, strong feta and stronger ouzo, fill your senses with the Greece you have been imagining.

Whether you soak in the pulsing nightclubs of city life or immerse in the solemnity and grandeur of ancient temples and monuments, or be awed by the rugged outdoors and natural beauty, a visit to Greece tinged with sessions of coffee and the melancholic music of rembetika (blues songs), will help you unwind and unleash an imagination you might not have realized you possessed.

It is easy to understand how so many myths of gods and giants originated in this vast and varied landscape, with wide open skies and a sea speckled with islands, where days melt from one to the next, while you relish the white-sand and palm-fringed beaches.

Greeks also pride themselves on their cuisine, and as some of the most hospitable people on the globe, they will go out of their way to ensure you are well fed. The tang of home-made tzatziki and the aroma of grilled souvlaki are just the beginning. The Greek menu is filled with scrumptious cuisine that offers an adventure at every mealtime.

Basic ingredients like feta and olive oil are at home in kitchens across the country, but it is the regional dishes and styles of cooking that make traveling around the country such a culinary joy. Cheeses, herbs and mountain greens you might never have heard of compliment local seafood, meat and veggie dishes. The secret of Greek

cooking is often found in the back garden where many of the ingredients are freshly gathered and produced.

Adding to its offerings, Greece provides the visitor with endless activities and the land is a magnet for anyone who enjoys the great outdoors. Wander along cobbled, Byzantine footpaths, hike into volcanoes, watch for dolphins and sea turtles and cycle through lush forests. Greece also offers some of the world's top kitesurfing, diving and rock-climbing locations.

Around the land, you also stumble across galleries, live music and impressively modern museums in the most unexpected places. The result is a country with endless cultural pursuits, with a modern art scene that is thriving, fresh and vibrant, and its fashionable clubs and cafes abuzz with life and society that is increasingly multicultural.

There are few cultures in the world that embrace the past so passionately while simultaneously welcoming the future with open arms as Greece. Here are a few pit-stops you can make while traveling across the country:

Old meets new in Athens: The capital of Greece, retains a firm grip on style and sophistication that rivals any other European capital. While retaining its storied landmarks including the 5th-century BCE Acropolis citadel with the Parthenon temple, the city also teems with the energy and vibrancy of a modern metropolis, replete with thought-provoking modern art and a vivacious contemporary music scene and night-life.



Experiencing the Acropolis: The Acropolis is the most important ancient site in the Western world. Crowned by the Parthenon, it stands sentinel over Athens, visible from almost everywhere within the city. Its monuments of Pentelic marble gleam white in the midday sun and gradually take on a honey hue as the sun sinks, while at night they stand brilliantly illuminated above the city. A glimpse of this magnificent sight cannot fail to lift your spirits.

Surreal Santorini: Even the most jaded traveler succumbs to the spectacle of this surreal landscape, a relic of what was probably the biggest eruption in recorded history. The caldera and its vast curtain of multi-coloured cliffs is truly awesome. Santorini is famous for its spectacular sunsets, hugely popular from the village of Oia on the northern tip of the island because there is an uninterrupted view of the sun as it finally sinks below the horizon.

Soaring high at Meteora: You are not likely to forget the first moment the magnificent Meteora come into view — soaring pillars of rock that jut heavenward, and a handful of monasteries at the top. Once, these monasteries were used successfully as refuge by hermit monks seeking a



retreat from expanding Turkish occupation. The rope ladders that once enabled the monks to reach the top have long been replaced by steps carved into the rock. Today, these spectacular stone towers beckon rock climbers from around the world.



Medieval old town Rhodes: Getting lost in the Old Town is a must. Only then will you find yourself removed from the throngs of tourists and meandering down twisting, turning, cobbled alleyways with archways above and squares opening up ahead of you. The beauty of the Old Town lies in these hidden corners, where your imagination will take off with flights of medieval fancy.

Climbing to Angelokastro: The ruined fortress of Angelokastro, on Corfu's west coast, rises above everything, especially the crowds. It is one of those reassuring places where land and water meet sensationally; a great knuckle of rock soaring above the glittering Ionian Sea, a green pelt of olive trees and cypresses at its back. Its name derives from the 11th-century Byzantine rulers of Corfu.



The Acropolis of Athens, Greece, with the Parthenon Temple during sunset



EXCLUSIVE to THE TIMES KUWAIT



Ban Nuclear Weapons Now



Anne-Marie Slaughter and Susi Snyder

Anne-Marie Slaughter, a former director of policy planning in the US State Department, Professor Emerita of Politics and International Affairs at Princeton University, and author of *Renewal: From Crisis to Transformation in Our Lives, Work, and Politics*.

Susi Snyder is Financial Sector Coordinator of the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons.

The events of the past three months in Ukraine — like Russia's annexation of Crimea and incursion into eastern Ukraine in 2014, the US invasion of Iraq in 2003, and the long proxy war in Syria — have given the lie to the claim that nuclear weapons prevent war. Nuclear deterrence might stop nuclear-armed countries from directly engaging in war with each other, just as it might stop proxy wars from escalating and spreading to the North Atlantic or the Pacific. But it is equally possible that nuclear deterrence has caused war and enabled national leaders to act with impunity.

Nuclear weapons have certainly not stopped Russia from waging aggressive war against Ukraine. On the contrary, President Vladimir Putin is using nuclear threats as a shield behind which to commit flagrant, grave, and systematic war crimes, and possibly crimes against humanity.

States that possess nuclear weapons have frequently gone to war with states that lack them. The erroneous belief that Iraq had developed nuclear, chemical, and biological

weapons led the United States and its allies to invade the country against the will of the United Nations Security Council, triggering a humanitarian catastrophe and two decades of insecurity in the region and beyond. The Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), by suggesting that the status quo of nuclear haves and have-nots should be maintained at all costs, has provided some cover for these actions, as well as for attacks on suspected nuclear facilities in Iraq, Iran, and Syria.

Some argue that the existence of nuclear weapons has prevented conflict among the great powers, thereby averting World War III. But that ignores the countless proxy wars fought in Africa, Asia, and Latin America throughout the Cold War and since, when the Soviet Union (and later Russia) or China armed one side and the US or its allies the other.

Laos, whose farmers are only now able to use their fields again, after decades of suffering the lethal effects of unexploded ordnance from

Report, the world's most powerful countries "are the ones that consistently dominate news headlines, preoccupy policymakers, and shape global economic patterns." Using this metric, the publication's top ten powers are, in descending order: the US, China, Russia, Germany, the United Kingdom, Japan, France, South Korea, Saudi Arabia, and the United Arab Emirates. It is worth noting that a coalition led by Saudi Arabia and the UAE (supported by the US) is actively fighting Iran-backed forces in Yemen right now.

Although the NPT entered into force in 1970, four more countries — India, Pakistan, North Korea, and Israel — have succeeded in acquiring nuclear weapons, and others have continued to try. That is why, in 2007, former US Secretaries of State Henry Kissinger and George Shultz, former Secretary of Defense William Perry, and former US Senator Sam Nunn wrote a commentary in the *Wall Street Journal* calling for "a world free of nuclear weapons." Nearly

planet. Speakers described the second- and third-generation effects of nuclear weapons detonations, which not only forced people to live through the experience of a thousand exploding suns but also shattered their efforts to start a family, rebuild their lives, and live with dignity and some sense of normalcy after suffering from nuclear weapons use or testing.

Subsequent humanitarian conferences in Mexico and Austria brought home the ways that nuclear deterrence also destroys lives. (A similar gathering is scheduled to take place in Vienna in June.) Nuclear deterrence requires demonstrations of nuclear capabilities, which have had devastating consequences for the affected people and communities in Australia, the Pacific Islands, the Central Asian steppe, the US, North Africa, and China's Taklamakan Desert.

Nuclear weapons, like all weapons of mass destruction, can never be used within the bounds of the laws of war. Fortunately, the same determined efforts that almost completely ended the deployment of landmines and cluster munitions resulted in the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW) entering into effect in January 2021.

The TPNW — the only treaty that makes the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons illegal — was brought about by all those countries whose security was shattered through decades of proxy wars between nuclear-armed powers. Adopted by 122 countries, it constitutes a recognition that the laws of war apply equally to all states, no matter what is in their national arsenal.

Weapons designed to mass murder civilians, terrorize the world, and enable impunity for war crimes can no longer be relied on to 'prevent war'. Another legacy of Putin's aggression in Ukraine and his willingness to brandish the threat of nuclear weapons will be a renewed drive to rid the world of them.

“ Nearly two decades after the end of the Cold War, the commentary concluded that relying on nuclear weapons to deter war was becoming “increasingly hazardous and decreasingly effective.” ”

the Vietnam War era, was unable to avoid great-power conflict. For Guatemalans, Hondurans, Nicaraguans, and Salvadorans struggling to create a community free from terrifying violence, the absence of great-power war simply meant delegated death and destruction.

Moreover, the definition of a great power is fuzzy. Political scientists and foreign policy experts have long debated the best measures of national power. According to *US News & World*

two decades after the end of the Cold War, they warned of a world of 30 or more nuclear powers and concluded that relying on nuclear weapons to deter war was becoming “increasingly hazardous and decreasingly effective.”

In 2013, the Norwegian government hosted a conference on the humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons — the first intergovernmental meeting that looked at what these weapons do to people and the



Training taste buds to low sodium diet

An estimated 1.28 billion adults aged 30-79 years worldwide have hypertension — a primary risk factor for cardiovascular disease, and which significantly increases risk of brain, kidney and other diseases. According to the World Health Organization (WHO), hypertension is the leading global cause of premature death.

Blood pressure is measured in mmHg by two numbers that are usually written one above the other. The number on top is termed systolic and represents the pressure in blood vessels when the heart contracts or beats. The number written below is known as diastolic and represents the pressure in the vessels when the heart rests between beats.

Hypertension is diagnosed if the measurement, taken over two separate days, shows the systolic blood pressure reading to be 140 mmHg or higher on both days; and/or the diastolic blood pressure readings on both

days is 90 mmHg or higher.

Blood pressure lowering drugs are the usual medical treatment for hypertension. It is possible to delay the need for hypertension drugs, or complement the effect of these drugs, by maintaining a healthy lifestyle that includes regular exercise and following a healthy nutritious diet low in saturated fat and salt. While people are known to lower their saturated fat intake, sticking to a low-salt diet has been more difficult.

One of the main reasons for not adhering to lower salt intake is that people do not like the taste of low salt foods. A new study by researchers at the University of Kentucky in the United States shows that it is possible to change taste perceptions in people that allow them to adjust to food with less salt.

Our taste adaptation intervention lowers salt intake and increases enjoyment of a sodium restricted diet in patients with

hypertension, said the research team behind the 'Sodium Watchers Program -- Hypertension' (SWaP-HTN) for gradual taste adaptation to low salt food.

The study examined the program's short-term effects on sodium intake, blood pressure, preference for salty food, and enjoyment of a sodium restricted diet. A total of 29 adults with hypertension were randomly assigned to the intervention or usual care in a 2:1 ratio. Participants in the usual care group received routine medical and nursing care for hypertension including advice to follow a sodium restricted diet and take prescribed medications. The average age of participants was 63 years and 55 percent were men.

The intervention group received 16 weeks of education and follow-up with a study nurse via video call on a computer tablet. Sessions were held weekly for six weeks, then every two weeks for 10 weeks. The program was individualized to each patient's barriers and weekly goals and included salt added at the table, salt used during cooking, grocery shopping, and eating in restaurants. Participants received an electronic device that detects salt content to enable them to identify and avoid high salt food.

Using the electronic device the participants could test the salt content of restaurant meals and ask the chef to reduce or eliminate salt on their next visit. They also used it at home to lower the salt content in their own cooking. Some people automatically added salt at the table before tasting the food so we asked participants to count the number of 'shakes' of the salt-shaker and to set goals for reducing it.

At baseline and 16 weeks, all participants



provided a 24-hour urine sample to assess sodium intake and had their blood pressure measured. In addition, preference for salty food and enjoyment of a salt restricted diet were assessed on a 10-point scale. The researchers then compared changes from baseline to study completion date between the groups.

The study found that the intervention led to a significant reduction in sodium intake and increased enjoyment of a salt restricted diet. Most participants in this group also ended up removing the salt shaker from their table within three weeks. The study also found a trend of decreasing mean systolic blood pressure in the intervention group, from 143.4 to 133.9 mmHg. Though this fall in pressure was appreciable, it was not considered statistically significant because of the small number of participants.

In the intervention group, sodium intake dropped by 1,158 mg per day, which was a 30 percent reduction from baseline, while the control group increased daily intake by 500 mg. Enjoyment of a low salt diet increased in the intervention group, from 4.8 to 6.5 on a 10-point scale, although patients still preferred salty food.

Monkeypox: what we know so far



Dr. Jibin John Thomas
Registrar, Internal Medicine
International Clinic

consumption, direct contact with body fluids or lesion material. While the virus itself is not a sexually transmitted infection, the most recent surge in cases appears to have been spread among men who have sex with other men.

Early symptoms include fever, chills, enlarged lymph nodes, muscle and body aches, and exhaustion, with the most obvious symptom being painful blisters all over the body. Within 1 to 3 days (sometimes longer) after the appearance of fever, the patient develops a rash, or 'pox' often beginning on the face then spreading to other parts of the body.

Monkeypox is diagnosed by detection of unique sequences of viral DNA in skin lesions either by real-time polymerase chain reaction (PCR) and/or sequencing. The incubation period of monkeypox is usually from 6 to 13 days but can range from 5 to 21 days. In most cases, the symptoms of monkeypox disappear on their own within a few weeks, however, the rash and pustules can last for several weeks.

In some individuals, disease can lead to medical complications and even death. Mortality has been estimated to be 1 to 10 percent, depending on the strain. Severe disease and mortality are higher among children, young adults, and immunocompromised individuals. Though there is no specific treatment for monkeypox, health authorities say there is no cause for panic, as vaccines and treatments against smallpox have been found to be effective against monkeypox infection.

Because monkeypox virus is closely related to the virus that causes smallpox, antiviral drugs and immunoglobulins used against smallpox are effective in this disease. Clinical studies from Africa suggest that the smallpox vaccine is 85 percent effective against monkeypox. Jynneos (Imvamune or Imvanex), an attenuated live virus vaccine which has been approved by the US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) for the prevention of smallpox and monkeypox, is being administered in some places as two subcutaneous injections four weeks apart.

Disease prevention strategies used in response to COVID-19 could also help against monkeypox, including social distancing, wearing masks, increasing ventilation, and staying home if we are sick. Hand hygiene is also really key since this is a DNA virus which is better suited to survive on surfaces.

Other precautions that can be taken to prevent infection with monkeypox are avoiding contact with any materials, such as bedding that has been in contact with an infected person. Avoiding travel to areas known to have monkeypox and to endemic places where the disease is known to prevail.

As the world recovers from the devastating COVID-19 pandemic along comes monkeypox, a new disease that threatens to derail the recovery process. A rare disease similar in symptoms to smallpox, but less severe and less contagious, monkeypox has so far been identified in over a dozen countries, outside of the areas where it normally prevails.

Monkeypox is a viral zoonosis — a virus disease transmitted from animals to humans — usually associated with countries in the tropical rainforest areas of Central and West Africa. The World Health Organization says



scientists have identified several animals as susceptible to the monkeypox virus, including rope squirrels, tree squirrels, Gambian pouched rats, dormice, non-human primates, and other species.

Transmission of monkeypox virus occurs mainly when a person comes into contact with the virus from an animal, human, or materials contaminated with the virus. As such, the spread of monkeypox is relatively easier to prevent than COVID-19 or measles, which are spread through small very fine droplets and tiny aerosol particles that contain the virus.

The virus enters the body through broken skin, respiratory tract, or the mucous membranes (eyes, nose, or mouth). Animal-to-human transmission may occur by bite or scratch, wild meat preparation and

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From the absurd to the ridiculous...

Just when you imagine things cannot get any worse for expats there comes another proposal to restrict their movement in the labor market.

A proposal by none other than an honorable member of parliament has been made to restrict the transfer of workers to other jobs, and urging the government to change laws to protect employers who recruit and train workers, calling it "a theft of trained and skilled workers" by other employers.

Even though the proposal might never see the light of day, the sheer thought of such a

is on protecting the employer. The wildly unreasonable, illogical and inappropriate proposal can be termed as absurd in every sense. Improving the skills and capacity of workers through training or other means should not restrict their professional and personal growth in any way; and threatening them with harsh penalties such as deporting and "no returning back to Kuwait for five years" is nothing short of ridiculous.

The proposal fails to address the more serious issue of exploitation and trafficking of workers, rather it seems that these issues do not exist. Kuwait has been consistently working to improve its global image on both human rights and workers rights, by enacting legislation consistent with labor standards set by the International Labor Organization (ILO), and developing policies and devising programs promoting decent work for all women and men.

There are approximately 2 million people employed in Kuwait out of which more than 1.5 million are expats.

The government has 470,000 on their payroll, while the rest work in the private sector. Only 4 percent of Kuwaitis work in the private sector as compared to nearly 76 percent in the government sector.



The private sector is the engine of growth and provides the much needed impetus for the economic prosperity in the country. Even if they are only proposals by a lone lawmaker, to suggest them does more harm than good. A better proposal would be to restrict

the entry to Kuwait of only trained workers, pay appropriately and equitably for their training, talents, and skills, rather than providing the so-called 'training' here in Kuwait and then expecting them to become bonded labor to their employers.



- By An Expatriate

thought process by some people can be so worrisome to the larger interest of progress and development of this country.

The idea that employees once taught by employers have no right to leave is nothing short of being bonded, and when the whole world is discussing ways to further promote the rights of workers, here in Kuwait the narrative

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