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Hunger, poverty undermines society



TIMES KUWAIT REPORT

United Nations World Food Day and the International Day for Eradication of Poverty are held back to back on 16 and 17 October; while this may be coincidental there is no denying that hunger and poverty are inextricably tied to each other. To eradicate global poverty we need to address the underlying food insecurity, and to reduce inability to access adequate food, we need to eliminate prevailing inequities and poverty.

Socio-economic reports by international development agencies concerned with improving access

to food and eradicating poverty show that the two-way, 'cause and consequence' relationship between hunger and poverty creates a vicious cycle that nourishes each other. Lack of an adequate healthy diet leads to malnutrition that reduces economic potential and fuels poverty, which consequently increases the risk of food insecurity.

In a wealthy country such as Kuwait, the prospects of facing hunger and poverty might appear to be a far-fetched notion. But this is not as improbable as many would think. With the country overwhelmingly dependent on imports for nearly all of its food needs, the state remains vulnerable to any long-term



disruption in food supply chains. This susceptibility was underscored during the COVID-19 global pandemic, and more recently by the food supply

constraints caused by the ongoing conflict between Russia and Ukraine.

In the event of a major global calamity, such as one arising from

another pandemic or a significant geopolitical or environmental upheaval that leads to extended periods of food supply disruptions and price increases, countries such as Kuwait could be confronted with a serious, if not existential, threat to their growth and progress as a nation.

Governments in the past have relied on a strategy of ensuring food security by focusing on building larger food storage silos, boosting stocks of imported foods, and diversifying the countries from where it sources food. While this strategy could mitigate the threat of short-term supply disruptions, it is not a sustainable food security strategy over the long-term.

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About 80 percent of Engineering Construction sector has recovered



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In an exclusive interview for this week, The Business Year (TBY) talks with Ubed Arain, the CEO and Managing Director of Dar Gulf Consult, one of oldest and leading architecture and engineering consultancies in Kuwait.

Winner of numerous awards for his various projects over the years, Mr. Arain has had a substantial direct involvement in some of the most iconic buildings in Kuwait, including among others, The Scientific Center in Salmiya, Al-Kout Mall in Fahaheel, Dasman Diabetes Institute in Kuwait City, KNPC headquarters in Ahmadi, the Jaber Al-Ahmad Hospital in South Surra, and the Passenger Terminal 2 at Kuwait International Airport.

Amid his busy schedule Mr. Arain began the interview by telling us a little bit about the company that he has helped grow into one of largest and most successful engineering consultancy firms in Kuwait.

"We are a Kuwaiti Architecture and Engineering (A&E) consultancy firm, established in 1967. We very well know the needs of the society and how to fulfill these in the best possible way with the design of building and infrastructure projects that are custom made for Kuwait. Also we aim that our projects be

Exclusive interview with Ubed Arain CEO and Managing Director, Dar Gulf Consult for Engineering and Consultancy

as sustainable as we can. Gulf Consult was the first Kuwaiti consulting firm to join the United States Green Building Council (USGBC) in 2009.

"All the projects we have designed so far are as sustainable as we were able to make them considering available capital. We always put in great effort into that. Additionally, we recognize our strengths and weaknesses and act accordingly. We have many partners among A&E firms worldwide who help us deliver what we may not have in our expertise or resource base. This allows us to provide our clients with the best possible product, within the budget, and suiting their expectations. That is why we have so many returning clients. It is our consistency and high quality of service that helps us keep our customers.

Though the company, like most other businesses in Kuwait, suffered setbacks during the nearly two years of COVID-19, they have bounced back. Speaking about the impact of the pandemic on projects under Dar Gulf Consult, Mr. Arain said: "Construction at most of our projects was halted except the Airport Terminal because of its high priority. We continued with the construction and supervision activities. Even when the curfew was in place, our staff was allowed to work and continued to do so. Other projects had to stop for many different reasons. Either the contractor was not present, the labor was missing, or there was no agreement to continue until the government would allow them to.

The pandemic delayed many projects, because even after the restrictions were lifted, many workers were unavailable. Now, things have improved,

though we have yet to see the full strength of the industry. About 80 percent of the sector has recovered so far.

Turning to what makes the new project of the T2 Airport Terminal so environmentally sustainable, the CEO explained, "We are qualified to get the gold rating in the Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED), which is a green building certification program used worldwide. To earn the gold rating a company needs to get about 60 to 79 points in its projects. At T2 we are targeting over 70 and when completed it will be one of the most sustainable projects in Kuwait. About 12 percent of energy used will be produced by the building itself, and 100 percent of the water used will be recycled.

"The T2 project has a closed circuit of water recycling. The area around the building will gather rainwater, and it will be stored for use in irrigation. We will also reuse water from showers, washbasins for flushing toilets. Thereafter the sewage water will get treated and again the water will be used for irrigation. Moreover, we have made the building more energy efficient by reducing the amount of direct sun reaching the inside. The air conditioning load is much lower because the windows are shaded and triple-glazed, making the savings even higher.

"At Dar Gulf Consult we are doing all that we can to reduce energy, water usage and recycling as much waste in our projects. We have already submitted our application for the T2 project to USGBC for LEED Gold Certification and they are at present reviewing it," said the CEO.



Commercial belt to encircle new residential cities

Master plans for the development of upcoming residential cities will be built as integrated units that will feature a commercial belt around the periphery, which provides all public and private service, as well as educational and recreational facilities to residents, without the need for them to travel long distances to avail of these services.

Reports indicate that the plan to establish the commercial belt will be initially applied to the upcoming residential city of Sabah Al-Ahmad, and later to the cities of South Sa'ad Al-Abdullah, and Al-Mutlaa, and then to all new cities developed in future. The commercial belt will allow for the establishment of many commercial activities, such as commercial complexes, shopping centers and private health clinics, in addition

to allocating sites for the establishment of educational projects such as private schools and nurseries, as well as allocating recreational projects and a package of public services that are directly related to the quality of the daily life of citizens.

Establishing a commercial belt around new cities is expected to achieve many economic, social and environmental benefits, as a large part of those projects to be established would be allocated to small and medium enterprises, and will be fully implemented by the private sector, with the government's role limited to organizing by identifying places to set up projects and offering land to investors. This would also help to provide job opportunities for citizens in the private sector as well as increase government revenues by offering land to investors.

The commercial belt will also play a significant role in improving the environment and mitigating the current traffic problem, as all requirements and services will be provided to residents of new cities, reducing their need to travel outside the city for these services.

The private housing issue is reportedly a priority for the new government and the concerned authorities have been asked to expedite all processes with the aim of presenting the necessary real-estate legislations for approval to the National Assembly. Among the real estate laws that need urgent approval are the real estate developer law, and laws on 'real estate finance', 'smart cities', 'central cooling', and on 'sustainability of buildings'.

CBK introduces electronic wallet on trial basis

Central Bank of Kuwait (CBK) announced last week that out of its keenness to enable modern financial technologies in Kuwait and promote innovative business models, it has introduced a digital or electronic wallet on a trial basis. The new product will initially be available



only to a group of volunteer customers on a trial basis and in a regulated environment. If found successful, the product will be launched to the wider public shortly.

A digital wallet (or electronic wallet) is a financial transaction application that runs on mobile devices. It allows consumers to use their smartphone or tablet to pay for purchases when shopping, to store funds, make transactions, and securely track payment histories and other personal details. Digital wallets essentially

eliminate the need to carry a physical wallet by storing all of a consumer's payment information securely and compactly.

Moreover, digital wallets do not require a bank account at a physical bank, instead, you can place your funds in an online-only bank — which gives unbanked and underbanked communities access to financial services, therefore enabling broader financial inclusion.

The CBK statement clarified that the electronic wallet will in particular benefit domestic workers and low wage employees, as well as employers in Kuwait as it will enable employers to pay wages and other rewards electronically in what the CBK promised would be an easy and fast manner.

The electronic wallet will also enable domestic workers to keep their money safe, withdraw from an ATM machine or transfer to the account of another person and even make cross-border money transfers in cooperation with licensed exchange companies in Kuwait. The CBK added the new product targets the low-income segment who do not have bank accounts, by facilitating access to their money.

The Central Bank of Kuwait indicated its keenness to support innovative business models based on modern financial technologies, which provide added value to the user in particular and the local market in general, pointing to the role of the general framework of the experimental regulatory environment in testing and developing such innovative financial products in a safe environment.

The CBK concluded by affirming that it will continue to play its role as a catalyst in the field of financial technologies in the State of Kuwait, in a way that contributes to achieving the State of Kuwait's 2035 'New Kuwait' vision.



Working towards change enhances my career in the UN

Ameera Al Hassan, UN Habitat Programme Manager for Kuwait and the GCC

By Reaven D'Souza
Managing Editor

With a doctorate in Sustainable Architecture and Role of Policy Making and End Users, Ameera Al-Hassan is the first Kuwaiti woman leading a UN programme in the region. Soft spoken but determined, she has been going about creating change with tangible results. In an exclusive interview with the Managing Editor of The Times Kuwait, she elaborated on her work, and hopes for an even brighter future for Kuwait and its people.

Giving us an insight into her academic background and her decision to work for the United Nations at the onset of the interview, Ms. Ameera explained: "My experience as a sustainability expert and my doctorate research theme enabled me to work efficiently for the UN-Habitat, which is the United Nations program mandated in issues pertaining to Sustainable Urban Development and the United Nations Human Settlement Program, UN-Habitat.

"UN-Habitat aims to help city dwellers create a better urban future for their cities and to realize the UN 2030 Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) and the New Urban Agenda. The SDGs are described by the UN as a global blueprint for dignity, peace and prosperity for people and the planet, now and in the future. My long experience on ways to implement sustainable development goals at a personal and societal level inside our cities, so as to achieve environmental, economic and social sustainability, encouraged me to join UN-Habitat, initially as an intern in 2009 when I was a PhD reader. Over the years since then, I have worked to enrich my experience at the UN and on its roles and regulations.

"My roles and responsibilities at the UN have varied through the years, and in 2019 I was officially appointed in 2019 as UN Habitat Program Manager and Analyst for the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) states, with my headquarters here in Kuwait. As the years progressed, I was tasked to do different assignments, starting from corresponding with our stakeholders inside and outside Kuwait; participating in the preparation process of the



“UN-Habitat aims to help city dwellers create a better urban future for their cities, to realize the UN 2030 Sustainable Development Goals (SDG), and the New Urban Agenda.”

National Reports of the GCC countries; involving in capacity building activities at the Gulf and Arab regional level, reaching out to donors for Internally Displaced People (IDPs) and refugees in the region; and in preparing and executing conferences and ministerial meetings. I have also been engaged in activities designed and conducted for people with special needs, youth and women, and other activities related to achieving SDG11 designed for experts in the Gulf and Arab region."

Revealing some of the challenges that she faced as a women in what is still a largely male-dominated region, and her experiences as a woman working in her profession, the UN envoy said: "I believe, as the first Kuwaiti

woman leading a UN program in Kuwait, my main challenge was carrying out a project that aimed to mitigate the effects of climate change and achieving sustainable urban development in Kuwait and other Gulf countries.

"Though aspirational, gender equality is a concept that is yet to be achieved on leadership level in UN organizations. We still have a long way to walk; women still continue to be less in numbers and earn less in wages. Highly educated women do not have the same opportunities as similarly educated men.

"Moreover, my challenge has been in leaving a legacy behind for Gulf women to follow, as Gulf women are still very low in numbers in the UN system, not because of lack of qualification,

but usually because they need to step forward and take action.

"Besides these, as the world is facing the effects of climate change, we need to urgently implement projects that help mitigate the effects of climate change on the Gulf states, as well as in other Arab countries. This includes among others aiming for zero fossil energy, improving energy efficiency products, and better solid waste management. We need to eliminate the effect of climate change on public health, therefore, as I see it, it is my duty to encourage people to plant more and more trees on each passing day, so as to contribute to improving the general environment.

"There is a Chinese proverb; the best time to plant a tree is 20 years ago! This shows you how important trees are, and by planting seedlings in the open public spaces we are in fact contributing to both the physical and psychological health of the general public.

"With the COVID-19 emerging out of the blue, a new challenge has risen, as women make up 75 percent of the medical and nursing personnel; helping at the societal and state level while maintaining a healthy family atmosphere became a priority as well as an essential element for survival.

Turning to what she enjoys most about working for the United Nations, Ms. Ameera disclosed: "Creating change and tangible results is the most joyful thing in working for the UN... You commence a project aiming at changing a situation and once you are done, you look back to it with total pride and a sense of achievement. Seeing people laugh happily when they receive their newly refurbished houses is incredibly fun. I enjoy meeting up with new people at different levels from presidents of states to prime ministers, ministers and members of the public and vulnerable people and learning from them.

"Preparing a new project, allocating resources, and implementing strategies, as well as coordinating and collaborating with the different stakeholders and partners so as to achieve the desired result, is such a wonderful experience. Raising funds for a cause and achieving your target are very hard work and yet very rewarding mentally."

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MoE to test traffic decongestion proposal



A proposal to change timings and introduce a shift system for employees of the Ministry of Education (MoE) is said to be under consideration by the ministry. A senior ministry source has been quoted as stating that any solution to traffic congestion, as long as it is in coordination with the Civil Service Commission and does not affect educational activities, will be considered by education officials.

The presence of a large number of schools, especially private schools and

private hospitals, in the suburb of Sabah Al-Salem and other similarly affected areas, has led to traffic congestions with the start of school year. The daily traffic congestion has led to many accidents, incidents of road rage, and prevented employees from reaching their workplaces in time.

A new proposal, for implementing a flexible working system that has been adopted successfully in several countries, could provide a solution to the perennial traffic congestion. According to the Undersecretary of Public Education, Osama Al-Sultan, the proposed official working hours are divided into three time periods. The first period starts at 7am and ends at 2pm and the employee benefits from the grace period until 7:30 as a reward for attending at this early hour. The second period starts from 8:00am and ends at 3:00pm, while the third period starts at 9:00am and ends at 4:00pm.

The proposal adheres to the seven hours of official work per day as stipulated by the Civil Service Commission, but with a flexibility that achieves several positive results, including reducing traffic jams,

uninterrupted services in the educational district, allowing time to coordinate and finding a balance between work and social life, reducing absenteeism, as well as the increase in productivity of employees because this flexibility provides sufficient work time duration for employees.

He noted that this flexible working method using the biometric system to register attendance will increase productivity in a comfortable and appropriate atmosphere for the employee, as well as reduce days of absence and allow employees the flexibility to complete their personal work, such as a doctor's appointment.

Ministry of Education is said to be studying the proposal from all sides, with the General Administration of the Mubarak Al-Kabeer Educational Zone being currently under trial with this new proposal. The ministry is also considering the inclusion of traffic awareness programs in the educational curricula to target students at an early age.

Meanwhile, President of the Kuwait Society for Traffic Safety, Badr Al-Matar,

has called to adopt mass transportation to solve the traffic congestion. He stressed that the traffic crises and severe congestion witnessed in most areas at the beginning of every school year are not insurmountable, provided that they rely on advanced and modern means of mass transportation. He called for expediting the introduction of the metro for students, as well as for the public, pointing to the need to spread the culture of mass transit. He also reiterated the importance of including traffic awareness programs within the educational curricula of kindergartens up to the secondary stage, in a manner that is appropriate for each school stage, with the aim of instilling awareness and adherence to traffic rules among students from a young age.

Al-Matar also added that another proposal to change the timing of school hours will not reap any fruits, but rather will result in causing confusion for everyone involved, in addition to increasing the trouble for parents who have to pick up their children from the same school but in different academic levels and therefore having separate timings.



Railway project gathers steam

The national railway project, which is of vital economic and commercial importance to Kuwait, has unfortunately been shunted to the back of priority lists of repeated governments. The project includes a national component that would facilitate the movement of people and cargo within Kuwait, and a regional section, the unified railway network, which is planned to link the six Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) states. Despite Kuwait's commitment to agreements with the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries to establish a unified railway track to link the Gulf countries and make it one of the most modern and safe means of transportation, whether for goods or passengers, the project has not received the priority it merits in the past.

Recently, there has been a revival of interest in the railway project, with the Public Authority for Roads and Land Transport (PART) deciding to hire a global consulting office to revive the long-delayed railroad project. The new government has also appointed a ministerial committee headed by Deputy Prime Minister Sheikh Talal Al-Khaled, to supervise the follow-up and implementation of long pending major projects, and to take the necessary measures to remove any obstacles that prevent the realization of these projects.

The aim of contracting with a global consulting office, to conduct a review of the railway project, is to identify the obstacles and suggest solutions for its speedy implementation.

Officials related to the project say that over the years there have been numerous obstacles to the implementation of the railway project, including the lack of permission to build the tracks over lands belonging to government agencies.

Among the government entities that have raised objections to the project are the , Kuwait Flour Mill Company, which has as warehouses in the area; the Ministry of Education, which has an area for Scouts along the proposed railway track; the presence of communication network lines owned by Ministry of Communication and Information; and land owned by the Ministry of Defense, in addition to objections from the Environmental Public Authority to some aspects of the project.

For its part, the Ministry of Finance, recently halved the KD1 million budget it had allocated to PART, for hiring a global consultant. The ministry slashed the budget following information that an earlier study on this project already existed and that the new consultant would only have to revive and amend it to bring it in line with the government's current vision.

Barriers to the railway project have led to a reduction in the number of lines and tracks to eight, and to a shortening of the distance originally planned for the project. Amendments to the plan will now see only the 'Gulf track' to be implemented in the first phase. The 'Gulf track' is 111km long and extends from the Nuwaiseeb Port, near Kuwait's border with Saudi Arabia, to the Shadadiyah area, with four stations for maintenance, storage, loading of goods and for passengers.

It is noteworthy that the Council of Ministers announced a few weeks ago its decision to complete several development projects on an urgent basis. These include, among others, the Entertainment City, the People's Park, addressing the existing conditions in Naqaat Al-Shamlan, the labor cities, the air cargo city at Kuwait International Airport, the Al-Subbiya entertainment project, the Al-Saffarin market, and the railway track in Kuwait.

Hopefully, the ministerial committee set up to revamp major projects will be able to bring together all the government entities that have objections to the planned railway project and reach an agreement on all the issues that have been hindering this vital development project.

New Indian ambassador to take office shortly

Dr. Adarsh Swaika, from the Indian Foreign Service batch of 2002, and currently Joint Secretary in the Ministry of External Affairs, has been appointed as the next Ambassador of India to the State of Kuwait. He is expected to take up the assignment shortly.

The ambassador designate, who holds a Phd in Chemistry and is fluent in several languages, has previously served as director in the UN division of India's Ministry of External Affairs. During his career in the External Affairs Ministry, Dr. Swaika has also served in Indian missions in Beijing, Sofia and Moscow.



Apple Pay begins trial operations in Kuwait

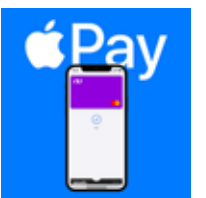
Apple has launched 'Apple Pay', the company's mobile payment service, on a trial basis in Kuwait with the service now being available at select malls in the country.

The app allows users of Apple devices such as iPhones, iPads and Apple smartwatches to make payments for purchases without the need for a credit or debit card, as well as facilitates and simplifies financial payments.

The company said that based on results from the trial operations it would make its Apple Pay service available in all commercial outlets in

the country through PoS (Payment of Sale) terminals that are connected to the Kuwaiti payments network.

Earlier the Ministry of Finance and the Kuwait Direct Investment Promotion Authority had reached an agreement with Apple to allow the tech-giant to operate its service in the country after removing the obstacles that stopped Apple from launching the service in Kuwait. The agreement reached between the finance ministry and Apple would allow the company to receive payment for its service from banks without the deduction of a stipulated 5 percent tax on income derived through its Apple Pay service.



Lifting the ban on issuing entry permits for some family members

The Ministry of Interior has started allowing select family members to obtain entry permits to join their family. Sources confirmed that parents who have infants born outside of Kuwait will be allowed to bring their children to join the family in the country.

In addition, some requests for joining a family will also be considered from a humanitarian side, along with other related requests. Security sources also told a local Arab paper that there are hundreds



of transactions under consideration and awaiting resolution after the announcement of the cabinet formation.

Government agencies to monitor, regulate ads on social media

Ministry of Information (MoInfo), in coordination with the Ministry of Commerce and Industry and the Ministry of Interior, as well as other relevant government agencies, is to monitor and regulate the advertisements that appear on social media handles of companies and individuals.

The committee will reportedly work to end the current state of chaos in promoting

goods and services in Kuwait without obtaining licenses to do so, especially since some of these advertisements on social media have become fertile ground for suspicious operations.

The ministry indicated that the proposed scenarios include subjecting all well-known social media handles, including that of famous individuals and companies, to the same requirements as stipulated for



commercial advertising, and obtaining the necessary licenses for this.

Advertisements on social media are of a commercial and marketing nature and as such should come under the purview of the relevant ministries and subjecting them to the same regulations and obligating the owners of such handles to follow rules and laws pertaining to commercial advertisements.

Coops collaborate with MoI to improve local security

Cooperative societies in a number of regions are collaborating with the Ministry of Interior (MoI) to set up CCTV surveillance cameras at their cost in the localities where they operate.

The surveillance cameras, which will be linked around the clock with the Operations Room of the Ministry of Interior will help monitor violations and maintain security, as

well as monitor entry and exit of vehicles, all of which are expected to contribute to reducing crimes, theft or armed robbery, as well as encroachment on private or public property.

Cooperative societies located in the Dahiyat Abdullah Al-Salem, Shamiya, Yarmouk and Qadisiyah have already implemented the system by installing solar-powered cameras in

these areas. The coops launched the initiative as part of their societal responsibility and their keenness to serve the people of the region.

The MoI welcomed the initiative and expressed the hope that more coops would follow suit and install these surveillance cameras in their neighborhoods to help ensure the security of citizens and residents in the area.



IWG holds Beauty of Korea event



The International Women's Group in Kuwait and the Embassy of the Republic of Korea to the State of Kuwait co-organized a cultural event about Korea, which was titled "The Beauty of Korea," on Sunday, October 2, at Crown Plaza Hotel.

Mrs. Ghada Shawky, president of the IWG and wife of the Ambassador of the Arab Republic of Egypt, began her speech by expressing her happiness that this season begins with "Korea Day", adding that the International Women's Group is lucky to celebrate it as one of its main goals is to work on rapprochement and integration between cultures, and that Korea is

Korean industries and unmatched skin care products. Shawky added that she once read that Seoul is one of the most beautiful capitals in the world. She also made it clear that it is important to strive to know a country from the perspective of its people. Without knowing the unique perspective of the Korean people, our understanding of Korean culture can become shallow at best and stereotypical at worst. That is why organizing these events is very important.

H.E. Chung Byung-ha, Ambassador of the Republic of Korea to the State of Kuwait delivered welcoming remarks in which he extended his gratitude to president and board members of IWG for co-hosting the event. He also expressed his pleasure in introducing some aspects of Korean culture including "Hanbok", Korea's traditional dress, which symbolizes the beauty of the past and reflects an essential part of Korea's traditional way of life. He also hoped that the special presentation of modern day Korean beauty tips, under the umbrella term of "K-beauty", by a Korean medical doctor would allow participants to have a chance to get a glimpse of the Korean beauty at the present time.

The Embassy prepared K-beauty products for raffle prizes and distributed door gifts along with booklets about Korea's tourism and cuisine for all participants. Some delicious Korean delicacies were also served including "Kimchi".

At the end of the event, Mrs. Ghada Shawky presented the Korean ambassador and his wife with an honorary shield and thanked him for his speech and for organizing this special day, which made all the attendees happy.



a country with a long history dating back 7000 years. It is a country rich in culture and tradition. Shawky added that the Korean people are proud of their unique traditional culture and rapid economic success in a short period of time.

Mrs. Shawky added that on a social level, the Korean people show great respect for their elders, parents and family, and believe in sincerity, diligence, humbleness and hard work. They follow certain rules of behavior while meeting, eating, praying, and even celebrating. Shawky highlighted the richness of the Korean cuisine, the spread of K-drama and K-pop in the world, in addition to the high-quality

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Thought for the week

“ We all live under the same sky, but we don't all have the same horizon. In an instant age, perhaps we must relearn the ancient truth that patience, too, has its victories.

- Konrad Adenauer

Proper diet when breastfeeding



Ask Mira: Eating Right to Live Happy & Healthy

Hello Ladies!

Studies have proven that babies who were breastfed have a higher IQ when they grew older, show a better performance at school and are more sociable.

Breastfeeding benefits both the mom and the baby, and increases the bond between both of them. Breast milk is very rich in nutrients and antibodies that protect the baby. It is more easily digested by the baby than milk formula, and has just the right amount of fat, sugar, water, and protein to help your baby continue to grow.

Many new moms wonder if diet can affect breastfeeding or can make them produce less milk. You do not have to make major changes to what you eat or drink if you follow a normal healthy diet. Nevertheless, there are a few considerations to follow.

Keep in mind: If your diet is too low in calories or relies on only one food group, then this will affect the quality and quantity of your milk.

Calories: The exact amount depends on your weight, your workout level, your metabolism and how frequently you are breastfeeding. Remember, breastfeeding increases your calorie needs, usually moms who are breastfeeding need 2,000 calories per day.

- Increase your water consumption by half a liter a day. Nursing women tend to get thirsty especially during feeding sessions because part of their water consumption goes directly to milk production.

- Eat five meals a day, with two snacks in between and focus on healthy cooking, high fiber food choices, and plenty of vegetables and fruits.
- Keep in mind that everything you eat will go directly to your milk.
- So avoid any food that can cause bloating problems for your baby such as cauliflower, raw carrots, couscous, broccoli, capsicums, cabbage, beans, lentils and spices (you need to see the effects of these food on your baby).
- Avoid nicotine, caffeine, alcoholic beverages and artificial sweeteners, including diet sodas. Those will decrease breast milk production.

Don't Forget: Good Nutrition for you means good nutrition for your baby!

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Create healthy habits, not restrictions

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www.eatlikemira.com.



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

Halwasan

(Broken Wheat Roundels)



Halwasan is a traditional sweet (mithai) that is considered unique to the city of Khambhat, or Cambay as it was previously known, in the Indian state of Gujarat.

Though the advent of various factory produced mithai using dry fruits have pushed such traditional and healthy mithai to the margins, Halwasan continues to be a popular sweet, especially on special occasions. Made from broken wheat, edible gum, and dried whole milk (mawa or khoya as it is known in India), Halwasan is an extremely nutritious sweet, while the nutmeg powder lends it a very warm and earthy flavor.

Total time : 45 minutes

Serving: 500gm

Ingredients:

- 1 liter milk
- 3 tsp yogurt
- 2 tbsp edible gum powder
- 4 tbsp bulgur (finely broken wheat)
- 300g sugar
- 3/4 tsp nutmeg powder
- Almond
- Saffron

Instructions:

- Place milk in a pan and when it begins to boil add the yogurt
- If milk does not separate add more yogurt as required. Remove from flame
- Add a tablespoon of ghee (clarified butter) to a pan and fry the edible gum
- When gum begins to fluff up add in the milk slowly while stirring constantly
- Meanwhile, place 2 tablespoons of ghee in another pan and add the bulgur
- Roast until golden brown
- Add the roasted bulgur to the milk and keep stirring
- Add half the sugar to the milk mixture and continue stirring
- In another pan, roast the remaining sugar over low heat until it turns to brown liquid (caramelized)
- Add the caramelized sugar to the milk mixture
- Keep stirring as water evaporates from the milk and the mixture thickens
- Add the saffron and nutmeg, and turn off the flame
- When the mixture cools down, make small roundels, decorate with almonds and serve.



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



Spain marks National Day with grand celebration

Spanish Ambassador H.E. Miguel Moro Aguilar hosted a reception at the newly opened Grand Hyatt Hotel on 12 October to celebrate his country's National Day.

Traditionally referred to as the 'Día de la Hispanidad', the reception was attended by VIP dignitaries, diplomats, special invitees and the media.

Deputy Foreign Minister, Majdi Al-Dhafiri was the chief guest for the occasion and jointly cut the ceremonial cake to mark the celebration. In his address to the gathering, Ambassador Aguilar expressed his intent in maintaining and enhancing the affirmative bonds with Kuwait. He added that a country like Kuwait with a shocking history of being invaded in 1990, emerged to be a glorious beacon in the region and over time has become one of the strongest defenders of humanitarian issues around the world and in adhering to international laws. Spain and Kuwait enjoy excellent cooperation in international forums and this in turn confirms the cherished values between the two countries.



He also stated that the visits made by Kuwaiti foreign ministers, including the political consultations made with regard to the Deputy Minister in April and May 2021 respectively, are a collective progress towards newer diplomatic features. Furthermore, he extended his gratitude to Kuwait Airways for reconnecting Madrid and Kuwait after nearly forty years, and added that with construction underway for Kuwait's highly



anticipated new global airport, numerous travel options for travelers from Spain and Latin America will be set into motion.

In conclusion he added that Spain had a heritage dating back to centuries, its long-term fruitful existence celebrates its deep historical ties with the Spanish American countries, conjoining a culturally rich, vibrant group of countries on both sides of the Atlantic, and making Spain a pioneer in



today's globalization.

The Spanish Ambassador pointed out that this year Spain is celebrating the 500th anniversary of the first documented world circumnavigation, an adventure that began in southern Spain, on 20 September, 1519, and lasted for three years.

Guests were entertained with a traditional flamenco dance set to the music of a Spanish guitarist.

Working towards change enhances my career in the UN

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3

Elaborating on her work as UN Habitat Program Manager, Ms. Ameera explained: "At present being a program manager and analyst involves creating an annual work plan for the office that should link up between each GCC country strategy, the UN Agenda 2030 and the New Urban Agenda, as well as setting a timeline, implementing and reporting."

"Moreover, I have to link up with other organizations under ONE UN theme, and collaborate with other partners at governmental and non-governmental level. Our vision includes involving youth, women, vulnerable groups, NGOs, and the private sector to achieve SDG17 where possible in our projects. Therefore, over the course of the past decade I have met up with new partners and succeeded in creating continuous bonds with them."

Speaking about her plans for the future, the UN program manager said: "My ambition knows no boundaries; in the coming years my vision is to grow the UN Habitat role while achieving new milestones. While doing so, I will be seeking tangible results and creating a legacy to become a role model to other Arab women looking to join the UN. As a Kuwaiti citizen, my vision is to get appointed in a new post which no other Kuwaiti woman previously was recruited in, and this in itself will be a kick-start for my peers to consider working for the UN in larger numbers and climbing the success ladder."

"I honestly believe that more women from Kuwait should join international organizations. We need more women from Kuwait and GCC countries to get appointed to UN posts, as they do not lack the academic qualifications or experience, but they need to rise to the challenge and prove to the world that they too can achieve success at the highest levels. Already we have Gulf women becoming medical and academic doctors, engineers, artists, singers, teachers and even pilots, but until present time we face shortage in the number of Gulf and Kuwaiti women working for the different UN organizations and in the UNH."

"Work with the UN is important as it connects people and brings them together"

In many ways, we work for humanity, linking donors with vulnerable people. Our work is based on the fact that nations all over the world face different kinds of challenges depending on their geographical location; some nations face famine and poverty, while others suffer from pandemics and diseases, natural catastrophes or wars. For us at the UN, we do not work on the basis of race, religion or gender, but rather we respond to the needs of nations and do our best to respond quickly to crises, because time is a very critical factor."

On a personal note, Ms. Ameera revealed her hobbies that include watching movies, "however, because of time restrictions I watch movies usually during my mission flights. My other hobbies include hiking, mountaineering, playing squash and learning new words in new languages. I like attending public talks, learning new information and traveling to discover historical places. If there is one experience I would like to share with your readers it would be that my most precious experience is the ones related to humanitarian work."

Nudging her to talk about other sides of her personality, Ms. Ameera revealed, "Since my undergraduate years until present time, I have worked in different jobs on full-time and part-time basis. For example, I have worked as a university journal editor and correspondent for some time, I volunteered as a microbiology lab technician in Ibn Sina Hospital in Kuwait during the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait in 1990."

"I also worked as a high school teacher, a university professor, a puppeteer and a scientific researcher. I am good at drawing but I can never sing! I believe there are no limits to human's capabilities and we only need to explore our hidden talents."

For instance, I became a mountaineer during my postgraduate years and I had the chance to do live translation for a famous cable news channel. Moreover, in 1997, I read a conference closing statement in Spanish in Mallorca, Spain. Though I have plenty of stories on my experiences to narrate, I still want to learn and experience new things in the coming years, as I

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Over a million World Cup fans are preparing to visit the Gulf to watch the month-long festival of football in Qatar. As the first World Cup to be staged in the Middle East, social norms and religious practices are likely to be different from previous tournaments.

Fan festivals: When the opening match kicks-off in Doha, Al Bidda Park located in the heart of the city near the Corniche will become a meet-up spot for supporters throughout the tournament. Matches will also be screened at other fan sites, at Qetaifan Island North, where a beach festival is planned with concerts, activities, food and drink outlets; on Al Maha Island in Lusail; and at the Al Maha Arena, where live concerts will be hosted.

Those who have booked accommodation at the official fan villages on the outskirts of Doha can visit the Fan Village Cabins Free Zone, where games will be shown live.

Free travel is being provided on the Doha Metro system, Hayya Fan ID and a World Cup match ticket will allow access to the Doha Metro. All eight stadiums hosting 64 matches are within an hour drive of central Doha.

Hayya card: It is compulsory for visitors to apply for a Hayya card, it is a fan ID that offers free public transport around Doha and acts as an entry visa into the country. The Supreme Committee for Delivery Legacy opened a special service center for Hayya card holders to support fans at the Ali bin Hamad Al Attiyah Arena.

Fans can collect a physical copy of their digital Hayya card, in case they want to use transport services or fan zones and do not have a mobile phone.

The center's opening hours are from 10am to 10pm every day except Fridays, where opening hours are from 2pm to 10pm until December 23.

Alcohol: Alcohol is served in licensed restaurants and in many hotels across the country, the organizers also assured that it will be made available in fan zones at certain times. Alcohol sales in fan zones may be less expensive than hotels and will probably involve exchanging local currency for tokens that can be used for purchasing beverages.

Bringing alcohol into the country is forbidden. Only residents are allowed to purchase alcohol from specialist outlets for home consumption, so drinking away from official venues will be off-limits for fans.

COVID-19: A vaccine is not mandatory to visit Qatar. However, anyone attending the World Cup aged six or above is required to present a negative coronavirus on arrival at the airport.

A PCR test result must not be more than 48 hours old before the time of embarking from the country where the test was performed, or if taking an official negative Rapid Antigen Test, the result must have been received not more than 24 hours before departure time. Note that self-tests will not be accepted.

Clothing: Respecting local norms is likely to be one of the greatest challenges for the huge number of visitors coming to Qatar during the World Cup. Swimwear is allowed on hotel beaches and swimming pools, but visitors will be expected to cover shoulders and knees when visiting public places like museums and government buildings.

The removal of shirts is prohibited inside stadiums, although the much publicized air-conditioned stadiums are designed to maintain a pleasant temperature for spectators. Outside, the average temperature for November is around 26°C, but it could get as warm as the mid-30s.

Public displays of affection: The organizing committee has asked visitors during the World Cup to limit public displays of affection. Qatari law prohibits cohabitation of unmarried

couples, but authorities have confirmed that during the tournament unmarried friends of different genders or couples can share the same room without penalty.

Photography: With hordes of fans sharing their experiences on social media, enforcing Qatar's strict rules on privacy and photography could be a challenge. Organizers called on fans to exercise "common courtesy" and ask permission before photographing or filming others. Fans should be aware that taking pictures of government buildings such as offices, military camps or industrial areas is strictly prohibited.

Fans should ensure their travel insurance covers any enforced stays in a hotel to isolate, a requirement if you test positive while in Qatar.

World Cup visitors to Qatar who hold Hayya cards are excluded from the pre-entry online registration requirement on the Qatari government's Ehteraz website for residents and GCC nationals.

Like in the UAE, even in Qatar masks are only required on public transport and on healthcare premises.

E-cigarettes: Qatar's Ministry of Public Health ordered an outright ban on sales of vapes in 2014.

Hamad International Airport customs department was also advised not to allow e-cigarettes into the country along with Qatar's seaport and land borders.

Despite this, there remains a large community that regularly uses e-cigarettes without penalty, so there may be some leniency on the matter. However, it will not be possible to legally purchase vaping refills and associated products while in Qatar.

Working week: Qatar starts its working week on a Sunday, with a weekend of Friday and Saturday. Some services, including banks and certain shops will have reduced working hours on Friday, as it is considered a holy day.

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The path to becoming a professional footballer can be both costly and time-consuming. However, a collaboration between the College of Science and Engineering (CSE) at Hamad Bin Khalifa University (HBKU) in Qatar, sKora, a Qatar-based science and technology startup, and the King Abdullah University of Science and Technology (KAUST) in Saudi Arabia, has resulted in a unique project titled ‘Be a Star’ that aims to make the process easier by creating a cost-effective method to help players, clubs and agents alike.

Dr. Jens Schneider, an Assistant Professor at the College of Science and Engineering at Qatar’s Hamad Bin Khalifa University, tells us how the unique ‘Be a Star’ platform can assist young footballers who are hoping to become professional footballers.

“There are about 200 million players who dream of becoming a professional footballer. However, there are only 200,000 paid positions worldwide, across all leagues, so only a tiny fraction are able to achieve their ambition. Our project aims to build an automatic career-path recommendation platform, in which young players can critically self-assess their skills and which connects them with opportunities like free-for-all training sessions and football schools. We hope our platform will not only be helpful in managing expectations for young players, but will also identify top talent that would otherwise go unnoticed.

“Young footballers are passionate about their dream, and they are willing to pay agents their last penny to obtain representation. For agents, these young players do not represent a reliable source of income as the real money is in the ‘big names’. In addition, professional sports agencies in the region are scarce, leaving aspiring players often without a clear career trajectory. What sets our project apart is that it will come in the form of an affordable application that is custom-tailored for aspiring players. If successful, it will democratize the sports agency business.”

Turning to the next steps in developing the idea and probably commercializing the project, Dr. Schneider explained, “We have been awarded a National Priorities Research Program standard grant (NPRP-S) by Qatar National Research Fund (QNRF), for our project, the title of which in full is ‘Be a star: Data analytics for soccer career path recommendation’. For this project, researchers from CSE and KAUST have joined forces with sKora, the Qatar Science and Technology Park startup that is driving the development of the platform. We just signed a non-disclosure agreement with sKora, which allows the project partners to access sKora’s database, comprising around one million professional football transfers. The research goal is to identify similarities between players in the transfer database and aspiring players to make our recommendations. For instance, many young Japanese football players started in the German lower leagues, since it is relatively

achieve goals

Interview with Dr. Jens Schneider

Assistant Professor at the College of Science and Engineering, part of Hamad Bin Khalifa University (HBKU).

easy for Japanese players to obtain a German residence permit and the German entry-level leagues are competitive internationally.

“As far as commercializing this project goes, Qatar Foundation (QF) will co-own the intellectual property created in the project with sKora. We hope, apart from sKora becoming a successful QF start-up, that the software and methods created in the project can be licensed to international markets that are too hard for us to enter directly. Our focus is on the Middle East, North Africa, Pakistan, Turkey region since there is little barrier to entry. In contrast, the Asian market is harder to reach due to cultural and language differences as well as an established agency network.

“In addition, my colleague Dr. Kamilla Swart-Arries, CSE associate professor and head of CSE’s Sport and Entertainment Management program, will lead in researching the transformative aspects of the project, that is, how to turn a single event into lasting value for Qatar and the region.”

Elaborating on why the project decided to target countries in the region, and future plans for expansion, and the role of sKora in the project, Dr. Schneider clarified: “We always have the philosophy of starting local, since we understand the environment best. We hope to later grow into other markets (such as Asia and the United States) but will most likely have to rely on international partners.

“With regard to sKora, they are a QF startup and project partner. They grant access to a globally unique database of player transfers as well as a database of opportunities for aspiring players. They have also allocated manpower to the project and are an important partner for us, since they know the professional agency business very well. sKora’s CEO, Adel Saad, is a licensed FIFA agent aside from being a computer engineer and IT professional by education. sKora and their growing base of local aspiring players will be the ideal testbed for the research outcomes of this project — everything we develop can be immediately field-tested.”

Dr. Schneider concluded the interview by telling us about the advantages of having a digital football agent compared to an actual football agent. “Cost is one important advantage. It takes a professional agent about a week to onboard a young player before even putting the player into contact with any club. Representing a young player with no clear transfer, which is how agents make most of their money, is risky for the agent and costly for the player. Digital agents can scale much better to larger player numbers.

“Easy self-assessment against a large pool of competing young players is another advantage. Even though a young player may be the best in town does not mean he makes the cut at a professional club.



“Finally, the platform also aims to automate some of the more tedious tasks of professional agents: spending hours each day scanning web pages and networks for opportunities for young players to show their skills in front of a professional coach. This goes both ways: Clubs are interested in identifying talent early and sKora is interested in placing their clients well. So far, sKora has entered a partnership with Lusail FC doing exactly that.

“Moreover, this method is democratic and much cheaper than other options. If you were a promising young footballer, you might as well give it a shot. The system will analyze all the data you are willing to share with the platform and will then try to place you.

Since this is an automated system, we can make recommendations to many more players than an agent could. The recommendations are not only placement or opportunity recommendations; we also seek to recommend how to improve your skills from the same standardized tests clubs use to assess their candidate’s fitness. In addition, we can also recommend field positions to players.

“This is a project that can help and include all parties — young players, agents, clubs. Players benefit since the system is more approachable than a professional agent; football clubs benefit since they get access to talent earlier; agents benefit since our tools allow them to pre-filter candidates and identify talent early. In addition, the envisioned platform will keep track of each player’s development. If, say, Lusail FC is looking specifically for a left-sided striker or a goalkeeper, we can recommend players who are good in that role. Similar analytics methods could, in the future, also be used to optimize the pool of players in a club. For example, an analysis could recommend hiring another midfielder since more successful clubs are more agile on the pitch.

[This article is submitted on behalf of the author by the HBKU Communications Directorate. The views expressed are the author’s own and do not necessarily reflect the University’s official stance.]



Entertainment projects vital for country's economic development

The tourism and entertainment sector undoubtedly is one of the most important that countries all over the world rely on to develop and diversify their sources of economy as is considered a mainstay of the economies of some countries.

In Kuwait, unfortunately, the entertainment sector has not been given the importance it deserves. There is no real strategy to simulate the successful experiences of neighboring countries in this field which have taken big strides in developing their tourism facilities.

Experts in the field of tourism told a local Arabic daily that the tourism sector in Kuwait suffers from lack of recreational facilities because there is no independent entity to regulate this sector, in addition to the absence of means to revive this vital sector, the most important of which is opening the door for family and tourist visas.

The experts pointed to several challenges facing investors to establish recreational projects, for example, the scarcity of land and its unjustified high prices, in addition to the lack of manpower specialized in maintaining

equipment and gaming devices and the high wages, if any, and with these high costs, the investor may not find it easy to cover operational expenses until 5 years, leave alone the profits.

Sources say these obstacles must be offset by government support to build a tourism economy that enhances the domestic product.

The General Manager of Leaders Group for Consulting and Development and the former assistant undersecretary for the tourism sector, Nabila Al-Anjari, confirmed that there is no vital obstacle preventing the construction of recreational projects in Kuwait, while the real obstacle is the absence of serious government decisions and programs in this regard, especially after some projects were suspended and abandoned for a long time until neglected facilities became ruins.

She explained saying, "when we talk about tourism or recreational projects, we must know that they are not just buildings, but rather a comprehensive economic system, a strategic work and a clear plan be it in the Gulf, at international or Arab level.

Secondly, what is the existing organization or the structure of the tourism sector that



will supervise these projects, there must be a competent authority.

Al-Anjari stressed the need for there to be a tourism law and an information system to study the economic impact, in addition to knowing the target group and segments — the youth, the family, or the children — and what is the return from it and in what way the state will benefit and what is the mechanism for receiving land from the state to establish those projects.

It is also necessary to study the social impact of tourism, environmental issues, and the development of Kuwaiti youth, training and

teaching them how to manage this type of project, and that there should be colleges and universities that graduate young people for these tasks.

Al-Anjari pointed out that it is very important to provide statistics, database and information on the tourist sites in Kuwait to build a deep and well-defined marketing plan, stressing that the entertainment sector is an integrated tourism umbrella for an economic, social and cultural system. For his part, the expert and tourism activist Mubarak Abu Hadidah asked about the entity that leads the tourism and entertainment scene in Kuwait.

He pointed out that the country is in a state of confusion due to the intertwining of specializations in governmental and semi-governmental agencies.

He stressed that in order to achieve the advancement of the tourism sector, it is necessary first to classify the sector as an industrial economic activity in Kuwait, and to establish an independent entity of specialists and experts in the field of entertainment and tourism.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 13

Hunger, poverty undermines society

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

The apparent food security we currently enjoy could be shortlived and easily undermined by any extended period of food shortage worldwide. For instance, when faced with the prospects of shortfalls, or potential future shortages, in domestic production, food exporting countries are liable to succumb to domestic social and political pressures and ban the export of essential food commodities. This was witnessed early this year when some countries imposed restrictions on their food exports in response to the food supply disruptions brought on by the outbreak of conflict in eastern Europe.

It is indeed commendable that policymakers in Kuwait are finally waking up to this vulnerability and to the stark realization that the country can no longer rely on its oil wealth to guarantee secure and sustainable food supplies in future. In this regard it is noteworthy that recently the Council of Ministers received a comprehensive report from the Ministry of Commerce and Industry (MoCI) on the country's prevailing food security status and the measures needed to enhance this.

While the report's recommendations include tried and tested practices of building more and larger food silos, diversifying the number and regions from where Kuwait imports foods, and bolstering the country's supply chains by ensuring multiple supply channels, it also recognizes the need to do more. Among others, the report stressed the need to develop an integrated national food and water security strategy based on developing a comprehensive system that enables sustainable production in essential foods.

The study also called for reconsidering the distribution of arable land and lending more support for agricultural holdings with the aim of achieving self-sufficiency in several foods through increasing livestock breeding, poultry and fish farming, as well as improving fodder production in the country. Additionally, the MoCI study advocated strengthening the national food basket by expanding regional and international agricultural investments, and purchasing agricultural land, livestock and fisheries in countries that are willing to rent or sell such land.

However, no matter how attractive the proposal of investment in foreign farming

land might seem at first glance, the leasing or purchasing of land abroad for feeding Kuwait remains vulnerable to the same geopolitical vagaries mentioned earlier. In the event of extended food scarcity or other externalities induced by climate change and other factors, there is no guarantee that these lands would not be expropriated by the concerned governments to placate domestic demands.

One option that seems to have skipped consideration by the MoCI study authors would be for Kuwait to fund the development of large tracts of unfarmable land in many developing countries, in collaboration with the indigenous farmers who are currently barely able to eke a sustenance living from these lands. Kuwait Fund for Arab Economic Development (KFAED) and other state entities that already provide grants and loans for development projects in many countries could divert a portion of this funding for targeted ventures in developing countries, especially in those that enjoy a relatively stable political environment.

Funding from Kuwait, alongside technical and administrative inputs from UN agencies such as the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), the World Food Programme (WFP), and the World Health Organization, as well as others, could significantly improve productivity of unfarmable land through proactive land revival and restoration programs. Experiential evidence from pilot studies in several countries already show that creative, sustainable programs can sustainably restore productivity on currently barren land.

For instance, it has been proven that the widespread salt pollution prevailing on arid land could be removed by initially planting the area with grasses and shrubs that thrive in a salty environment. Specialized drainage systems or water leaching techniques have also been shown to restore degraded land in a cost-effective manner. While this can be a lengthy and costly process that makes it unaffordable to local farmers and governments, investments from Kuwait could help change the equation.

This multiple-stakeholder collaboration would be an all-round win situation for everyone concerned. It would enhance the lives and livelihood of indigenous farmers, helping alleviate hunger and poverty among them; it would improve the economic prospects of developing countries willing to participate in the venture; and, in the bargain, it would

provide Kuwait with food security through its purchase of excess production from these areas, which will be guaranteed by local farmers and governments.

The theme for this year's World Food Day of 'Leave no one Behind' emphasizes the fact that too many people in too many places are being left behind by food poverty. Despite the tremendous achievements the world has attained in food production, millions of people still cannot afford a healthy diet that prevents the risk of them sinking into malnutrition and hunger. But the tragedy is that this need not be so; the world currently produces enough food to adequately feed everyone.

Although numerous challenges exist to feeding the world equitably, most of them are man-made and can be overcome. A major obstacle to food security is the existing inefficient distribution system that discriminates between people based on the inequities in affordability and accessibility to nutritious food. Added to this, are regional conflicts and geo-political upheavals that disrupt food supply chains.

Multiple natural challenges also exacerbate existing food poverty, including global health threats and climate change, which is shrinking and shifting areas where crops can grow, and significantly impacting poor rural farmers and their agricultural yields. In addition to all of the above is the humongous amount of food that goes wasted each year. The world clearly can and needs to do better; we cannot and should not be leaving anyone behind.

The importance of addressing poverty and hunger in order to realize the global Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) is evident from the fact that the first and second SDGs call for 'No Poverty' and 'Zero Hunger'. Also, SDG 12 urges 'Responsible Consumption and Production', underlining the need to reduce the tremendous food wastage that occurs worldwide. Target 12-3 of SDG12 aims to halve per capita global food waste at the retail and consumer levels, and reduce food losses along production and supply chains.

The huge wastage of produced but unconsumed food is not only a major cause of food insecurity worldwide, it is also a significant contributor to environmental degradation. Most of the food wastage usually ends up in landfills where they pose an environmental and health hazard by contributing to contamination of soil and water supplies, and the production of

methane — one of the largest sources of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions.

Besides raising awareness on food wastage among everyone, we need to find innovative ways to save food from being wasted. Providing unused but still safely edible food to civil society organizations for distribution to the needy in society; rationalizing food consumption, and composting household food waste, are just some strategies that people can employ in their own homes. As we mark yet another World Food Day and International Day for Eradication of Poverty, here are some startling facts that you could ponder over:

The United Nations Environment Programme's (UNEP) annual Food Waste Index for 2021, estimates that food waste from households, retail establishments and the food service industry totals 931 million tonnes each year. Nearly 570 million tonnes of this waste occurs at the household level. The average global household produces 74kg of food waste per capita annually. Incidentally, the index also reveals that the annual average per capita food waste in Kuwait was around 95 kilograms, and annual household food wastage was 397,727 tonnes.

In 2021, over 700 million people were undernourished, of whom around 190 million experienced high acute food insecurity that required humanitarian assistance for their survival. Meanwhile, consumers in rich countries annually waste around 222 million tonnes, which is nearly equivalent to the 230 million tonnes of net food production of entire sub-Saharan Africa.

According to United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), every five seconds, a child dies as a result of a hunger-related disease, which works out to over 6 million children dying annually from easily preventable causes. Additionally, poverty affects over half the global population, with 3 billion people surviving on less than US\$2.50 a day, of whom 1 billion live in extreme poverty of less than \$1.25 a day.

As UN Secretary-General António Guterres noted ahead of this World Food Day, "By aiming for better production, better nutrition, a better environment, and a better life, we can transform agrifood systems and implement sustainable and holistic solutions." This could help promote inclusive growth, long-term development, greater resilience, and a more sustainable world without poverty, and with good food available for everyone.

IMF projects strong GDP growth for Kuwait

International Monetary Fund expects Kuwait's economy will register the largest growth in the Gulf this year, and exceed previous estimates by the Fund.

In its report on growth prospects, the Fund expects Kuwait's real GDP to grow by 8.7 percent this year, compared to its 8.2 percent forecast of last April, and for real GDP growth for Kuwait in 2023 at 2.6 percent, reflecting the expected slowdown in growth next year.

Regarding the consumer price index in Kuwait, the IMF lowered its growth forecast for this year to 4.3 percent instead of its previous estimate of 4.8 percent, and suggested a slowdown in this rate in 2023 to 2.4 percent. In

its report, the Fund also lowered its forecast for Kuwait's current account balance surplus to record 29.1 percent of GDP in 2022, compared to previous estimates of 31.3 percent, which was the highest since 2014, and also reduced its estimates regarding the current account balance surplus for next year at 23 percent of GDP, compared to its April 2022 estimate of 27.2 percent of GDP.

The Fund expected Saudi Arabia to record the second largest growth in the Gulf, after Kuwait, in its GDP by 7.6 percent; followed by Oman with 4.4 percent; the UAE in fourth place in the Gulf with a weighted growth of 5.1 percent, then Qatar with 3.4 percent, and Bahrain with 3.4 percent. The



IMF also raised its forecast for the growth of the economies of the Middle East and Central Asia to 5 percent this year, compared to its previous estimate of 4.6 percent, with growth likely to slow to 3.6 percent next year.

The International Monetary Fund expected a slowdown in

global growth from 6 percent during 2021 to 3.2 percent this year and then 2.7 percent next year, which represents the weakest growth pattern ever since 2001, with the exception of the period of the global financial crisis and the critical stage of the pandemic.

"The worst is yet to come, and

for many people in 2023 it will feel sluggish," the IMF noted, echoing warnings from the United Nations, the World Bank and many global CEOs.

The IMF reported that more than a third of the global economy will experience two consecutive quarters of negative growth, while the three largest economies — the United States, the European Union and China — will continue to slow.

In its report, the Fund listed three main events that are currently hindering growth, namely the Russian invasion of Ukraine, the cost of living crisis and the economic slowdown in China, which creates a 'volatile' period economically, geopolitically and environmentally, said the Fund.



LuLu Hypermarket holds Italian Week 2022

LuLu Hypermarket, the destination of choice for discerning shoppers in Kuwait, launched a week-long celebration of high-quality Italian foods and products at the Italian Week 2022 promotion.

The promotion, which ran from 12 - 18 October at all outlets of LuLu Hypermarket in the country, was inaugurated at the Egaila branch of LuLu Hypermarket on 12 October by Italian Ambassador H.E. Carlo Baldocci, in the presence of the hypermarket's top management in Kuwait and a large gathering of shoppers and well wishers.

When it comes to setting global trends in art, design, fashion and food, Italy is undoubtedly an acknowledged and valued leader whose



products are often envied and imitated worldwide.

No matter how authentic-looking the duplicate might be, there is no replacement for

original Italian products, and these authentic products were showcased during the Italian Week 2022 at LuLu Hypermarket.

Original products from well-known Italian brands were available at amazingly special prices during the promotion period. Among the renowned Italian food brands that have become household names in Kuwait are such items as Barilla pasta, Lavazza coffee, Nutella hazelnut cream, and, of course, Ferrero chocolates and confectionaries.

In addition to enticing prices on Italian products, the week-long festival also highlighted the passion that all Italians have for good food, with specially erected food stalls in the hypermarket offering shoppers authentic,

nutritious and flavorsome Italian street foods.

Adding further dazzle to the promotion were large cutouts and images of traditional Italian monuments that underlined why Italy continues to be a leading travel spot for people in Kuwait and around the world. A display of traditional Italian dance performances added to the appeal of the Italian Week 2022 promotion, with shoppers captivated by the color, energy and music of these artistic demonstrations.

The Italian Week 2022 reiterated LuLu Hypermarket's continued commitment to providing shoppers with an unrivaled shopping experience, while offering high quality products from around the world at exceedingly competitive prices.

Indian Embassy marks launch of 17th PBD website



India will hold the 17th Pravasi Bharatiya Divas (PBD) at Indore in Madhya Pradesh from 8-10 January, 2023. A ceremony was held at the embassy of India to mark the launching of the PBD website jointly by the External Affairs Minister of India and Chief Minister of Madhya Pradesh on 13 October.

Registration process has commenced and interested participants can visit the PBD website

at: <https://www.pbdindia.gov.in/en>

The website contains all details related to the 17th PBD, including registration and programs lined up. Delegates will have options to participate as an individual or as a group.

Therefore, interested participants will have to opt at the time of registration.

More details on PBD 2023 is available on the website <https://www.pbdindia.gov.in>



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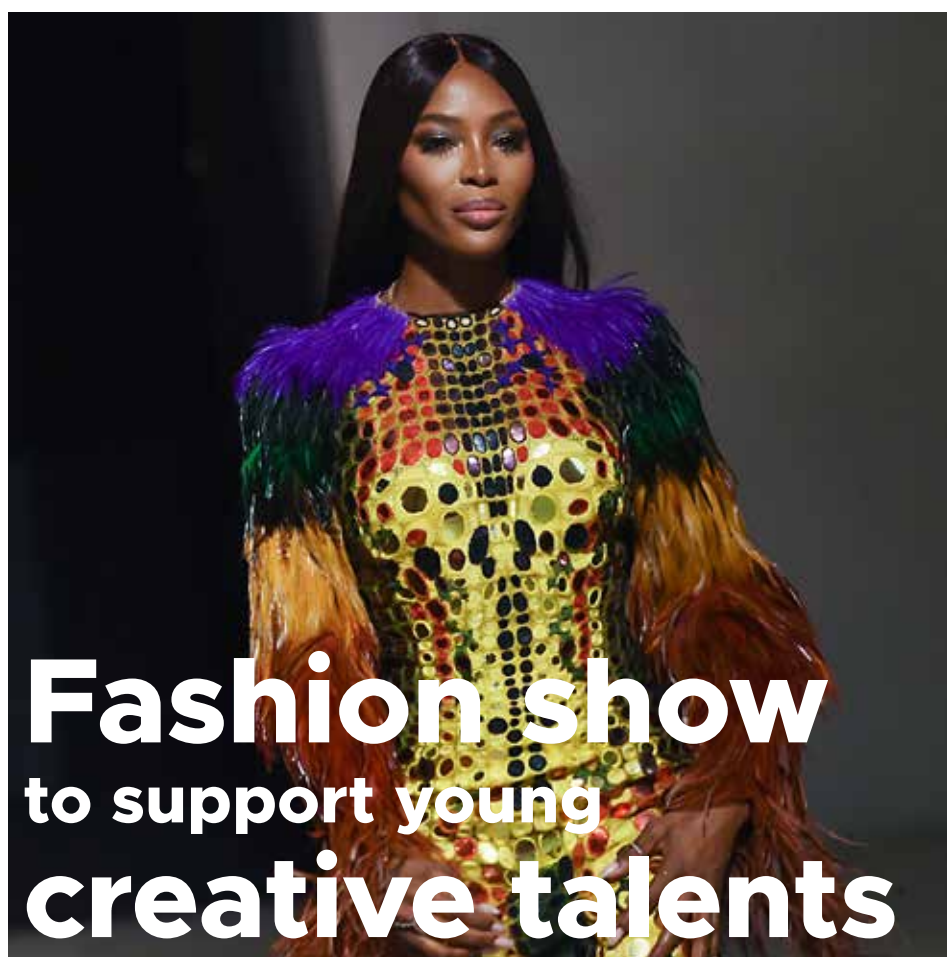
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Hermoine Macura-Noble



The first Australian English speaking News Anchor in the Middle East. She is also the Author of Faces of the Middle East and Founder of US-based 501c3 charity – The House of Rest which helps to ease the suffering of victims of war. For more from our Contributing Editor, you can follow her on Instagram, here.

Qatar Creates, an arts and culture promotion platform in Qatar, and EMERGE, a global charitable initiative dedicated to uniting the fashion and creative industries as a force for good, will host a fashion show and VIP dinner later this month alongside supermodel Naomi Campbell to help support young creatives.

Experts say that by 2030, young people will make up 42 percent of the world's population and account for 75 percent of those under the age of 35 in Africa; therefore, the development of various creative industries is essential to give young people a chance to make informed decisions and reach their full potential.

Held under the patronage of Sheikha Al-Mayassa bint Hamad Al-Thani and co-hosted by international supermodel Naomi Campbell, the charity gala and fashion show will take place on 28 October at Ceremonial Court, Education City, to support Alternative Education and investment in young creative and business talent from emerging regions with a focus in Africa, the diaspora and developing communities around the world.

Founded in 2005 and inspired by Naomi Campbell's friendship with former President of South Africa, Nelson Mandela — Fashion For Relief brings the international fashion, entertainment, design, and music industry together to raise funds for various essential causes and humanitarian crises while promoting inclusivity and equal opportunities for all.

Known as one of the first supermodels in the world, Naomi Campbell has presented fashion initiatives and projects in New York, London, Cannes, Moscow, Mumbai, Dar es Salaam, and now, Doha — raising millions for good causes around the world. She is recognized as a global fashion icon known for her charitable efforts through successful partnerships and associations with renowned leaders in the industry, such as Gucci, Dolce & Gabbana, Louis Vuitton, and

Burberry. Recently, she has been appointed a Global Ambassador for the Queen's Commonwealth Trust to help champion the work of young leaders.

The event will bring the fashion and creative industries' most prominent names to Doha through their new initiative, EMERGE. This initiative will create new apprenticeships for after-school and university programs focused on creative and alternative industries such as general education, fashion, technology, art, sustainable innovations, and agriculture.

EMERGE will unfold in three main events leading to a grand Couture Show. While the Art Exhibit will highlight leading and acclaimed young artists, led by Art Masters such as Kehinde Wiley or Victor Ehikhamenor, the Fashion Exhibit will showcase a selection of award-winning fashion designers from Africa, the diaspora and the Middle East, such as Thebe Magugu, Bianca Saunders and Abdel El Tayeb.

The creative and business event EMERGE Talk will bring leading professionals together to discuss the future of alternative industries after an opening conversation on the power of creativity in business between Naomi Campbell, Sheikha Al Mayassa, and Kehinde Wiley.

Sheikha Al Mayassa bint Hamad bin Khalifa Al Thani, the driving force behind Qatar Creates, said: "With the FIFA World Cup Qatar 2022, we stand at the cusp of an incredible moment for our region. It is our responsibility to seize this moment and draw the international community's attention toward causes that benefit marginalised people across the globe. I am grateful to EMERGE for joining our efforts, and I am confident that we can harness this opportunity to uplift and empower those who need it most while creating cultural milestones."

The charity gala is a ticketed event and will feature a fashion show where established designers showcase their work, followed by an auction and a VIP dinner. The event will spotlight talented award-winning designers from Africa, the diaspora, and the Middle East. In the past, celebrities such as Kate Moss, Jane Fonda, and Beyoncé, as well as models like Bella Hadid, Kendall Jenner, and Winnie Harlow, have walked in the charity show.

Tickets for the event can be purchased through Qatar Creates. One Pass holders can avail priority access and discounts through the Qatar Creates portal. For additional information on Qatar Creates and the One Pass, visit www.qacreates.com

International Day of the Girl Young Ambassadors Initiative



On 11 October, the world commemorated the 10th anniversary of the International Day of the Girl Child (IDG). Over the past ten years, there has been increased attention on issues that matter to girls amongst governments, policymakers and the general public, and more opportunities for girls to have their voices heard on the global stage. Yet, investments in girls' rights remain limited, and girls continue to confront a myriad of challenges to fulfilling their potential, made worse by concurrent crises of climate change, COVID-19 and humanitarian conflict.

The Embassy of Canada, in collaboration with the British Embassy, United Nations Resident Coordinator Office, in coordination with UNDP, UNICEF and UN Women in the State of Kuwait, have invited high school students to partake in the 'Young Ambassadors' initiative, which allows students to work with corresponding embassies. The selected students will be provided with mentoring and leadership development opportunities over a five-month period, through exposure to 'real-world diplomacy', access to decision-makers, and a platform to share their ideas and initiatives to promote women's inclusion and empowerment in Kuwait and beyond.

As the Ambassador of Canada, H.E. Aliya Mawani, stated: "When everyone in society participates equally, communities are more prosperous and more secure. Everyone benefits. I'm so excited about this collaborative, intergenerational partnership to advance United Nations SDG 5 — promoting gender equality — which is also a core priority for Canada. Through this initiative, students in Kuwait will experience real-life diplomacy, develop leadership skills, and gain support and tools to be confident and effective champions for gender equality. I can't wait to meet and learn from these Young Ambassadors!"

For his part, the United Nations Secretary General Representative and Resident Coordinator to Kuwait, Dr. Tarek Elsheikh, highlighted the United Nations girls Agenda: "Adolescent girls have the right to a safe, educated, and healthy life, not only during these critical formative years, but also as they mature into women. If effectively supported during the adolescent years, girls have the potential to change the world — both as the empowered girls of today and as tomorrow's workers, mothers, entrepreneurs, mentors, household heads, and political leaders. An investment in realizing the power of adolescent girls upholds their rights today and promises a more equitable and prosperous future, one in which half of humanity is an equal partner in solving the problems of climate change, political conflict, economic growth, disease prevention, and global sustainability. The 'Young Ambassadors' initiative is timely, as it provides an opportunity for youth to drive ambition towards a sustainable future for all."

Voicing the same sentiment, the British Ambassador H.E. Belinda Lewis, noted: "Women and girls represent half of the world's population and therefore also half of its potential. But gender inequality persists and holds back progress in many countries. On International Day of the Girl Child, I am pleased to support the launch of the UN's 'Young Ambassadors' program to promote the importance of gender equality globally, as a key element of the Sustainable Development Goals. I'm looking forward to working with Kuwaiti partners on this important initiative."

UNICEF Representative to the Gulf Area, Eltayeb Adam, added, "At UNICEF, we are pleased to welcome and support the 'Young Ambassadors' initiative. Girls are powerful leaders of change around the planet. They are challenging us to act on gender equality, climate action, and more. We must spare no effort to help them build a brighter future and safer world for our societies. There is also more than symbolism to today's launch on the 10th anniversary of International Day of the Girl. We are committed to supporting the Young Ambassadors throughout the programme and beyond."

According to UN Women, there is established and growing evidence that women's leadership in political decision-making processes improves them. For example, research on panchayats (local councils) in India discovered that the number of drinking water projects in areas with women-led councils was 62 percent higher than in those with men-led councils. In Norway, a direct causal relationship between the presence of women in municipal councils and childcare coverage was found. Additionally, a limited number of studies have found connections between education and leadership. These studies generally suggest that as education increases, so do successful leadership behaviors.

However, around the world, 129 million girls are out of school, including 32 million of primary school age, 30 million of lower-secondary school age, and 67 million of upper-secondary school age. In countries affected by conflict, girls are more than twice as likely to be out of school than girls living in non-affected countries. Only 49 percent of countries have achieved gender parity in primary education. At the secondary level, the gap widens: 42 percent of countries have achieved gender parity in lower secondary education, and 24 percent in upper secondary education. The reasons are many and include poverty, child marriage and gender-based violence, as well as many poor families often favoring boys when investing in education.

With adversity, however, comes resourcefulness, creativity, tenacity, and resilience. The world's 600 million adolescent girls have shown time and time again that given the skills and the opportunities, they can be the changemakers driving progress in their communities, building back stronger for all, including women, boys and men.

Mobilizing Corporate Assets for Sustainable Development



Carl Manlan

Vice President of Inclusive Impact and Sustainability at Visa CEMEA.



The last Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) is, in some ways, the most important. Recognizing that all other SDGs can be met only through collaboration, SDG17 includes targets such as the mobilization of financial resources for developing countries from multiple sources and the promotion of partnerships among public, private, and other stakeholders. But, less than eight years from the SDGs' 2030 deadline, official development assistance (ODA) continues to dominate the narrative about structural economic transformation.

In 2021, net ODA by members of the Development Assistance Committee of the OECD totaled just under \$179 billion. That is less than 4.5 percent of the \$4.2 trillion shortfall in financing required to support the achievement of the SDGs. And while countries agreed in 2015, when the SDGs were adopted, to raise ODA to 0.7 percent of gross national income by 2030, they remain far from reaching that target. Meanwhile, more than \$100 trillion in assets under management worldwide can be leveraged to accelerate development.

Beyond the difference in scale, the public and private sectors tend to target different aspects of the development continuum. For example, ODA might be channeled toward improving health outcomes, whereas investment is more likely to spur growth in a particular sector, such as agriculture.

Achieving the SDGs by 2030 is improbable, but if corporations reimagine and deepen their community impact, we can make great strides toward sustainable development. Key to this process will be support for small and medium-size enterprises (SMEs), which

“An estimated 500 million jobs will be needed by 2030 to absorb the growing global workforce. But, to create so many jobs, SMEs need capital to grow and become more resilient. As it stands, they often struggle to access financing.”

in developing and developed countries alike generate employment, drive income growth, and advance poverty reduction. In emerging economies, SMEs account for seven out of ten jobs, and formal SMEs contribute up to 40 percent of GDP, with the figure rising much higher if one also includes informal businesses.

Women-led SMEs play a particularly important role. Companies like Koolboks in Nigeria and Hoa Nang in Vietnam hire talented young people, help reduce gender disparities, and reinvest the wealth they generate in their communities. Such firms, and SMEs more broadly, form the backbone of sustainable and

resilient development, rooted in communities and offering ample opportunities to connect to global value chains. By acquiring talent and devising innovative solutions to existing problems, businesses that start small can grow into dynamic and influential economic actors that create more wealth for communities, not least by providing better employment opportunities to more workers.

Here, it is worth noting that an estimated 500 million jobs will be needed by 2030 to absorb the growing global workforce. But, to create so many jobs, SMEs need capital to grow and become more resilient. As it stands, they

often struggle to access financing.

There is a role for ODA here. But donor governments around the world are confronting intensifying fiscal headwinds in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic and, more recently, the energy and food crises triggered by the war in Ukraine. The private sector must take a leading role in providing the necessary financing.

This implies a paradigm shift, whereby capital (and aid) allocation drives development through investment in employment and wealth creation. Special attention must be paid to women-run businesses, which currently account for 40 percent of SMEs in Africa, but receive just 1 percent of venture capital funds.

Some progress already is being made on this front. For example, the Nigeria-based Aruwa Capital Management, founded and led by women, invests in rapidly growing companies that either provide essential goods and services to the 'female economy' or businesses that are founded or co-founded by women or have gender-diverse teams. And the Corporate Impact Investing Initiative can unlock more capital for SMEs, especially those led by women.

Such efforts can help to create a new generation of 'Nana Ben' women — the ladies who controlled at least 40 percent of informal-sector business in Togo from 1976 to 1984 — but on a much larger scale. Investing in SMEs in fast-growing markets, such as the African Continental Free Trade Area, will accelerate the pace of transformation.

This is not charity; such investment will bring major financial returns. Studies show that purpose-driven companies outperform their peers, not least because young people — who overwhelmingly believe that social issues, from racial justice to the environment, must shape corporate decision-making — are more likely to support them.

At the same time, we must recognize that the most profitable investments are often long-term, even intergenerational, ventures. We might not enjoy the fruits in our lifetimes, but we must cultivate them anyway, in order to nourish our descendants and provide the seeds for future prosperity.

Entertainment projects vital for country's economic development

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 10

Abu Hudaiah feels the private sector is lost between the government confusion and the complex documentary cycle, explaining that if this situation continues, the result will inevitably be the flight of local and foreign investors towards investing outside the country.

In turn, the Executive Vice President of Ajyal Real Estate Entertainment Company, Abdulwahab Al-Arefan, confirmed that the operational process of the entertainment projects requires the provision of a large number of workers and teams to maintain equipment, devices and games, and this is what Kuwait projects lack, in addition to another obstacle represented in the unjustified rise in land prices.

To establish projects, therefore, the investor needs big capital to start his entertainment project, and with high operational costs, this investor may not be able to reach the break-even point between profits and covering operating expenses until approximately 5 years after the establishment of the project.

Al-Arifan said that the profits of entertainment projects depend not only on operating the games, but also from the

surrounding facilities such as restaurants, cafes, etc., and in order to reach the stage of achieving profits, there is a need for government support and the provision of appropriate facilities to help such projects continue and achieve their goal, and this support must continue for a period of no less than two or three years to cover, at least, the operating expenses until the project begins to achieve profits, whether the support is financial through partnership between the public and private sectors, or by providing appropriate facilities for the government procedures required to establish any entertainment project.

This is in addition to providing logistical support, providing land and opening the door for visas to bring in the necessary labor to operate this type of project.

The CEO of the Future Child Entertainment Real Estate Company, Faisal Al-Houti, explained that the Corona crisis affected entertainment projects, as the state reduced spending on this vital sector, noting that the nature of the hot climate in Kuwait for most of the year requires the authorities to focus more on indoor entertainment projects that mainly serves citizens and residents and drives the local economy.

He stressed the need for the state to provide the necessary lands for the establishment of these indoor projects, pointing out that the private sector is able to implement medium-sized and large projects, because Kuwait is different from other tourist countries such as the UAE (Dubai) and Saudi Arabia, which depend on foreign tourists, which is the opposite situation in Kuwait, which depends mainly on citizens and residents, and therefore the country is not prepared to establish large projects.

At the same time, Al-Houti stressed the need to open the door for visas to attract tourists from outside Kuwait, as did neighboring countries, because relying on domestic tourism only will not be rewarding and will not achieve the expected return.

5 obstacles hamper the establishment of entertainment projects

- Lack of budget need for such projects
- The hot climatic conditions in Kuwait which necessitate focusing on indoor recreational projects
- The population of Kuwait is small, and not good enough for big recreational projects.

- Scarcity of manpower to operate these projects.
- Lack of liquidity and scarcity of land with the required areas.

9 ways to revive the tourism sector

- The private sector must take charge of operation of entertainment projects of all sizes
- Opening the door for visas to increase the number of visitors
- Provide land and sites for the establishment of projects
- Innovative ideas for entertainment projects
- Opening the door for licenses, providing infrastructure and overcoming all obstacles
- Providing financing services for recreational activities and projects
- Government focus on developing tourism and entertainment system; creating tourism ministry
- Ensuring the establishment of tourism and entertainment programs
- Providing statistics, database and information on tourist places in Kuwait

EXCLUSIVE to THE TIMES KUWAIT



COP of No Return

**Sameh Shoukry***President-Designate of COP27 and
Egyptian Minister of Foreign Affairs.*

Some fear that this year's United Nations Climate Change Conference, to be held at Sharm El-Sheikh from 6–18 November, will be an unintended casualty of the geopolitical tensions and economic challenges the world is facing. I believe the opposite: COP27 represents a unique and timely opportunity for the world to come together, recognize our common interests, and restore multilateral cooperation.

The human cost of climate change is making headlines almost daily. Global warming is no longer a distant or theoretical threat, but an immediate material one — a phenomenon that affects each of us, our families, and our neighbors. No society has been left unscathed by more frequent and intense droughts, wildfires, storms, and floods. Millions of people are already battling for survival.

And that is with temperatures having risen by just 1.1° Celsius, relative to pre-industrial levels. As the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change has made clear, every additional tenth of a degree makes matters worse. Yet the changes needed to avert catastrophe are not being made, at least not fast enough, and the developing world is increasingly frustrated with rich countries' refusal to pay their fair share for a crisis for which they bear overwhelming responsibility.

But there is reason for hope. In my discussions with delegations around the world, I see their determination to make COP27 a success. Already, societies are starting to act. Climate adaptation and new forms of collaboration are gaining traction, and investment in climate tech is booming. This includes new carbon-removal technologies, electric transport

solutions, and renewable energies. As a result, clean-energy prices continue to fall: almost two-thirds of renewable power added in G20 countries in 2021 cost less than the cheapest coal-fired options. My country, Egypt, is on track to produce 42 percent of its energy from renewable resources by 2035.

At the same time, civil society is devising mechanisms for holding companies and governments to account, guarding against greenwashing, and ensuring a just transition. There is a new focus on restoring nature.

More ambition, scale, and speed are needed, and the rules remain unclear or contested. But a process is underway, and there is no going back. Even in countries that might seem to be wavering

often limited due to their scarce resources and competing development needs. Developed countries must uphold their end of that bargain, by supporting both mitigation and adaptation, thus fulfilling their envisaged responsibilities in the Paris agreement.

On the mitigation front, we must move from rhetoric to action in cutting our greenhouse-gas emissions and removing carbon from our atmosphere. All countries must embrace more ambitious Nationally Determined Contributions, and then translate those pledges into programs. We must act now to ensure appropriate resources are available to developing countries to unlock their potential.

At the same time, we must craft a

Framework Convention on Climate Change's Standing Committee on Finance. And yet this amount has not been delivered. We need an increase in the scale of finance pledges, especially for adaptation, at COP27, compared to those made at COP26 in Glasgow.

Developed countries must also honor the pledge they made last year to double adaptation finance by 2025, and they should provide the assurances needed for the Green Climate Fund's new replenishment.

And the time has come to address the loss and damage suffered by countries that did not cause the climate crisis. This remains contentious, but I believe that we can approach it constructively, guided by the priorities of developing countries, for the benefit of all.

A just transition must account for the needs of various regions. For example, African countries are committed in principle to adopting renewable energy and refraining from exploiting their fossil-fuel resources. But 600 million people in Africa — 43 percent of the continent's population — currently lack electricity, and around 900 million do not have access to clean cooking fuels. The climate-action bargain demands that this be addressed, and the continent's broader development needs be met, in sustainable ways.

All of these imperatives must be pursued together, with a carefully designed package of actions, rather than through piecemeal measures. They are the pillars of a just transition. If one is missing, the entire edifice collapses.

Ahead of the 2015 COP in Paris, few believed that an agreement would be reached. Yet delegates from all over the world came together, and through skill and perseverance, reached a groundbreaking deal. In 2022, we face even higher hurdles, so we must work even harder to clear them. If we do, we will usher in a new age of clean energy, innovation exchange, food and water security, and greater climate justice.

As daunting as this challenge is, we have no choice but to confront it. We must negotiate with one another, because there can be no negotiating with the climate.

“ We must craft a transformative adaptation agenda, so that communities, especially in climate-vulnerable regions, can protect themselves from the effects that are already unavoidable. The bill for this agenda must be divided fairly. ”

in their commitments — say, by investing in fossil-fuel infrastructure — officials insist that stopgap measures necessitated by immediate challenges should not be mistaken for long-term strategies. No one doubts the greener road ahead.

The question for those of us who will participate in COP27 is straightforward: How can we seize the opportunity the conference offers to create a sense of common endeavor, prevent backsliding, and inspire an approach based on science, trust, justice, and equity?

At its heart, climate action is a bargain. Developing countries have agreed in good faith to help tackle a crisis they did not cause, on the understanding that support, particularly financial support, would be provided to complement their own efforts, which are

transformative adaptation agenda, so that communities, especially in climate-vulnerable regions, can protect themselves from the effects that are already unavoidable. The bill for this agenda must be divided fairly.

To date, a disproportionate share of climate finance has been directed toward mitigation, leaving developing countries largely to fend for themselves in financing adaptation investment. But even the finance provided for mitigation is far from sufficient and has not been delivered with the appropriate instruments.

In 2009, developed countries pledged to provide \$100 billion annually for climate action in the developing world by 2020. This is only a small portion of the more than \$5.8 trillion that is needed (up until 2030), according to the UN



Healthier diets boost brain health

Diet is an important source of many metabolites, including those that are markers of various aspects of our health. A metabolite is an intermediate or end product of metabolism, which in turn is the set of life-sustaining chemical reactions taking place in organisms.

A new study that aimed to find out how metabolites impact cognition, found that across the world and among different races and ethnicities, the metabolites from healthier diets could help protect brain health. Previous research has shown that certain metabolites, including lipids, amino acids, and steroids, are linked with cognitive decline associated with brain diseases such as Alzheimer's disease and dementia.

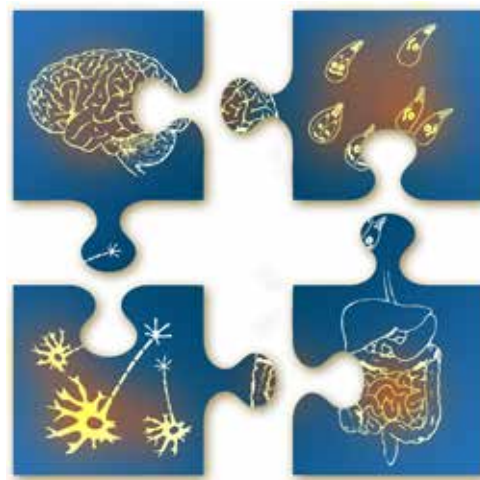
The study by researchers at Brigham and Women's Hospital, a unit of Harvard Medical School in the United States, confirmed what scientists already knew about the link between diet and cognition — what we eat can impact our brain health.

The scientists involved in the study pointed out that diet impacts more than just body

weight, and can influence how the brain and body functions in tandem, and how this can have a crucial bearing on mental and physical health of an individual.

The researchers found that metabolites from healthier diets, such as the Mediterranean diet, were associated with stronger cognitive functions, such as thinking, reasoning or remembering, while metabolites from diets high in sugar were associated with poorer cognitive function. The researchers also demonstrated that these findings could be generalized to different races and ethnicities.

Different metabolites are produced by different kinds of foods and while some are associated with positive health outcomes, others are known to be linked to worse health outcomes. For example, Vitamin B12, a metabolite from animal diets, helps in neurological function, which is why doctors advise vegans who eat only plant based foods to supplement their diet with B12. On the other hand there are certain metabolites, such as ribitol — a plant-based metabolite — that may negatively affect our cognition.



For their study, the research team evaluated metabolite levels and cognitive function scores in more than 2,200 Hispanic and Latino individuals, over 1,360 European people, and nearly 480 African-American people. They then tested whether metabolites that have previously been linked to cognition in past research could be applied to the three different racial and ethnic groups involved in the study.

The research team found that six metabolites — four of which were sugars or derivatives of sugar — were associated with poorer cognitive function. Another type of metabolite, beta-cryptoxanthin, that is associated with fruit consumption and the Mediterranean diet was linked to stronger cognitive function. They also found that their findings could be generalized across all racial and ethnic groups involved.

However, the study did not find a strong causal relationship between metabolites and cognitive health; what they surmised was that the relationship probably goes both ways —

with diet impacting our cognition and our cognition impacting our diet. The research team hopes that future studies will explore how metabolites may directly impact cognition.

The scientists also warned that their findings should be interpreted with caution, as there were some limitations to their study, including that it did not consider other contributing factors for cognitive decline, such as socioeconomic status, physical activity and social support. Moreover, sugar intake was not measured among the participants, which makes it difficult to identify specific dietary recommendations to boost brain health.

Nutritionists add that while the study reaffirms that people who eat poorer quality diets may be at higher risk for chronic disease, the findings should not be used to make specific dietary recommendations. Nevertheless, the study reiterates that healthy plant-based foods tend to have more of the healthy, safe, beneficial metabolites, while less-healthy highly processed foods will have more of the less-safe, unhealthy metabolites that negatively affect cognition.

The findings underscore the importance of adhering to a healthy diet that is rich in fruits and vegetables. The study suggested eating more of the unprocessed, whole foods and fewer processed foods that are high in sugar or low in vitamins and minerals. Nutritionists and dietitians point out that people should make sure that at least half of their grains are whole grains, and swap half of their animal-based proteins for plant-based ones. Besides diet, improving lifestyle habits, such as good social interactions, adequate sleep, physical activity, and avoiding substance abuse among others, are also known to be beneficial to cognition.



Weight loss not beneficial for everyone

A new study into overweight and obesity has found that weight loss is much more beneficial for people with excess weight compared to individuals who are already lean.

The study, by researchers at T.H. Chan Harvard School of Public Health in the United States, evaluated weight loss strategies and their health effects in nearly 200,000 people. They found that people with obesity who lost weight had a significantly lower risk of type 2 diabetes, however, when lean people attempted to lose weight, their risk of type 2 diabetes increased.

The researchers studied data from three prospective cohort studies conducted between 1988 and 2017 among nearly 200,000 people. People were deemed lean if they had a BMI under 25. If it was 25 to 30 they were deemed as having overweight and if it was above 30 they were deemed as having obesity.

They grouped people into seven categories based on methods used to lose at least 4.5 kilograms — low-calorie diet, exercise, low-calorie diet plus exercise, fasting, commercial weight loss program, diet pills, and a combination of fasting, commercial and diet pills. They also looked at people who did not lose weight.

Of the people who lost at least 4.5

kilograms and had obesity at baseline, the team found that all of the weight-loss strategies were associated with less weight gain and a lower risk of diabetes. The study also found that exercise was the most effective strategy for weight loss.

Over the course of the 24-year study period, people with obesity who exercised had a 21 percent lower risk of diabetes and those who took diet pills had a 13 percent lower risk. People who were overweight and exercised, had a 9 percent lower risk of Type 2 diabetes and those who took diet pills had a 42 percent higher risk of diabetes.

The study showed that if you are overweight or obese, even moderate weight loss of up to 4.5 percent led to significant gains in overall health and reduction in disease risk. Surprisingly the health effects were found to be opposite among lean people, with lean people who intentionally lost weight tending to gain back more weight and have a higher risk of diabetes.

Lean people who exercised in order to lose weight also had a 9 percent greater risk of diabetes and lean individuals who took diet pills or followed a commercial weight loss program to lose weight had a 54 percent increased risk of diabetes.

Bariatric physicians, who focus on treating those who have obesity and help promote weight loss and increase overall health, were surprised to learn that weight loss strategies had such opposite health effects on people depending on their body mass index (BMI) at baseline. They surmised that underlying biological differences could be impacting how and why people's bodies respond differently to weight loss efforts.

Obesity causes hormonal and metabolic complications that can contribute to a range of health problems, including type 2 diabetes, insulin resistance, hypertension and heart disease. When people, who have obesity, lose weight they eliminate some of the fatty tissue that produces inflammation, disrupts hormonal production, and contributes to insulin resistance.

Lean individuals, on the other hand, have a different hormonal and metabolic makeup, which likely causes them to respond differently to weight loss. Attempting to lose weight when you are lean can have negative effects on your overall metabolism, mental health, and possibly even overall health.

People who are already lean should aim to engage in maintenance activities such as exercising to stay healthy and eating nutrient-dense whole foods while eliminating or reducing the consumption of ultra-processed foods.

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New Chance for the World Bank



Lawrence H. Summers

Was the Chief Economist of the World Bank (1991-93), US Secretary of the Treasury (1999-2001), Director of the US National Economic Council (2009-10), and President of Harvard University (2001-06), where he is currently University Professor.

Outside of the security domain, overhauling the World Bank offers US President Joe Biden's administration its greatest opportunity for a key foreign-policy achievement. The World Bank should be a major vehicle for

crisis response, post-conflict reconstruction, and, most importantly, for supporting the huge investments necessary for sustainable and healthy global development. But currently it is not.

The remarkable feature of the World Bank's financial model is that even before it is reformed, which is very necessary, and even without considering its ability to mobilize private-sector finance, each \$1 of appropriated funds from the United States catalyzes a permanent increase in lending of more than \$15 dollars. (This is because other countries contribute to the Bank as well, and paid-in capital is leveraged many times over.)

Uniquely, the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) have the capacity to do very large things worldwide and at low budgetary cost. They are multilateral and most of the shareholders uphold Western values. The World Bank is located in Washington, DC, and traditionally has



EXCLUSIVE to THE TIMES KUWAIT

American leadership. Charles Kenny at the Center for Global Development (CGD) and others have pointed out that, despite much rhetoric, the world is falling far short in its collective ability

to respond to crises. Kenny's searing analysis shows that despite today's 'polycrisis'—looming global recession, high interest rates and a strong dollar buffeting many economies, rising food and energy prices, the ongoing pandemic, and accelerating climate change—World Bank lending has not even kept up with growth since 2017. In fact, it has declined in the last year, and the IMF has not done much better.

This should be unacceptable to the US and other major IMF and World Bank shareholders. Given the magnitude of global challenges over the next decade, we should be thinking in the trillions not the billions for the Bank. If war is too important to leave to generals, financing global survival is too important to leave to green eyeshades and international bureaucrats.

Four steps are necessary, and all are broadly consistent with US Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen's recent speech and a recent statement from a group of think tanks.

First, the Bank needs a new and broadened mission statement embracing sustainability and global public goods as well as poverty reduction. There can be no enduring success in poverty reduction without a global paradigm shift to sustainable development, and there can be no path to a global green transition without progress in poverty reduction. Mission statements are meaningless without action. The Bank's shareholders insist on a financial vision that will result in \$2 trillion in lending over the 2024-34 decade.

Second, the Bank must overhaul its financial model to include more extensive leveraging of its capital; reconsider lending instruments, including their time horizon and degree of conditionality; and combine the efforts of the Bank's co-financing with those of the International Finance Corporation (the Bank's private-sector lending arm) and the Multilateral Investment Guarantee Agency to spur private investment. Consideration should be given to ideas advanced by Mark Plant, also of the CGD, and others to use special drawing rights (SDRs, the IMF's reserve asset) as capital for development. (So far, despite much ballyhoo, new allocations of SDRs, as best as I can tell, have had no impact on the pace of development around the world.)

Third, there is a pressing need to reform the Bank's culture and procedures to emphasize speed of execution. The time will come when the reconstruction of Ukraine will be a key priority. Without reform, I hope, but do not expect, that funds committed will be rapidly transferred on promised schedules, unlike in so many other post-conflict situations.

I also hope that the Bank can move away from what I once called its 'convoy approach'—all sectors in all

countries—toward an emphasis on what is most important. Recognition that provision of large amounts of funding at moments of crisis comes with maximum speed can be of enormous value to client countries.

Fourth, these steps should be reflected in a major green capital increase to be agreed within a year. Given how dire the world's needs are, the increase should be 2-3 times as large as the previous \$13 billion increase in 2018. I would estimate that a \$30 billion dollar increase in paid-in capital, which would cost the US about \$5 billion over eight years, could support nearly an extra \$100 billion in annual lending, heavily directed toward the energy transition.

This is more the beginning of a vision than a detailed program. My goal is to convey a sense of the urgency and scale the moment demands. I have not been in office for quite a while, so I have lost sympathy with the constraints that the staff of the Bank

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and the world's treasuries will point to. Guilty. On the other hand, there are hinge moments in history when the transition from inconceivable to inevitable is dizzyingly rapid.

This must be the case. After all that has happened in the last few years, there is an urgent need for the US and its allies to regain the trust of the developing world. There is no better means of regaining trust than through the collective provision of large-scale support for countries' highest priorities. And there is no more rapid and effective way of mobilizing support than through the World Bank. If we do not see major progress on these issues at the G20 Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governor meeting this week in Washington, DC, a major opportunity will have been squandered.






**VISIT OF
POPE FRANCIS
TO BAHRAIN**



His Holiness Pope Francis will visit the Kingdom and during his stay in the country, The Pontiff will address the Bahrain Forum for Dialogue, a conference that will focus on the theme 'East and West for human coexistence'

The Pope will also celebrate a public mass at the Bahrain National Stadium on Saturday, 5 November. Catholics from the other countries of the Vicariate of Northern Arabia are invited to attend this gathering

ITL World will facilitate your travel requirements to Bahrain for this auspicious occasion

DEPARTURE FROM KUWAIT ON 4TH NOVEMBER 2022

Package Includes

Return airfare, Bahrain tourist visa, 2 nights' accommodation with daily breakfast, return transfers to Bahrain National Stadium on 5th November, half-day city tour & return airport transfers

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