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Gender- violence, a lingering social thorn

THE TIMES KUWAIT REPORT

International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women, held each year on 25 November, is an opportunity to raise awareness on the pervasive human rights violation against women and girls that persists covertly and overtly in most countries of the world.

As the United Nations agency, UN Women, stated ahead of this year's International Day for Elimination of Violence Against Women: "There has been a significant backlash against women's rights and attacks against women human rights defenders and activists in recent years. The legal status of women's rights is increasingly imperiled in many countries, regressive new laws are exacerbating impunity for perpetrators of domestic violence, governments are using force against gender-based violence protests, and



women's rights organizations are increasingly being marginalized.

UN Women, stressed that supporting and investing in strong, autonomous women's rights

organizations and feminist movements is key to ending violence against women and girls (VAWG). The agency pointed out that the push forward with feminist mobilization in the face

of a push-back from anti-rights movements, is underscored by the theme for this year's campaign on VAWG, which is 'UNITE! Activism to End Violence against Women and Girls'.

Kuwait is marking this year's International Day to Eliminate Violence Against Women by reiterating its commitment to implement international treaties and agreements on the elimination of all forms of discrimination and violence against women. Speaking on the issue of VAWG, chairperson of the Union of Kuwaiti Women's Associations, Sheikh Fadya Saad Al-Sabah, slammed violence against women as being one of the most common human rights violations.

Noting that the Kuwaiti constitution and laws safeguard women's dignity and protect them against psychological and physical violations, she lauded the efforts exerted by Kuwait to protect women's human rights.

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MoI to restart printing of school textbooks

In line with the Cabinet's exhortations for closer cooperation and collaboration between ministries, and to rationalize spending by combining efforts, the Ministry of Information (MoI) announced last week that an agreement has been reached with the Ministry of Education to use the Government Printing Press to print school textbooks for the academic year 2023-24.

The agreement is noteworthy in that this would be the first time in 47 years that the government press was being used to print textbooks. Announcing the agreement, the spokesperson for the Ministry of



Information, Anwar Murad, said that this agreement came under the directives of the Minister of Information and Culture and the Minister of State for Youth Affairs, Abdul

Rahman Al-Mutairi.

She noted that the minister had directed information ministry officials to enhance cooperation between the two ministries in this field and overcome all obstacles that could face the implementation of this agreement. A working group is to be formed with officials from both sides, with the Education Ministry side headed by the Undersecretary of the Ministry Faisal Maqseed.

Adding that the last time that the books of the Ministry of Education were printed in the government printing press was in

1975, she pointed out that the agreement represented a major step towards unifying government efforts and bringing about closer cooperation between them in a way that guarantees continuity and the rationalization of spending.

She explained that the agreement between the officials of the two ministries also included that the government printing press would print the books of the Ministry of Education as a priority, without prejudice to its other obligations, whether at the level of the Ministry of Information or other government agencies.

LuLu Hypermarket launches Super Friday Promotion



LuLu Hypermarket, the leading retailer in the region and the destination of choice for discerning shoppers, launched the 'LuLu Super Friday' promotion that runs from 23 November to 3 December across all outlets of the hypermarket in Kuwait.

The week-long event was inaugurated on 23

November at the Al-Qurain branch by the popular social media sensation dr_kholodii, in the presence of the top management of LuLu Hypermarket, along with a large gathering of customers and well-wishers of the brand. The 'Super Friday' promotion features an amazing range of offers and discounts on an array of world-class products

for shoppers to choose from, including super-special deals of up to 75 percent discount on select items in all categories, such as electronics, mobile phones, IT equipment, home appliances, fashion, footwear, luggage, toys, household, fragrance, eyewear, and cosmetics among others.

"Buy Hisense & win" contest grand raffle

draw winners awarded WORLDCUP QATAR 2022 Semifinal tickets. The 'Super Friday' promotion reiterates LuLu Hypermarket's continued commitment to provide shoppers with an unrivaled shopping experience, while offering high-quality products from around the world at exceedingly competitive prices.

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IWG delegation visits Kuwait Airways

A delegation from the International Women's Group (IWG), headed by Ghada Shawky, president of the IWG and wife of the Egyptian Ambassador, paid a field visit to Kuwait Airways on 20 November.

Department of Institutional Communication and Public Relations at Kuwait Airways welcomed the members, which was followed by a tour that was arranged by the Engineering Department of the airline.

Eng. Abdullah Al-Habib guided the tour during which he gave an overview of the history of Kuwait Airways from its inception in 1954 to the present day and the consistent and effective role of the Engineering Department since the arrival of the aircraft from the factory

until entering service. He also explained the periodical maintenance method provided for the whole fleet, which currently includes 33 aircrafts, and also highlighted the concern of the general safety of its passengers.

A brief description was also given about the types of aircrafts used by Kuwait Airways from 1954 until now, in addition to modern aircrafts, their types and advantages.

The delegation visited the A320neo, A330neo and Boeing B777 aircraft, with a tour inside the aircrafts, wherein the members were given information about the aircraft's services provided on board.

Towards the end of the tour, Mrs. Shawky, presented an honorary shield on behalf of the group to express gratitude to Kuwait Airways and also presented certificates of appreciation to Eng. Abdullah Al-Habib and the staff of the Department of Institutional Communication and Public Relations.





Kuwaiti investments in Switzerland are considerable and well appreciated

Ambassador of Switzerland H.E. Dr. Tiziano Balmelli

By Rabih Kalas
Special to The Times Kuwait

In a recent exclusive interview, Ambassador of Switzerland H.E. Dr. Tiziano Balmelli, spoke at length about bilateral relations between Switzerland and Kuwait. He stressed on the importance of strengthening existing ties between the two friendly countries, and exploring new areas of common interest in order to serve mutual interests, and achieve prosperity of the two countries.

Ambassador Balmelli, who holds a PhD in Law from the University of Fribourg has worked in the academic field from 1996 to 2001 before entering the Swiss Federal Department of Foreign Affairs in 2002. Well-versed in international law, he has served in different capacities at several Swiss diplomatic missions abroad before arriving in Kuwait. As a constitutional lawyer, he is keen on promoting the rights of people under international laws and charters, and is an ardent supporter of freedom of opinion and expression.

The Swiss envoy began by telling us of his delight to be in Kuwait and his priorities since presenting his credentials. "In general, my very first assignment is to get to know the country, its people and their potential. I immediately started after my arrival. It is a never ending process and I will be learning until my last day here, of course, but this is my priority for the first three months at least. I need to listen to many relevant actors in Kuwaiti politics, business, and society in general.

"I am also learning from fellow diplomats and other foreigners who have been active in this country and the region for a while. I do this with the positive approach which characterizes my personal nature: I constantly try to detect or generate opportunities in potential fields of cooperation. Before the end of the year, we will be able to delineate priorities, objectives and strategies with my team and our partners. My feeling at this stage is that we will focus on increasing the economic exchanges, valorizing our reciprocal humanitarian tradition and expanding people-to-people relations."

Appreciating the open nature of the country and voicing his optimism on enhancing bilateral relations, the envoy noted: "An ambassador should be first a scout and then a bridge-builder. The scout must act as a pioneer and identify not only new ways to fix old issues, but also new opportunities to expand relations. The bridge-builder then has to inspire and connect the relevant actors on both sides to join forces for win-win initiatives. Ambassadors have a big comparative advantage in these endeavors, doors are always open for them. This is particularly true in Kuwait. Since my arrival at the beginning of June, I have very much appreciated the great openness and sense of hospitality of the Kuwaiti people. And I am very optimistic about working here."

Praising Kuwait's role in supporting humanitarian issues, and highlighting the shared conviction in this regard between Switzerland and Kuwait, and on the importance of peace and dialogue in resolving conflicts, Ambassador Balmelli said, "This is a central aspect of our bilateral relations. Our two countries share an internationally recognized tradition of promoting dialogue and peaceful settlement of disputes, even in the harshest crisis, while other actors may slam doors, cut ties or even actively fan the flames of conflicts.

populations. I think, for instance, of the promotion of international humanitarian law, where the International Committee of the Red Cross is a key partner for both of us."

Describing bilateral economic relations as a field that could always be further improved, the Swiss envoy stated: "Generally speaking, I believe that the economic relations between two countries are always improvable, no matter how good they already are. With regard to the Swiss-Kuwaiti relations, our goal is to support the continuous expansion of the volume of investments. This goal is beneficial to the prosperity and the happiness of the populations in our countries."

"In Switzerland, we believe that the main role of public institutions is to provide framework conditions conducive to the development of the private sector's business. In the view of the Swiss government, these conditions are well in place between Switzerland and Kuwait through a free trade agreement (GCC-EFTA), an investment protection agreement and a double taxation agreement.

"We should now listen to the business communities to learn what could be done to further develop and expand the potential. We should not forget that Kuwait is performing in a highly competitive region, the GCC. I am confident that the economic and structural reforms under consideration



traditionally ranks in the top positions. We are strongly integrated into the global economy and we are committed to free trade. We have stability, personal and legal security, easy and well-functioning institutions at all levels. I know that the Kuwaiti private sector is already well aware of the many comparative advantages of Switzerland."

"The Kuwaiti investments in my country are considerable and well appreciated and this has been the case for a long time. I was honored to learn that the Kuwaiti people were the first from the Gulf region to discover and love Switzerland. Our people-to-people relations and friendship date back to the early 1930s, well before the formal establishment of diplomatic relations in 1966 and the arrival of the first Swiss Ambassador to Kuwait in 1977."

Asked about the potential for high-level reciprocal visits in the near future, Ambassador Balmelli explained, "For the whole year in 2022, our Foreign Minister Ignazio Cassis is simultaneously holding the office of the President of the country. This is by virtue of our unique institutional system, with the presidency assumed each year by one of the seven ministers, on a rotating basis."

CONTINUED ON PAGE 12

"I am confident that the economic and structural reforms under consideration in Kuwait will significantly boost its relations with Switzerland, among others. This will definitely be one of my priorities."

"We can both be proud of this humanitarian role. Unfortunately, the region and the world are witnessing plenty of these situations where countries like Kuwait and Switzerland should join forces to promote dialogue and peace, in particular to prevent or reduce the suffering of civilian

in Kuwait will significantly boost its relations with Switzerland, among others. This will definitely be one of my priorities."

Underlining his country's special appeal for global investors, including Kuwaitis, the ambassador noted: "In the World index of Economic freedom, Switzerland

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Thought “ for the week

Do I not destroy
my enemies when
I make them my friends?

- Abraham Lincoln

Former US ambassador praises RR as an independent voice of Kuwait

Deputy CEO of Reconnaissance Research (RR), Yousef Alghusain, welcomed former US ambassador to Kuwait and Iraq Douglas A. Silliman at the onset of the latter's five-day visit to Kuwait, where he is expected to meet with several Kuwaiti business and political leaders.



Alghusain said: "Ambassador Silliman played a major role in the launch of Reconnaissance Research. He is a key figure in our portfolio of close friends." He added: "Ambassador Silliman last visited Kuwait in 2019, when he inaugurated the center's maiden event (the US role in Kuwaiti-Iraqi Relations), where he along with a number of ambassadors, businessmen and academics, had a fruitful discussion."

Alghusain commended Ambassador Silliman as being an active expert in the region's affairs and challenges,

thanks to his long practical experience of working in Kuwait and Iraq, and his career at the US State Department since 1984, as well as his current work as president of the Arab Gulf States Institute in Washington (AGSIW).

For his part, Ambassador Silliman said: "It was my great pleasure to return to Kuwait after three years to renew old friendships and make new ones. In Kuwait I found some new optimism about the possibility of positive reform following elections and the formation of the new government. I hope that we will see cooperation between the government and parliament to put in place laws and policies that will position Kuwait well to deal with the most serious issues of the future — regional security, climate change, and sustainable development."

He continued: "I have a strong attachment to Reconnaissance Research, and have met its founder, Abdulaziz Al-Anjeri, numerous times while in Washington D.C. including just a few weeks ago."

He added "The last time I was in Kuwait in 2019 I had the honor of being a keynote speaker at their inaugural event. It was an enlightening and very well executed event by an excellent institution."

Amb. Silliman concluded: "Reconnaissance Research has succeeded in establishing itself as an independent voice of Kuwait to many Americans and members of the international community. They have put together a number of well-researched analytical reports as well as high quality events. We will continue to work together."

Jazeera Airways announces new service to Kazakhstan



Jazeera Airways announced its second service to Kazakhstan, with direct flights scheduled twice weekly to the city of Turkistan.

The new route is the first ever direct-flight between the Middle East and Turkistan. The flights from Kuwait are scheduled to depart on Mondays and Saturdays, while returning flights from Turkistan will arrive during the morning hours of Tuesdays and Sundays.

The route is scheduled to begin from 3 December and will serve the high demand for religious and cultural tourism with the flights landing at the Hazrat Sultan International Airport (HAS) in Turkistan.

Jazeera Airways Chief Executive Officer, Rohit Ramachandran, said: "We are very pleased to be continuing our expansion and serving a significant demand from CIS countries to travel to the Middle East, specifically for pilgrimage to Saudi Arabia, thanks to our frequent connecting flights to Medinah, Jeddah and Taif. Turkistan also attracts religious tourism and these flights will provide customers with convenient connections through our network."

Turkistan is the administrative center of the Turkistan Region of Kazakhstan, near the Syr Darya River, while the Hazrat Sultan International Airport (HSA) is a new airport that was inaugurated in 2020 with a capacity of three million passengers annually.

The Flight Schedule are as follows:

J9 635: Monday, Kuwait (KWI) to Turkistan (HSA) at 19.30 02.00 (+1day) ; J9 635: Saturday, Kuwait (KWI) to Turkistan (HSA) at 19.15 01.45 (+1 day)
J9 636: Tuesday, Turkistan (HSA) to Kuwait (KWI) at 03.00 04.10
J9 636: Sunday, Turkistan (HSA) to Kuwait (KWI) 02.45 03.55

RECIPE

Vegan Winter Bars



If you are on the lookout for a home-made gluten-free vegan indulgence, then look no further than at this delicious and nutritious Winter Bar recipe. Winter is a season when nutritious vegetables and fruits are readily available, and in some places this is the time when water chestnuts are abundant in the market. The interesting aspect of this recipe is that it can be tailored to make it free of various ingredients that people could be allergic to, including soy, gluten, nuts, or dairy, and to fit your personal dietary preference, whether it is a keto, paleo or low-carb diet.

Total Time: 20 minutes
Serving: 12 pieces

Ingredients:

- 1/3 cup extra-virgin coconut oil
- 1 cup water chestnut flour (singhara atta in Hindi)
- 1/3 to 1/2 cup grated jaggery
- 1/4 cup coconut powder

Instructions:

- Heat coconut oil in a pan and when it gets hot, add the water chestnut flour
- Roast the flour until the distinct aroma of the flour rises
- Add jaggery and coconut powder and keep stirring
- Turn off the flame
- The mixture will soon begin to leave the sides of the pan
- Immediately, start spreading it on a tray greased with coconut oil
- Sprinkle some coconut powder and even out the surface
- While warm, cut into rectangle bars, or the shape of your choice
- Let the mixture cool, before serving.



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

PART forms company to undertake infrastructure work

Public Authority for Roads and Land Transport (PART) has established a separate company in the public sector to implement and manage projects, and to realize financial benefits that will allow PART to carry out its role without being subject to budgetary restrictions.

The new company, with a capital of KD10 million set aside from the current budget for PART, will undertake a list of projects that have



been prioritized by the Authority such as paid parking in the streets, heavy vehicle parking areas, and the projects to develop the Jaber Bridge islands that the Council of Ministers is currently planning to implement in the near future.

In future, the company will also undertake new road projects in competition with the private sector, with the advantage being that as a public sector company it will have less

bureaucratic procedures to go through, as well as other hurdles that currently discourage many private sector companies from undertaking infrastructure projects.

Moreover, with its own funding it will not need to wait for approval from the Ministry of Finance or the Central Agency for Public Tenders, and the Fatwa and Legislation Department, but they will, of course, be subject to the control of the State Audit Bureau.

Government to incentivize private sector to hire nationals

A saturated public sector that can no longer absorb the hundreds of nationals seeking government jobs each year and already eats into three-quarters of the government's annual budget expenditure has increasingly become unsustainable. In a bid to ease pressure on the budget and encourage young nationals to seek employment away from government jobs, the Council of Ministers is reportedly working on a program that motivates employers in the private sector to employ national workers, including young graduates, retrenched workers, and other citizens seeking jobs.

The number of Kuwaitis working in the

private sector is currently around 75,000, most of whom work in sectors such as banks, finance, investment companies, communications and information technology.

The government plan which seeks to incentivize the private sector to hire around 23,000 citizens annually so as to reach its goal of providing jobs to over 100,000 citizens over a four to five year period.

Some of the steps being envisaged by the government include:

- Conducting a study on the incentive schemes implemented by other Gulf Cooperation Council countries, as well as other leading developed countries,

to encourage private sector companies to hire nationals. Identifying high-priority jobs to attract national labor in three stages over a staggered period, so that each stage is studied separately, then its data is analyzed and, if needed, a remedial study is built on its impact.

- Targeted incentive plans, including eligibility criteria, policies and processes, and aligning them with the efforts of the Public Authority of Manpower to increase the percentage of national employment in the private sector. Evaluating the impact of potential incentive plans on the government's financial resources and budgets in the future.



- Defining and implementing a training program and refining skills to equip citizens to take up jobs in the private sector
- Designing a strategy and policy to close the salary gap between public and private sectors and between expatriate and national workers.

Projects worth nearly a billion to launch in next fiscal

As part of efforts to revive the economy, revitalize the market, and provide gainful employment to nationals, the government is reportedly looking to spend nearly a billion dinars in the new fiscal year, 2023-24.

Over 129 development projects worth a total of KD955 million are understood to have been lined up for approval by the cabinet. Of these projects, 114 are ongoing projects from previous years, while 15 are new development projects.

The list of new projects include: Developing Mubarakiya area that encompasses both the commercial area and the municipal garden; launching the smart recruitment of skilled workers project; developing new employment centers; implementing the National Framework for Digital Skills; launching the Center for Development of Sustainability Technologies for Facilities and Infrastructure (Phase One - Building the Facility).

Other projects on the pipeline include the Ahmadi Cultural Platform Project; the supply-

ing and installing of a main conversion station for the Shagaya renewable energy project, which aims to transfer approximately 3,000 megawatts from the solar cell farm in Shagaya; first phase of a project to supply, install, operate and maintain gas turbine units operating in the combined cycle system (3,600 megawatts at the Nuwaiseeb site; the fourth package of new government buildings and the automatic connection of systems and cybersecurity for the new passenger terminal T2 at Kuwait International Airport; restructuring the postal sector, to transform it into a government company or in partnership with the private sector.

In addition, projects for the Jahra Waterfront (Corniche); empowering youth in entrepreneurship project; the educational, cultural and entertainment center on Abdullah Al-Ahmad Street in the Sharq region, with a total area of 57,000 square meters, for the study of languages, arts, a perfume laboratory, a cooking laboratory,



a virtual reality exhibition, and a 900 meter long bicycle track inside the complex.

The projects also include developing a unified platform for exchanging data between government agencies, which is expected to raise the level of efficiency and interaction between the involved entities; and a project to convert municipal solid waste into dry fuel that is used in cement factory kilns; as well as a project to provide alternate sources of energy through Refuse-derived fuels (RDF) such as the one that will convert municipal solid waste into dry fuel.

MoE to hire Indian, Nepali workers

Ministry of Education (MoE) is to hire Mlworkers from abroad in order to fill the hundreds of cleaning jobs lying vacant, as it has been unable to hire the required number of such workers through local contracting.

The Administrative Affairs and Administrative Development Sector of MoE has reportedly requested the Civil Service Commission to give its approval for the formation of 'foreign contracting committees' to go to India and Nepal to recruit about 1,000 female workers, to meet the ministry needs for cleaning workers.

The committees are expected to leave Kuwait in December, after obtaining the approval of the CSC, especially in light of the urgent need for these workers in schools, educational areas and the ministry's offices.



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French Embassy celebrates 'International French Teachers Day'



Ambassador of France, H.E. Claire Le Fleischer held a celebration at her residence last week to mark 'International French Teachers Day'. In a speech delivered on the occasion the ambassador pointed out that French was taught in Kuwait since the beginning of 1966, and that it is the third most taught language in Kuwait.

Praising the bilateral bonds between the two countries, Ambassador Le Fleischer

noted that an estimated 1,000 French teachers are currently teaching in Kuwait, and that around 30,000 students enroll in French language courses every year, including 10,000 students who study French at the baccalaureate level.

The ambassador also revealed that the French Embassy, represented by the French Institute in Kuwait, in partnership with the Kuwaiti Ministry of Education, Higher Education and Research, Gulf University and

the French Institute in Paris, will organize a regional training course in French for foreign teachers next February. This course will bring together about 70 participants from Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Qatar, the UAE and Kuwait.

She stated that French ranks fifth in terms of the most spoken language in the world, after Mandarin Chinese, English, Spanish and Arabic. More than 235 million people speak French daily, and nearly 300 million people are able to express themselves in French.

In conclusion, she thanked all the French language teachers in Kuwait, whose mission is to transfer and create content that contributes to the openness of future generations to learn French culture and language.

The event ended with a choir from Fahaheel National Indian School students singing a group of songs in French, and French DELF certificates for the years 2021 and 2022 being awarded to the students of the French Institute.

India-GCC to resume FTA negotiations

India and the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) states decided to pursue resumption of Free Trade Agreement (FTA) negotiations. This was disclosed in a joint press conference held by Indian Minister of Commerce and Industry Piyush Goyal and visiting Secretary-General of GCC Nayef Falah M. Al-Hajraf in New Delhi last week.

During the bilateral engagement, which was termed as forward-looking and solution-oriented, "both sides agreed to expedite conclusion of the requisite legal and technical requirements for

formal resumption of the FTA negotiations. The FTA is envisaged to be a modern, comprehensive agreement with substantial coverage of goods and services," said a statement from the Indian Ministry of Commerce and Industry following the talks.

The statement emphasized that the proposed FTA will create new jobs, raise living standards, and provide wider social and economic opportunities for both sides. They also agreed to significantly expand and diversify the trade basket in line with the enormous potential that exists on account of the complementary business and economic ecosystems of India and the GCC.

The GCC is considered the largest trading partner bloc of India, as bilateral trade in 2021-22 touched over US\$154 billion with Indian exports valued at around \$44 billion and imports of around \$110 billion. Meanwhile, bilateral trade in services between India and the GCC was valued at around \$14 billion in 2021-22, with exports valued at \$5.5 billion and imports at \$8.3 billion. Around



35 percent of India's oil imports and 70 percent of gas imports are from the GCC countries while GCC investments in India are currently valued at over \$18 billion.

Earlier, Indian External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar had welcomed Al-Hajraf in India and

noted the expanding India-GCC partnership. "Agreed to take it forward in newer areas, including in trade, security, culture and education. Also exchanged perspectives on regional and global developments and on building collective resilience," Jaishankar said on his official Twitter account.



Kuwait Cricket and FRIENDi mobile announces partnership for cricket season until 2023

Kuwait Cricket and FRIENDi mobile (By KConnect Arabia W.L.L) announced their partnership in a glittering ceremony on Monday, 21st November at the Olympic Council of Asia to be the title sponsor for the KCC domestic & international cricket season 2022-23.

The partnership deal was signed between Kuwait Cricket President Mr Haider Farman and FRIENDi mobile CEO Mr. Benoitt Janin.

"Kuwait is a country with millions of expatriates who are extremely interested in the game of Cricket. We are happy to associate with Kuwait Cricket to promote this game of cricket among the expatriates here," Mr. Benoitt Janin CEO of Friendi Mobile, said. On his part, Mr. Haider Farman thanked FRIENDi mobile for the partnership and said "that Kuwait Cricket would continue to improve the infrastructure and all other facilities provided



to the teams and players in the coming months & season in order to help and assist the national team players prepare for the international tournaments".

As per the partnership, FRIENDi mobile acquired the principal sponsorship and naming rights for the Kuwait National Men's team and all the major domestic tournaments in the state of Kuwait for the men's category.



"We sincerely thank FRIENDi mobile for this groundbreaking partnership; through this partnership with KCC (ranked 25th in the ICC T20i global rankings) FRIENDi mobile aims to increase their brand awareness, exposure and acquire more direct customers for their brand and in the process, promote, develop and help expand the game of cricket in the State of Kuwait amongst all

nationalities" the Director General of Kuwait Cricket Mr Sajid Ashraf said.

The ceremony was hosted by Noor Al Obaid, Head of Marketing at Gateway Consulting who are the official marketing partners of KCC for the season 2022-23 and attended by a galaxy of personalities including the Kuwait National Men's Team (led by Captain Mohammad Aslam & National Head Coach Muthumudalige Pushpakumara) KCC Board Vice President Mr Faisal Al Marzouk, General Secretary Mr. Emad Al Jassam, Board Members Mr Mahmoud Bastaki, Ms Awadatif Al Qallaf & Deputy GM Mr. Faisal Al Obaid of Gateway Consulting. On behalf of FRIENDi mobile, the Commercial Director of FRIENDi mobile Mr. Michael Fitzpatrick, Group VP Mr. Michael Klindt, Marketing Manager Mr. Asif AbdulGhaffar and Deputy Sales Manager Kate Graham graced the occasion.

Kuwaiti investors welcomed in Bulgaria

The Bulgarian ambassador H E Dimitar Dimitrov, confirmed that every Kuwaiti or resident who has a visa issued by one of the "Schengen" countries can enter Bulgaria without the need for a Bulgarian visa, even though Bulgaria does not yet belong to the Schengen visa system.

Dimitrov added, in a statement to reporters on the sidelines of a concert he held at his residence, that his country has always called for the abolition of visas for Kuwaitis, and its position is very positive, but there are procedures related to the institutions of the European Union, namely the European Commission and the European Parliament, which approve the exemption of Kuwaiti citizens from the visa.

Regarding the issue of direct flight between the two countries, he explained that direct flight is one of the great interest for him, and that he seeks to revive this direct flights again, pointing out that there is an old agreement between

Kuwait and Bulgaria in the field of aviation, and negotiations are still ongoing between the two countries with the aim of upgrading it.

The ambassador also touched on the issue of certificates issued by his country's universities, stressing "the endeavor to have Bulgarian certificates accredited, because there are many Bulgarian citizens who work in Kuwait with their Bulgarian certificates, and there has never been any problem with their certificates, and until today there are no problems with our certificates."

He added, "there are procedures in Kuwait to accredit Bulgarian degrees, and these procedures relate to the Ministry of Higher Education and the National Authority for Academic Accreditation and Education Quality in Kuwait, but we hope that Bulgarian universities and higher institutes will be accredited for study, especially since there are a number of Kuwaitis who graduated from Bulgarian universities in



the field of medicine and made a significant contribution to the development of the health sector in Kuwait.

He continued, "Bulgaria is an excellent place for university studies, and the graduates of Bulgaria are Kuwaitis, who have already confirmed that the level of education in Bulgaria is very advanced, and the Bulgarian people are hospitable and happy to see friends from Kuwait study there.

In a message to investors Dimitrov said Kuwaiti investors were welcomed with the availability of many investment opportunities, pointing out that the cost of production in Bulgaria is very low, and it is considered the cheapest in the European Union, and the investor can reach out to the huge European market, and the income tax and corporate tax in Bulgaria It is very miniscule.

The Bulgarian ambassador revealed a huge presence of a Bulgarian opera troupe to Kuwait, and a series of concerts will be organized at the Sheikh Jaber Al-Ahmad Cultural Center, in which a Bulgarian opera crew belonging will participate, along with a large number of international opera singers who will perform and help in bringing peoples together, and we always encourage our musicians and singers to participate in such events in Kuwait, which has always been very open to organizing such events.

IPS, Badr Al Samaa Medical Center organize health campaign

Indian Public School (IPS) in association with Badr Al Samaa Medical Centre organized a free health campaign titled, 'Health is Wealth' for the students on 21 and 22 November, to mark International Children's Day celebrated on 20th November worldwide.

A team of doctors and technicians from Badr Al Samaa Medical Centre Farwaniya conducted the campaign as a part of the Centre's Corporate Social Responsibility. It included dental checkup, eye checkup and



BMI for the students of primary classes. This proved to be a blessing for the students as many were diagnosed with vision related issues and difficulty in coordination.

Treatments were advised and reports given to the concerned teachers and parents.

An interactive seminar session was also conducted for the students of senior-



secondary wing on the topic of 'Health, Diet and a Healthy Lifestyle'. The aim of the seminar was to raise awareness among teenagers of the attitude that can be adopted to improve their diets and to increase physical activity levels and thereby adopt a healthy lifestyle. The session enlightened the students on the need to have the right nutrients through the

right dietary intake. The students were also advised on the risks involved in consuming junk food.

Issues like obesity, bulimia, anorexia, anemia etc. and their symptoms were also explained in detail. There was enthusiastic participation by the students in this interactive session.

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A	Team	P	W	D	L	GF	GA	Pts
	Netherlands	2	1	1	0	3	1	4
	Ecuador	2	1	1	0	3	1	4
	Senegal	2	1	0	1	3	3	3
	Qatar	2	0	0	2	1	5	0

B	Team	P	W	D	L	GF	GA	Pts
	England	2	1	1	0	6	2	4
	Iran	2	1	0	1	4	6	3
	USA	2	0	2	0	1	1	2
	Wales	2	0	1	1	1	3	1

C	Team	P	W	D	L	GF	GA	Pts
	Saudi Arabia	1	1	0	0	2	1	3
	Poland	1	0	1	0	0	0	1
	Mexico	1	0	1	0	0	0	1
	Argentina	1	0	0	1	1	2	0

D	Team	P	W	D	L	GF	GA	Pts
	France	1	1	0	0	4	1	3
	Australia	2	2	0	1	2	4	3
	Denmark	1	0	1	0	0	0	1
	Tunisia	2	0	1	1	0	1	1

E	Team	P	W	D	L	GF	GA	Pts
	Spain	1	1	0	0	7	0	3
	Japan	1	1	0	0	2	1	3
	Germany	1	0	0	1	1	2	0
	Costa Rica	1	0	0	1	0	7	0

F	Team	P	W	D	L	GF	GA	Pts
	Belgium	1	1	0	0	1	0	3
	Croatia	1	0	1	0	0	0	1
	Morocco	1	0	1	0	0	0	1
	Canada	1	0	0	1	0	1	0

G	Team	P	W	D	L	GF	GA	Pts
	Brazil	1	1	0	0	2	0	3
	Switzerland	1	1	0	0	1	0	3
	Cameroon	1	0	0	1	0	1	0
	Serbia	1	0	0	1	0	2	0

H	Team	P	W	D	L	GF	GA	Pts
	Portugal	1	1	0	0	3	2	3
	South Korea	1	0	1	0	0	0	1
	Uruguay	1	0	1	0	0	0	1
	Ghana	1	0	0	1	2	3	0



Group Matches

Sunday 27 November
Monday 28 November
Tuesday 29 November
Wednesday 30 November

Al Bayt Stadium

28
ESP
v.
GER
22:00

36
NED
v.
QAT
18:00

Khalifa International Stadium

27
CRO
v.
CAN
19:00

35
ECU
v.
SEN
18:00

Al Thumama Stadium

26
BEL
v.
MAR
16:00

34
IRN
v.
USA
22:00

Ahmad Bin Ali Stadium

25
JPN
v.
CRC
13:00

33
WAL
v.
ENG
22:00

Lusail Stadium

32
POR
v.
URU
22:00

K
M
2

Stadium 974

31
BRA
v.
SUI
19:00

P
A
2

Education City Stadium

30
KOR
v.
GHA
16:00

T
F
1

Al Janoub Stadium

29
CMR
v.
SRB
13:00

A
D
1

The point Table representing up to 3pm, Saturday, 26 November 2022.

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Fiscal year 2021-22 ends in deficit

Last week, the Ministry of Finance announced the State's budget and closing account, which shows a deficit of KD3 billion in the fiscal year 2021-22 that ended on 31 March, 2022, marking a decrease of 72.2 percent compared with the previous fiscal year. Non-oil revenue was up by 38.5 percent compared to last year's closing accounts, which was the highest non-oil revenue recorded in 7 years.

Total revenue was up by 76.9 percent compared to last year's closing accounts, while wages and subsidies accounted for 76.0 percent of all expenditure, while capital and infrastructure expenditure accounted

for 12.0 percent of total expenditure, stated the ministry.

Elaborating on the budget and closing account, Minister of Finance Abdulwahab Al-Rasheed noted: "The rebounding oil price in the second half of the fiscal year helped shore up Kuwait's revenue. Kuwait has one of the strongest sovereign balance sheets in the world, with one of lowest sovereign debt to GDP levels globally, and a strong rebounding economy".

The State's accounts recorded KD18.6 billion in revenue, and KD21.6 billion in expenditure. Oil revenue hit KD16.2 billion, an increase of 84.5 percent from last year, while non-oil revenue reached KD2.4

billion, which was up 38.5 percent from previous year. Average price for Kuwait crude oil for the fiscal year hit US\$80.7 per barrel, and average oil production reached 2.539 million barrels per day.

Meanwhile, wages and subsidies posted KD16.4 billion, comprising 76.0 percent of all expenditure, while capital expenditure was KD2.6 billion, comprising 12.0 percent of all expenditure.

Minister Al-Rasheed added that the government is fully prepared to discuss the final account with the legislative authority and move forward in implementing solutions that are more realistic to develop public finances. The State's budgets



and closing accounts must be ratified by the National Assembly in order to be considered final.

Gender- violence, a lingering social thorn

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

However, she also lamented that violence against women is still a stumbling block to efforts and endeavors to ensure gender equity, development and peace, and stressed that the goal of attaining sustainable development cannot not be achieved without eliminating violence against women and girls.

Despite the principles enshrined in Kuwait's constitution, its ratification of several international covenants on women's rights, and protections provided by law against violence on women and girls, the phenomena continues unabated in public as well as in domestic spheres. In recent years there has been a spike in cases of violence against women, with several high-profile incidents garnering media attention and gaining traction in the national psyche.

In September, 2020, Fatima Al-Ajmi, a 34-year old pregnant Kuwaiti woman was shot dead by her brother inside a hospital, after she was hospitalized from gunshot wounds fired at her while at home by the same assailant. The brother apparently did not approve of her marriage. In December of the same year, Shaikha Al-Ajmi, no relative of the earlier-mentioned victim, who worked as a security-guard at the National Assembly was stabbed to death by her brother. This 'brother' did not approve of his sister working as a guard in the parliament building.

A dated, but nevertheless relevant report, published in 2018 by Dr. Fatima Al-Salem — back then, an Assistant Professor of Journalism and New Media at Kuwait University, and now the Director-General of Kuwait News Agency

(KUNA) —, showed that 53.1 percent of Kuwaiti women had been subjected to some kind of violence in their lives. The results compiled from a community behavior questionnaire on violence against women, including physical, psychological, verbal and sexual abuse, was designed to serve as the basis for an illustrative study showing the extent of violence against women in Kuwaiti society.

The study showed that physical abuse is the most prevalent type of gender-violence (30.7%), followed by psychological abuse (25.3%), and verbal abuse ranking third (24.9%). Additionally, a woman's husband or fiancé was found to be the most frequent perpetrator of the violence (50.2%), while an ex-partner was implicated in 20.4 percent of cases. Moreover, a father, brother or other close relative was reported to be the main abuser in 13.1 percent of cases.

The survey which also explored perceptions of gender-violence among respondents found that when asked to define violence against women, 51 percent respondents ranked exploitation and extortion as the main violence, followed by physical abuse (44%), psychological abuse (37%) and verbal abuse (35%). Exploitation as the main form of violence may appear surprising, but given the increased use of social media, the misuse of these platforms to threaten and blackmail women has increased significantly in recent years.

The results also show that 67 percent of the participants view violence as something related to culture and tradition, and that it occurs more often to women from cultures that adopt traditional values about the role of

women and men, such as male domination. In terms of preventing violence against women in Kuwait, the majority of respondents believe that awareness and education of society is key to eliminating gender-violence.

In August 2020, in order to conform with international covenants on eliminating violence against women, to which Kuwait is an early signatory, and in response to the relentless pressure from activists and women's rights groups that had been tirelessly campaigning for protection from gender-violence, the National Assembly passed Law 16/2020, or the Law on Protection for Victims of Domestic Violence.

Defining domestic violence as 'physical, psychological, sexual or financial mistreatment, whether in words or actions, or the threat of such actions, by a family member against one or more other members', the legislation aims to set minimum standards and legal protection procedures for victims of domestic violence, 'without threatening the stability of family unity in society'.

The law also includes provisions for legal, medical and rehabilitation services for victims, and calls for the establishment of shelters for survivors of domestic violence, and a hotline to receive complaints of gender violence. Equally importantly, the legislation also paves the way for issuing restraining orders to prevent harassers and abusers from contacting their victims.

However, passing of the law against domestic violence by parliament was evidently not enough to deter perpetrators of violence against women. In April last year, a young Kuwaiti woman, Farah Hamza Akbar was stabbed to death for refusing a marriage proposal from her killer. Horror and outrage sparked by this brutal act of violence led to citizens, activists, and human rights advocates protesting the violence, as well as the continued callousness of authorities towards gender-violence.

Under the overarching banner of 'Bas Kuwait' (Enough Kuwait), the protestors gathered at Irada Square in front of the parliament building, and called on lawmakers to implement the 'Protection for Victims of Domestic Violence' law that was passed in August 2020, and to enact more stringent punishment for perpetrators of violence against women. Although grassroots activism, with support from civil society organizations and concerned citizens has gained strength in recent years, and added impetus to campaigns aimed at eliminating gender violence, clearly, there is much more work that remains to be done.

Three weeks after the murder of Shaikha Al-Ajmi, the court charged the assailant of a misdemeanor, and imposed a 2-year prison sentence. Under Article 153 of Kuwaiti penal code, the killing of a close female relative, whether a mother, sister, wife or daughter, suspected of committing adultery is considered as an incident of 'honor-killing', and legally treated as a 'misdemeanor' — a relatively minor crime that entails a maximum sentence of three years in prison, or a maximum fine of KD3,000.

Treating a heinous murder as a misdemeanor is the equivalent of insulting the victim, and all those grieving her loss. If anything, it is the most

dishonorable and abominable aggression that anyone can perpetrate. There is and can be no honor in 'honor-killings', especially given that the victims in most cases are the own flesh and blood of the perpetrators. For its part, society needs to drop the prefix from these so-called 'honor-killings and call it by what it really is, a gruesome murder of one human being by another, and institute the fullest punishment under the law for these criminals.

Attributing and condoning this egregious behavior as a cultural or traditional norm, by 67 percent of people, as evidenced by the university survey mentioned above, is highly regrettable. People have to understand that cultures and traditions in a society are not static elements, they evolve over time and under influences. We live in an age of accelerating cultural change brought on by globalization, urbanization and rapid population growth around the world. People who live in a time warp are an anomaly.

Unfortunately, conservative elements in society tend to resist the incessant changes brought on by time, and their sway over people means that laws are enacted that aim to preserve traditional cultural practices and beliefs, and prevent incursion of foreign ideologies or behaviors. Sadly, this retrogressive thinking also gives rise to perverse behaviors among some people who resort to violence in order to maintain their beliefs.

No matter how it is framed, the criminal act of 'honor-killings' stems from a distorted perception that women are the repositories of honor and men are its guardians or protectors. It arises from the misguided, misogynistic notion that honor emanates from a woman's body — how she dresses, behaves, walks, talks, or interacts with others, are all causes of concern to the male regulators of honor.

Although this phenomenon is more widely reported from the Middle-East and from South-East Asia, it occurs in other places as well. It is especially prevalent in societies and communities where men are socially conditioned to think that they are entitled to power and control over women, who are also often considered as 'inferior'. In these situations, violence becomes a tool to ensure that women are kept in line and do not stray beyond borders delineated by men.

In Kuwait, domestic violence has for too long been considered an internal family matter, in which the law or society has no say. But, as recent incidents indicate, gender-violence is a behavior-pattern that needs professional psycho-therapeutic interventions and social care. The hope is that more stringent laws, better awareness through education, increased media coverage and public outrage over VAWG, as well as a willingness by more women to talk about domestic violence in the open, will bring a respite to the prevalence of gender-violence in this country.

However, elimination of gender-violence also requires an attitudinal change among men, and the promotion of concepts such as gender-equality, freedom of choice, and respect for women. And, this needs to begin at home, and at any early age.

CityBus announces 'Gold bar' winners

CityBus, the leading public transport operator in Kuwait had launched the 'Gold Rush' Raffle Draw on 14 October, as an appreciation to its customers for their loyalty during the pandemic.

The 10 winners of the 1st monthly draw of the 'Gold Rush' raffle are:

1. Abhishek Kumar
2. Sean Maximus Bautista
3. Tawadrous Halim Farah
4. Denham Anthony Labrooy
5. Sally Fernando Cayanan
6. Krycel Tumbaga
7. Jagdish Patidar
8. Bency Chakkalayil Varghse Baby
9. Deepak Pandey
10. Edgar Baliai

The raffle draw was conducted under the supervision of Ministry of Commerce and Industry. The Winners were invited to City Group Co. KSCP, Sulabiya head office and were awarded with 5gms. of 24 carat gold bars.

There will be two more monthly raffle draw announcements, that are scheduled to place during December and January.

This promotion is for all passengers



travelling on CityBus during the next two months. Passengers can register by scanning the QR Code on their tickets. Every ticket registered has a chance to win the Gold bar and there's no limit to the number of tickets that can be registered by a single passenger.

There will be 10 winners every month with a chance to win 5 gms of 24 carat Gold bar each, and one mega raffle winner at the end will receive a chance to win 40 gms of 24 carat Gold bar. The promotion will run until January 15th.

Culture hinders adoption of mass transport

Numerous studies and research by local and international entities have suggested that one of the solutions to Kuwait's seemingly perpetual traffic congestion lies in promoting 'mass transportation' modes of travel among citizens and residents. Other recommendations include introducing innovative technologies and policies that get more people to use mass transport, including the launch of a long-awaited metro rail system, efficient inner-city bus services, shared rides and others.



These studies, as well as evidence of its successful implementation in other countries, should have propelled the authorities to introduce mass transportation in Kuwait, and prompted them to encourage people to abandon their cars and adopt less polluting, less expensive and more sustainable modes of transport.

While policymakers agree that mass transportation could be the answer to traffic congestion, they are, as usual, reluctant to introduce policies and processes that large segments of citizens are unwilling to accept.

Attribute the absence of a culture of its use to

several reasons, including fear of losing privacy, and the desire for freedom of movement according to the destination one wants.

Vice President of the Kuwait Society for Traffic Safety, retired Brigadier Bader Saleh Al-Hammadi, said "The experience of introducing mass transportation contributed to solving the problem of traffic jams in many countries. However, in Kuwait, adverse climate conditions throughout the year, high temperature, humidity, dust and other unwelcome weather patterns, have hindered public interest in using mass transport means of travel. Moreover, the culture of using mass transport is not ingrained in the culture of the country, where people prefer the privacy provided by cars, as well as the freedom of movement provided by individual vehicles.

He added, "Officials have been urging the use of mass transportation, but people do not want it. They like privacy in transportation, and the ability to reach their desired destination at a time and pace of their choice, rather than wait around at bus shelters in inclement weather."

Member of the Board of Directors of the Kuwait Society for Traffic Safety, Dr. Jamal Al-Mutawa, said that "the solutions offered to reduce traffic congestion are direct and indirect, including changing working hours for government institutions and schools, activating e-government, raising the cost of the trip through road tax, reviewing the price of fuel and the price of vehicle insurance, and allocating special lanes for vehicles with more than one passenger."

Kalyan Jewellers celebrates the Nation's passion for football with the launch of Es Vida!

Gender neutral limited edition jewellery campaign features Indian footballers Harmanjot Singh Khabra and Nganbam Sweety Devi

Kalyan Jewellers, one of the largest and most-trusted jewellery companies, has today announced the launch of its football-themed jewellery – Es Vida. With the ongoing football World Cup fever, the all-new limited edition jewellery designs of Es Vida pays tribute to the country's vibrant football culture.



Es Vida, is a Spanish phrase which means 'It's Life' – which is exactly what football is to its millions of supporters. This set of gender-neutral platinum and rose gold jewellery from Kalyan Jewellers provides fans with an opportunity to valiantly display their passion for the game.

Talking about this unique football memorabilia, Mr. Ramesh Kalyanaraman, Executive Director – Kalyan Jewellers said, "We are delighted to introduce Es Vida to the passionate and enthusiastic football community in India and the Middle East. We believe that these all-new soccer-inspired designs will be something that the footballing community would love to wear and flaunt, as

they celebrate this game season. In a brand first, we have associated with India's football icons for the Es Vida campaign, and we hope that fan's for whom football is life, will embrace Es Vida," he added.

The brand campaign for Es Vida features Indian youth icons Harmanjot Singh Khabra and Nganbam Sweety Devi, both players representing India's National Football Team. Coming together for the first time, Harmanjot Singh Khabra and Nganbam Sweety Devi speak about what football means to them. They advocate that one should #WearYourPassion – and is featured wearing the Es Vida range of gender neutral jewellery from Kalyan Jewellers.

Football fans can now wear their passion as they cheer their favourite football teams and sporting icons - Es Vida designs are available at select showrooms across Kuwait, Qatar, UAE, Oman and India, priced from KWD 205 onwards.

Sport this stylish football-themed pendant from Kalyan Jewellers and get a chance to have a better shot at your next GOAL!



This single-tone pendant is made of the finest quality platinum, and is an excellent way to accessorize your daily look, this soccer season.

Football for many is not just a game, it is life! Keeping this emotion at heart, Kalyan Jewellers introduces distinctive Es Vida jewellery designs, which is a perfect gifting option for your loved ones. The perfect accessory to showcase one's passion towards the sport!

This dual-tone pendant, with its stunning rose gold and platinum matte-finish gives a stylish and matchless look



Philips Middle East collaborates with Kuwaiti chef, Faisal Fahad Al Nashmi, for the launch of its latest innovation

Together, Philips Middle East and Chef Faisal will introduce a new way of cooking to drive healthier habits in Kuwait.

Kuwait City, Kuwait (20 November 2022): Philips Middle East, a global leader in the innovation of consumer products and domestic appliances, is collaborating with the world-renowned Kuwaiti chef and restaurateur, Faisal Fahad Al Nashmi, for the launch of the Air Cooker 7000 Series.

Since breaking onto the Kuwaiti food scene at the age of 24, chef Faisal Fahad Al Nashmi has quickly established himself as one of the most influential chefs in the country. His collaboration with Philips aims to empower people in Kuwait to create chef-worthy meals that are healthier and tastier, at home.

The Air Cooker has been given Chef Faisal's seal of approval as a new way to discover flavour, creativity and control in the kitchen. Using innovative NutriFlavour technology to create optimal levels of temperature, humidity and time, the device cooks food to perfection while also preserving up to 90% of nutrients. The Smart Climate Control feature sets ideal cooking conditions automatically, enabling precise results even for complex recipes through a range of cooking methods such as steaming, roasting, baking, slow cooking, or

even sous viding.

Philips Middle East has also developed a savvy sous-chef to work alongside the Air Cooker: the NutriU app. After selecting from an extensive range of recipes, the user must simply press start and let the Air Cooker automatically set the perfect cooking climate. To kick start the collection of Air Cooker-specific recipes, Chef Faisal himself has adapted three of his signature dishes to the innovation, for everyone to enjoy a restaurant-worthy meal from the comfort of their home.

May Buhaisi, Category Lead at Philips Middle East commented on the collaboration: "We all know that healthy eating is the cornerstone of a healthy lifestyle, however it's not always easy to create exciting and nutritious meals that look and taste good. The Philips Air Cooker 7000 Series is designed to help achieve delicious and healthy meals effortlessly."

Chef Faisal also commented: "I'm proud to be a part of this exciting launch and contribute towards an entirely new culinary cooking experience. Cooking is an artform. It's an opportunity to experiment, be creative, and discover new flavour combinations. The Philips Air Cooker is the perfect companion for this, giving every home cook the confidence to be bold."



Embassy of India holds curtain-raiser for 17th PBD

Embassy of India held an event on 24 November to raise the curtain for the 17th Pravasi Bharatiya Divas (PBD)-2023, which will be held in Indore, Madhya Pradesh from 8-10 January, with the theme 'Diaspora: Reliable Partners for India's Progress in Amrit Kaal'.

Chargé d' Affaires at the Embassy, Smita Patil expressed her gratitude to the Indian community in Kuwait, who showed enthusiasm by participating in the event in large numbers. She noted that the 16th PBD Convention was organized online due to the pandemic, making the 17th edition of this event the first convention to be held physically after a gap of four years.

She highlighted the significance of India's diaspora in spreading the Indian culture and heritage, while also mentioning the unique features of this year's PBD which will be an opportunity for the diaspora Indians

to connect with their roots and brainstorm over ways to contribute to the growth and development of India.

Presentations on the Registration formalities and logistics arrangements for potential participants were highlighted at the event through presentations, as were the various tourism opportunities in the State of Madhya Pradesh. It was also disclosed that the last date for group registration to avail a 25 percent discount on registration fees was open until 30 November.

As a special gesture, and on the request of members of the Indian diaspora, Madhya Pradesh Tourism Board reduced the hotel rates so that more people can participate from all over the world.

The event witnessed enthusiastic response from members of the Indian community in Kuwait who participated virtually as well as in person.

FORMULA 1 Unfolds in Abu Dhabi with NFTs of Historic Grand Prix cars

By **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: [hello_hermoine](#)

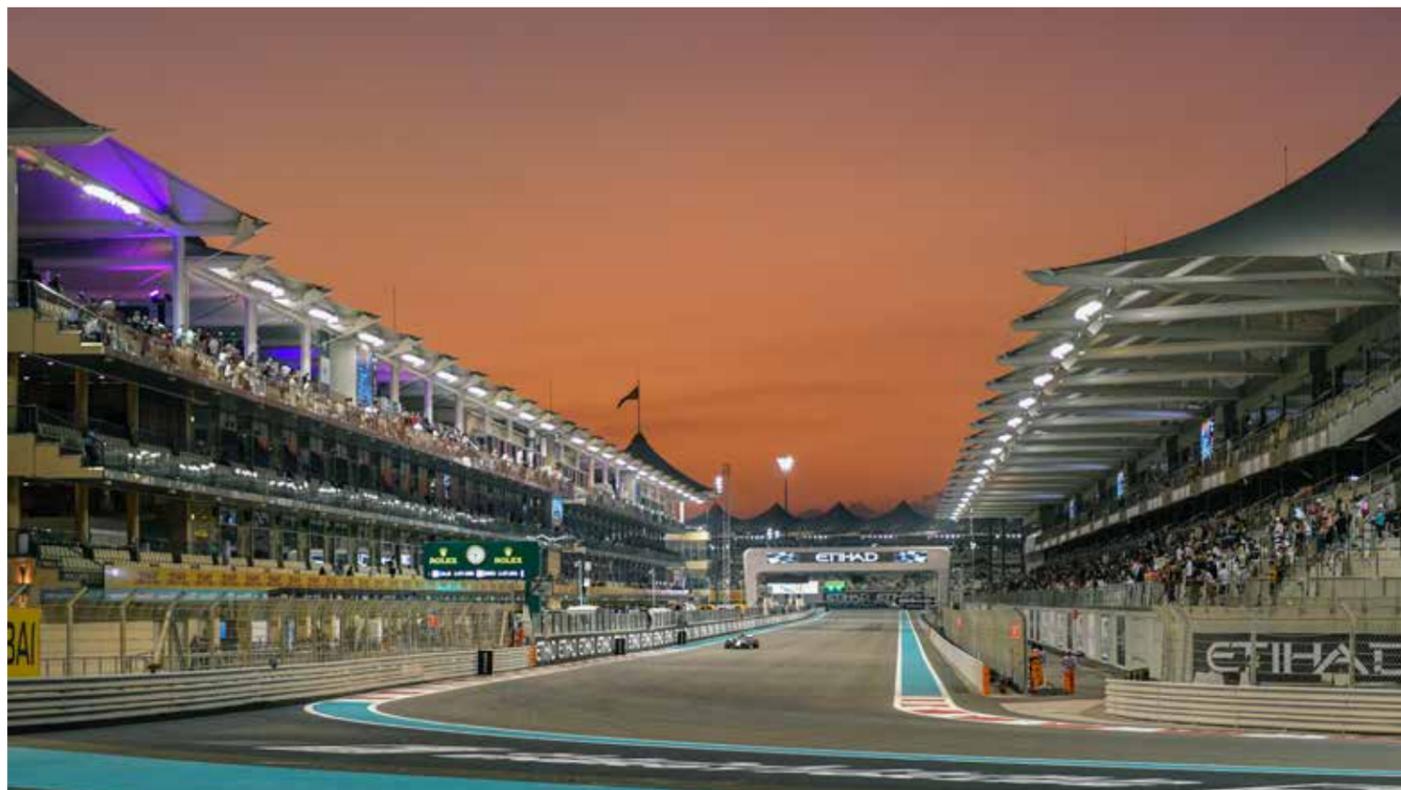
As Grand Prix fever sweeps across the region, spurred on by the rocketing superstar-status of Formula 1 drivers, fans can now own a slice of this addictive sport thanks to luxury publisher Opus, 'F1 Supremo' Bernie Ecclestone, and rising Web 3.0 super-studio Glorious



1/1 Ecclestone Grand Prix Collection Auto Union V86

Digital. The trio are launching a digital Non-Fungible Token (NFT) collection called 'The Ecclestone Grand Prix Collection' that motoring fans will be blown away by.

Opus has worked with the likes of Prince, Usain Bolt, Manchester United, Ferrari, Pelé, Her Majesty the Queen, the



World Boxing Council, Formula 1 and more. Bernie Ecclestone is the godfather of racing, known for building F1 into a heavyweight of sporting broadcasts globally. And Glorious Digital is making waves — within a year of conception, the studio is working with some of the world's most established brands including Wimbledon and the Nelson Mandela Foundation.

Together, the three, are releasing limited edition NFT artworks using the stunning Polaroid portraits of 26 of Ecclestone's private collection of historic Grand Prix cars. Cars that have raised Grand Prix chequered flags, mastered by drivers and icons such as Jack Brabham, Enzo Ferrari, Bruce McLaren, Ettore Bugatti, James Hunt, Niki Lauda and Michael Schumacher.

Each NFT is created from giant Polaroid images produced by one of the world's last five working giant 20"x24" cameras. These cameras were originally built to photograph oil paintings and tapestries, capturing their incredible detail.

The digital artworks will be released as

two collections — The Ecclestone Grand Prix Collection and the Grand Prix Trilogy Collection.

The Ecclestone Grand Prix Collection will feature 26 digital artworks, one edition of each car for 26 unique one-of-one editions in total. Those lucky enough to secure one of these will also access priceless utility, including an invitation to visit Bernie Ecclestone's own racetrack and receive the original Polaroid used to create their NFT, professionally stored, plus another authenticated copy to display at home among other items and experiences.

The Grand Prix Trilogy Collection will be more accessible, with 2600 one-of-one edition NFTs, again using the images of the 26 cars, but in a mixed set of three.

Opus Chief Executive Karl Fowler says they are excited to share a sense of ownership of these cars and photography artworks with fans who have followed Grand Prix history. "The Ecclestone Grand Prix Collection has a truly special story... What better way to reach a global fan base

and community whilst retaining the beauty of the Grand Prix cars than through the digital medium of an NFT release.

Glorious Digital Chief Executive, Tim Harper, explained why he is also excited about the release which further immortalises the motorsport history. "Like the millions of fans around the world, we've become drawn to Formula 1 not only because we are fascinated by the current superstars and teams that we watch now, but also the intriguing individuals, teams and cars that came before them, which are woven into the fabric of the sport's origins has become a joy."

Both, the 2600 digital artwork NFTs that make up the Grand Prix Trilogy Collection and the Ecclestone Grand Prix Collection, will be available to view at the Abu Dhabi Grand Prix from 17 November. The Grand Prix Trilogy Collection will be available to purchase from 17-30 November. Whilst the auction for the 26 one of ones will commence from 1-7 December. Both will be available on the Glorious Marketplace.

Kuwaiti investments in Switzerland are considerable and well appreciated

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3

"Traditionally, during their presidency, Swiss Foreign Ministers have to devote their attention to domestic affairs, while international contacts are considerably limited. Nevertheless, even without a ministerial meeting, the two Ministries are holding annual political consultations and the next round of political consultations will be in Switzerland in the coming months. In any case, we are working on this, and new opportunities may always arise due to our very good bilateral relations."

Turning to the people-to-people relations, the Ambassador recalled that Switzerland hosts several world-class universities and research institutes, attracting students and researchers from all over the world. He encourages Kuwaiti citizens to take advantage of these offers. He also mentioned Switzerland's strong attractiveness for tourists: "We are looking forward to welcoming many more Kuwait citizens to enjoy our beautiful lakes, mountains, forests, cities and villages. Not only for the purpose of shopping, business trips and holidays, but also for exciting summer-

and winter-camps for the Kuwaiti youth. In particular, I invite you to discover and enjoy the wonderful canton of Ticino in the Italian-speaking part of Switzerland, where I come from."

Responding to a question on what he, as a member of the younger generation, hoped to

“ We are looking forward to welcoming many more Kuwait citizens to enjoy our beautiful lakes, mountains, forests, cities and villages. Not only for the purpose of shopping, business trips and holidays, but also for exciting summer-and winter-camps for the Kuwaiti youth. ”

achieve during his tenure in Kuwait, the envoy quipped: "Being young is also a matter of spirit, not just age. In my case, I am not sure that being 50 years old qualifies me as a young diplomat... But for sure I always promote new ideas and concrete actions with the right optimism and

energy. In this sense, I will definitely bring a new perspective and a fresh approach to strengthen the ties at all levels between our two countries."

Asked to pick a country that he considers close to his heart from among the various countries he has served, the ambassador said, "I sincerely believe that in every single country of

"Türkiye will always hold a special place in my heart. It is a beautiful country with an impressive historical heritage and an ancient melting pot of civilizations.

Also, I rediscovered there a profound sense of humanity and human relations which is inexorably disappearing in large portions of the Western world. But above all, it is the place where our wonderful son was born in 2018, and that is surely the most important reason behind that."

On a further personal note, while commenting on food and whether he enjoys the Kuwaiti fare, the envoy replied, "Absolutely! The food in Kuwait is delicious and reflects the diversity of the people who have lived or passed through Kuwait over the centuries. I fully enjoy with my eyes, nose and palate the traditional food and the culinary fusion with the different blends. Currently, one of my favorite dishes is the 'machboos laham'.

And, at the conclusion of the interview, when asked if he looked forward to visiting diwanias in Kuwait, the ambassador exclaimed, "What a question! Indeed. This is one of the main reasons why I came to Kuwait... :-)

the world one can find inspiring human beings and stunning landscapes. This has always been my experience so far and, indeed, I have had the chance to live and travel in dozens of countries. In the summer of 2017, I moved to Ankara with my wife and we lived there until May 2022.

EXCLUSIVE to THE TIMES KUWAIT

Africa's Education Opportunity



Julius Maada Bio
President of Sierra Leone.



Education is on the cusp of a global shift. September's Transforming Education Summit at the United Nations in New York brought together representatives from more than 130 countries to discuss how to respond to the worldwide learning crisis caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. Unless that response truly is transformative, the UN's Sustainable Development Goal for Education (SDG4), which aims to 'ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all' by 2030, will remain out of reach.

Against this background, Africa is on the cusp of an education transformation of its own. Officials, civil-society organizers, and educators from across the continent convened last month in Mauritius for the Association for the Development of Education in Africa (ADEA) Triennale, which focused on addressing the pandemic's devastating effects on millions of schoolchildren and university students.

The greatest challenge currently facing schools in Africa is enabling students to develop a capacity for learning. There is a general consensus that acquiring numeracy and literacy skills in early childhood is critical to improving learning outcomes and reducing socioeconomic inequalities. But while giving every child the opportunity to succeed has become something of a mantra among government officials and education professionals, we must acknowledge that Africa is far from achieving this goal.

Born to learn, a series of studies published by the Global Education Monitoring Report, the ADEA, and the African Union, highlights the difficulties facing African educators. Children in Africa are seven times less likely to have

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rudimentary reading skills and five times less likely to learn basic mathematics than students in the rest of the world. Moreover, the ability of local education systems to teach even basic literacy skills has declined in some 40 percent of African countries over the last 30 years.

In Sierra Leone, violent conflicts and other challenges have held back our education system. While we have made up for lost time — increasing primary school completion rates and achieving gender parity, for example — we have not been able to ensure that every child who finishes school has acquired the necessary skills.

But we are determined to do better. To this end, we have increased education spending, waived all tuition costs, provided students with school meals and updated learning materials, and raised teacher salaries by 30 percent. We

have also redesigned school curricula according to the five Cs: comprehension, critical thinking, computational learning, creativity, and civics. These reforms reflect our child-centered approach to teaching and learning, which aims to enhance access, boost school safety, and increase investment in infrastructure. Our radical inclusion policy has improved learning outcomes at all levels and improved final-exam scores.

But there is still much work to be done. To promote foundational education for all learners, we must foster cooperation and information-sharing among African countries. In that spirit, the Born to learn report features detailed policy recommendations and clear examples of programs that have improved teaching efficiency and quality across the continent. In

Sierra Leone, for example, we have introduced national assessment and feedback mechanisms to create an integrated approach that informs our curricula, shapes teachers' pedagogy, and enables us to evaluate students' progress more effectively. These recommendations and experiences will likely serve as the basis for the African Union's newly-established Leveraging Education Analysis for Results Network (LEARN), which seeks to help African countries introduce educational reforms and monitor their effectiveness.

Providing teachers with financial incentives is essential to any successful educational reform, which is why Sierra Leone has increased teacher salaries despite the financial constraints created by the COVID-19 pandemic. Another way to promote accountability is to define a clear and communicable vision for the future of education.

But children cannot learn on an empty stomach. Families below the poverty line are more likely to keep their children in school if food is provided for them. That is why increasing access to free, nutritious school meals is crucial to improving foundational learning outcomes.

While African governments have made significant efforts to reform their education systems, we must avoid overstating our accomplishments. Multilateral discussions have provided local leaders with important frameworks, but educational disparities cannot be reduced overnight.

Improving education is central to sustainable national development. It is also the most effective tool for dismantling the cycles of intergenerational poverty that have crippled Africa's economies. While the past few years have disrupted our education systems, they have also presented us with a unique opportunity to provide an equitable, high-quality educational environment to all learners.

To take advantage of this opportunity will require close cooperation with multilateral efforts, such as UNESCO's recently launched campaign to promote literacy and numeracy in Africa. As the campaign's slogan reminds us, every child is born to learn. But first, we must do our part to ensure that they are able to.

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EXCLUSIVE to THE TIMES KUWAIT

World Cup and the World Economy



Jim O'Neill

A former chairman of Goldman Sachs Asset Management and a former UK treasury minister, is a member of the Pan-European Commission on Health and Sustainable Development.

The 22nd World Cup is under way, but who at the beginning of this century would have thought it might be hosted by tiny Qatar? Yet here we are, and the only surprise is that it doesn't feel all that surprising.

For a large part of my professional career, I explored the links between the beautiful game and the global economy. At Goldman Sachs and, before that, at the Swiss Bank Corporation, I indulged my dual obsessions by presiding over special one-off publications for each World Cup from 1994 until 2010. After one, I received personal messages from senior central bankers around the world. Some told me it was the best publication we produced, which, given how frequently we published on economic events and markets, was both amusing and something to ponder. We persuaded national leaders and major football figures to guest write for us. On one occasion, Alex Ferguson, the legendary Manchester United manager, selected his all-time top world team.

I have, to date, managed to attend six World Cups, hosted by the United States, France, South Korea and Japan, Germany, South Africa, and Brazil. From these experiences, I can add

my voice to those who describe the event as one of the most beautifully inclusive meetings of many different nationalities and cultures. The advent of the Fan Zones, which really took off following the 2006 World Cup in Germany, embodied this spirit, though I experienced it most intensely in Seoul in 2002.

The link between football and the state of the world economy is apparent in the choice of tournament hosts. I think it is an inescapable fact that FIFA's selection of South Africa in 2010, Brazil in 2014, Russia in 2018, and now Qatar, was based on the steady rise of so-called emerging economies during the first two decades of this

“ The link between football and the state of the world economy is apparent in the choice of tournament hosts. FIFA's selection of South Africa, Brazil, Russia and now Qatar, was based on the steady rise of so-called emerging economies. ”

century. I have long thought that the other two BRICS countries (a group comprising Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa) might well join the small group of hosts in the future.

But given many major countries' inward turn in recent years, are the days of even wanting to host the event numbered? Will aspiring emerging-market countries find it increasingly difficult to succeed in staging the world's most watched tournament? Or, to the contrary, could

the world soon shift back to a more contented, globalizing, and inclusive international order? One might even ask a deeper question: is FIFA a leading or a lagging indicator of the world economy and the degree of globalization?

I suspect that how the competition progresses over the next four weeks and, crucially, how many of us watch the matches, might be the clearest early sign of the broader significance of this year's World Cup. The competition has been the backbone of FIFA's revenues. There is already talk, probably motivated by professional clubs' desire for even stronger revenues, of turning the tournament

In the 1980's, 1990's, 2000's, and 2011-20, global real GDP growth averaged, respectively, 3.3 percent, 3.3 percent, 3.9 percent, and 3.7 percent. The acceleration in the most recent two full decades was clearly due to stronger growth in the emerging world, and it coincides with the period when FIFA began selecting hosts from outside the traditional football strongholds. It currently looks as though this trend could be reversed this decade, even with eight years still to go.

And what about the winners this time? I learned through the popularity of the publications I produced in the past to go no further than predicting the four semi-finalists. For one thing, the same realism with which one must approach economic forecasting applies to the World Cup as well; for another, the leaders of countries we didn't tip to win often did not take it very well.

I start with history. Only eight countries have won the World Cup. Brazil, having won five times, is always one of the favorites, and this year's squad seems to be one of the tournament's strongest. Argentina, Uruguay, France, Germany, Italy, Spain, and England are the other previous winners. Even though Italy failed to qualify this time around, the winner is likely to be one of the others.

One of these years, England will win it again, but it could easily be any of the previous winners. Among the rest, Denmark, the Netherlands, and Portugal usually punch above their economic and population weight. Whoever wins, I will be watching for all sorts of signals about the future — just as I have always done.

into a biennial event, or supplementing the current quadrennial format with a quadrennial club-based competition.

If the global economy's future is very different from the past 20-30 years, this will be reflected in FIFA's decision-making. It is hard to imagine FIFA being enthusiastic about future competitions in emerging-market countries if these countries contribute less to world economic growth than the tournament hosts since 2010.



Epigenetics, the new frontier of cancer research

New findings over the past five years suggest that epigenetics, a natural process in organisms, could be an important factor behind how cancers arise, proliferate, and reappear. It could also herald the beginning of a new series of therapeutic interventions to prevent or treat cancer.

The word 'epigenetic' literally means 'in addition to changes in genetic sequence'. It includes any process that alters gene activity without changing the underlying DNA sequence, and which leads to modifications that can be transmitted to daughter cells. Epigenetic processes are essential to many organism functions, but many types of epigenetic processes have been linked to an increased risk of cancer and many other adverse health conditions.

To better understand epigenetics, we need to know the meaning of several related terms in genetics, such as genome and phenotype. Genome refers to the complete set of genes or genetic material that is present in a cell or organism, and carries all the genetic information of an organism. Phenotypes are the observable physical properties of an organism, including its appearance, development, and behavior.

An organism's phenotype is determined

by its genotype, which is the set of genes the organism carries, as well as by environmental influences upon these genes. For instance, twin siblings who share identical genotypes, ultimately express nonidentical phenotypes because each twin encounters unique environmental influences as they develop. Epigenetics is thus the study of stable phenotypic changes that do not involve alterations in the DNA sequence.

Despite the human genome being sequenced in 2003, a clearer understanding of the genetic mechanisms and the working of our genome has remained elusive. This is largely because, while the DNA in genes encodes the information that allows us to develop, grow and repair our cells and tissues, the expression of the genes is controlled by other mechanisms and their interaction.

Gene expression is the process by which information encoded in a gene is used to either make RNA molecules that code for proteins or to make non-coding RNA molecules that serve other functions. For genes to be expressed, they first need to be read, or transcribed, and then the molecules they code for are made, or translated. For the cell machinery to be able to read the

DNA, the DNA itself needs to be accessible. This is affected by a number of mechanisms.

Researchers at the Institute of Cancer Research in the United Kingdom have now found that how the DNA is wound around proteins called histones, and how these are then packed into fibers called chromatin can affect the expression of genes.

Explaining their finding, the scientists noted that if the DNA is in a tangled portion of the genome, those genes may not be accessible to extract, and they are turned off. Whereas if they are in untangled regions in the DNA, then the genes can be expressed.

This finding is a form of epigenetic control, as the expression of a gene varies not due to a change in the actual DNA sequence, but due to other processes that affect its accessibility. Earlier it was believed that cancer was the result of gene mutations in the cell, however, the new study shows that besides mutations on the genome that drive cancer, the epigenetic environment in which they exist is also a factor.

For their study the scientists sequenced the entire genome of 30 colorectal cancers that had not spread and eight adenomas (tumors that are not cancers). They also examined the accessibility of chromatin and the genes that were being expressed. The study found mutations in the genes that coded for proteins regulating the transcription of chromatin, on the cancers but not on the adenomas. They also found these changes were passed on following cell division.

To look at why the genetic expression of cells from the same tumor can be different, another study sequenced the genome of different cells in the same tumor, as well as quantified the expression of all the genes in those cells. This study found that less than 2 percent of differences in genetic expression



in cells was due to differences in the DNA, which suggested that the differences could be due to epigenetics.

While the cancer death rate has decreased in the US and elsewhere in recent years, secondary cancers, which are cancers that can arise years after the initial cancer was treated, are still a conundrum. The lack of understanding about mechanisms that bring cancer out of dormancy has made them particularly difficult to treat.

Researchers are interested in understanding why breast cancer, for example, can relapse 20 years after surgery.

New studies now show that dormancy, when the tumor cells are doing nothing in the body of a person with breast cancer, could be due to epigenetic factors, and when or if the tumor becomes active is also determined by epigenetics. In terms of cancer biology, the big question is, can we exploit epigenetic changes for developing new treatments by stopping the tumor from evolving by identifying epigenetic vulnerabilities.

While epigenetics of cancers are challenging to investigate, they may well hold the key to understanding where our failures to prevent and treat cancers are coming from.



Meal frequency: Many small meals, or few large ones

We have grown up in a culture that promotes dividing the daily diet into three large meals — breakfast, lunch, and dinner — for optimal health. However, in recent years, some studies have shown that eating smaller, more frequent meals may be best for preventing chronic disease and weight loss.

Those who advocate for eating small, frequent meals suggest that this can improve satiety, increase metabolism, prevent dips in energy, stabilize blood sugar, and prevent overeating among other benefits. Although there are a few studies validating this, other studies have shown no such benefit, and some research even suggests that it may be more beneficial to stick with three larger meals.

Here we look at the current research and science behind meal frequency and benefits, if any, of small frequent meals compared with fewer, larger ones.

Earlier epidemiological studies have suggested that increased meal frequency can improve blood lipid (fats) levels and reduce the risk of heart disease. In particular, one 2019 cross-sectional study that compared eating fewer than three meals per day, or more than four meals per day, found that consuming more than four meals increases HDL (high-density lipoprotein) cholesterol and lowers fasting triglycerides more effectively.

Higher levels of HDL are associated with a reduced risk of heart disease. This finding is supported by another study, by the American Heart Association that concluded greater eating frequency is associated with a

reduced risk for diabetes and cardiovascular disease. However, it is important to note that these studies were observational, meaning it could only prove association, not causation.

Meanwhile, another study that compared eating patterns on body fat and perceived hunger, found no difference in energy expenditure and body fat loss between those eating three meals or those consuming six meals per day. Interestingly, those who consumed six smaller meals throughout the day had increased hunger levels and desire to eat compared to those who ate three larger meals per day.

Similarly, many people tout small, frequent meals as a cure-all for obesity. They believe that eating frequent meals help boost metabolism, due to the thermic effect of foods (TEF) — the energy required to digest food — being higher. However, other studies suggest fewer, larger meals may increase TEF more than eating frequent meals.

Several experts also believe that eating small, frequent meals can benefit athletes. According to the International Society of Sports Nutrition, athletes who follow a reduced-calorie diet may benefit from eating small frequent meals with adequate protein because it can help preserve lean muscle mass. However, there is limited evidence to suggest that when prioritizing total daily calorie intake in athletes, a higher meal frequency may increase performance, support fat loss, and improve body composition.

Dietitians now suggest that both eating patterns can be beneficial, as long as the primary focus is on healthy eating habits and on portion sizes. For instance, if your goal is to lose weight, it is important to be mindful of your portion sizes. Be sure to stay within your allotted daily calorie needs and divide them among the number of meals you consume.

However, all the above studies were found to have limitations; for instance, small, frequent meals could come in the form of ultra-processed foods and snacks that fall short in many vital nutrients the body needs. Similarly, portion sizes of each meal could vary greatly. Due to these and other inconsistencies and limitations, the US Dietary Guidelines Advisory Committee concluded that there is insufficient evidence to determine the relationship between meal frequency and body composition and the risk of overweight and obesity.

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Smart Climate Control. The Air Cooker automatically adjusts temperature, humidity and time according to the recipe, eradicating the common challenge of rubbery fish, soggy vegetables, and cakes that are somehow burnt, but still raw in the middle. By retaining up to 90% of vitamins and nutrients as well as natural flavours and textures of fresh produce, there's no need

to choose between taste or health.

Home cooks with an experimental flare can even develop their skills with the help of a savvy sous-chef - the NutriU app. The app will take users on a culinary journey, where they can discover new recipes and learn new cooking techniques. Designed to help users discover the joy of creating healthy, nutritious meals, the app is both easy to use and intuitive. Simply select the recipe you want to prepare on the app and let the Air Cooker do the rest. Not only can the smart appliance automatically set



optimal cooking conditions, users can even remotely adjust temperature, humidity and timer settings in real-time through the app.

To really bring the restaurant experience into the family home, Philips has partnered with the world-renowned Kuwaiti chef, Faisal Fahad AlNashmi, who will be adapting three of his signature dishes for the NutriU app. With a collection of homegrown and regionally inspired eateries across the GCC, such as AlMakan, Table Otto and Street Café Kuwait, Chef Faisal will empower people in Kuwait to create chef-worthy meals at home, irrespective of their skill level.

The Philips Air Cooker is now available for purchase in Xcite stores across Kuwait, for just [KD 249].

