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# Action plan to boost project pipelines



## THE TIMES KUWAIT REPORT

Timely implementation of crucial infrastructure and energy projects has been a major stumbling block in the path of Kuwait's growth and development over the years. With projects worth over KD8 billion reportedly in the pipeline for fiscal year 2023-24, and a government apparently keen on implementing projects on a priority basis through its four-year action plan, it remains to be seen whether this year could finally break the traditional lethargic pace of project developments in the country.

However, if project spending in the first half of this fiscal is any indication,

project implementations this year are likely to be no better than that witnessed in recent years. Despite repeated assurances of prioritizing spending on development projects and facilitating their completion, latest official data shows that during the first half of fiscal year 2023-24, only KD108 million dinars were spent on development projects, or roughly 10 percent of the KD1.02 billion set aside in the budget for projects this fiscal year.

According to the finance ministry, of the 130 projects ear-marked for fiscal 2023-24 only 5 have so far been completed and are being readied for handover. Of the total projects, 13 had not even commenced, 52 were still in the preparatory stage,



and 60 were in various stages of implementation. In this regard a look at the project spending in fiscal year 2022-23 reiterates the narrative

that low project spending has been a persistent shackle that Kuwait has found difficult to shake off.

According to official data, Kuwait's

actual spending on development during fiscal year 2022/2023 amounted to KD665 million, or a little over half of the total financial appropriations of KD1.3 billion for the year. This amount also represented a decrease of 29.5 percent compared to the 2021-22 fiscal year, when spending totaled around KD945 million. Analysts have expressed concerns about the low disbursement and completion rates in this fiscal, fearing a repeat of previous years.

Circulars from the Ministry of Finance, strongly urging the various government entities to prioritize development plan projects, including by initiating special procedures to implement them ahead of

**CONTINUED ON PAGE 8**

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# Judicial conference provides learning opportunities

Kuwait Institute for Judicial and Legal Studies partnered with the Office of Assistance and Training for the Development of Public Prosecutions Abroad of the US Department of Justice to organize a collaborative training initiative titled 'Judicial Principles and Their Application - A Judicial Conference'.

The event, which took place at the headquarters of the Kuwait Institute for Judicial and Legal Studies, saw the participation of a significant number of Kuwaiti judges, their Saudi counterparts, Bahraini delegates, and three visiting judges from the United States. The Charge d'Affaires of the US Embassy in Kuwait James Holtsnider inaugurated the event.

In his opening address, Mr. Holtsnider expressed his gratitude to the judges participating in the workshop, and



highlighted the mutual learning opportunity presented by their collaboration. He then outlined the primary objectives of the

program, which includes knowledge exchange, judge training, and fostering stronger relationships among the four countries involved.

He praised the Kuwaiti, Saudi and Bahraini judges for their professionalism and extensive experience, and underscored the significance of collaboration with colleagues and friends to further enhance the practice of law. Elucidating on the structure of the American legal system, the Charge d'Affaires noted that it aligns with Kuwait's judicial framework, both of which are exemplified by its independence and the authority derived from the Constitution. He added that although the two legal systems may vary, it consistently provides a chance to glean insights from one another.

Expressing his hope that the US judges would gain valuable insights during this visit, Mr. Holtsnider added, "Likewise, I believe and hope that our Kuwaiti, Bahraini, and Saudi colleagues will derive valuable information from the American judges."

Speaking on the occasion, the Director of the Kuwait Institute for Judicial and

Legal Studies, Counselor Hani Al-Hamdan, warmly welcomed "our esteemed guests from the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and the Kingdom of Bahrain, extending wishes for a pleasant stay in Kuwait, their second home."

He said, "This conference is designed to augment persistent endeavors in promulgating legal knowledge and exploring effective comparative experiences concerning legal issues. Their contributions will undoubtedly enrich our deliberations and foster a practical framework, bringing our judicial systems closer in perspective."

He added, "There's no doubt that our collaboration with the United States, represented by the American Embassy and the Office of Assistance and Development of Public Prosecutions Abroad, has been exceptionally fruitful. Past collaborations, including two conferences in the last year, were productive and enlightening, benefiting from the expertise of American judges who were engaged for this purpose."

He went on to say, "In this instance, we have included judges from the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and the Kingdom of Bahrain. This aligns with the Kuwait Institute for Judicial Studies' ambition to be a regional training center in the Arabian Gulf region."

Al-Hamdan emphasized, "The United States possesses a profound legal and judicial cultural heritage, encompassing fundamental legal principles that are universally revered. These principles revolve around concepts of freedom, justice, and the equitable application of the law. Furthermore," he said, "contemporary advancements in witnessing practices and the integration of artificial intelligence for testimony assessment and evidence evaluation will be key topics of discussion in this conference."

## Thai Embassy promotes Muay Thai combat sport in Kuwait

The Embassy of the Kingdom of Thailand in Kuwait held a series of cultural programs and training courses for Muay Thai, conducted by three trainers, in cooperation with the Lanna Fight Club.

"The embassy revealed the desire of Muay Thai trainers to share with Kuwaitis knowledge, skills, techniques and experiences related to the famous game, which is one of the traditional martial arts in Thailand.

The embassy added Muay Thai has become one of the popular combat sports in Kuwait. There are increasing numbers of Kuwaiti men, women and youth who have trained in enjoyed practicing the sports." The comments section



is available to all Al-Qabas readers via a free account. Share your opinion on news and analysis. The event was organized from September 29 to October 1, 2023

## CONDOLENCES

The Board, Management and Staff of



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expresses profound sorrow on the sad demise of

**Saud Abdulaziz Abdulmohsin Al Rashed**

who passed away on Friday, 6<sup>th</sup> October.

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heartfelt condolences to our

Chairman

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&**

**Mr. Khaled Saud Al Rashed**

**Mr. Essam Saud Al Rashed**

**Mr. Faisal Saud Al Rashed**

**Mr. Adnan Saud Al Rashed**

**And to the bereaving Al Rashed family**

*May Allah Almighty bestow mercy on his soul*



# Kuwait, my second home country

## Kuwait is an unparalleled paradise for diplomats, says outgoing Greek envoy

By Reaven DSouza  
Managing Editor

Ambassador of Greece to Kuwait and Bahrain, H.E. Constantinos Piperigos has completed his tenure in Kuwait and is leaving to take up his next posting as Director-General of the Economic and Administrative Affairs Department at the Greek Foreign Ministry in Athens. Amid his busy schedule of taking leave of officials and friends in Kuwait, Ambassador Piperigos spared some time to speak at length to the Managing Editor of The Times Kuwait, Reaven D'souza, about his experiences living and working in Kuwait.

He began by saying, "I arrived in Kuwait with my wife on a Saturday evening in 2019 after a long trip, and I was received by one of the officers of the Protocol Department at the Kuwait Foreign Ministry, who said, 'Welcome to your second home-country.' I did not grasp the meaning of what he said at the time, but within only three months I understood what he had meant by that welcoming sentence after having witnessed the kindness and generosity, and experienced the wonderful hospitality and openness shown by the Kuwaiti people. This is what distinguishes Kuwait, as it is a paradise for diplomats."

He added that when he visited the Failaka Island for the first time, he prostrated on the ground and kissed its soil because of his feeling of greatness that after 2,300 years, he would stand on the same ground where Alexander the Great and his soldiers had set their feet on. They were moments and feelings that were difficult for him to describe.

He went on to say, "I spent a wonderful time in Kuwait, and I held many events to bring the peoples of the two countries closer together, the most recent of which was the Alexander the Great Exhibition in the Contemporary Art Platform, which was originally scheduled for a month in Kuwait, but was extended to over three months because of the passion of

researchers and those interested in this great exhibition, and also because of the discussions it ignited to work on transforming Failaka into a cultural and tourist destination."

Pointing out that he succeeded in bringing the two countries together at the people-to-people and commercial levels as well, he noted that direct flights between the two countries were launched last year and expanded this year — with now two flights per week to Athens throughout the year and five during the summer to Athens and Mykonos. He stated that the Greek embassy issued about 5,000 visas during the current year, most of them for long-term, multi-entry visas, including 3,500 visas during the summer.

The Greek envoy explained that Kuwaiti investments were not as significant in his country in the past, but after direct airline connections, as well as stability and economic growth in Greece, major Kuwaiti investors are grasping the momentum and have been examining prospects

and showing high interest for investment opportunities in various fields, including in real estate, renewable energy and tourism amongst others.

Noting that the Greek 'golden visa' system granting residency is considered the most affordable in Europe, he explained that it costs 250,000 Euros in all regions of Greece, except for 4 specific regions — parts of Athens, Thessaloniki, Mykonos, and Santorin, which cost about 500,000 Euros. The ambassador stated that Greece is considered a safe country with a very low crime rate — although he admitted it is difficult to compete with Kuwait's safety.

The Greek ambassador explained that his country exports to Kuwait industrial equipment, building materials, metals, pharmaceuticals, cosmetics, vegetables, fruits, dairy products, and the famous Greek olive oil. He also mentioned that the Greek company DESFA assures the maintenance and operation of the gas deposits of Al-Zour refinery, and that major Greek constructing companies are interested in returning again to the Kuwaiti market.



Ambassador of Greece to Kuwait and Bahrain,  
H.E. Constantinos Piperigos

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We have a small community in Kuwait of about 200 people, most of whom work in universities, schools and banks, and the most important challenges they face, like other communities, are obtaining a driver's license and bringing their families to Kuwait. He elaborated on this by saying that there are discussions at the European Union level to find a solution to these challenges.

He added that the next step after the adoption of the European Cascade visa system for Kuwaitis is the visa waiver, and that the visit to Kuwait by the European envoy to the Gulf region last Friday addressed these challenges facing the Europeans in Kuwait.

The Greek Foreign Minister will also attend the meeting of the 27th session of the Joint Ministerial Council of the Gulf Cooperation Council states and the European Union due for 9 and 10 October in Muscat, and has requested a bilateral meeting with the Kuwaiti Foreign Minister Sheikh Salem Al-Sabah and he plans to invite him to visit Athens.

The ambassador said he expected to see more Kuwaiti students in Greek universities since many Universities provide English-speaking departments and also because of the presence of the most prestigious universities there, especially for medical specialties. He also pointed out that there are a number of Kuwaiti students studying aviation in Greece.

Revealing that the next ambassador of Greece to Kuwait is H.E. Yianni Plotas, the outgoing Greek envoy added, "I met Plotas many years ago, he is a wonderful person and is expected to arrive in Kuwait from Nigeria, along with his wife and their two pet dogs, very soon."



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## Ali Al-Salem Air Base holds Open Day for media personnel

The US Air Force at Ali Al Salem Air Base hosted an Open Day for media professionals, featuring a range of activities and events aimed at familiarizing them with the Air Forces' responsibilities at the base.

The agenda encompassed demonstrations on combat aircraft fires and the latest techniques in police dog training. Attendees were also provided with insights into the various military vehicles and aircraft employed in base operations and training.

Colonel Julie Julian commenced the event by commending the strong collaboration between the US Air Force and its Kuwaiti counterparts at the base. She emphasized the enduring nature of the partnership,



evident over the past 30 years, and stressed the vital role of mutually beneficial alliances in achieving collective objectives. She further noted that in addressing present-day challenges and deterrence, the US Air Force



relies heavily on allies and partners, deeming them crucial strategic assets. Colonel Julian assured that the base is fully prepared to confront any challenges, threats, or engage in relief and humanitarian efforts during



natural disasters, in collaboration with Kuwaiti partners.

Colonel Pilot Abdul Aziz Behbehani highlighted the cooperation and support extended by the American Air Forces to the Kuwaiti Air Forces, focusing on knowledge exchange, training, and joint exercises. He emphasized the positive impact of these collaborations in bolstering military capabilities and acquiring new skills, highlighting the preparedness of Kuwait Air Force to face emergencies 24/7.

Captain Pilot Khaled Al-Faqan provided insights into Kuwait's acquisition of Caracal aircraft, totaling 30 advanced units, and their distribution among the National Guard, the Kuwaiti Army, and the Ministry of Interior. He underscored the versatility of these aircraft for diverse operations, including transport, rescue, and combat.


## MEW seeks partners for renewable energy projects

Ministry of Electricity, Water, and Renewable Energy (MEW) is planning to initiate Requests for Qualifications (RFQs) from competent companies, for the upcoming phases of the Al Shagaya Renewable Energy Project (SREP), before year end. The ambitious project to be concluded in four phases aims to eventually achieve a capacity of 4,500 MW of renewable energy, in line with the

government's target for renewables to constitute 15 percent of the electricity production mix by 2030.

The initial phase encompasses an independent solar photovoltaic energy production project, with a capacity of 1,100 MW. A second phase will see the installation of a 200 MW concentrated solar power plant with a storage capacity of around 5 hours, followed by a third phase that will feature a 1,500 MW Independent Power Producer (IPPP) solar project. The final phase will include a 1,700 MW IPPP solar project.

Quotations for various phases of the project will be sequentially launched later this year. The selected developers for the SREP project will enter into power purchase agreements with the MEW for up to 25 years from commercial operation date.



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# Kuwait ranks fifth regionally in oil sector projects

A new report on oil and gas industries in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region for the 2023-24 period by MEED magazine shows that planned spending by the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries on oil, gas and petrochemical projects is around US\$325 billion. Of this total spending, Kuwait accounted for about 7 percent or \$22.4 billion, which ranked the country fifth overall in the region in terms of spending in this sector.

The UAE topped the volume of future spending among the GCC countries, accounting for about 29 percent of the total at \$93.9 billion, followed by Saudi Arabia taking the second spot with about 26 percent, at \$84.4 billion. Oman ranked third with about \$79 billion, representing 24.3 percent of the total future spending on projects in the region, while Qatar ranked fourth with about \$40.1 billion, representing 12.34 percent of the total spending and Bahrain came in sixth place with \$5.1 billion.

The report pointed out that the oil, gas and petrochemical project sectors amounted to \$868.7 billion, with the six Gulf states alone receiving about half the value of those projects at \$415.5 billion. Saudi Arabia topped the volume of active projects in the Gulf region with about \$176 billion, constituting in total more than 42 percent of the projects in the Gulf.

The UAE came in second place with about \$82.9 billion in the volume of active projects, and Qatar came in third place in the Gulf with about \$79.6 billion. Oman ranked fourth with \$38.4 billion, Kuwait ranked fifth with \$22.3 billion, and Bahrain came in sixth place with \$16.3 billion. At the regional level, Iran ranked second after Saudi Arabia with a project volume of \$141.9 billion, followed by Iraq with \$137.9 billion, and Egypt fourth with \$87.6 billion.

The report noted that in light of the world increasingly turning away from fossil fuels and preferring renewable sources for energy, oil and gas producers in the region are concerned about their investments in this sector, and the important role that hydrocarbon revenues play in their economies.

In response to these developments, the leading



national oil companies in the region are taking the initiative to implement new policies and investments that enable them to maintain their position at the forefront of the global energy sector. The policy focuses on diversifying investments in new technologies and types of fuel, on preserving hydrocarbon reserves, and on reducing greenhouse gas emissions through the use of clean technologies and reduced consumption.

But even as such deep-rooted changes occur, the region's oil and gas producers are confident that hydrocarbons will remain the world's largest energy source for decades to come, even after oil demand growth begins to slow. They are also aware that the low production costs give them a significant advantage over competitors, and as a result they are investing heavily to expand their production capacity, whether in the exploration and production sector or refining, distribution, storage and transportation.



## Rashmika Mandanna inaugurates Kalyan Jewellers's new showroom at Al Barsha in Dubai



Kalyan Jewellers, one of the most trusted and leading jewellery brands, today launched its brand new showroom at Al Barsha in Dubai. The showroom was inaugurated by Kalyan Jewellers' brand ambassador Rashmika Mandanna. This is the company's 19th showroom in UAE.

Addressing the crowds, Kalyan Jewellers' brand ambassador Rashmika Mandanna said, "I am delighted to be part of the Kalyan Jewellers launch celebrations in Dubai today. This new showroom stands as a testament to the brand's unwavering dedication to provide best-in-class shopping experience to its patrons in the region. We are confident that patrons will continue to extend their support towards the brand and enjoy the brilliance of the brand's exquisite jewellery designs, which is a testament to the brand's intricate craftsmanship and graceful aesthetics."

The jewellery brand offers patrons with state-of-the-art facilities in a world-class ambience, presenting an un-paralleled shopping experience. The knowledgeable customer service executives of Kalyan Jewellers will be hands-on in assisting customers to find the perfect jewellery piece, which suits their style and budget.

Talking about the new showroom, Mr. T.S. Kalyanaraman, Managing Director of Kalyan Jewellers, said, "As a company, we have achieved huge milestones and taken major strides towards creating a holistic ecosystem to enhance the customer shopping experience. As we embark on this next phase of our growth journey, consistently expanding our geographical footprint in the region, we are committed to continue offering best-in-class shopping experience to our customers while staying true to the company's core values of trust and transparency."

As part of this launch, the brand is offering its patrons upto 25% discount on making charges of gold jewellery and also upto 25% discount on their diamond jewellery range at their Al Barsha, Dubai showroom until 30th October 2023.

Customers will also be able to avail the benefits of Kalyan's 4-Level Assurance Certification on gold jewellery. While jewellery retailed at Kalyan Jewellers goes through multiple purity tests, the 4-level assurance certificate promises customers payment on the value of purity mentioned in the invoice during exchange or resale. Also, it ensures free lifetime maintenance of ornaments at any Kalyan Jewellers' showroom.

Kalyan Jewellers' all-new showroom will stock Muhurat – the bridal jewellery line curated from across India along with exclusive sections featuring Kalyan's popular house brands such as Tejasvi (Polki jewellery), Mudhra (handcrafted antique jewellery), Nimah (Temple jewellery) and Glo (dancing diamonds). Other sections at the showroom include Ziah (Solitaire-like diamond jewellery), Anokhi (uncut diamonds), Hera (daily wear diamonds), Rang (precious stones jewellery) and the recently launched Lila (Coloured Stones and Diamond Jewellery).

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## LuLu launches 15th hypermarket in Kuwait

**L**ulu Group opened latest Hypermarket at Hawally in the State of Kuwait. The store which is also 15th in the country was officially inaugurated by Dr. Ali Merdhi Ayyash Alenezi, in the presence of Yusuff Ali MA Chairman of Lulu Group, Mariam Ismayil Jumaah Al Ansari and other officials.

Ambassadors, Diplomates, Government Officials and other Dignitaries from various countries including Kuwait, UAE, India, Spain, South Africa, Vietnam, Kenya, Bangladesh, Myanmar, Malawi, Yemen & Tanzania attended the grand inauguration ceremony.

The sprawling 83,000 square foot store is located in Hawally, a major commercial hub offers grocery, non-food, H&B, fresh food (chilled and dairy, frozen, fruits and vegetables, meat, and fish), in-house kitchen



and delicatessen services.

Furthermore, a wide range of household items, home furnishings, toys, luggage, party seasonal items, mobiles & accessories, IT and accessories, BLUSH (premium cosmetics and



perfumes), and electronics are also added to satisfy every customer's desires. Also present on the occasion were Ashraf Ali MA, Executive Director, Adeeb Ahmad, Lulu Financial Group Managing Director, Mohamed Haris,

Lulu Kuwait Director, Sreejith, Lulu Kuwait Regional Director and other officials.

A large number of people from different walks of life were also present to witness the inauguration.



## LuLu Exchange opens 35th customer care center in Kuwait



**L**uLu Exchange Kuwait, one of Kuwait's most trusted names in cross-border payments and foreign currency exchange, opened its 35th customer engagement center in the commercial region of Hawally.

The opening marks the 302nd Global Customer Engagement Center under LuLu Financial Holdings and is aligned with the company's expansion strategy for Kuwait, as the country navigates an era of growth and progress toward achieving financial inclusion.

The engagement center was inaugurated by Ambassador of the UAE H.E. Dr. Matar Hamed Hlais AIMkasafa Al Neyadi, in the presence of South African Ambassador H.E. Dr. Manelisi Genge, diplomats from India, as well as Chairman and Managing Director of LuLu Group International, MA Yusuff Ali, Managing Director of LuLu Financial Holdings, Adeeb Ahamed, and other senior management of LuLu Exchange Kuwait.

Speaking on the sidelines of the event, Mr. Ahamed said, "We are delighted to open

our newest customer engagement center in Kuwait's Hawally region which is known for its residential and commercial appeal. This new center will be a bridge to our diverse services, nurturing a hub of engagement and simplifying our customers' seamless adoption of digital payment solutions. Kuwait remains a key market for our operations, and we are thankful to our valued customers and partners for their continued support toward our growth."

Established in 2011, LuLu Exchange Kuwait is one of the country's leading financial services providers, charting a path of digital transformation that has seen it implement several industry-first initiatives to better serve retail and corporate customers. As one of the most future-focused payments companies in Kuwait, LuLu Exchange provides financial services in a timely, transparent and reliable manner through its network of customer engagement centers and mobile payments app – LuLu Money.

## Egyptian Embassy grants 5-year multiple-entry visa to Kuwaitis



**T**he Egyptian Ambassador to Kuwait, Osama Shaltout, said the Egyptian Embassy in Kuwait is prepared to facilitate Egyptian citizens' participation in the upcoming presidential elections scheduled for December 1, 2, and 3, 2023, for Egyptians residing abroad.

Additionally, Ambassador Heba Zaki, the Consul General of Egypt, announced a new five-year multiple-entry visa for Kuwaiti citizens traveling to Egypt. Each stay should not exceed 90 days, and a fee of up to 250 dinars will be charged, simplifying visits for Kuwaitis to their second home.

During a press conference held at the embassy, Shaltout encouraged the Egyptians living in Kuwait to exercise their constitutional right to vote in the forthcoming elections. He commended their enthusiasm in showing support for presidential candidacy, underlining that this action marks the initial step towards actively shaping the nation's future.

Ambassador Shaltout emphasized that Egyptians in Kuwait, as well as across the globe, participating in the December presidential elections, will convey a message to the world regarding the essential role of Egyptian communities abroad in influencing their nation's future.

Furthermore, Ambassador Shaltout mentioned the process for those seeking media coverage at the electoral headquarters. Interested individuals need

to submit an application to the embassy, which will then be forwarded to the Egyptian Foreign Ministry.

The ministry will, in turn, send it to the National Elections Authority to obtain the necessary permits. Shaltout informed that there are approximately 467,000 Egyptians in Kuwait with work permits and a total of 671,000 Egyptians, including those joining family members.

He also revealed that the electoral headquarters location would be announced the following week, with ongoing coordination with the Kuwaiti authorities and the National Elections Authority. Contracts have been signed with various Internet companies to review their efficiency within the electoral headquarters for the election day, which will also have election observers.

Consul General Zaki explained that the decision to grant a five-year multiple-entry visa to Kuwaitis was in line with the Minister of Interior's approval for citizens in several countries, including Kuwait, to receive such a visa.

This decision is part of the effort to streamline and expedite procedures for Kuwaiti citizens entering Egypt. These actions are a result of mutual coordination and cooperation between Egypt and Kuwait, showcasing the warm welcome extended by Egypt to the Kuwaiti people to visit at any time.



# Ambassadors of Greece, Mexico bid adieu to Kuwait



The Deanship of the Diplomatic Corps organized a farewell ceremony for the outgoing ambassadors of Greece and Mexico to Kuwait the day before yesterday evening following the end of their tenures in Kuwait. The event was attended by Khaled Al-Farsi, the representative of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and a significant number of heads of diplomatic missions accredited to Kuwait.

Speaking on the occasion, the Dean of the Diplomatic Corps Ambassador of Tajikistan Dr. Zabidullah Zabidov commended the efforts of the outgoing ambassadors in enhancing their countries' relations with Kuwait, highlighting their cooperation and support with their fellow heads of other missions.

He expressed gratitude to the Kuwaiti Ministry of Foreign Affairs for the ongoing cooperation and support to diplomatic missions and international



organizations in Kuwait, emphasizing the positive relations Kuwait maintains with all nations. The Greek Ambassador, Constantinos Piperigos, discussed his achievements during his tenure, notably organizing three visits by Greek ministers to Kuwait and establishing successful

direct flights to Mykonos during the summer and to Athens throughout the year.

He also mentioned successful cultural events like the exhibition "Alexander the Great: Building Bridges between East and West," contributing to public dialogues on cultural and tourism

development in Failaka (Icarus), organizing performances by renowned artists, and boosting Greek exports to Kuwait. He expressed his appreciation for the cooperation he received from the Kuwaiti Ministry of Foreign Affairs, acknowledging the support in facilitating his tasks in Kuwait.

On the other hand, the Mexican Ambassador to the country, Miguel Angel Isidro, summarized his accomplishments during his eight and a half years in Kuwait. He successfully introduced Kuwaitis to Mexico's tourism and investment potential and its ongoing development, dispelling misconceptions some had about his country.

He spoke highly of the warm reception he received from Kuwaiti society and the friendships he formed with fellow ambassadors, expressing hope for continued friendships in the future.



Mohamed Naser Al-Sayer & Sons Company inaugurated two new showrooms at Shuwaikh, one exclusively for Toyota cars, and another called 'ALSAYER Car World' an outlet for certified pre-owned multi-branded cars.

The event was attended by company Chairman Faisal Bader Al Sayer, the CEO Mubarak Naser Al-Sayer, and CEO of Al Dhow Holding, Bader Musaed Al Sayer along with distinguished guest Project General Manager Middle East & Central Asia Division at Toyota Motor Corporation, Ojima Eiichiro in the presence of members of the media and top management of ALSAYER.

Speaking on the occasion, Mubarak Naser Al Sayer said, "We believe that 'the customer comes first', so our strategy depends on continuous

## ALSAYER opens mega Toyota showroom in Shuwaikh

development and expansion for the convenience of our valued customers through the opening of new projects such as car showrooms, service centers, and original spare parts, optimally distributed to cover all regions of Kuwait." He added, "From the members of the Board to every single member of the team, we are focused on delivering an unsurpassed customer experience, and to fulfilling the promise of 'putting a smile

on the face of every customer'."

For his part, Mr. Eiichiro thanked ALSAYER for the support and trust in Toyota products and services. He added, "Toyota Motor Corporation has a very long and firm relationship with Mohamed Naser Al Sayer, for almost 70 years since 1954. They are one of the most important partners among all the distributors in the world",

The new car showroom for Toyota in

Shuwaikh is characterized by modern decoration and designs with large space to display all the various new Toyota models, including saloons, hatchbacks, SUV, as well as hybrid electric cars. It also allocates a special area for GAZOO RACING – GR cars, which is the sports arm of Toyota. The cars bearing the GR brand are inspired by the world of motorsport. The showroom also includes a pavilion dedicated to the 'SAYARATI' Center, which provides distinctive accessories for Toyota cars.

The Management encouraged the team in Shuwaikh to deliver outstanding service. the Group believes State of the art facilities is an excellent milestone, but to make them come alive a team of dedicated and well-trained employees is essential.

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# Bank accounts of deported expats vulnerable to financial fraud

Banks have expressed concerns that bank accounts belonging to expatriates deported from the country may pose a risk to the financial system, as these still 'open' accounts could be exploited by fraudsters to engage in financial frauds, or for money laundering purposes.

Estimates place the number of bank accounts belonging to deported persons at around 30,000 with various commercial banks in the country. This large number of 'live' accounts could invite regional and international criminal gangs to target these accounts to move

their illegal funds without drawing attention to themselves. Banks fear that such accounts could also be used to recruit more expatriates for fraudulent operations, whether directly or in exchange for fees. Even dormant accounts that lack funds can be vulnerable to hackers, who seek to penetrate them for the largest possible amount of personal data and password information, as well as financial information.

The banks warn that continued exposure of this large number of bank accounts to financial fraud gangs or those active in money laundering operations increases the vulnerability of the



financial system. Accordingly, they have called on the authorities to establish an information link between banks and the Ministry of Interior so that the names of deported people are immediately provided to the banks, which can then freeze these accounts, especially accounts that lack funds.

The regulatory authorities, led by the Financial Investigation Unit of the Central Bank is said to be monitoring the accounts of clients who have deposits in their accounts, have liabilities, or have job or commercial dues that will be deposited later, with further scrutiny by the bank.

## Action plan to boost project pipelines

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

budget approval, and to initiate tendering processes without waiting for approval from parliament, have obviously not evinced the desired response from the involved authorities.

Also among the development projects for this fiscal year that have lagged or remained in limbo for a while now, are several strategically important ones. These include the expansion of Kuwait International Airport's Terminal 2; the Mubarak Al-Kabeer Port on Bubiyan Island; and the Northern Economic Zone Development Project, which seeks to attract high-value global investments with special laws that will also ensure transparent financial resource management.

A previous report that analyzed project pipelines and implementation of development projects in recent years, identified several procedural and process barriers that hindered effective implementation and timely completion of projects in the country. Among others, this included delays in contractual procedures, repeated revisions to signed contracts, and difficulties in obtaining required approvals from regulatory authorities.

Moreover, the need for many projects to have their own laws, or amendments to existing legislation, necessitated parliamentary approval which further delayed project implementations. Given the turbulent political environment that has prevailed in recent years, it is obvious that in order to make any headway in implementing crucial projects, the executive and legislative arms

of government will need to find common ground and cooperate with each other.

The report also highlighted deeper structural shortcomings that have proved to be persistent challenges to implementation of projects over the years. Overcoming some of these deep-rooted challenges would require structural reforms that have long been sidelined by policy- and decision-makers as they were deemed to be politically unpopular.

Numerous studies and reports by local and regional entities, as well as by global institutions such as the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank have recommended the government undertake these 'unpopular' structural reforms in order to boost the country's sustainable growth going into the future. These reforms include the need to rationalize the public sector wages and subsidies that continue to consume nearly 80 percent of the state's budget expenditure.

Other reform recommendations include reorienting the economy away from overreliance on hydrocarbon revenues, and spurring non-oil growth; enhancing workforce productivity, which, despite enormous amounts spent on human resource development by the state, continues to be relatively low; engaging the private sector to drive development projects; and, incentivizing nationals to seek job opportunities in the private sector.

Political instability has also been identified as a major reason for the tardiness witnessed in project pipelines. A background reading of the turbulent political scenario that prevailed for much of 2022 and the first half of 2023, reveals the influence

of political instability on development projects. In April 2022, the government headed by His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al Sabah tendered its resignation, citing inability to work with opposition legislators.

Subsequently, His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, officiating for His Highness the Amir, dissolved the Parliament in June, and announced that general elections had been set for 29 September. Following elections, a new government was eventually formed in October, headed once again by His Highness Sheikh Ahmad Al-Nawaf. But barely three months into the new parliamentary term, in January 2023, the government once again resigned citing incompatibility in working with opposition members in the National Assembly.

Then, in early March 2023, Kuwait's constitutional court annulled the parliamentary election held in September 2022, citing technical irregularity in how the previous government had been dissolved. The court also ruled to reinstate the dissolved 2020 parliament. In May 2023 the Crown Prince dissolved the reinstated 2020 Parliament and ordered for fresh elections to be held. Accordingly, snap general elections were held on 6 June of this year to elect a new parliament. In mid-June a new cabinet once again headed by His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Al-Nawaf was sworn in.

In short, for all practical purposes, the parliament has been in abeyance for nearly nine months of fiscal year 2022-23 and, so far, for around five months in this fiscal including the annual summer recess of parliament, leading to important decisions and laws being shelved. The political upheavals over the past period have not only affected project pipelines, it has also held back the fiscal and structural reforms that the country direly needs to boost growth and revive its development process.

On the plus side, the recent cooperation and coordination witnessed in parliament has been encouraging, and, if continued, could bode well for the country's overall economic development and project implementation. The government is apparently keen to push through economic growth and reenergize vital projects, including the country's ambitious Vision 2035 development plan, which has now been updated to the 2024-2040 period, due to recent health, economic and geo-political crises.

The government's proactive and pro-development stance was apparent during the speech by His Highness the Prime Minister to parliament in mid-July. Addressing the first session of the 17th legislative term of parliament, the premier outlined his government's action plan for the 2023-27 term of the National Assembly. He termed the work plan a document of cooperation between legislative and executive authorities, and one which establishes joint constructive work-rules based on putting the supreme national interest first.

Elucidating the government's work plan, the premier said it encompasses major economic and value-added development projects with specific timetables, with the focus being on ensuring economic diversification, improving development performance, and addressing economic and financial challenges. Improving living conditions

and answering social needs for citizens, mainly housing, education, health and entertainment, was also part of this initiative, he added.

A more detailed look into the government's action plan reveals several interesting aspects that could be crucial to driving Kuwait's sustainable economic growth in the years ahead. Among others, the plan calls for establishing 'Ciyada Development Fund', a new sovereign fund drive development process. The Ciyada Fund, which will invest in the local economy and help develop vital megaprojects, will be a significant boost to economic growth and project development, both of which have historically suffered from low investments.

The action plan also calls for engaging with the private sector to shoulder a greater role in economic development; increasing private investments in developing and operating special economic zones; creating more jobs for Kuwaitis in the private sector; enhancing workforce productivity; launching a new privatization strategy; and restructuring subsidies to target only vulnerable sections of the population.

Other initiatives in the plan include digitizing government services, and shifting the economy to a circular one with the goal of achieving carbon neutrality by 2060. In addition, the work plan includes several fiscal reforms and initiatives including prioritizing the passing of a draft law that has remained stalled in parliament since 2017, introducing a performance-based medium-term framework for the budget, reducing oil dependency through repricing government services, reviewing the corporate tax law, and creating new non-oil revenue streams.

The emphasis on revitalizing the development process and opening a new chapter in the country's growth was also reiterated by the Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Oil, and Minister of State for Economic Affairs and Investment, Dr. Saad Al-Barak. In a statement to Kuwait News Agency during his visit to China — as part of the high-powered entourage accompanying His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah's state visit to China in late September — the minister noted that several agreements had been signed with the Chinese side related to major projects, including the completion of the Mubarak Al-Kabeer Port.

He also revealed that during the visit, the Minister of Justice and Minister of State for Housing Affairs, Faleh Al-Rakba, had signed a memorandum of understanding on the housing cities project — for the construction of an integrated residential city. And, the Minister of Electricity, Water, and Renewable Energy, Dr. Jassim Al-Ostad, had in turn signed a memorandum of understanding to establish a solar electricity generation station. Other agreements were also signed by Foreign Minister Sheikh Salem Abdullah Al-Jaber Al-Sabah related to infrastructure and other fields.

Tellingly, the minister did not elaborate on Kuwait's new strategy of engaging with the West in terms of ensuring the country's defenses, and pivoting to the East, most notably China, in relation to spurring its economic growth and development. But then, irrespective of whether it is East or West the country's strategic interest is in ensuring a growth-oriented safe and secure sustainable future for Kuwait and its people.



## IWG participates in Wellness Day at C Club

A delegation from the International Women's Group (IWG), headed by President of the IWG, Antonia Dimitrova, participated in a 'Wellness Day' event at the C Club last week. The event, held at the club's state-of-the-art facilities included fitness activities, spa therapies and healthy culinary specialties for a holistic approach to well-being.

The IWG delegation was warmly welcomed by the CEO of Argana Hotels & Resorts, Fadi Hijazin, who gave an informative introduction on the importance of a holistic approach to well-being and the club's commitment

to creating a sanctuary for members. The delegation were then taken on a conducted tour of the extensive facilities and participated in yoga and stretch sessions with professional instructors. They were also individually assessed and counseled regarding a wellness program that would best suit their particular needs. The ladies were thrilled with the facilities of the spa and the outstanding specially prepared healthy culinary treats.

On behalf of the IWG, Mrs. Dimitrova presented an honorary shield to express gratitude for the exceptionally prepared wellness-day and rejuvenating visit.





# Water scarcity recognized as hidden threat to global security and prosperity

As the United Arab Emirates hosts the United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP-28) the Ambassador of the United Arab Emirates to Kuwait HE Dr. Matar Al Neyadi said the "COP-28" will focus on making it a conference for implementation and not for pledges as approximately four billion people currently suffer from water shortages for at least one month a year

He highlighted that COP-28 will build upon the agreements reached in the previous summits held in Glasgow and Sharm el-Sheikh.

Ambassador Al Neyadi's remarks were made during the "Urban Breakfast - Talk of the Town" event organized by the UAE Embassy, in collaboration with the United Nations Human Settlements Program's mission.

The session included the participation of the embassies of Spain, the Comoros, and



the European Union. The discussion was titled "The Road to the UAE - COP 28," aimed at understanding the challenges facing the conference scheduled to take place in Dubai from November 30 to December 12, 2023, and the desired outcomes, while also exploring the roles of the European Union, the African Union, and the UN-Habitat Human Settlements

Mission in the fight against climate change.

Ambassador Al Neyadi drew attention to a paper circulated by the UAE concerning the urgent and underlying threat of global water scarcity, underscoring it as a hidden peril jeopardizing the world's security and prosperity. He highlighted that water scarcity is a pervasive issue affecting individuals and

societies worldwide, with approximately 4 billion people enduring water shortages for at least one month every year. He anticipated that the situation would deteriorate in the years to come. Acknowledging the gravity of the challenge, he stressed the need to prioritize addressing water scarcity on the global agenda, advocating for bolstered international efforts and adequate financial resources to overcome this pressing global issue.

He emphasized the significance of reducing emissions across various sectors and encouraged everyone to partake in emission reduction endeavors. He also stressed the importance of climate financing mechanisms and universal involvement in climate change mitigation, urging for global action, necessary investments, and advancements in innovation, research, and development.

## Jazeera Airways to reduce use of in-flight plastics

Jazeera Airways, Kuwait leading low cost carrier, recently introduced sustainable food service ware on all flights across its network of 64 destinations. By changing from plastic cutlery to 100 percent biodegradable spoons, forks, knives and napkins, Jazeera reduces 300 kilograms of plastic on its flights each month.

The cutlery, manufactured by Dubai-based Palmade, is made from natural materials including leaves of the date palm trees. All of these materials are certified biodegradable and compostable. Earlier in the year, Jazeera also switched from plastic stirrers to wooden ones as a part of its sustainable practices. The airline is the first low cost carrier in the Middle East to switch from plastic to eco-friendly in-flight food service ware.

Speaking about the move, Jazeera Airways CEO, Rohit Ramachandran, said, "As a low cost carrier, we have to be cost conscious in our business, but we are also mindful of our ethical, social and environmental accountability. In the last few years, we have taken small steps towards sustainability and continue to stay focused on reducing or offsetting our carbon emissions. Changing to biodegradable service ware is another small initiative that we are hoping will contribute to a larger impact. Our ultimate goal is to achieve net-zero emissions by 2050."

In 2021, Jazeera Airways placed an order for 28 new A320neo and A321neo aircraft,



an investment in the excess of US\$3.4 billion. The A320neo aircraft provide an 18 percent reduction in fuel burn and CO2 emissions, and cut NOx emissions and noise pollution by 50 percent. For customers, Jazeera runs CHOOOSE a carbon offset program providing them with the option to reduce their flight's environmental footprint by choosing to contribute to climate projects.

The airline has also invested in 2,000+ units of the new Expleseat TiSeat E2 model, the world's lightest aircraft seat. Roll out of these seats on Jazeera Airways' aircraft is expected to begin in 2024. With the Expleseat lightweight seats, Jazeera will deliver a substantial weight saving of 1.2 metric tons per aircraft, reduce jet fuel consumption and increase passenger capacity.



## City Centre hosts British Meat Trade delegation



Kuwaiti-owned City Centre hosted a British meat trade mission at its Salmiya store, during the mission's visit to the country. The visit by representatives of several British meat trading companies was facilitated by the UK Embassy in Kuwait, represented by Senior Trade Advisor at the British Embassy, Gula Al Sharafi and Mission Leader, AHDB, Halal Sector Senior Manager, Dr. Awal Fuseini.

City Centre impressed the visitors due to the large size of the Salmiya branch, in addition to the multiplicity of sections consisting of food, non-food and household products, and the diversity of its products across all

sections, including carrying premium UK brand 'Waitrose', which is available in Kuwait exclusively through City Centre stores.

The City Centre team, led by Head of Commercial, Arvind Sathualong with Head of Marketing, Nermeen Bishady, received the British delegates warmly. Attracting investments in the Kuwaiti markets and offering product diversity for its shoppers is one of the top priorities of the City Centre team. This step signifies opening new potential avenues of business, ultimately resulting in a large choice of meats available to City Centre customers.

Thought  
for the  
week

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

- Abraham Lincoln



# German Ambassador delighted to see significant turnout on Unity Day celebration



Ambassador of the Federal Republic of Germany to the State of Kuwait Hans-Christian Freiherr von Reibnitz, expressed his delight at the significant turnout of German friends to join in the commemoration of Unity Day, a moment of great significance for the German people.

He elaborated on his country's jubilation over the 60th anniversary of forging diplomatic ties with Kuwait, highlighting the ongoing arrangements to mark this momentous occasion in the upcoming months of April and May.

These celebrations will encompass a rich tapestry of artistic and musical activities, specialized workshops, discussion groups,

and various events.

Emphasizing the significance of the novel Cascade visa system, he viewed it as a pivotal stride toward eventual visa exemption for Kuwaitis. The system allays concerns for Kuwaiti visa applicants by granting long-term, multi-entry visas aligned with the passport's validity, effective for five years since its recent implementation, just 10 days ago.

Regarding visa application advice, he recommended prospective German visa applicants to initiate the process six months prior to their intended travel date, cautioning against last-minute submissions.

In response to queries concerning military and defense collaboration between both nations, he underscored the robust and enduring military ties. Notably, some of Kuwait's military equipment is of German origin and undergoes maintenance accordingly. He revealed the existence of 150 German brands and trademarks in Kuwait, stemming from a productive German-Kuwaiti partnership. Although determining the precise count of associated companies remains challenging due to the collaborative nature of this alliance.

Addressing the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, he acknowledged a relative decrease in the German community's numbers. Despite this reduction, he emphasized the community's quality and

expertise. The family visa presented a challenge, and collaborative efforts with Kuwait were underway to address this issue.

Lastly, he unveiled ongoing efforts to formulate a bilateral document supporting

the strategic convergence between Germany and Kuwait. This initiative is set against the backdrop of both nations celebrating the 60th anniversary of their diplomatic relations.



## Tamimi & Company celebrates 14 years in Kuwait, relocates to new office

Al Tamimi & Company, a leading law firm in the Middle East and North Africa region, celebrated its 14 years of operations in Kuwait and marked the historic event with a relocation to a new office at the iconic Burj Alshaya.

Celebrations to mark the two events, which was held at the new office, was attended by over a hundred guests, including the UAE Ambassador H.E. Dr. Al Neyadi, Charge d'Affaires at the Embassy of Lebanon, Ahmed Arafa, Assistant Director General for Business Development at KDIPA, Mohammed Yousef Mulla Yaqoub, Former Economic Adviser at Al-Diwan Al-Amiri, Dr. Yousef Al-Ibrahim, and former Minister of Finance, Manaf Al Hajeri.

In his speech, guest speaker Managing Director of Markets & Investment Banking at Kamco Invest and Board Director at Burgan Bank Group, Abdullah AlSharekh, shared with attendees the role of the private sector in achieving Kuwait 2035 vision and in transforming Kuwait into a financial and trade hub both regionally and internationally.

The keynote at the event was delivered by Dr. Noah Raford, former senior advisor to the UAE Prime Minister's Office and founding executive of the Dubai Future Foundation. Dr Noah delivered a futuristic presentation that complemented the themes of the event, such as the vision of New Kuwait 2035.

In his speech on the occasion, Founder and Chairman of Al Tamimi & Company, Essam Al Tamimi said, "Our move to Burj Alshaya marks a new chapter for our journey in Kuwait. We pride ourselves on building and nurturing relationships in each of our jurisdictions, and over the last 14 years we have fostered close ties with the public and private sector.

Supporting businesses and government lies at the heart of our ethos and way of working, and through the firm's experience and expertise we will continue to work closely with the community."

For his part, Managing Partner at Al Tamimi & Company, Samer Qudah commented, "Kuwait is an important part of Al Tamimi & Company's regional footprint, and it is a key strategic jurisdiction for us. By relocating to Burj Alshaya we are positioned at the heart of the business community, and it makes us more accessible to clients.

In his remarks on the occasion, Partner, and Head of Kuwait, at Al Tamimi & Company, Omar Handoush, said: "I believe this will prove to be the most exciting phase for our firm here in Kuwait. Our move to the prestigious Burj Alshaya, is a reflection of our firm's continued commitment to Kuwait and the belief that the greatness of Kuwait, with all its rich cultural history and entrepreneurial spirit, lies in its future. The firm has built its reputation over the last 14 years, and our objective is to continue to provide the leading legal services in the country and work closer than ever with the government and business community in Kuwait."

Al Tamimi & Company Kuwait offers a full range of corporate services in Kuwait, including mergers and acquisitions, commercial, competition law, intellectual property, banking, finance, transport, and infrastructure. The firm is also home to the leading dispute resolution practice in the region offering litigation, international dispute resolution, mediation, and arbitration. We are the only law firm in the region to have rights of audience before all courts.



## Kalaam Telecom Group among Top 50 MENA Leaders



Kalaam Telecom Group, a digital solutions provider was the only telecom company shortlisted in the Top 50 MENA Leaders list for 2023, by Global Thought Leaders. The group commemorated its remarkable journey to becoming one of the 50 influential MENA leaders, with a documentary film outlining its vision and the way forward to reach greater heights.

Founded in 2005 as a voice operator, Kalaam quickly transformed as one of the leading telecommunications providers for businesses and became the second largest ISP for enterprises in Bahrain. Kalaam realized quite early that connectivity is a commodity and enterprises, especially Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs), require industry specific digital solutions to differentiate and stay competitive. To allow businesses to move up the value-chain, Kalaam introduced next-gen digital solutions portfolio such as Voice & Communication, Cloud, Managed Networks, Cybersecurity, IoT & Big Data, ICT and Datacenter to its business practices.

Kalaam continued its growth journey organically and inorganically, acquiring four established telecom companies in Bahrain and Kuwait. In pursuit of expansion, Kalaam acquired KEMS Zajil Telecom, Kuwait's first

internet service provider in Kuwait and has transitioned the company to be an enterprise digital solutions partner. Furthermore, in 2022, Kalaam also launched its operations in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, acquiring ISP, SMS, Voice, Cloud and Cybersecurity licenses, allowing expanded presence to six global offices.

Kalaam's subsidiary brand, Kalaam Carrier Solutions, provides a fully integrated, simplified and consultative approach to connect global telecommunication carriers from the US, Europe, and Asia into the MENA region. Today, the group proudly boasts one of the strongest network infrastructures with 53 Points of Presence (PoP) and multiple regional data centers, allowing it to become one of the top 3 Data Service Providers in the MENA region.

Despite being a niche player and a disrupter in the market, the group is continuously striving as a thought leader with an agile and challenger mindset, customer first approach and is ambitious to cater to the future needs of businesses. These main drivers of the company are reflected in how it is impacting enterprises and global carriers while remaining focused on innovation at every stage.



## Gandhi Jayanti program at IEAS

Indian English Academy School (IEAS) held a program on the occasion of Gandhi Jayanti. The Indian Ambassador, H.E. Adarsh Swaika, was the chief guest on the occasion held to commemorate the 154th birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi and to unveil the bronze bust of Mahatma Gandhi, the Indian Father of the Nation.

The event, held on 2 October, commenced with a warm welcome to the Indian Ambassador and the distinguished guests. The dignitaries were welcomed at the entrance with traditional Aarti (an Indian traditional and sacred ritual of welcoming) and garlands. Fr. Bosco D Mello, the Principal of IEAS, welcomed the Indian Ambassador and the other dignitaries. The ambassador was then escorted



to conduct the unveiling of the bronze bust of Mahatma Gandhi, which had been meticulously crafted by gifted Indian artisans and donated to the school by the Indian Embassy. The Ambassador then delivered a speech that captivated the interest of everyone at the event.

Furthermore, the students of the IEAS, dressed in traditional Indian attire, then presented cultural



performances; including classical dance and patriotic songs. The results of the painting competition organized by the Embassy on the theme Gandhiji and Swachata (cleanliness) were then announced. The competition saw the participation of primary and middle school students from 21 Indian schools. The event concluded with the Indian National anthem.



## Carmel School honors meritorious students

Carmel School organized an 'O Grade' ceremony last week to honor the students of Grades IX-XII for their Overall Excellence and Outstanding Academic Performance. The event was graced by the Ambassador of India, H.E. Adarsh Swaika as the chief guest. The dignitary was accompanied by the Second Secretary, Indian Embassy, Anchita Kethwas, and Ankit Kumar of Mughal Mahal Group, who is a proud alumni of Carmel School. Also in attendance were the principals of Indian Schools in Kuwait, benefactors, parents, teachers and students.

The program commenced with the National Anthems of both Kuwait and India, followed by the traditional Lighting of the Lamp and prayer seeking the blessings of the Almighty. Principal,

Sr. Christy Maria delivered the welcome address and felicitated the dignitaries with potted plants.

Ambassador Swaika, in his address, spoke of the importance of following dreams and encouraged the students to achieve their aspirations through hard work and dedication. Medals, Certificates of Merit and Cash Prizes were then presented by the Mughal Mahal Group to the toppers of the CBSE Board Examination 2022-23, while Founder Prizes were awarded for excellence in both curricular and co-curricular categories.

The Program culminated with a Vote of Thanks by the Head Boy and Head Girl and a heart-warming rendition of the Carmel Anthem by the rocking Carmel musicians and students.



## Gulf Indian School organizes 'Heuristic-2023'

Gulf Indian School, Fahaheel organized an exhibition on 10 September titled 'Heuristic 2023', in which students showcased static and working models which can be used for learning various pedagogical concepts. Principal, Dr. S.Prashant Vasudev inaugurated the exhibition accompanied by the Vice Principal Kallianikutty Rajan.

The exhibition, which was organized by

the Science and Mathematics departments, showcased a diverse range of exhibits, projects, and interactive displays. A standout display showcased an innovative water filtration system, designed by a group of students, which aimed to address the global issue of clean drinking water scarcity. Mathematics department left no stone unturned in inspiring the students to prepare still models and mental math games and contributed amazing ideas.

The class XI demonstrated golden rain, chemical chameleon, fake blood chemical reaction, hydrogen-balloon experiment and lava lamp, which were very fascinating. They also made varieties of soaps using natural ingredients. The remarkable day concluded with loads of appreciation and best wishes from the management and parents.



## Exhibition of 'Art Integrated Learning' at NIS

On 15 September, New Indian School (NIS) organized an exhibition. The items were meticulously arranged in the huge assembly area and ten other classrooms as well as the corridors. The exhibition was focused on the theme, Art Integrated Learning on Andaman and Nicobar Islands.

The distinguished chief guest, Anoud, who is the administrative and academic supervisor of all non-Arabic schools of Aljeri Holding Group, along with NIS Principal, Anita Sadanand and the Vice Principal, Jeya Ananthi inaugurated the venue by cutting the ceremonial ribbon. The ceremony commenced with the recital of a verse from the Holy Quran followed by the Prayer song and the Kuwait National Anthem.

The chief guest, along with the school Principal and Vice Principal then released the



school magazine, and expressed appreciation of the work by students and teachers of NIS. In her address, Principal Sadanand explained the importance of conducting exhibitions and promoting the Indian concept of 'Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat', which aims to enhance interaction between people of

diverse cultures living across India with the objective of promoting greater mutual understanding amongst them.

The cynosure of the entire event was the replica of the Cellular Jail of Andaman and Nicobar Island and Port Blair, made by Mr. Praveen, the art teacher of NIS,

under the supervision of the Vice Principal. The exhibition detailed the culture and tradition, science and technology, art and craft and food varieties of Andaman and Nicobar Islands. The day ended with a sweet note letting the organizers taste the sweet fruit that their hard work bore.





Qatar Airway's Group CEO and  
Chairman of Qatar Tourism  
Akbar Al Baker



David Beckham at the  
Opening Ceremony

# Qatar inaugurates the ultimate automobile festival

## The Times Kuwait Report

**Q**atar Tourism, in collaboration with the Geneva International Motor Show (GIMS), is holding the inaugural edition of GIMS Qatar from October 5 to 14 with 31 renowned automotive brands that is showcasing the latest innovations from the industry.

Qatar's Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman Al-Thani inaugurated Qatar's first Geneva International Motor Show at the Doha Exhibition and Convention Center (DECC) on Thursday Oct 5, igniting what is termed as the automotive passion of Qatar.

The inauguration of GIMS coincides with the Qatar Formula One Grand Prix in Lusail. Spanning over 10,000 m<sup>2</sup> the exhibition is hosting 31 renowned automotive brands, including Toyota, Lexus, Porsche, Volkswagen, Lamborghini, BMW, KIA, Audi, McLaren, Mercedes-Benz, Vinfast, Chery and much more.

Alongside the main exhibition, GIMS Qatar 2023 will create the ultimate automotive festival of automotive excellence in Qatar with four immersive experiences taking place across some of the most prominent tourism destinations in the country.

These include a "Future Design Forum" at the National Museum of Qatar, thrilling offroad adventures at Sealine, exhilarating ride-and-drive experiences at the Lusail International Circuit, an exquisite gallery of classic automobiles, and a grand parade of automotive excellence along the iconic Lusail Boulevard.

Mr. Saad Bin Ali Al Kharji, Deputy Chairman of Qatar Tourism, said: "GIMS Qatar is setting the stage for what promises to be the most prestigious and influential automotive experience in the Middle East.

Welcoming the world to the ultimate automotive festival is a testament to our dedication to creating unforgettable experiences for residents and visitors. Hosting large-scale, globally recognised events such as GIMS Qatar exemplifies our commitment to our strategic vision of becoming the fastest-growing destination in the Middle East by 2030."

Qatar to the media a day prior to the opening to the public Qatar Airway's Group CEO and Chairman of Qatar Tourism Akbar Al Baker said Qatar's open approach to innovation and development made the country a perfect host for GIMS. The exhibition, returning after a three-year hiatus due to the Covid-19 pandemic, is being held outside its base in Geneva for the first time in its illustrious century-old history.

"At the crossroads of East and West, and as a pioneering state that has welcomed innovation and development across diverse sectors, Qatar is a fitting destination for this prestigious motor show's first foray outside of its home country

of Switzerland," Al Baker said, adding that the event's venue, the Doha Exhibition and Convention Center will witness groundbreaking reveals of the latest innovations by 31 renowned automotive brands.

"The launch of the Geneva International Motor Show in Qatar is a testimony to Qatar's rising global prominence as a prime destination for large-scale internationally important events going forward. GIMS Qatar will be hosted every two years in Doha, providing an unrivalled opportunity for brands to present their latest technologies, most innovative ideas and concepts, and inspire the next generation

Al Baker pointed to Qatar's overreaching development of its tourism sector over the past decade alongside the country's investment in building premium conference venues and an ambitious strategy to become the fastest-growing tourism destination in the Middle East by 2030.

"The state has dynamically pursued a strong and ambitious strategy that has seen investment into the sectors to create new tourism assets, strengthen the country's infrastructure and diversify the tourism offering to include business, sports, cruise and other important tourism pillars. With its futuristic skyline, traditional souks and pristine beaches, Qatar offers everything from desert adventures to immersive art exhibitions, exquisite dining experiences and much more," Al Baker added.

On the other hand, the Chief Executive Officer of GIMS, Sandro Mesquita, called the partnership between GIMS and Qatar as perfect. He added that this year's exhibition would drive GIMS to become a more global entity with one brand but two platforms in Doha and Geneva.

According to Mesquita, GIMS and Qatar have a clear ambition to make the exhibition the premier auto show of the Middle East and beyond and to make it the most dynamic car show, offering unique experiences both in and outside the car.

"With GIMS Qatar, we pave the way for a new type of motor show. It is an innovative,

decentralized platform for brands. We have been revealing the future of automotive since 1905, and in that time, we have become a sounding board for the industry. Our Geneva Salon has, for many years, allowed the great and good of the automotive industry to connect, share ideas and inspire the sector's future. Wherever and whenever a GIMS event occurs, it brings the same excellence," Mesquita said.

Running between 5-to-14 October, the automotive extravaganza is set to spotlight 31 iconic automotive brands—from Toyota, McLaren, Mercedes-Benz among others.

Held outside of Geneva for the very first time, the mega 10-day event is providing a unique experience to discover the world's biggest car

**GENEVA INTERNATIONAL  
MOTOR SHOW QATAR IS A  
MUST-GO EXPERIENCE FOR  
AUTO ENTHUSIASTS IN THE  
COUNTRY. VISITORS WILL GET  
A CHANCE TO EXPLORE TRUE  
EXCELLENCE IN LUXURY, SPORTS,  
EXOTICS AND CLASSICS.**

manufacturers, dozens of which are flaunting their latest pieces. The major automobile event in Qatar comes after the signing of a decade-long agreement between the Gulf state and GIMS organisers in 2021 to host the illustrious 118-year-old event biennially from 2023.

The Swiss spring exhibition is set to recommence in the European country in 2024. This year's edition of the event at DECC highlights

the surge in electric vehicles (EV's) in Doha and the rest of the region, with at least three brands on display for visitors, with Lucid Group Inc. set to showcase new editions of its Air EV.

The luxurious Mercedes-Benz AG is also driving forward the EV trend with the company's Qatar distributor unveiling its all-electric range, hailed as a landmark in the Gulf state's move towards sustainable mobility.

Concurrent events will also take place during the week long event such as the Forum for the future of car design, which will include a rich programme of keynote speakers, exclusive panel discussions and a networking lunch that will facilitate disruptive dialogue and cross-disciplinary thinking to discuss the future of the automotive industry. The Sealine Adventure Hub, located at the luxurious Outpost Al Barari, will offer adventure seekers the opportunity to explore the surrounding dunes and see first-hand the skills and capabilities of automotive brands participating in GIMS Qatar 2023 as they conquer the toughest terrains.

In collaboration with the Qatar Motor & Motorcycle Federation (QMMF), GIMS Qatar will also host four exclusive Track Days at Lusail International Circuit. Guests will be invited to enjoy premiere access with the unique opportunity to drive on the newly renovated circuit directly following the F1 champions.

The Urban Playground at Lusail Boulevard will bring the passion and energy of GIMS Qatar to life with engaging performances and interactive activities. A special Parade of Excellence will take place on October 12 at 19:00 which will feature up to 100 dream cars and unique models cruising along Lusail Boulevard's 1.3km iconic strip.

At the DECC, a Classics Gallery will offer visitors an opportunity to discover an exclusive line-up of the world's greatest and finest motorcars. Showcasing some of the best cars ever made and top concourse winners, this exhibit is a must-attend event for all discerning classic car buyers, collectors, and enthusiasts. The exquisite display also shines spotlight on the automotive jewels from Qatari and Arabian private collections.





# Road to, and from, Energy Transition



**Francisco Mauro Brasil de Holanda**

*A retired Brazilian diplomat, he was the former ambassador to Kuwait, and representative to Palestine. He also served at Brazilian embassies in London, Ottawa, Rome, and Asuncion in Paraguay.*

A consensus has emerged about the urgent need to foster energy transition. Past uncontrolled deforestation in today's developed countries, together with the ongoing escalation of carbon emissions from fossil fuels, has precipitated extreme weather events, including the melting of icecaps in the polar circles; crop-shriving droughts; and the increasingly frequent and devastating floods and typhoons among other devastations.

These episodes have raised awareness among the international community about the urgent need to act, lest climate change becomes irreversible. Joined by 196 parties, the 2015 Paris Agreement set the overarching goal to hold the increase in the global average temperature 'to well below 2 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels', and pursue efforts to further reduce it to 1,5 degree Celsius. This is expected to be achieved through a global process of transition towards clean renewable energy sources.

The Paris Agreement recognizes that climate change is a shared problem and called on all countries to set emission targets. A goal of such magnitude involves costly and bold decisions with uncertain results and potentially far-reaching consequences. To make things worse, unforeseen events, such as the COVID-19 pandemic and the ongoing Russia-Ukraine conflict, posed serious additional hurdles. Contrary to the Paris roadmap, both episodes strengthened the role of fossil fuels as the shortest way to ensure energy security.

History assisted many energy transitions before, such as from wood to coal, starting in the 18th century; and from coal to oil, as from the 19th century, after the discovery of the first oil wells in the United States, in 1859. Yet none of them were swift, and all were actually energy additions, rather than energy transitions. It was not until 1900 that coal supplied half the world's energy demand; and it took until the 1960's, a century after its discovery, for oil to replace coal as the world's favorite energy source. It is also notable that all past transitions were driven mainly by economic and technological stimulus, and not by policy, as is the case now, when the world is haunted by gloomy environmental imbalances.

This article is premised on the assumption that there is no alternative to energy transition and that time is short. The plan has four sessions, as follows:

**Role of fossil fuels in future:** Central to the fate of energy transition, the role and share of fossil fuels in tomorrow's global energy profile arouses opposing views.

In an article titled 'A call to clean energy' in Finance and Development, published in December 2022, the Executive-Director of the International Energy Agency (IEA), Faith Birol stated, "...a massive surge in investments in new energy technologies and energy efficiency



could cut global demand for fossil fuels so much that there would be no need for investments in new oil and gas fields. At the same time, continued spending on existing assets, including investments to reduce upstream emissions, remain essential".

Through a different lens, a press statement by OPEC Secretary General, Haitham Al Ghais, released by OPEC in September 2023 stated, "It is an extremely risky and impractical narrative to dismiss fossil fuels, or to suggest that they are at the beginning of their end. In past decades, there were often calls of peak supply, and in more recent ones, peak demand, but evidently neither has materialized. ...Such narratives would lead to energy chaos on a potentially unprecedented scale, with dire consequences for economies and billions of people across the world."

One might guess if this OPEC statement would be corroborated by the United States and China, that, together with Saudi Arabia account for 40 percent of the world oil supply, and are also (US and China) on the front line in the transition to clean renewable sources.

Taking into account its scale worldwide, as well as its essential role to energy security, it is unreal to see the fossil sector stop growing in the coming years, as much as it is undesirable to shift public policies priorities away from the development of renewables.

From fuel-intensive to mineral-intensive: the new basket of inputs: The transition to a clean renewable economy will be followed by a shift from a 'fuel intensive', to a 'mineral intensive' energy system. A completely new mix of minerals is required for the production of renewables, vis-à-vis those fueled by hydrocarbons. According to the IEA, "Since 2010 the average amount of minerals needed for a new unit of power generation capacity has increased by 50 percent as the share of renewables in new investment has risen".

The mix of minerals varies. Lithium, nickel, cobalt, manganese and graphite are crucial to battery performance, longevity and energy density; Rare Earth elements to wind turbines and electric vehicles motors; copper and aluminum for electricity networks. Production and reserves are unequally distributed among different countries. Chile, Peru, China, Congo and the US supply about 60 percent of the world markets of copper.

Rare earth minerals are mostly supplied by China, Australia, US, Russia and India, but other sources have the potential for significant increases in production. Reserves of lithium are mainly located in Chile (9.3 million tons) and Australia (6.2 million tons), followed by Argentina (2.7 million tons) and China (2.0 million tons).

The projected increase in demand for this basket of minerals may open up new opportunities to producers, notably, but not exclusively, to small to midsize economies, such as Argentina, Bolivia, Chile, Peru, Congo, Myanmar and Vietnam. Yet historical evidence shows that being home to abundant natural resources is no guarantee of success. Domestic legal security and wise 'resources diplomacy' are also essential to turn opportunities into durable gains, to benefit as many people as possible.

How much will it cost?: The Sharm el-Sheikh Implementation Plan estimates that a global transformation to a low-carbon economy is expected to require investments of at least US\$4-6 trillion a year. This will require a firm engagement from governments, central banks, commercial banks, institutional investors and other financial actors.

Across emerging markets and developing economies other than China, it is estimated that \$2.4 trillion will have to be spent per year by the end of this decade on three key objectives: transforming energy systems; building climate resilience; and supporting natural capital and sustainable agriculture. To achieve the SDGs more broadly, overall development spending (including the \$2.4 trillion) must more than double from its pre-pandemic level, to around \$5.3 trillion per year by 2030.

On a longer term perspective, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) estimates that to keep global average temperatures within 1.5° Celsius of pre-industrial levels, greenhouse-gas emissions will have to be reduced by 45 percent (from 2010 levels) by 2030 and achieve net-zero emissions by 2050. According to the Network for Greening the Financial System, this will require a total capital investment of more than US\$ 275 trillion by 2050.

Multilateral development banks will be crucial for closing the massive global climate financing gap. But they, too, will need more funding from developed countries, so that they can provide development funds and help crowd-in more private-sector capital. The new 'loss and damage' facility announced at the 2022 United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP27) was another welcome development.

An important role in the path to renewables may be played by the major oil companies, many of which are increasingly turning into energy companies. Brazil's PETROBRAS, a leading oil producer, has announced firm plans to engage in the exploration of off-shore windmills, whose potential may be as high as 700 GW.

Notably, Gulf countries are also mobilizing. Saudi Arabia intends to generate 50 percent of its national power supply from renewables

by 2030. The onshore facilities of ADNOC, the United Arab Emirates's (UAE) state oil company, are now supplied by nuclear and solar energy.

Possible consequences of the transition process on power relations: New power relations may come up in the wake of energy transition. The Sino-American competition for global influence; the strengthening of the Moscow-Beijing axis since the conflict with Ukraine; and apparent strains between Washington and Riyadh - reveal a fragmentation among key political players with strong influence on energy markets.

According to some international analysts, new competing blocs may come up as a consequence. In a recent media interview, Carlos Cordon, from the International Institute for Management Development, in Lausanne, foresaw an European bloc; a NAFTA bloc; and three blocs in Asia: one made up of Japan, Taiwan, South Korea, Australia and US; a second one centered on China; and a third one in India.

Apart from these, Cordon notes a potential role to the BRICS and to a group of 'friendshore countries', such as Saudi Arabia, and others in the Middle East. He adds that the decisions about supply chains would be mainly political. Different blocs could apply their own regulatory mechanisms in their trade relations.

In conclusion: The transition to renewables is not a matter of choice. It is inevitable and urgent. The longer it takes, the worse. The scale of the challenges ahead is huge and may have ample long term consequences beyond national levels. Mistakes made now will be harder to fix than before.

The dominant position of fossil fuels in today's energy supply may not change overnight, lest energy security be in risk. But it is essential that it be balanced by the development of renewables. It is reasonable that the transition to renewables follow different paths in different places, provided that the fundamentals of the Paris Agreement be respected.

The support from governments will be decisive to provide adequate financing, especially in cases that the private sector may not be willing or prepared to take the risks. Yet it will have to be supplemented by private flows. The multilateral institutions may help devise the necessary tools to make the machine working, as it has done.

The threat of political fragmentation foreseen by some analysts is a matter of concern, should it materialize, trade relations would be strongly influenced by political, not economic criteria. Some mechanisms of global multilateralism available today would be weakened and international trade would be affected.



EXCLUSIVE to THE TIMES KUWAIT



# Gender Justice Is Climate Justice



**Immaculate Atuhamize and Bertrand Badré**

*Immaculate Atuhamize is a climate and gender activist from Uganda.*

*Bertrand Badré, a former managing director of the World Bank, is CEO and Founder of Blue like an Orange Sustainable Capital and the author of Can Finance Save the World?*

The Paris Summit for a New Global Financing Pact, held this past June, rightly focused on promoting an inclusive climate action plan that leaves no one behind. As 13 world leaders stressed in a joint commentary published ahead of the gathering, we must ensure that climate initiatives do not overshadow other development efforts, including the global fight against poverty.

This is a daunting challenge, particularly at a time when centrifugal forces threaten the rules-based international order and many countries are grappling with rising interest rates and elevated debt levels. But if global leaders are serious about leaving no one behind, they must address the specific needs of vulnerable groups, especially women and girls, who comprise half of the world's population.

The United Nations' fifth Sustainable Development Goal (SDG5) — achieving gender equality and empowering all women and girls — is inextricably linked to other SDGs, such as those covering health, education, and access to water. Climate change jeopardizes all these interconnected goals, potentially generating a cascading effect.

Women and girls in developing countries, particularly those living in rural areas, bear the brunt of the climate crisis. For starters, girls are often tasked with acquiring water and food for their families. Given that most indigenous

families have at least five members, these responsibilities amount to a heavy burden — one that becomes heavier as the climate crisis escalates, forcing girls to travel increasingly long distances to fulfill their families' needs.

This contributes, for example, to girls arriving at school late. Moreover, without access to clean water, girls struggle to maintain their menstrual health and hygiene. Such challenges force some to drop out of school, thereby losing their chance to acquire quality basic education. Climate change also contributes to increases in child marriage, as desperate families trade their daughters for scarce resources.

Climate change exacerbates other societal problems affecting girls and women, such as gender-based violence. And, given that women carry out most of the unpaid domestic and care work, they face distinct challenges when disasters strike. This has been the case in Uganda, which has lately faced severe climate-related catastrophes, such as floods in the east and southwest and prolonged drought in the north. Since few women have training in disaster mitigation, they die at higher rates than

and engaged with leaders and peers. As the Africa Climate Summit unfolded, many youth-led organizations continued their work, holding climate walks, side events, and press conferences highlighting further the issues that directly affect them and their communities, but were being left out of the leaders' discussions.

These young people (including one of us) observed with astonishment that most leaders and international organizations seemed focused primarily on carbon markets, but paid little attention to pressing issues like increased plastic pollution in Africa. They were equally dismayed by nebulous commitments to allocate resources for resilience and adaptation measures, and vague promises to help countries deal with loss and damage from climate-driven disasters.

The Africa Climate Summit should be a platform for African people, particularly youth, to share and propose homegrown solutions, rather than an opportunity for polluters to promote strategies that perpetuate the crisis. Africa is not a dumping ground; it is a continent rich with innovative thinkers and viable solutions. African climate solutions are global

would not only reduce their vulnerability; it would also bolster the food security and climate resilience of households and communities. The Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) projects that ensuring gender equality in farming could boost women's farm yields by 20-30 percent. The resulting efficiency gains could reduce global hunger by at least 12-15 percent and lead to a 2.1 gigaton decrease in carbon-dioxide emissions by 2050.

Similarly, Project Drawdown, a coalition of scientists and economists from around the world, lists girls' education as one of the most effective ways to combat global warming, particularly when combined with voluntary family planning. Bridging the gender gap in education could help countries adapt to climate change and mitigate its worst effects. Investing in girls' education prepares them for the future they inherit and reduces the existing inequalities many women and girls face. Likewise, integrating climate topics into school curricula could foster greater ecological awareness among these children and thus contribute to their communities' resilience.

It is too soon to assess the Paris Summit's impact. But the event undeniably set the tone for subsequent international gatherings, including the Africa Climate Summit, as well as the G20 meeting in New Delhi and the annual session of the UN General Assembly. The message that emerged from these meetings — that climate change and development must be addressed simultaneously — is also likely to feature prominently at November's UN Climate Change Conference (COP28) in the United Arab Emirates.

This is a start. But for any climate-change plan to be really effective, especially in emerging and developing economies, it must ensure women's social, economic, and political participation. Upcoming international summits, beginning with COP28, must therefore reflect a steadfast commitment to gender justice, and transform the "leave no one behind" mantra from a catchy slogan into tangible actions, both at the policy and grassroots levels. While proactive measures may be expensive, inaction would be far more costly.

“ The FAO projects that ensuring gender equality in farming could boost women's farm yields by 20-30 percent. The resulting efficiency gains could reduce global hunger by at least 12-15 percent. ”

men under such circumstances.

Despite all of this, women and other vulnerable groups are frequently sidelined in climate-policy discussions. The recent Africa Youth Climate Assembly — held the day before the inaugural Africa Climate Summit in Nairobi — showed just how serious this problem is.

At the event, young people representing various African countries discussed climate-related challenges with which they have firsthand experience, shared personal stories,

solutions, and Africans' ideas deserve attention and genuine support. Solutions devised without input from those directly affected will always fall short, and the consequences of leaving some behind can extend well beyond the group in question. Consider agriculture. Despite playing a central role in the sector, women often lack the same access to agricultural resources, services, and formal decision-making bodies as their male counterparts.

Increasing women's access to these resources





# Innovative approach to treat type 1 diabetes

Diabetes is one of the largest global public health concerns, imposing a heavy global burden on public health as well as socio-economic development, and is a leading cause of mortality and reduced life expectancy worldwide. According to estimates from the International Diabetes Federation (IDF), worldwide approximately 537 million adults, between the ages of 20 and 79, were living with diabetes in 2021. By 2030 the number of adults living with diabetes is expected to reach 643 million, and to increase to 783 million by 2045.

These startling figures, as well as the fact that more than half the people living with diabetes are unaware they have the condition, highlight the need to raise public awareness on the illness, and that it can be treated and controlled through early diagnosis, regular monitoring, medication and therapies, as well as through lifestyle changes such as eating a healthy diet and engaging in physical activities.

Diabetes is a chronic health condition that affects your body's ability to turn food into energy. Normally, most of the food you eat is broken down by the digestive process into sugar (glucose) which is released into the bloodstream that carries it to your cells where it is converted into energy needed by the body. The hormone insulin, produced in the pancreas, acts like a key to allow blood sugar into your body's cells.

When your blood sugar goes up, it signals islet cells in your pancreas to release insulin. With diabetes, your body does not make enough insulin or it cannot use it as effectively as it should. When there is not enough insulin or cells stop responding to insulin, too much blood sugar stays in your bloodstream. Over time, that can cause serious health problems, such as heart disease, vision loss, and kidney disease. There is no cure as yet for diabetes, but losing weight, eating healthy food, and being active can really help.



There are three main types of diabetes: type 1, type 2, and gestational diabetes. Type 1 diabetes is thought to be caused by the body's immune system destroying cells in the pancreas that produce insulin necessary to regulate blood sugar levels. In type 2 diabetes, the body cannot use insulin effectively to maintain blood sugar at normal levels. Gestational diabetes, which develops during pregnancy, also increases the mother's and baby's risk for type 2 diabetes later in life.

While gestational diabetes usually goes away after childbirth, and engaging in healthy lifestyles and medical treatments can help manage type 2 diabetes, people with type 1 diabetes will have to take insulin shots every day, or wear an insulin pump that provides the body with the

required dose of insulin.

In what could be a breakthrough achievement in the treatment of type 1 diabetes, scientists at Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) in the United States have developed an innovative approach of implanting pancreatic islet cells that produce insulin within the body, which produces insulin whenever it detects an increase in blood glucose levels.

Previous attempts at implanting pancreatic cells had run into several hurdles. For instance, attempts to implant pancreatic islets cells from human cadavers, or from stem cells, to deliver long-term control of diabetes, were saddled by the additional need for patients to take regular doses of immunosuppressive drugs to prevent their body's natural immune system from attacking the implanted cells.

Attempts to overcome immune system attacks by encapsulating the transplanted cells in a casing also proved short-lived as the implanted cells could not then access the needed oxygen supplies. To overcome these challenges, the MIT engineers designed a new implantable device that not only carries hundreds of thousands of insulin-producing islet cells, but also has its own oxygen factory, which could generate oxygen indefinitely by splitting water vapor found in the body.

Oxygen supplies were facilitated by using a proton-exchange membrane — a technology originally deployed to generate hydrogen in fuel cells — located within the device. This membrane can split water vapor available in the body into hydrogen, which diffuses harmlessly away, and oxygen, which goes into a storage chamber that feeds the islet cells through a thin, oxygen-permeable membrane.

A significant advantage of this approach is that it does not require any wires or batteries. Splitting this water vapor requires a small voltage (about 2 volts), which is generated using a phenomenon known as resonant inductive coupling. A tuned magnetic coil worn as an outside patch on the patient's skin transmits power wirelessly to a small, flexible antenna within the device in the body.

## Climate change found to affect sleep quality

Climate change has been shown to have a direct and indirect impact on many aspects of our life and our livelihood. Now a new study reveals it could also affect the quality of our sleep, especially among people living in urban areas. The importance of proper sleep, along with a healthy diet and regular exercise, is fundamental to a person's overall health and wellbeing.

Researchers at Harvard Medical School in the United States found that both climate change and urban induced warming effects such as urban heat islands (UHI) can substantially increase nighttime temperatures and



thereby impact the quality of sleep enjoyed by people. The study revealed that as nighttime temperature rises above 25 degrees centigrade, there is a rapid decline in quality of sleep.

An UHI is an urban area that is significantly warmer than its surrounding rural areas, with the difference being more perceptible at night than during the day, and most noticeable during summer and winter.

The UHI effect could be caused by several factors, including reduced ventilation and heat trapping due to the close proximity of tall buildings, heat generated directly from human activities, the heat-absorbing properties of concrete and other urban building materials, as well as the limited amount of vegetation.

The elderly and those from lower socio-economic conditions are especially vulnerable to higher temperatures and its impact on quality sleep. In general, as we age, the depth of sleep and sleep duration are usually impaired, this is further exacerbated in elderly people with baseline medical conditions, mental health conditions, underlying sleep disorders, and those on medications.

Additionally, people with lower socioeconomic status are more likely to live in congested homes and in dense urban areas with less green space where the urban heat island effect is more intense. They also have less access to healthcare facilities to deal with consequences of disrupted and inadequate sleep.

For the study, participants wore sleep monitors and environmental sensors, which monitored the length of sleep, efficiency, and restlessness. Researchers gathered data from 50 older adults, which included 11,000 nights of sleep and environmental information. Findings revealed a 5 to 10 percent drop in sleep efficiency as temperature escalated from 25° to 30°C. As cities around the world get warmer this could impact sleep quality and overall health of people living in these areas,

During sleep, we fluctuate between phases where our body temperature is regulated differently. During the Rapid Eye Movement (REM) sleep — which makes up about a quarter of the time spent asleep — the body's ability to regulate temperature is impaired. This means that if room temperature is high, the body is unable to adjust to it, which leads to frequent arousals from sleep.

Considering the effect of sleep deprivation on overall wellbeing of individuals, there is a rising need for healthcare officials and policy makers to tackle sleep disruptions caused by higher temperatures induced by climate change.

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