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250 Fils

Getting the water equation right



THE TIMES KUWAIT REPORT

In Kuwait, most of us have come to take for granted that water will always be available when we turn on the taps. In the minds of many, including those in policy-making circles, the thought of water taps running dry one day are as far-fetched as the idea that oil will no longer fund the country's economy. But both scenarios are not as improbable, or as distant as many would imagine — with the odds being in favor of water taps running dry before the oil spigots do.

A time when Kuwait could find it challenging to sustain the supply of potable water is a prospect that everyone needs to be wary of, and an issue for which policy- and decision-makers have to urgently develop mitigating and adaptive strategies. We had a foretaste of what it would be like to wake up without water in our taps last August, when at the peak of summer season and scorching heat, faucets ran dry in many places.



Data from the Ministry of Electricity, Water and Renewable Energy (MEW) for two consecutive days in the first week of August last year, reveals that water consumption

exceeded production by 29 million imperial gallons, or 0.13 million cubic meters (MCM). Daily water production on the related days was estimated at 477.8 million imperial gallons

(2.17 MCM), while consumption topped 506.8 million gallons (2.30 MCM) per day. Although the deficit was met by dipping into the ample strategic reserves, that did not prevent water supply breakdowns in many areas.

Uncharacteristically high summer temperatures driven by global changes in climate and weather patterns, have been wreaking havoc on power and water supplies in many countries. In Kuwait, besides the high summer temperatures, unbridled consumption, growing population, and rapid urbanization and industrialization, have all contributed to exacerbating an already precarious water situation. An arid climate, scant rainfall, no natural surface water resources, and a mostly saline and dwindling groundwater resource, means that nearly all potable water in Kuwait comes from eight desalination plants located along the country's coastline. But overwhelming dependence on desalination plants to provide potable water for the country is fraught with its own share of hazards.

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Strict enforcement of visit visa regulations



Undersecretary of the Ministry of Interior, Lieutenant-General Salem Al-Nawaf, emphasized the importance of strict enforcement of the law against anyone violating the visit visa regulations that were announced recently.

Visitors violating the permitted one-

month stay are initially given a one-week grace period. However, if they do not depart after paying the fine following the grace period, they and their sponsors will face deportation from the country.

Regarding the Interior Ministry's decision to allow residency violators to regularize their status by paying the requisite fines during the period from 17 March to 17 June, ministry sources revealed that so far 652 residency violators have submitted requests to the Residency Affairs Departments to amend their status. Of this total, 366 applied for a modification of their visa status, paid the due fines and applied to obtain new residency permits under new sponsors.

Meanwhile 258 residency law violators left the country following confirmation that they were not wanted by the law or had legal cases pending against them. The

remaining 28 expatriates were prevented from leaving after it was found that they owed financial dues to the state, in addition to some having misdemeanor and felony cases registered against them.

Ministry sources explained that there appears to be a misunderstanding among many residency violators that the amnesty allowed them to exit the country without settling the financial dues they owed or without resolving any legal cases registered against them. The ministry clarified that the amnesty is applicable only to residency violators, and does not include those who owe dues to the state, such as traffic fines, electricity bills, municipal and trade violations, or those who have cases registered against them by citizens or residents in the country's computer system.

The ministry underlined that the three-month grace period for residency law

violators allows them to amend their status after paying the fine and complying with the regulations and procedures. They also allow violators who leave the country during the grace period to return with new procedures.

Additionally, violators can exit the country without paying fines from designated ports, provided they have no administrative or judicial obstacles. The ministry urges residency violators with such obstacles to consult the General Administration of Residence Affairs to check the requirements for obtaining residency during this period.

Ministry sources also indicated that residency violators failing to rectify their status or exit the country within the specified period will face legal penalties, denial of residency permits, deportation, and a ban on reentry to the country.

AlSayer Group holds road safety awareness campaign among students



AlSayer Group recently organized and participated in several events promoting road safety awareness and educating students at various educational institutions on safe driving habits and showcasing the advanced safety features of Toyota vehicles.

As part of the GCC Road Safety Awareness Week, AlSayer Group hosted a road safety event at the International University of Kuwait (IUK) that targeted university students and focused on raising awareness about the dangers of mobile phone usage while driving, the importance of wearing seatbelts, and the need to avoid rash driving.

4th March, at the KNPC Ahmadi main building. The Car Rental Division presented our Group's vehicles' safety features and provided a comprehensive presentation on its safety techniques.

Furthermore, the Group's Toyota Technical Training Center conducted training sessions for the students of Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah High School. The sessions, held on 5th and 6th March, focused on educating the students about hybrid and electric vehicles (EVs), as well as emphasizing the importance of traffic safety and periodic maintenance. The team of experts delivered interactive discussions, presentations, and practical demonstrations to enhance the students' learning experience. They provided insights into the working principles of hybrid and electric vehicles, highlighting their environmental benefits and technological advancements.

The sessions also stressed the significance of responsible driving, following traffic rules, wearing seat belts, and avoiding distractions on the road and the importance of regular maintenance and using genuine spare parts to ensure optimal vehicle performance and longevity.

Also, in collaboration with the Kuwait Society of Engineers, AlSayer Group participated in the Traffic Safety Awareness Forum on 6 March to increase awareness about traffic safety and safe driving practices. The Group set up an engaging booth that showcased Toyota vehicles' advanced safety features, highlighting the company's commitment to enhancing the safety of drivers and passengers.

For his part, Group Manager at AlSayer Group, Eng. Nehad Al-Haj Ali, emphasized the company's dedication to road safety and community empowerment and commented "we prioritize promoting road safety awareness and equipping students with responsible driving knowledge to make Kuwait's roads safer for everyone."



Kuwait road accident statistics were presented at the event, which engaged over 50 students and teachers through quiz sessions, emphasizing the criticality of following traffic safety rules. The event also featured the participation of the Support & Rescue Team, who demonstrated road safety measures during emergencies and safe off-road practices utilizing fully equipped off-road rescue Toyota SUVs. Toyota Kuwait showcased Supra and Toyota 86 sports cars, allowing students to envision the superior driving and safety features in the Toyota mobility range.

Additionally, the Group's Car Rental Division played a vital role in promoting road safety by participating in the Road Safety Campaign organized by the Kuwait National Petroleum Company (KNPC) that was held on 3rd and

Embassy of India issues advisory on MoI amnesty

The Indian Embassy issued an advisory to Indian nationals in Kuwait regarding the amnesty granted by the Ministry of Interior (MoI) to residency-law violators in the country.

The advisory stated that Indian nationals who have lost their passports and wish to apply for Emergency Certificates (EC) to go back to India under the recently announced Amnesty scheme of Kuwait, are required to fill relevant application forms and submit documents along with necessary charges, at any one of the three Indian Consular Application Centers (ICAC) managed by BLS.

Those who have already filled EC forms and obtained the requisite tokens from the Embassy are advised to visit BLS Centres on the date mentioned in the token, for submission of EC application with the mandated EC fee. The embassy added that since all tokens for 21 March to 8 April are already booked, BLS Centers will only accept these token holders during this period.

After submission, the applicant is required to visit the Embassy on the next working day on the specified time given by BLS, for interview and collection of ECs.

It may be noted that henceforth, tokens will be issued only at the three BLS Centers and not at the Embassy.

Applicants for tokens are therefore requested to visit the BLS Centers only from 2pm-4pm on all working days (except Friday) to get a token for the submission of the EC forms for the next available dates. Those who do not take advance tokens will be accommodated only if there is any slot available after 8 April. Moreover, all applicants must ensure that the details requested in the form are filled accurately or it would not be accepted.

The Embassy added that if a person wishing to avail of the amnesty and rectify their residential status by paying the requisite penalties finds that their passport is expired, they can apply for reissuing the passport to any of the three BLS Centers along with the prescribed undertaking signed by the new sponsor and his or her civil ID copy, and other required documents and fee.

Addresses of the three ICAC in Kuwait are as follows:

BLS International Ltd., Kuwait City: 3rd Floor, Al Jawhara Tower, Ali Al Salem Street, Kuwait City (Same building that has offices of Indigo Airlines)

BLS International Ltd., Jleeb Al Shuyoukh: Nesto Hypermarket Building (Old Olive Hypermarket), Mezzanine Floor, Jleeb Al Shuwaikh, Kuwait

BLS International Ltd., Fahaheel: Al Anoud Shopping Complex, Mezzanine floor, Mekka Street, Fahaheel.

For more details you can contact ICAC on +965-65506360 (Whatsapp) and +965-22211228 (Call center)

EU to consider waiving Schengen visa for GCC nationals

In a media statement last week, the European Union's (EU) Arabic spokesperson for the Middle East and North Africa (MENA), Luis Miguel Bueno elaborated on a tentative EU plan to waive the Schengen visa requirement for citizens of Kuwait and Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) states in the near future.

The spokesperson explained, "This proposal is currently on the negotiating table by the European Commission, but first there must be a discussion within the European Union (EU) among member states, and also in the European Parliament. As you know, there are elections in about four months to the EU Parliament next June. I

Regarding the proposal to exempt Kuwaiti and Qatari citizens from Schengen visa, Bueno said that there is a desire on the part of the European Commission to work towards exempting citizens of these two countries from the Schengen visa. However, the process is somewhat complicated and must go through the Council of the European Union and the European Parliament."

Bueno also confirmed that the upcoming visit



of the Secretary-General of the Gulf Cooperation Council, Jassim Al-Budaiwi, to Brussels includes discussing several files, including the exemption of citizens from Gulf Cooperation Council countries from the Schengen Visa.

Together, the Gulf States constitute the eighth-largest economy in the world, with annual growth of their combined economies estimated at about 6% and a gross domestic product of \$2.4 trillion.

Foreign minister expresses optimism on expected breakthroughs

Foreign Minister Abdullah Al-Yahya expressed optimism about potential breakthroughs in the coming months, noting that there are signs of progress on various fronts and expected further positive developments in the near future.

Minister Al-Yahya was speaking on the sidelines of a reception he held last week to mark the holy month of Ramadan, for diplomats of countries and heads of international and regional organizations accredited to Kuwait. The event was attended by the Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs, Ambassador Sheikh Jarrah Al-Jaber, as well as the minister's assistants and senior ministry officials.

Al-Yahya expressed his happiness at the presence of a large number of Kuwaiti, Arab, and foreign diplomats, led by the Dean of the Diplomatic Corps at the event. He also expressed

his hope that "these meetings would continue during Ramadan or on other occasions, adding that Kuwaitis refer to diwaniyah gatherings as mini-parliaments, where all issues concerning citizens and the region are discussed."

In response to a question about the European parliamentary elections scheduled for next June and Kuwait's actions regarding the Schengen visa, Al-Yahya said, "We have received numerous invitations to participate in several conferences, concerning the issue of exempting Kuwaitis from Schengen. There are multiple pathways to address this, either through exemption, or adopting a strategy similar to what our British counterparts have done, such as granting Kuwaitis a long-term visa for five years through online applications."

Regarding Canada, he said, "We are nearing completion of facilitating electronic visa procedures with them. The remaining steps involve meeting a few minor conditions that they have requested, which have already been forwarded to the relevant authorities. The matter is close to finalization and is currently with the Ministry of Interior. I believe we will conclude this process before this summer."



Regarding some vacancies in the positions of Kuwaiti ambassadors in certain countries, the Minister of Foreign Affairs stated, "We have a plan that will be finalized shortly, and we are currently establishing standards in line with the decisions of the Council of Ministers, both within and outside the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. We have fulfilled all these requirements, and they have been formally submitted to the Council of Ministers for approval. In the near future, they will be implemented."

Referring to Kuwaiti and Arab efforts to halt Zionist aggression in Gaza, he stated, "We have recently participated in several conferences that were primarily focused on the Gaza issue, and we emphasized our concern for the Palestinian people. This matter holds great importance and is a top priority for our political leadership."

"Our efforts have centered on reinstating donations and aid to the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees (UNRWA). Many major donor countries that had previously suspended their funding have now reversed their decisions and committed to resuming their contributions in the upcoming allocations, including Canada, Germany, and Sweden. We hope that other nations will follow suit and renew their support for the agency," he added.

Emphasizing the "importance and priority of ending the war", Al-Yahya said, "There is significant European and Arab pressure at the highest level. I confirm that there will be a breakthrough soon, at least based on the steps we are witnessing today in the region, including from the Gulf, Arab, Islamic, and even European sides."

Al Muzaini Exchange Announces Winner of \$10,000 Transfer and Win Campaign



Al Muzaini Exchange Company, Kuwait's leading exchange service provider, proudly concludes its Transfer and Win Campaign by revealing the fortunate recipient of its \$10,000 Mega Prize. The announcement took place on Sunday, March 17, 2024, at the Al Muzaini Head Office.

Ms. Kumari Gajulamandyam emerged as the winner, expressing profound gratitude for Al Muzaini's continuous commitment to rewarding its loyal clientele through various campaigns throughout the year. Having trusted Al Muzaini for numerous years, Ms. Gajulamandyam commended the company's efficiency in facilitating fast, secure, and competitively-priced money transfers, particularly to India. She stated, "I trust Al Muzaini for my money transfers to India; they are truly exceptional. The staff is incredibly helpful, and I recommend Al Muzaini to anyone in need of swift and reliable money transfer services."

Al Muzaini Exchange remains dedicated to offering top-tier financial services, including money transfers and foreign currency exchange, ensuring utmost convenience and safety at the most competitive rates. Mr. Hugh Fernandes, General Manager of Al Muzaini, extended his congratulations to Ms. Gajulamandyam, remarking, "We are delighted to announce the winner of our Transfer and Win Campaign 2024. Our commitment to delivering exceptional services and rewarding our loyal customers remains unwavering."

Throughout the campaign, which ran from December 26, 2023, to February 29, 2024, Al Muzaini awarded prizes totaling over \$30,000. Hundreds of winners were selected for daily, weekly, and monthly prizes, in addition to the grand prize. Participation in the campaign was open to all customers availing Al Muzaini's services, including money transfers conducted at branches, online, or through kiosks.

Ramadan Iftar Buffet

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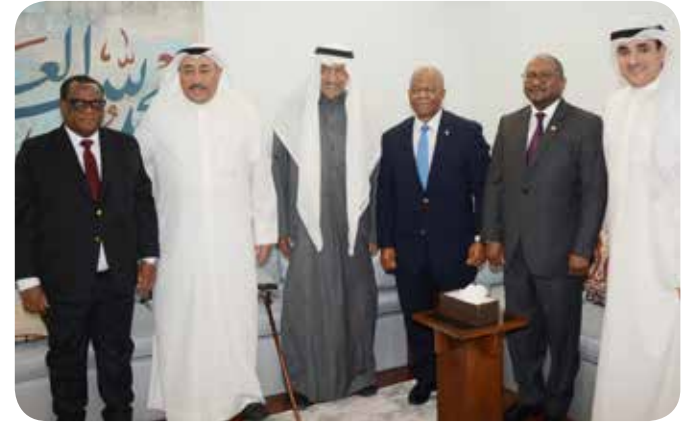
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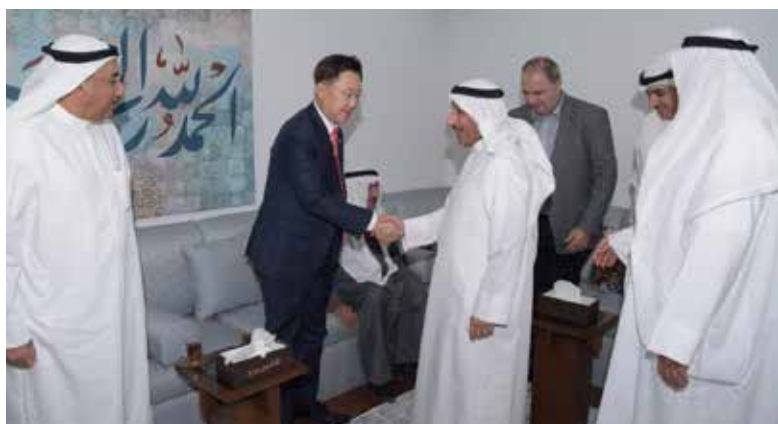


Last week, Tareq AlShumaimry, editor-in-chief of The Times Kuwait, hosted a gathering at his diwaniya, welcoming friends, well-wishers, and members of the diplomatic community as part of the Ramadan festivities. The event provided diplomats from various nations an opportunity to mingle with the Kuwaiti community and share Ramadan greetings with them.

The diwaniya, a cornerstone of Kuwaiti culture and social life, becomes particularly vibrant during the holy month, transforming into bustling centers of social interaction, welcoming individuals from diverse backgrounds and nationalities.

Visits by diplomats and international guests to the diwanis are also instrumental in bridging cultural divides and nurturing a convivial atmosphere that fosters warmth and inclusivity. They allow ambassadors and diplomats to deepen their connections with Kuwaiti citizens and officials, and reinforce the strong, positive ties between the diplomatic corps and all sectors of Kuwaiti society.

Amidst these interactions, the serving of traditional tea, coffee, and Ramadan sweets to the guests, which embodies the essence of Kuwaiti hospitality, adds to the richness of the experience.



EU ambassador hosts Ramadan Ghabqa for media representatives

On March 18, H.E. Anne Koistinen, Ambassador of the European Union (EU) to the State of Kuwait, hosted a Ramadan Ghabqa with journalists and media representatives. The event served as an occasion to express appreciation for the strong cooperation between the EU delegation in Kuwait and the local media, as well as to discuss the deepening partnership between the EU and Kuwait.

In her welcoming remarks, Ambassador Koistinen highlighted her commitment to fostering dialogue and collaboration between the EU and Kuwait, building on the already excellent and strong EU-Kuwait partnership.

Ambassador Koistinen said, "On the occasion of the Holy Month of Ramadan, I would like to send my warmest greetings to H.H. the Amir of Kuwait Sheikh Mishal Al Ahmad Al Jaber Al Sabah and to Muslims inside and outside Kuwait."

She added, "Ramadan this year is rather different as people in the region and beyond are concerned about the suffering of the Palestinians in Gaza. My thoughts are with the people of Gaza, who are suffering from hunger, bombing, and displacement. But I also don't forget the Muslims suffering in other places in this region during this Holy Month, such as Sudan, Yemen, and Syria. I sincerely hope that this Holy Month of Ramadan brings lasting peace in the Middle East and across the world, including in Europe, where Ukraine continues to fight for its freedom and independence."

Ambassador Koistinen praised Kuwait's ongoing humanitarian support for Palestinians and UNRWA, which remains a top priority for the European Union. She highlighted that the EU is the leading donor to Palestinians globally, with €225 million mobilized for humanitarian aid since October 7.

Furthermore, the EU has increased its financial contributions to UNRWA, transferring €50 million in early March and planning to boost emergency aid to Palestinians by €68 million in 2024.

Humanitarian aid to Gaza

Ambassador Koistinen said, "We believe that there is no substitute for UNRWA and for the provision of services to Gaza and its twomillion inhabitants."



Ambassador Koistinen highlighted the joint statement between the European Commission and other countries on the opening of a maritime corridor to deliver additional humanitarian aid to Gaza alongside plans for a temporary pier.

Ambassador Koistinen noted that financial and humanitarian support alone is not sufficient, and reiterated the EU's commitment to addressing the root causes of the conflict and advocating for the Two-State Solution. "I am pleased that the EU agrees with Kuwait on the utmost importance of finding a way out of the conflict, and we both support the 2002 Arab Peace Initiative, which is an excellent proposal to build on," she added.

She highlighted that the EU's High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, Josep Borrell, shares concerns beyond Gaza, as he has condemned Israeli provocative announcements to expand illegal settlements in the occupied West Bank. "The EU has clearly stated that it will not recognize any changes to the pre-1967 borders, including with regard to Jerusalem, other than those agreed upon by the parties," Ambassador Koistinen added.

Ambassador Koistinen also noted the EU's concerns regarding regional escalation and its potential impact on global trade, including trade between the Gulf and Europe. She mentioned the new EU defensive naval operation, EUNAVFOR ASPIDES, aimed at safeguarding the freedom of navigation and merchant shipping in the Red Sea and the Gulf.

Ambassador Koistinen expressed her excitement about experiencing Ramadan

traditions in Kuwait for the first time, including ghabqas and diwaniyas. She emphasized the importance of these gatherings in strengthening family bonds, fostering community spirit, encouraging reflection, and promoting generosity, all of which are central to the essence of Ramadan.

She mentioned that millions of EU Muslim citizens and residents from diverse backgrounds come together during this Holy Month, hosting various events such as iftars and interfaith initiatives. She noted that these celebrations exemplify the EU's motto of "united in diversity."

Milestones and achievements in EU-Kuwait ties

Ambassador Koistinen highlighted significant milestones and achievements in EU-

Kuwait relations. These include the adoption of more favorable Schengen visa rules for Kuwaiti citizens in September 2023, allowing them to obtain multiple-entry visas with a validity of up to 5 years from the first application. She also pointed out the successful rounds of Senior Officials Meetings and Human Rights Dialogues between the EU and Kuwait in December 2023, along with the robust trade and investment relations.

Schengen visa waiver

Regarding the Schengen visa waiver, Ambassador Koistinen made it clear that advancing visa-free travel for Kuwaitis remains one of her priorities during her mandate. She expressed hope that the new European Parliament, following the elections in June, will view the Schengen visa waiver proposal for Kuwaiti citizens favorably.

Ambassador Koistinen underscored the commitment of both the EU and Kuwait to promoting prosperity, stability, and peace in the region. This commitment is evidenced by fruitful cooperation in various areas, including women's empowerment, the green transition, and climate change initiatives. These efforts will continue to build on the strong EU-Kuwait relations within the framework of the EU's Joint Communication on a Strategic Partnership with the Gulf.

Ambassador Koistinen concluded by stating that the EU Delegation in Kuwait has plans to celebrate Europe Month in Kuwait this May.



Water usage expected to surge by over 25 percent

"Water is not just a private resource that can be monopolized and its sources competed for, but rather it is a human right that everyone must respect," said Minister of Electricity, Water, and Renewable Energy (MEW) and Minister of State for Housing Affairs, Dr. Salem Al-Hajraf, while stressing the need to enhance water security in the country and build capabilities to confront common global challenges.

The minister made the statement on the occasion of World Water Day, celebrated each year on 22 March. Al-Hajraf stated that celebrating World Water Day sends a message to world leaders and the peoples of

the Earth about the necessity of cooperation in the water sector to achieve a dual positive impact for humanity, as water is considered fundamental for sustenance of life.

He added that Kuwait's participation with countries worldwide in celebrating this day demonstrates its keenness to secure its local water needs through modern and innovative methods. This effort dates back to 1951 when Kuwait established the Shuwaikh plant, marking the first seawater desalination plant in the world at that time.

He pointed out that World Water Day is an opportunity to unite efforts on water issues and accelerate progress in this vital field. "We must all play our role, each from our position, to preserve this fundamental resource for existence and collaborate to manage this blessing in a sound and sustainable manner."

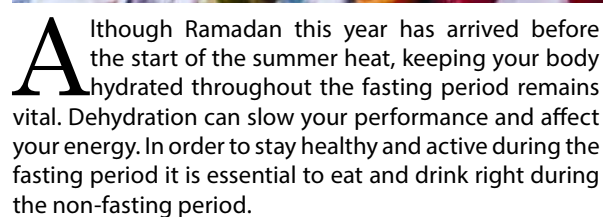
Highlighting the high usage of water in Kuwait, Al-Hajraf stated that the maximum rate of water demand by the end of this year may reach 585 million imperial gallons per day — a year on year increase of 27 percent. He added that unless water usage is curbed, water demand is projected to reach over 800 million imperial gallons per day by the year 2035. He stressed that the MEW is preparing to meet this projected demand by drafting a future plan that envisages increasing water production to around 1 billion imperial gallons by 2035.

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Ask Mira : Eating Right to Live Happy & Healthy



Traditionally, Ramadan is associated with drinking beverages that contain high levels of sugar. These sugars, which are directly absorbed into the bloodstream lead to a spike in insulin levels that then cause even more sweet cravings. Rather than partaking of drinks with high sugar content, it is better to focus on healthy drinks.

Here are some of the healthy drinks that you could opt for during Ramadan.



Kharroub (carob): Kharroub powder is a smart alternative to cocoa. You can try hot or cold drinks made of kharroub. It reduces cholesterol, aids digestion and acts as an antioxidant. In addition, it contains magnesium, calcium, iron, phosphorus, potassium manganese, copper, and the vitamins A, B, B2, B3, and D. Two tablespoons of Kharroub powder have only 70 calories in them, but you need to keep in mind that while it is low in fat and salt, it also has a higher sugar than cocoa powder, so use in moderation if aiming to replace cocoa with carob.

Amar el-deen (apricot juice): This is one of the most traditional Ramadan beverages in many places. It is made of dried apricot paste. Amar El Deen is full of antioxidants that prevent all sorts of chronic diseases. Plus it has lycopene that prevents male fertility and prostate cancer.

Watermelon Smoothie: Beat your thirst and boost your energy by having a glass of watermelon smoothie: It is an excellent drink during Ramadan, as it is full of nutrients, refreshing and tasty, besides preventing cellulite.

Almond drink: It is made by grinding raw almonds

with water, a bit of vanilla and honey. Almonds are rich in unsaturated fatty acids, decrease cholesterol and triglycerides levels, as well as make you feel satiated and energetic for hours.

Ginger and carrot juice: This is an excellent drink to refuel your body and clean your inner digestive system. It is an important drink for your blood circulation, decreases inflammation and body cramps.



Banana-Dates

shake: This drink is made by blending together low-fat yogurt, dates, honey and banana. Dates are rich in iron and other essential vitamins and minerals needed to break the Ramadan fast. Bananas are rich in potassium and so you do not feel thirsty, as it replaces sodium, which means salt. Potassium also prevents body cramps which are caused by dehydration.

Frozen Lemonade with mint: A very refreshing cold drink, with zero calories, It is high in vitamin C, boosts your metabolism and prevents cellulite formation. Last but not least, water will always be the number one liquid to have. Drink a glass of water every hour between your iftar and suhoor, and notice the difference, inside out.

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Thandai Cheesecake in Vermicelli Cups



A wonderful fusion recipe that blends flavors and traditions by combining vermicelli with Thandai cheesecake. While vermicelli is commonly used in various Indian dishes, Thandai is a refreshing and hydrating drink served during religious festivals and occasions. This innovative dessert, though initially challenging, promises to be a delightful addition to any party menu.

Making time : 15 minutes

Resting time: 30 minutes

Serving: 12 servings

Ingredients:

For vermicelli cups:

- 200g vermicelli
- 50g condensed milk
- 2 tbsp butter

For Thandai Paste:

- 2 tbsp cashew nuts
- 2 tbsp almond (soaked and skin removed)
- 1 tbsp pistachios
- 1 tbsp black peppercorns
- 2 tbsp green cardamom pods
- 2 tbsp fennel seeds
- 2 tbsp melon seeds
- 3-4 tbsp milk

For Thandai Cheesecake :

- 200g cream cheese at room temperature
- 1 tsp saffron dissolved in 1 tsp warm milk
- 1/2 cup sugar powder
- 4 tbsp Thandai paste
- 200g whipping cream cold

For garnish:

- Sliced pistachios, rose petals and saffron syrup

Instructions:

Making vermicelli cups:

- Roast vermicelli in butter until golden brown, stirring continuously
- Mix in condensed milk and combine well
- Press the warm vermicelli mixture into silicone cups to form cups
- Refrigerate for 1/2 hour or until set
- Making Thandai Cheesecake:
 - Blend together all ingredients listed under 'thandai paste' with little milk to form a smooth paste.
 - Infuse saffron in warm milk and let it sit for 10 minutes
 - Beat cream cheese until smooth, then mix in powdered sugar and saffron mixture
 - Add thandai paste to the cream cheese mixture and mix until well combined
 - In a separate bowl, whip cold whipping cream until stiff peaks form
 - Gently fold whipped cream into the cream cheese mixture until fully incorporated
 - Fill the chilled vermicelli cups with the thandai cheesecake mixture.
 - Garnish with sliced pistachios, rose petals, and a drizzle of saffron syrup
 - Serve chilled.



Chef Chhaya Thakker

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

Day	Ramadan	Date	Fajr	Sunrise	Dhur	Asr	Magrib	Isha
Sunday	14	March 24	4:29 AM	5:48 AM	11:54 AM	3:23 PM	6:01 PM	7:19 PM
Monday	15	March 25	4:27 AM	5:46 AM	11:54 AM	3:23 PM	6:02 PM	7:19 PM
Tuesday	16	March 26	4:26 AM	5:46 AM	11:54 AM	3:23 PM	6:03 PM	7:20 PM
Wednesday	17	March 27	4:25 AM	5:44 AM	11:54 AM	3:23 PM	6:03 PM	7:21 PM
Thursday	18	March 28	4:23 AM	5:43 AM	11:53 AM	3:23 PM	6:04 PM	7:21 PM
Friday	19	March 29	4:22 AM	5:42 AM	11:53 AM	3:23 PM	6:04 PM	7:22 PM
Saturday	20	March 30	4:21 AM	5:41 AM	11:53 AM	3:23 PM	6:05 PM	7:23 PM
Sunday	21	March 31	4:20 AM	5:40 AM	11:52 AM	3:23 PM	6:05 PM	7:23 PM
Monday	22	April 01	4:18 AM	5:38 AM	11:52 AM	3:23 PM	6:06 PM	7:24 PM
Tuesday	23	April 02	4:17 AM	5:37 AM	11:52 AM	3:23 PM	6:07 PM	7:25 PM
Wednesday	24	April 03	4:16 AM	5:36 AM	11:51 AM	3:23 PM	6:07 PM	7:25 PM
Thursday	25	April 04	4:14 AM	5:35 AM	11:51 AM	3:23 PM	6:08 PM	7:26 PM
Friday	26	April 05	4:13 AM	5:34 AM	11:51 AM	3:23 PM	6:08 PM	7:27 PM
Saturday	27	April 06	4:12 AM	5:33 AM	11:51 AM	3:23 PM	6:09 PM	7:27 PM
Sunday	28	April 07	4:10 AM	5:31 AM	11:50 AM	3:23 PM	6:10 PM	7:28 PM
Monday	29	April 08	4:09 AM	5:30 AM	11:50 AM	3:23 PM	6:10 PM	7:29 PM
Tuesday	30	April 09	4:08 AM	5:29 AM	11:50 AM	3:23 PM	6:11 PM	7:30 PM

Diabetes and Fasting during Ramadan

Fasting during the holy month of Ramadan is ordained for all Muslims who have attained puberty and can undertake the fasting without risk to their health. Fasting is considered one of the five pillars of Islam and every year during Ramadan an estimated 50 million people with diabetes practice daily fasting. Most people with type 2 diabetes can fast safely with appropriate medical advice and management before and during fasting. However, people with type 1 diabetes need special attention.



Dr. Jibin John Thomas MD
Registrar – Internal Medicine
International Clinic

Below are a few vital facts and tips to ensure that people with diabetes observe the holy month in full measure, without affecting their health.

Science behind fasting: Fasting begins to affect the body typically eight hours after your last meal. Your body first starts to use stored up energy through metabolizing glucose and fat. If you are on insulin medication for diabetes, then even more glucose is utilized than normal, putting you at risk of hypoglycemia (low blood sugar level). You may also experience hyperglycemia (high blood sugar level) when your body resorts to producing glucose from the liver itself. Liver is the storehouse of glucose in the form of Glycogen.

Plan ahead of fasting: If you are a diabetic then plan ahead at least six weeks before the holy month by aligning your medications and injectables with your meal timings. Your doctor will revise your insulin dosage and times based on your fasting schedule.

All diabetic people who take insulin must have their food at least half an hour after the injection. Iftar is the best time when you have your major portion of the meal and most physicians advise patients to take insulin just before the Iftar. One



major factor you must make sure is not to go for prayer and delay your main Iftar meal after taking your insulin shot. This can cause drop in sugar levels and cause alarming symptoms.

Planning Ramadan meals: While Suhur and Iftar are the primary meals during Ramadan, it is best to have at least three meals in a day, rather than two heavy meals. Always make it a point to have your Suhur meal as late as possible and not earlier. This will help prevent hypoglycemia and give the energy needed to sustain you through out your day. No doubt in diabetes, reducing carbohydrates gets the most attention. But other kinds of foods are also equally important and need to be understood well during Ramadan, as well as at other times. Knowing what foods are carbohydrates and converts to sugar is the most important tool in managing diabetes. This helps you balance your diet and plan your meals wisely. While planning meals remember to include food from all six food groups:

Grains: Brown rice with bran or wheat is the

most preferred. Choose whole grains over refined grains as they contain fiber that helps regulate sugar levels at a slow pace. Foods like millets, quinoa are also healthy alternatives. **Fruits:** It is recommended to have 2-3 servings of whole fruit (rather than juice) spread throughout the day. Limit the number of dates to 3 or 4 maximum.

Vegetables: Avoid pumpkin and sweet potatoes. Most vegetables do not convert to sugar except starchy ones like potatoes, beetroot, peas and corn. Eat these in moderation and as an alternative to other starchy food.

Fats: Some fat in our diet is essential but most of us eat too much. Plant-based oils like rapeseed oil and olive oil are rich in unsaturated fat, so they can help lower cholesterol and reduce the risk of heart disease. Lower fat unsaturated spreads are a good alternative to butter.

Dairy: Milk and its products contain lactose. The body breaks lactose down into glucose and galactose (most of which is later converted

to glucose). All dairy except cheese can break down into sugar in your body. So it is best to keep a limit on dairy products.

Protein: Protein does not become sugar but starchy sources of protein such as legumes, lentils and beans do. Therefore, if you wish to have hummus with bread, you will need to reduce your portions to half of each. Fish is a great source of protein, vitamins and minerals. Aim to eat at least two portions of fish every week.

Try to reduce: Your intake of fatty and salty foods, juices and canned carbonated drinks, coffee and tea, as they are diuretic and can cause dehydration. Iftar sweets in particular can have a major impact on your blood glucose level between Iftar and Suhur, so either keep off these sweets and limit its intake.

- Also remember to drink plenty of water, provided you are not restricted to the use of excess fluids by your doctor due to chronic diseases. Aim for at least 2-3 liters of water between Iftar and Suhur each day.
- Remember to carry with you some dates, sugar, juice or anything that can raise your glucose level in case you experience hypoglycemia and need to break your fast.
- Keep testing your blood glucose regularly; it will not break your fast.
- Always carry a bottle of water with you, in case you feel dehydrated.
- Do not stop your insulin, but do alter your dose and times as advised by your doctor.
- Exercise is another good way to keep your glucose levels in check.
- During Ramadan, it is best to do light or moderate exercise for at least half an hour but only between Iftar and Suhur times. Do not exercise during fasting hours.
- Make sure you take plenty of water before and after exercise.

Andrew & Lorraine Thomas

Leaving Kuwait after 54 well-spent years

Kuwait will always be dear to our heart

In a land of golden opportunities and towering ambitions, lies a remarkable journey of courage, strength and unshakeable determination of Andrew Thomas. From the city of dreams, Bombay (now Mumbai), to the land of plentiful opportunities, Kuwait, the life story of 74-year-old Andrew is nothing less than a blockbuster full of raw emotions, startling twists and real love.

By Smriti Rana Singh
Special to The Times Kuwait

Upon stepping into Andrew's humble palatial abode nestled amidst the bustling streets, one is immediately greeted by a serene ambience that tells the story of diversity and unity. As I sat down with him in his tastefully decorated drawing room, adorned with memories from a lifetime of adventures, Andrew shared with me the remarkable journey that has shaped his life in Kuwait. He traces his fingers over the frames adorning the wall with memories flooding back to him - the challenges he faced, the great things he achieved, the friendships he nurtured and the successes he accomplished. Their adorable companion of 13 years, their pet Monty's memory is also lovingly preserved on a table.

Andrew's story began in the vibrant landscape of India, in a city that never sleeps. His parents valued tradition yet embraced change with open arms. His father was a technocrat and a Second World War veteran and despite witnessing adversity, including loss of business and financial setbacks, his determination remained undeterred; he rose again. And it was this foundation of his father's grit and grace that would fuel Andrew's resilience, adaptability and the courage to carve his own destiny in the coming years.

At the age of 20, it was here, in between the chaos of days gone by and the glittering lights of the city, that Andrew's story unveiled. Reminiscing on the years gone by, Andrew says he didn't want to leave out on any experiences that gave him any chance to learn and grow.

Despite an academic background in Economics, Andrew started as a radio assistant at Gulf Fisheries and then worked at a bank for a brief period thereafter. However, the confines of a desk job didn't succeed to satiate his zeal, prompting him to explore new horizons. Working as a salesman for 12 hours straight, showing samples to potential buyers introduced him to mastering the art of persuasion and negotiation with finesse and precision. Propelling his career trajectory forward, Andrew then worked at a reputed organisation as a sales manager and then as a country manager in a leading publishing company. "I embraced each role with open arms and just gave it my best. Courage is the only thing I came here with and that helped me navigate the labyrinth of new opportunities and challenges without a thought of giving up," says Andrew proudly.

As his career blossomed, so did his personal life. He met his beautiful wife, Lorraine, while working at the publishing company. A true partner in every sense of the word, Lorraine stood by his side through thick and thin, giving him her unwavering support and strength in moments of doubt and uncertainty. A potential relocation to Nigeria made Andrew move to another leading trading and contracting company, so he could stay back. Here, his leadership skills flourished, and how! Nurturing his entrepreneurial ambitions alongside, he further ventured into realms of video shops and restaurants. With family priorities taking the forefront, he showed his exemplary devotion to his loved ones and decided to delve into trading, leaving his other ventures behind and taking the experiences

and the learnings forward. Through the highs and lows, gains and losses, Andrew found solace in the enduring bliss of marital harmony. "We have been married for 44 years now. I owe everything to my wife. She has been my steadfast support and a beacon of light. She handles our finances, drives me to wherever we are going and makes me the healthiest food ever. A workaholic herself, she has been the calm to my storms, my pride, and a wonderful mother to our three beautiful children - Ashwin, Anup, and Anisha," says Andrew glancing lovingly at his wife.

As Andrew's remarkable journey unfolded, so did the chapters of Kuwait's history. Through Andrew's narrative, I saw Kuwait as a land that witnessed the devastations of war and rebound to the marvels of modernity.



“Holding onto memories of simpler times, he says, “Can you believe sandwiches were available just for 30 fils and soft drinks were for just 25 fils. So, in a monthly salary of 50 KWD, it was quite affordable. Rent and car instalments were also notably lower.”

In the midst of an invasion, Andrew and his family faced harrowing challenges. His children aged 10, 7 and 4 witnessed the grim reality of war firsthand. As the turmoil resonated through the streets, a soldier weary and hungry made his way to their doorstep in search of food. The moment shook them, and they decided to leave for India. Fearing for theirs and their children's safety, they embarked on a journey by road to Baghdad, and then to Jordan. While Andrew's wife and children reached India safely, Andrew gave his seat to someone else more in need. After enduring





“ *In India, the couple ventured into leather business promoting women empowerment. The innovative approach empowered entrepreneurs to foster self-sufficiency. Eventually they started their own company WENPA, derived from the final alphabets of the family members' names.* ”

a nerve-wrecking period of ten days with no communication, they were finally reunited in India.

In India, the couple ventured into leather business promoting women empowerment. The innovative approach empowered entrepreneurs to foster self-sufficiency. Eventually they started their own company WENPA, derived from the final alphabets of the family members' names.

However, the irresistible allure of Kuwait called them back. Lorraine started working at a bank in Kuwait upon arrival, and after a long inning retired as a manager in correspondent banking at a leading bank while business-minded Andrew started another trading venture 34 years ago known as RAYS General Trading & Contracting Co W.L.L with Kuwaiti partner, Mr. Yousef Al Ghussain, who Andrew treats as a brother. “However, during the COVID-19 pandemic, I opted to sell my share to my Kuwaiti partner”. Despite the setback, my beloved wife supported me. Together we weathered the storms of life, building a foundation of love and patience that stood the test of time,” expressed Andrew. Lorraine adds, “Andrew believes in taking risks and persevering through hardships. And knowing his quest for more, he never sat through difficult times. He used to wake up at four in the morning and source vegetables from local vendors to get them delivered to over 85 establishments.” Despite setbacks, Andrew feels luck and hard work played a major role in overcoming difficult times.

My vision has guided me through every path of life.” He believes there is a big world out there, brimming with infinite possibilities waiting to be discovered and explored. As we spoke further about his achievements, Andrew believes that every facet of his life, even the challenging times, has been an achievement.

Going beyond mere appearance and designation, his actions have always been driven by a genuine desire to help wherever he can. Andrew quietly supported various causes in the last 5 decades in Kuwait without seeking recognition. “I don’t do things for namesake, I do it because I can and I want to,” says the well-known name in the Indian community.

Reflecting back on his early years as a bachelor, Andrew fondly talks about the times when sleeping by the seashore from 11 pm to 5 am was quite common. However, the practice permitted at that time changed as the country evolved. Holding onto memories of simpler times, he says, “Can you believe sandwiches were available just for 30 fils and soft drinks were for just 25 fils. So, in a monthly salary of 50 KWD, it was quite affordable. Rent and car instalments were also notably lower.”

Talking about his yesteryears and experiences in Kuwait, he says he feels grateful to the country for it helped instil a strong work ethic in him. “Everything was easy for my family in India. I was born in a well-to-do family. But things changed, and then as luck would have it, my brother and I landed here in Kuwait.” Notably, Andrew’s brother, an engineer by profession, returned to India after retiring seven years ago.

He affirms, “While India gave us a comfortable upbringing, it was Kuwait that compelled me to step up, explore and excel. I truly learned the meaning of responsibility here. I may not have cultivated a strong work ethic as intensely if I were in India.”

Additionally, it also honed his culinary skills. As a youngster, four of his friends would gather every Friday and indulge in the joy of cooking. “Oh! It used to be a great stress buster. These lessons and experiences kept him humble through his journey, eventually shaping Andrew into the person that he is today.

Expressing gratitude for the friendships he formed here, he says, “They are just a call away and I’m going to miss them the most.” He cherishes the strong bond that they share, considering them as close as family. “Our connection is going to extend beyond borders. We have plans in place and will make sure to keep the bond alive. We plan to meet in Japan soon. We love to travel,” says Andrew while, affectionally calling his group of friends as ‘Super Six’ - a friendship built over years of shared experiences, laughter, and unfazed support.

Andrew’s deep inclination towards Kuwait makes him want to stay here indefinitely but he also acknowledges that it’s time to depart. “Kuwait will always be dear to our heart,” he says, pointing out that there are no retirement laws in Kuwait for foreigners hence its time to leave, through reluctantly, the country that gave him so much. “There’s value in the experiences gained from every situation and at the end of the day, that’s what matters”, and he also acknowledges that he has many Kuwaiti friends who are always very supportive in every aspect of life.



Along with the experiences and learnings, Andrew takes back a few aspects of Kuwaiti culture. To maintain familial bonds, Kuwaitis schedule regular gatherings where siblings, in-laws and parents along with other relatives gather for meals together. This practice fosters harmony and deep respect for elders, with familial bonds taking precedence over other engagements. “I have already adopted this practice for ten years now. Our family plans to meet once a year, from wherever in the world we are,” says Andrew, whose eldest son is settled in Australia, middle son is working in Kuwait and daughter who is settled in New Zealand and now pursuing her PhD.

In Kuwait, people come to work, support their families back home, and save money with sheer hard work and honesty. Kuwaitis are known for their generosity and strong sense of community, making the country a positive and welcoming experience for the expats. “The sense of security and safety here is unparalleled, my wife can drive here at 1 am and feel absolutely safe,” says Andrew.

Talking about expats, he feels that the camaraderie among expats in Kuwait is absolutely extraordinary. Regardless of background or tenure, they come together as a close-knit family, supporting and helping each other along the way.

Based on his extensive experiences, Andrew advises newcomers to secure stable jobs with a minimum of a two-year contract. With their hard work and sincerity, they can explore opportunities not only within Kuwait but globally as well. “When you have a job, it’s simpler to understand the expectations of employers but when you don’t have a job, you’re giving them the liberty to negotiate differently and this situation should be avoided,” says Andrew recalling his past experiences.

Talking about his retirement plans as he embarks on a new chapter of his life; Andrew says he wants to travel to quench his thirst of adventure and discovery. Along with his wife, he has already travelled across the globe. “I’m always seeking new horizons. Exploring endless possibilities in my career and globe-trotting escapades have made my life a truly fulfilling one,” says the self-made man, proudly wearing the journey of 54 years as a badge of honour. After enduring numerous moves across different neighbourhoods of Kuwait, Andrew and his wife are now packing up their final Kuwaiti residence to relocate to Australia.

As I bid farewell to Andrew and Lorraine, I take along with me not only their story but a piece of Kuwait where dreams take on a newer dimension. And as they prepare to embark on a new adventure, they sign off, leaving behind a piece of their hearts in the place they called Home.

Kuwait's swift biometric rollout aligned with Gulf coordination efforts

- The biometric fingerprint database strengthens global security ties, especially with Arab and Gulf nations.
- The implementation of biometric fingerprinting would aid in identifying dual nationals who may use multiple identities and documents while traveling between countries.

While the Ministry of Interior continues to receive citizens and residents to conduct biometric fingerprinting before the June 1 deadline, sources at the ministry stress the importance of completing this process to avoid halting all transactions with the ministry. They note that approximately 1.7 million individuals have updated their data.

The sources revealed that Kuwait's hastiness in implementing the fingerprinting for all covered individuals and setting a three-month deadline starting on March 1 was in line with efforts for

Gulf coordination in this regard. Some countries are also rushing to complete security linkage and information exchange, noting that this will automatically resolve the issue of dual nationality.

The sources explained that the completion of the biometric fingerprint database will significantly contribute to establishing a security link with all countries worldwide, INTERPOL, and particularly with Arab and Gulf countries. This is especially important for managing information related to individuals with security concerns or issues, and for preventing entry attempts using

fake passports at airports.

The sources mentioned that the issue of dual nationality is of common interest among Gulf countries, as it currently poses financial burdens along with social and economic implications. The implementation of biometric fingerprinting would facilitate the closure of this issue and aid in identifying dual nationals who may use multiple identities and documents while traveling between countries.

The sources confirmed the existence of joint coordination among Gulf countries to resolve



this issue. They are utilizing the latest security measures, including biometric fingerprinting, whose database will serve as an official reference for identifying individuals applying for it. It's noted that this fingerprint has become a requirement for entry and exit for travelers in many countries.

IWG celebrates Lebanese culture with Ramadan Ghabka



The International Women's Group (IWG) in Kuwait, in collaboration with the Lebanese Embassy, and the Lebanese Ladies Society, hosted a Ramadan Ghabka celebrating Lebanese culture on Sunday, March 17th, 2024, at the Crowne Plaza Hotel. The event, titled "Lebanese Ghabka Night," drew members of the IWG, Kuwaiti and international dignitaries, and members of the Lebanese and Arab communities.

The ceremony began with welcoming remarks from Mrs. Leila Boulos, followed by a speech from Mrs. Antonia Dimitrova, President of the IWG and wife of the Bulgarian Ambassador. Mrs. Dimitrova extended greetings to His Highness the Amir of

Kuwait, Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, and the Kuwaiti people on the occasion of Ramadan.

The Chargé d'Affaires of the Lebanese Embassy in Kuwait, H.E. Ahmed Arafa, expressed his gratitude to the IWG for their role in organizing the celebration. He commended the event organizers and Mrs. May Mansour, wife of the Chargé d'Affaires, for her significant contributions. He also extended Ramadan greetings to the Amir and wished for continued progress and prosperity for Kuwait, particularly following the recent National Day celebrations. Mrs. Mansour, in her speech, acknowledged the efforts of the Lebanese Ladies Council in making the event a success.



The event featured a video titled "Rise above Lebanon," showcasing the country's rich tourist attractions, historical sites, and cultural tapestry. A musical performance followed, with Najla Al-Faqih captivating the audience with renditions of Fairouz songs, accompanied by oud player George Daoumi.

A captivating short film titled "Lebanon in the Eyes of Travelers" further enticed the audience with breathtaking visuals of Lebanon's natural beauty, tourist destinations, and historical landmarks.

The energy soared with two mesmerising dabkeh performances by the Lebanese band "Jayin," led by Zaki Shukr. The audience responded with enthusiastic applause, further fueled by another

Fairouz performance by Najla Al-Faqih. The event also offered exciting raffles with valuable prizes courtesy of the Lebanese community. A traditional "Mesaharati" performance added a touch of Ramadan spirit, inviting guests to indulge in a delightful buffet of Lebanese cuisine prepared by the Crowne Plaza Hotel chefs. Throughout the evening, Lebanese music filled the atmosphere, creating a memorable celebration of Lebanese culture.

The IWG concluded the event by honoring H.E. Ahmed Arafa and his wife, the Lebanese Ladies Council, and the "Jayin" Dabkeh Band for their contributions to the successful celebration of Lebanese culture in Kuwait.

Getting the water equation right

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

While increasing summer temperatures remain a potential threat to future water supplies in Kuwait, a more imminent threat to freshwater availability arises from increasing salinity of the Arabian Gulf waters. Despite built-in redundancies to overcome potable water exigencies, including multiple desalination plants and huge strategic water reserves of around 17.13 MCM, all the water needed to operate Kuwait's desalination plants comes from the Gulf.

Any untoward natural or anthropocentric event that impinges on the availability and quality of intake waters could affect efficient functioning of the desalination plants and have a devastating impact on living and economic conditions in the country.

Academics and hydrological studies have for long been highlighting the risks of increasing salinity in Gulf waters, but effective mitigating measures and remedial strategies from the authorities are still awaited. The latest warning on rising salinity of Gulf waters came last week in a media statement by Dr. Badr Al-Enezi, the vice dean for scientific, research, and higher education affairs at Kuwait's College of Life Sciences. Pointing out that currently there are 157 desalination plants in the region, Al-Enezi revealed that over the past two decades there has been a steady increase in the salinity of the Gulf waters that posed a risk to these plants.

While temporal and spatial variations exist,

studies show that salinity-levels along Kuwait's coastline ranges from 45 to 50 parts per thousand (ppt). Warning that any increase in salinity over 55 ppt could be a threat to desalination plants Dr. Al-Enezi added that unless mitigating measures are implemented, salinity could reach close to 60 ppt in the near future, making the desalination process economically and operationally quite challenging.

Detailing one of the factors that could be increasing the salinity of waters in the Gulf region, Al-Enezi said that the traditional desalination process is in itself a cause for rising salinity. He called for finding alternatives to outdated desalination technologies that produce hypersaline, chemically polluted hyperoxic brine as a byproduct, which is then pumped back into the Gulf waters resulting in a negative impact on all marine life forms, including fish production in the area.

In addition to harmful desalination discharges, climatic factors such as meager annual precipitation, high surface water temperatures in summer, low humidity, and increased evaporation have increased the salinity of Gulf waters. Meanwhile, untreated urban water runoffs and chemical pollutants discharged from industries have also steadily decreased the quality of waters along Kuwait's coastline.

Freshwater inflows into the Gulf could help reduce the salinity of the water, but aside from the minimal annual precipitation, the only other source of freshwater inflow to the

northern Arabian Gulf is from the Shatt-al-Arab waterway. However, freshwater in the Shatt-al-Arab — formed from the confluence of the Euphrates and Tigris Rivers in upper Iraq — has diminished considerably in recent years due to intensive development of dams and irrigation infrastructure in upstream areas.

Agricultural and industrial pollutant discharges from riparian states have also contributed to lowering the quality and quantity of freshwater flowing down the Shatt al Arab into the Arabian Gulf. Decreased freshwater inflow has in turn increased salinity of intake water at desalination plants. Substantial increase in salinity means more salt needs to be filtered out, increasing operational costs and impacting the economic viability of freshwater production through desalination.

Any decrease in desalinated water production could have a direct bearing on life and livelihoods in Kuwait, where average freshwater consumption at 447 liters per person per day is among the highest in the world. There are several mitigating and adaptive measures that the country could incorporate to strengthen water security and ensure sustainable development going forward.

On the supply side, newer less polluting desalination processes and technologies should be promoted, even as more use of recycled water is introduced. Studies show that about 84 percent of all wastewater collected in the region is treated to safe levels, but only 44 percent of this

water is then reused. Harnessing this wastewater would generate a new source of clean water for Kuwait and the region.

On the demand side, we clearly need to reduce our wanton water usage habits. Innovative public awareness campaigns, incentivizing water conservation policies, and introducing sustainable agriculture techniques and technologies that use less water help reduce water usage. But more importantly, the authorities need to recalibrate the present water subsidies that provide water at unrealistically low prices, which encourages unrestrained use of water.

In a bid to enhance food and water security in the country, the government, in August 2022, established the 'Supreme National Committee for Strengthening the Food and Water Security System'. The committee was tasked to draw up and implement a 'road map' to develop a comprehensive, integrated and sustainable work program to achieve water and food security to meet the short and long term needs of Kuwait.

However political upheavals since then have led to repeated changes in government, snap general elections, and new parliaments, with the result that currently it is not clear whether, or how far, the road map on food and water security has progressed. The new government and parliament taking charge after elections on 4 April needs to draw up coherent water policies and implementable strategies that ensure the long-term sustainable water security of the country.



Dean of Diplomatic Corps holds grand Gabka



Ambassador of Tajikistan and Dean of Diplomatic Corps H.E. Zubaydzoda Zubaydullo held a Gabka reception at the embassy premises on the occasion of the Holy Month of Ramadan. The reception also coincided with Nowruz, the traditional New Year of the people of Tajikistan and the region.

A galaxy of dignitaries that included Minister of Foreign Affairs Abdulla Al Yahya, members of the Kuwait Royal family as well as diplomats and distinguished guests graced the reception.

As part of the Nowruz celebrations, traditional handicrafts and delicacies were flown-in all the way from Tajikistan to celebrate the event. Ambassador Zubaydullo pointed out that Nowruz was a festival that united and brought joy to the people of the region.

Speaking on the occasion, Foreign Minister Al-Yahya stressed the depth of relations between Kuwait and Tajikistan, pointing to the two countries' keenness to enhance means of

cooperation in various fields. He also pointed out the importance of bringing points of view closer and strengthening ties between members of the diplomatic corps, adding that "this social factor is important to break all barriers, so we are keen to be present on these occasions."

For his part, Ambassador Zubaydullo expressed his happiness with the participation of Foreign Minister Abdullah Al-Yahya at the Ghabka, and stressed the depth of Tajik-Kuwaiti relations, which he described as distinguished. He added that the participation of ambassadors and heads of missions in the Ghabka reflects their respect for traditional Kuwaiti Ramadan customs, and is a recognition that these events provide an opportunity to strengthen ties between diplomatic colleagues and Kuwaiti society.

Explaining the significance of Nowruz and its abiding relationship with the culture of



Tajikistan, the ambassador said that Nowruz marks the arrival of spring, the rejuvenation of nature, the beginning of agricultural activities, and the vernal equinox. The term Nowruz, which translates to 'new day', signifies the start of a new solar year, promoting inclusivity, harmony with nature, and the preservation of

customs across generations. He added that Nowruz is one of the oldest New Year's holidays in the world

He noted that "Nowruz, with all its customs and rituals, is much greater than just a history in Tajik calendar, it carries a deep-rooted culture, which brings hope, peace and prosperity to millions of people around the globe, regardless of their races or political and religious views. The most significant aspect in the history of Navruz's emergence and spread is that its philosophy, wisdom, and logic are not associated with any religion or religious movement. Rather, Nowruz is a purely folk ritual, equally significant for everyone; a celebration of nature and agriculture, marking the beginning of the year."

He added that the spirit of Nowruz conveyed the same message throughout the world — one of human solidarity, hope and renewal, and is a reminder that our destiny is the same, so we must work for a better future for all.

Jumeirah Messilah Beach Hotel & Spa lines up exciting Ramadan experiences

Jumeirah Messilah Beach Hotel & Spa has announced the launch of its Ramadan Season, with an exciting line-up of experiences that are sure to captivate the hearts of guests seeking to immerse themselves in the spirit of the Holy Month. From an exclusive Ramadan tent, Asateer, to group Iftar gatherings in the fascinating outdoor Garden Café, along with the variety of choices offered by an enticing à la carte menu at Mint Café, Jumeirah Messilah Beach Hotel & Spa aims to provide guests and their loved ones with unique Ramadan memories.

The Asateer Tent stands at the heart of Jumeirah Messilah Beach Hotel's exclusive Ramadan offerings. With its enchanting interiors featuring the theme of 1001 Arabian Nights and adorned in the timeless hues of Robin Blue and Gold, the tent provides a culture-rich, authentic Ramadan feel along with various entertainment programs. Open for Iftar from sunset until 8:30 PM and Ghabka from 9:30 PM to 1:00 AM, the tent promises an unforgettable atmosphere.

During Iftar, the venue will entertain guests with Ramadan ambient music, while Ghabka will come alive with the vibrant melodies of a live Arabic band. Guests can enjoy shisha during the Ghabka session. One of the key highlights of the Asateer Tent is the Gergea'n Event – a celebration of Kuwaiti culture and tradition – scheduled for the 14th and 15th of Ramadan during Iftar.

Besides its extraordinary ambiance, the Asateer Tent will feature an exquisite buffet setup featuring



a stylish décor with five private cabanas, including a Royal Cabana, each accommodating up to ten guests. The buffet, with its distinctive environment and tempting gastronomic selections, will serve individual guests as well as groups. With a separate, captivating entrance and a delightful dates display, in addition to hot and cold stations, live culinary displays, and dessert choices, guests can truly savour the essence of the season. The event can host up to 700 guests at a time.

Corporate guests and families can enhance their shared values and embrace the spirit of togetherness inspired by Ramadan in the delightful outdoor ambiance of the Garden Café. With its tranquil outdoor setting, themed décor, lavish buffet with live cooking stations, and



welcoming atmosphere, the restaurant fosters a sense of community and camaraderie, turning Ramadan into a time for reaffirming bonds and anticipating shared achievements.

The Garden Café offers indoor and outdoor Iftar seating options, with a total seating capacity of 315 – including 115 indoor and 200 outdoor seats. The café is accessible from the hotel's main entrance, serving as a serene haven for reflection and connection, ensuring a memorable Ramadan experience.

Guests at Jumeirah Messilah Beach Hotel & Spa can also explore the Ghabka-only à la carte menu at the Mint Café. A picturesque open-air spot adorned with charming Ramadan decorations and overlooking the Infinity Pool and the Arabian

Gulf, the café offers shisha hosts live Arabic band performances during Ghabka. The café's exclusive beachfront dining experience – Kashta on the Beach – will be available as well throughout the holy month for both Iftar and Ghabka.

Nader Neishabouri, General Manager at Jumeirah Messilah Beach Hotel & Spa, comments on the hotel's exclusive Ramadan attractions: "We are thrilled to unveil our Ramadan offerings blending culture, traditions, luxury, and remarkable culinary delights. At Jumeirah Messilah Beach Hotel & Spa, our aim is always to craft special moments and memories for our guests while providing them with the finest of the season. With the diverse options we have curated at the Asateer Tent, Garden Café, and Mint Café, we hope to create unforgettable moments for our guests that they will treasure forever."

Gregorio Corrias, Director of Food & Beverage at Jumeirah Messilah Beach Hotel & Spa, comments on the gastronomic adventure awaiting guests during the holy month: "This Ramadan, we aim to provide our esteemed guests with a thoughtfully crafted blend of culinary excellence and cultural traditions. Our Ramadan selections are designed to elevate our guests' sensory journeys and create lasting memories during the revered month."

Jumeirah Messilah Beach Hotel & Spa's Ramadan exclusives will be available from March 10 to April 9. To make a reservation or for more information, call +965 22269666 or email jumeirahrestaurant@jumeirah.com.

India aspires to reach forefront of world economies

By Abrar Alquaily
Special Correspondent

With the growth of the global economy slowing, India's relatively rapid growth is emerging as a clear opportunity for investors looking for bright spots, as major global companies, including those of American and Japanese origin, have bet heavily on India. With a population of about 1.4 billion, India seeks to strengthen its position at the forefront of the world's largest economies. This year in particular is expected to be pivotal for India, with general elections, one of the largest electoral exercises in the world, scheduled between April and May.

As part of its continuous quest to build bridges with the Gulf region, the Indian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, through the Embassy of India in Kuwait, organized an introductory visit to New Delhi. The Times Kuwait participated from Kuwait, joining a group of about 27 media professionals from Saudi Arabia, Oman, the UAE and Bahrain. During the one-week trip, the group was briefed on the rapid growth of India in the transportation, renewable energy, infrastructure, technology, and other sectors.

Hydrocarbon cooperation with GCC: In an interview with the visiting media delegation, the Secretary of the Indian Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas, Pankaj Jain, praised the close relations between India and the Gulf countries that were initiated long before the discovery of oil and gas.

Expanding on India's energy needs, Jain explained that his country cooperates with Gulf countries on three axes: crude oil, gas and petrochemicals. In response to a question about the



possibility of cooperation with Kuwait in the field of oil exploration, refinery products and exchange of experiences, Jain pointed out that Indian refineries produce materials that Kuwait refineries are not producing at the moment, and this cooperation could be beneficial to both countries. He added that the India Energy Forum to be held next February, in which major Gulf and international oil companies plan to participate, will provide more opportunities for cooperation and bilateral relations between the parties to achieve common interests.

He explained that the strength of relations with Gulf countries is reflected in the mutual visits between senior leadership of the two countries, including the recent visit of Prime Minister Narendra Modi to Oman and the UAE, pointing out that five of the Gulf countries are among the most important trading partners with India regarding oil and gas, in addition to other areas such as fertilizers and organic industries.

Pointing out that around 60 percent of the country's oil and gas originate from the Gulf countries, he added that as the third largest consumer of oil and gas in the world, after China and the United States, India's hydrocarbon imports were worth about USD119 billion last year.

Jain added that his country's energy consumption is three times the average consumption of other countries, stressing that despite India's increasing orientation to clean and renewable energy in various fields, its demand for fossil oil will continue to increase and grow very quickly. Accordingly, energy producers should take these trends into



account. He stated that India plans to produce five million tons of green hydrogen by 2030, "as our annual needs are 6 million metric tons."

He also revealed that India has another source of energy, which is the extraction of methanol from agricultural crops abundantly available in his country, or the use of biogas resulting from the oxidation of foods. He revealed that the maritime security challenges witnessed in the region recently affected the cost of shipping transport and caused prices to soar, while increasing the cost of insurance, which negatively affected producers and consumers.

Mumbai Metro 3 Project: The media delegation also met with the Chief Project Manager of the wider Mumbai Metro 3 in the state of Maharashtra, C.M. Jadhav, who explained that the rapid transit metro system was designed to reduce traffic congestion in the city and complement the busy Mumbai suburban railway network.

As India's financial capital, and one of the most populous cities in the world, Mumbai is a high traffic city. Currently, a 25 kms drive from downtown Cuffe Parade to the airport takes two hours, but once the construction of Mumbai Metro 3 is completed, the trip will take less than 50 minutes. Jadhav explained that each landmark in the Mumbai Metro Line 3 project is another step towards improving the lives of Mumbai residents. Expected to be fully completed in 2025, this will not only save traffic time for residents, but also reduce road traffic in the region by 35 percent, and reduce daily fuel consumption by 460,000 liters.



Built in three phases over 15 years, the project is expected to be fully completed in October 2026. Jadhav added that the Mumbai Metro is the sixth longest operating metro network in India with an operating length of 46.4 km. When completed, the platform will consist of 14 high-capacity metro rail lines and one metro line, with a total of 356,972 kilometers (24 percent underground, the rest high,

with a small part built on road). The metro will serve 27 stations, and the total financial expenditure to expand the metro system is projected at \$14.43 billion.

Jadhav also gave a detailed explanation of the progress of the project and the engineering challenges faced, pointing out that the deepest point in the metro is 23 meters below the surface of the ground, which is air-conditioned and equipped with the latest technology to facilitate entry and exits from the metro.

He stated that the starting point of the metro was in the middle of one of the largest slums in Mumbai, explaining that about 3,000 of these buildings were removed and residents were temporarily transferred to new buildings, pending the construction of residential buildings with apartments for them.

International Solar Alliance: Our next stop was at the headquarters of the International Solar Alliance (ISA) which continues to play a pivotal role in promoting energy security and promoting sustainable livelihoods throughout its member countries. Designed as an alliance of solar-rich countries to meet their own energy needs, the ISA was launched on 30 November 2015, by India and France to implement the Paris Agreement.

So far, about 120 countries have signed the ISA Framework Convention, including 11 EU countries. In a large room containing the flags of the countries participating in the 'Alliance', ISA Chief Operating Officer, Joshua Wycliffe made a presentation in which he assured us that the International Solar Alliance continues to play a pivotal role in promoting energy security and sustainable livelihoods throughout its member countries by replacing carbon-intensive fossil fuels with clean and renewable solar energy.

Noting that ISA has so far successfully implemented several initiatives to drive the shift towards a greener future, Wycliffe added that ISA aims to deliver clean energy to 200 million Africans by 2030 and that the alliance launched its first pilot project within the framework of the World Economic Forum during COP28 in Dubai.

Pointing to the many real benefits and opportunities that can be realized through optimal investment in solar energy, he noted that it will not only help create more jobs for youth in the private sector in the field of renewable energy, but that it would also open the possibility of enhancing the study and presentation of university disciplines in solar energy, in line with the actual need for the current and future labor market needs of countries involved.

Pointing out that the ISA continues to play a pivotal role in securing renewable energy, and embracing sustainable living in member countries,

he noted that there is continuous cooperation among the member countries of the Alliance in order to reach zero neutrality by 2060. He added that as part of its ongoing mission towards replacing fossil fuels with clean and renewable energy sources, and ensuring a safe future, the Alliance has been able to implement several initiatives in various places around the world with the focus on a healthy green future.

Pharmaceutical sector: In a meeting with Sumantha Chowdhury, marketing officer at the Indian Pharmaceutical Export Promotion Council, the media delegation learned that over the past two years there had been a significant increase in the volume of drug exports from India to Kuwait. Ms. Chowdhury explained that pharmaceutical exports to Kuwait increased by 35 percent and 42.7 percent over the past two years. Revealing that further negotiations with the Gulf states on this matter were underway, she said that although negotiations take a long time, they were on the right track.

Revealing that India handles around 60 percent of vaccine production globally, Ms. Chowdhury noted that Indian pharmaceutical companies are contributing to raising the level of health worldwide. Adding that the council is responsible for exporting medicines and vaccines to countries around the world, and that any country wanting to import pharmaceuticals from India have to be registered with the council, she revealed that currently around 4,000 companies are registered under the umbrella of the council.

She pointed out that the pharmaceutical industry in India has a number of advantages, including a strong base of active pharmaceutical ingredients in addition to a high degree of conformity with standards, support from a strong base of pharmaceutical factories, and the availability of researchers, technicians and trained workers.

Business promotion: The media delegation also visited the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI), where its Secretary-General Sailesh Pathak called on Kuwaiti businessmen to invest in his country, and engage with their Indian counterparts in making profits, stressing that India offers promising opportunities in several fields.

Stating that Indian investment laws guarantee protection for foreign investors, Pathak pointed out that India is a large country, and investments can be made in any state, especially in the agricultural sector that can contribute to global food security. He added that investments are also being attracted to the information technology, renewable energy, textiles and pharmaceutical sectors.

Pointing to the possibility of doubling investor capital in a short period, he invited Kuwaiti businessmen to come and make profits in India. In his speech to journalists, Pathak touched on the great development that his country has witnessed over the past twenty years in various fields, and its entry into the list of the top twenty countries in the world.

He emphasized that India not only provides investors with the right environment to succeed and reap profits, but the FICCI helps them find a reliable local partner, leaving businessmen wishing to work in his country the freedom to choose the sector they want to invest in.



CONTINUED ON PAGE 14

Tranquil Beauty of BHUTAN

Land of the Thunder Dragon

By Nourah Khan
Travel Writer
The Times Kuwait

Nestled in the eastern Himalayas, the kingdom of Bhutan beckons travelers with its serene landscapes, vibrant culture, and deeply rooted traditions. As one of the world's last remaining Buddhist kingdoms, Bhutan offers a unique and authentic experience for those seeking adventure, spirituality, and connection with nature.



Bhutan's natural beauty is unparalleled, with towering peaks, lush valleys, and pristine forests at every turn. The country is renowned for its commitment to environmental conservation, with over 70 percent of its land designated as protected areas. Visitors can explore the breathtaking landscapes of Bhutan through trekking, mountain biking, or simply immersing themselves in the tranquility of nature.

Beyond its natural splendor, Bhutan is rich in culture and heritage. The Bhutanese people take great pride in preserving their traditions, from colorful festivals to intricate handicrafts. A visit to Bhutan offers the opportunity to witness traditional Bhutanese architecture, adorned with



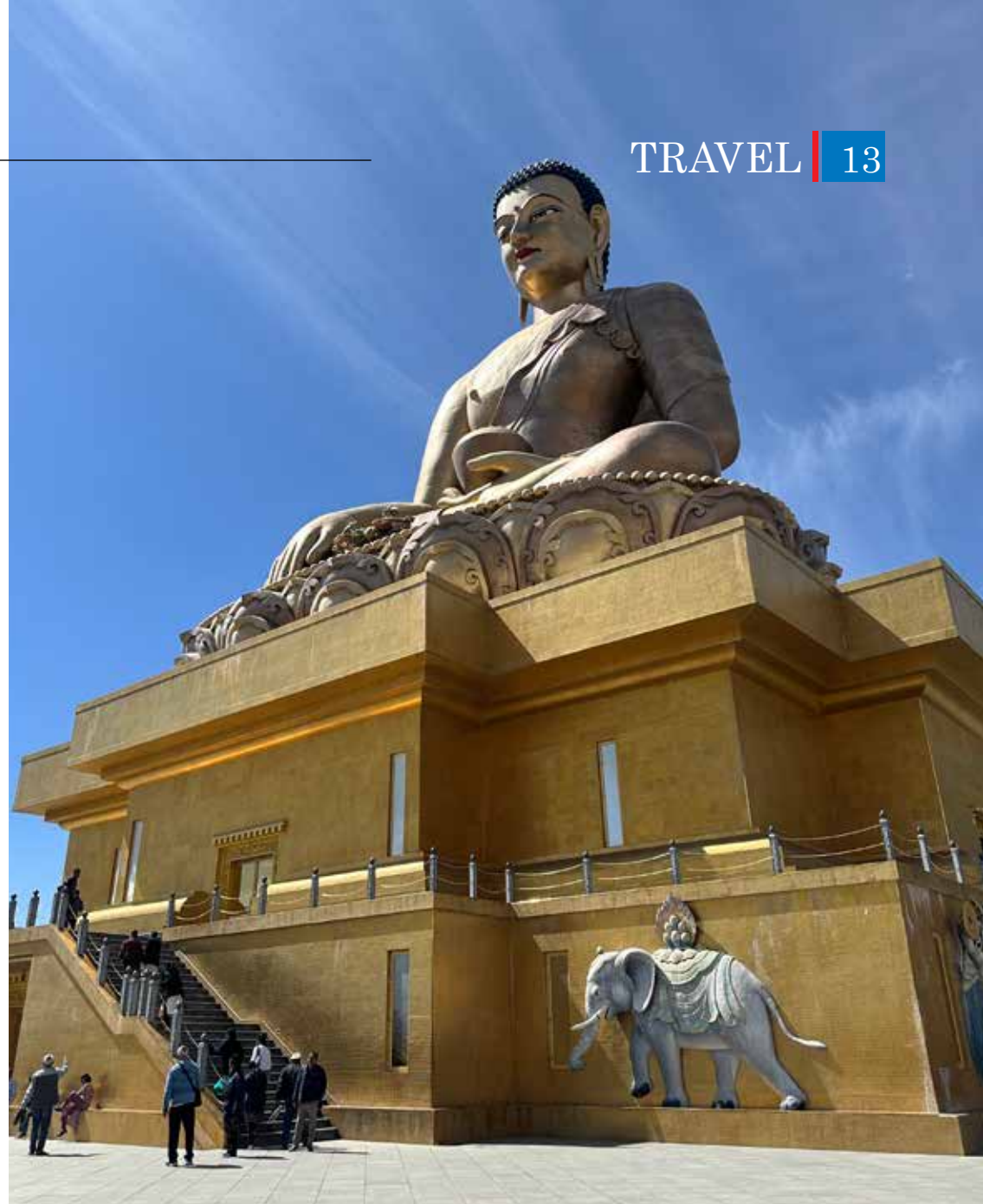
intricate wood carvings and vibrant paintings. Travelers can also engage with local communities, learning about ancient customs and participating in age-old rituals.

Bhutan, as I saw it, is suitable for people interested in learning about culture, customs and traditions, and for those looking for peace and tranquility. The style of tourism in it is very different from other countries.

Bhutan's commitment to sustainable tourism ensures that visitors have access to unique and authentic experiences while minimizing the impact on the environment and local communities. From homestays with Bhutanese families to traditional hot stone baths and farm-to-table dining experiences, travelers can immerse themselves in the rich tapestry of Bhutanese life.

I was impressed by the level of hotels I stayed in in Bhutan. I did not expect this level of luxury. I stayed in three wonderful and luxurious hotels, all of which belong to the Six Senses Hotel brand.

The beauty of the hotels and their stunning views of the Himalayas made me wish to extend my stay in Bhutan, but the matter is difficult



because I obtained a visa with a specific date that must be adhered to.

Travel to Bhutan is regulated through a sustainable tourism policy that prioritizes quality over quantity. Visitors are required to book their trip through licensed tour operators, who arrange all travel logistics, including visas, accommodations, and guided tours. While Bhutan may not be the easiest destination to reach, the journey is undoubtedly worth the effort for those seeking a truly transformative travel experience.

You cannot leave Bhutan without putting in your schedule climbing one of the famous peaks in this country

Perched precariously on the edge of a sheer cliff, Tiger's Nest Monastery, also known as Paro Taktsang, is a testament to Bhutan's rich spiritual heritage and awe-inspiring natural beauty.



Nestled amidst the mist-shrouded mountains of the Paro Valley, this sacred site has captivated pilgrims and travelers alike for centuries, drawing them into its mystical embrace.

Legend has it that in the 8th century, Guru Padmasambhava, the revered saint who introduced Buddhism to Bhutan, flew to this spot on the back of a tigress, meditating in a cave for three years, three months, three weeks, and three days. Thus, the monastery earned its name, Tiger's Nest. This mythological origin story adds to the allure of the monastery, imbuing it with a sense of mystique and reverence.

The trek to Tiger's Nest is not for the faint of heart, requiring a steep ascent of approximately

900 meters (2,950 feet). However, the journey is as much a part of the experience as the destination itself, with each step offering opportunities for self-reflection and spiritual renewal. Along the way, visitors are greeted by friendly locals selling refreshments and souvenirs, providing encouragement and support to weary travelers.

Tiger's Nest Monastery stands as a symbol of Bhutanese identity, resilience, and spiritual devotion. Despite the challenges of its remote location and treacherous terrain, the monastery continues to inspire awe and reverence in all who visit, serving as a beacon of enlightenment and inner peace in an ever-changing world.

A journey to Bhutan is not merely a vacation but a pilgrimage to a land of spiritual serenity, cultural richness, and natural splendor. Whether trekking through the Himalayan foothills, attending a vibrant festival, or simply soaking in the majestic beauty of the landscape, travelers will find themselves captivated by the magic of the kingdom known as the Land of the Thunder Dragon

Noura Khan, a travel influencer and content creator, is a Kuwaiti national, holds a degree in law from Kuwait University and has worked as a journalist prior to taking up a position in the government. In 2018 she started blogging on travel and visited more than 57 countries since. She has more than 97k followers on her blog post @nourajtraveller is well appreciated for content and travel information. Noura writes exclusively for The Times Kuwait on her travel visits.



EXCLUSIVE to THE TIMES KUWAIT

Truth About US Immigration



Nancy Qian

Professor of Economics at Northwestern University, is Co-Director of Northwestern University's Global Poverty Research Lab and Founding Director of China Econ Lab.

It is becoming increasingly apparent that immigration will be a major issue for voters in this year's US presidential election. Since President Joe Biden took office in 2021, more than 6.2 million people who did not have permission to enter the United States have attempted to cross the border from Mexico, and more than two million have been allowed to remain while they await an immigration hearing.

This marked increase from previous years has become a major source of controversy. While Biden's critics claim, dubiously, that immigrants are driving up crime rates and taking Americans' jobs, some Democrats are doubling down on calls to decriminalize illegal border crossings altogether. The first group accuses the second of undermining national security, while advocates of decriminalization accuse immigration hardliners of racism and xenophobia. With Americans arguably more divided than at any time since the Civil War, US politicians are peddling simplistic rhetoric about an immensely complex issue to stoke fear and anger, deepening the country's political polarization.

But there is good news for the American people: The truth about immigration is far less frightening than what some politicians and media figures want you to believe. For starters, immigrants are much less likely to commit crime than US citizens. Nationwide, illegal immigrants tend to be incarcerated at a much lower rate than native-born Americans. In Texas, for example, illegal immigrants, in 2018, were 45 percent less likely to be convicted



of a crime than native-born Americans. And the crime and incarceration rates for legal immigrants are even lower.

Republicans often point to a 2021 US Department of Justice report showing that federal arrests of non-US citizens increased by 234 percent between 1998 and 2018, while those of US citizens rose by only 10 percent. But this increase was driven entirely by arrests for immigration-related offenses. If those are removed, arrest rates of non-citizens increased by only 5.1 percent. In other words, when it comes to crimes that Americans can also be arrested for, such as theft or assault, the increase was lower for immigrants than it was for citizens.

But the other side of the debate also deserves some criticism. There is nothing necessarily xenophobic or bigoted about wanting to strengthen border security. Every country has a legitimate interest in controlling

who enters its territory, just as every family has a right to decide who may enter their home. You can open your arms to your neighbors without removing the locks from your doors. This is common sense.

Immigration need not be a partisan issue. During Barack Obama's presidency (when Biden was vice president), the US deported more than 5.3 million people, or around 2.65 million per term, which is more than the two million deported during Donald Trump's one term.

Nor is the economic relationship between immigrants and natives as 'zero-sum' as many assume. Although immigrants do compete with some Americans for jobs, the benefits they bring far outweigh the harms. One such benefit is tamer inflation. With around three job openings for every two job seekers, America urgently needs more immigrant labor. Industries such as construction, agriculture, and hospitality consistently rely on immigrants. When these jobs go unfilled, restaurants and other small businesses serve fewer people, and fewer homes are built. These outcomes translate into higher prices for Americans and lower US competitiveness vis-à-vis other economies such as China.

Economists typically find that immigration expands overall opportunities, raises wages, and lowers prices. After all, if a factory in the US cannot find workers at globally competitive wages, it will go out of business or move to a location where labor is cheaper, such as Mexico or China. Low-wage immigrant labor not only helps to keep the factory in the US. It also means that there will be more workers paying for housing, food, health care, and consumer goods, thus creating more jobs and raising wages for other American workers.

For demographic reasons, America's need for immigrant labor will only increase over time. In 2008, the US fertility rate dropped below the replacement level of 2.1 children per woman of child-bearing age, and it has been falling steadily over the past decade, reaching 1.7 in 2021. Fewer births mean fewer workers in the future. An ever-smaller working population will have to support a larger retired population.

One concern is that low fertility leads to

economic stagnation. Japan's fertility rate dropped below replacement level in the 1970s, and its GDP and average income both stopped growing by the mid-1990s — not least because it remained wholly opposed to immigration. In China, now the world's second-largest economy, low fertility has become one of the biggest challenges for long-run growth.

“Financing is key to realize global clean-energy ambitions. Low investment in Africa is a major challenge. In 2021, just 0.6 percent (\$2.6 billion) of the \$434 billion invested in renewable-energy projects went to African countries.”

The US has long been an exception precisely because its openness to immigrants has allowed it to keep growing robustly despite falling fertility. A steady stream of mostly healthy, young, eager workers from abroad has been key to maintaining economic dynamism. When managed properly, immigration benefits immigrants and native-born citizens alike.

But proper management calls for a thoughtful, evidence-based discussion, not hysterics. When cooler heads prevail, it is possible both to maximize the benefits of immigration while still maintaining border security and supporting workers in sectors that immigrants may enter. If US politicians are serious about serving the American people's interests, they will abandon the overheated rhetoric and start doing their jobs.

India aspires to reach forefront...

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 12

The Federation has 70 committees that deal with 70 different investment sectors, providing investors with all the information and data they need to help them succeed.

Highlighting the historical achievements that India has witnessed in the field of space and information technology, Pathak stated that these experiences will be available to all our partners in the GCC countries, as close neighbors and having historical relations that date back hundreds of years. Adding that his country attaches great importance to the issue of food security of the Gulf region, and that Indian companies prioritize their relations with the GCC countries, he stressed that the GCC region had no cause to worry about the possibility of India cutting off food or medicine supply due to any economic or other crises.

Cutting edge educational institutions: The Indian Institute of Technology in New Delhi (IIT Delhi) is one of the leading technical institutes in India and the world, with an exceptional reputation in the fields of engineering education and research.

The Institute was founded in 1961, and has

ever since played a vital role in the development of outstanding engineering and technological cadres, and its establishment is a major step towards strengthening engineering education in the country.

IIT Delhi offers a wide range of educational programs in different engineering fields, from undergraduate studies to doctoral studies, and the institute allows students to choose from disciplines such as computer engineering, electrical engineering, mechanical engineering, aerospace engineering, and many other disciplines.

The Institute is characterized by advanced research facilities and a huge team of researchers specialized in various fields. The Institute encourages innovative research, and its efforts in this field have resulted in ground-breaking discoveries and engineering developments.

Students enjoy the diversity and activities at Delhi IIT, as the institute provides a varied educational and social environment that promotes cultural and academic interaction. IIT graduates achieve great heights in various fields of industry, business and research, and the extensive alumni network forms a strong support for new students and promotes professional communication.



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AMR, a silent 'pandemic' waiting to happen

Since their discovery in the 1920s, antibiotics have been the main arsenal that medical science has resorted to in order to prevent and treat infections and diseases in humans, animals and plants. Although hailed as one of the greatest medical advancements in history, the overuse and misuse of antibiotics have created a new challenge for health care providers — antimicrobial resistance, or AMR for short.

Antibiotic or antimicrobial resistance occurs when bacteria change and no longer respond to the medications that once killed them or slowed their growth. These drug-resistant bacteria may multiply and spread, putting people at risk of more serious infections that are difficult, or even impossible, to treat. AMR has grown to become a multi-faceted global challenge known as a lurking silent pandemic. It is considered one of the top ten global public health threats to humanity in the 21st century.

According to the World Health Organization, globally, an estimated 1.3 million people die each year directly due to bacterial AMR. The global health entity warned that if no action is taken, this number could soar dramatically, leading to higher public health, economic and social costs and pushing more people into poverty, especially in low-income countries.

To address the increasing threats and impacts of antimicrobial resistance globally, the United Nations launched the Antimicrobial Resistance Multi-Stakeholder Partnership in 2022. The partnership seeks to bring about greater coordination, political leadership, interdisciplinary and multi-sectoral targeted actions by the whole of society. In support of this initiative, we as individuals must also do our part to reduce antibiotic resistance.

Below are a few basics on AMR and what we can do to reduce the impact of this potential threat to all life forms on Earth.

Antibiotic resistance does not imply that your body is resistant to antibiotics; it means that the bacteria causing an infection are unaffected by the antibiotic treatment. Bacteria have been around long before the arrival of the human species on the evolutionary ladder, evolving into different strains in response to the changing environment they encountered over the eons. Only those bacteria that could survive and even thrive in the presence of adverse conditions continued to multiply and pass on the resistant traits in their genetic material to other bacteria.

In recent decades, bacteria have begun to adapt and overcome many of the antibiotics developed to prevent their infection of humans, animals and plants. To survive modern antibiotics, bacteria have developed several defensive mechanisms such as producing enzymes that destroy the antibiotic; changing the structure of their cell wall so the antibiotic cannot attach to it; pumping the antibiotic out of their cells before it has a chance to work; or by restricting access so the antibiotic cannot enter the cell membrane.

If bacteria develop a combination of these resistance mechanisms, it could mean that multiple or all antibiotics prove ineffective against them, leading to untreatable infections. Once antibiotic resistance emerges, it can spread rapidly and easily to other people and to other healthcare facilities such as hospitals, clinics, and even between countries.



The development of antibiotic resistance in bacteria was aided to a large extent by how people used antibiotics, including through the underuse, overuse and misuse of antibiotics. Medical practitioners who prescribe antibiotics inappropriately, patients who use antibiotics without heed to the dosage prescribed, farmers and livestock owners who overuse antibiotics to protect crops and cattle, have all contributed to the growing menace of AMR.

Overuse: Overusing antibiotics drives the evolution of antibiotic resistance. When populations take antibiotics unnecessarily, it gives bacteria more opportunities to become resistant. Because bacteria can inherit genes from relatives and nonrelatives, it allows them to transfer antibiotic resistance to different species of bacteria. Also, some mutations that cause resistance can occur randomly.

Misuse: Bacteria multiply at any opportunity. Therefore, not taking antibiotics according to your doctor's instructions allows resistant bacteria to grow. This includes missing doses; stopping the course early; using the incorrect dosage.

Bacteria can reproduce and mutate if you use unsuitable antibiotics, such as someone else's medicine. If antibiotics only partially kill the bacteria, they survive and multiply, and the population of drug-resistant bacteria grows.

Inappropriate prescribing: Research shows that doctors prescribe antibiotics unnecessarily up to 50 percent of the time. Good antibiotic stewardship involves a correct diagnosis of the condition requiring treatment and the proper choice of antibiotic and course duration. Incorrectly prescribed antibiotics may expose people to potential complications. Moreover, if the prescribed therapy does not inhibit the bacteria, it can promote antibiotic resistance by allowing the bacteria to mutate.

Extensive agricultural use: Around the world, farmers use antibiotics as animal growth supplements and to prevent disease. Increasingly, antibiotics are being sold to produce larger yields and better products from livestock. The antibiotics used in animals also kill or suppress susceptible bacteria, allowing antibiotic-resistant bacteria to thrive. As a result, when

people eat meat or products from animals treated with antibiotics, they encounter resistant bacteria. These bacteria can then cause infections that are difficult to treat.

Agricultural antibiotic use also affects the balance of bacteria in the environment. Animals excrete almost all antibiotics in their waste, which disperses through fertilizer, groundwater, and surface runoff. Microorganisms in the environment then become exposed to resistant

bacteria, which alters the delicate balance of the ecology.

Everyone can play their part in helping prevent antibiotic resistance. Here are some tips:

- Patients should take antibiotics only as directed by your doctor and follow any other instructions they provide. This includes taking the full course of treatment as prescribed, even if you feel better before the end. Remember to take

your doses on time. Do not take someone else's medications or use leftover antibiotics. Do not use antibiotics to try to treat viral illnesses, such as colds or the flu.

- Doctors and healthcare providers can also help by: Prescribing antibiotics responsibly and only when needed. Using antibiotics that suit the specific bacteria involved. Only prescribing antibiotics for as long as necessary. Using good hygiene to control the spread of infections in clinics and hospitals.
- Reducing the use of antibiotics in livestock is also important. This involves using vaccines and other preventive measures to keep animals healthy and only using antibiotics when necessary. Farmers and ranchers should also follow instructions carefully when using antibiotics and only use them on the advice of a veterinarian.

فحص السكري
DIABETES CHECK-UP

- FBS/RBS
- HBA1C
- Creatinine
- Urea
- Urine Microalbumin
- Internal Medicine & Diabetologist Consultation or GP Dr. Consultation

سكر صائم/ عشوائي
سكر تراكمي
كرياتينين
يوريا
ميكروالبيومين
استشارة طبيب باطني والسكري
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