



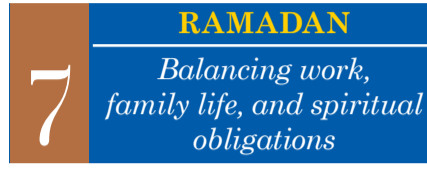
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Kuwait, US relations anchored by history, friendship, shared values

By Tareq Yousef Alshumaimry

Relations between Kuwait and the United States are based on centuries-old ties that were cemented by friendship and compassion between the two peoples. The establishment of the first hospital in Kuwait by American missionaries in 1911, referred to as 'Mushtashfa Amricani' (American Missionaries Hospital) further strengthening these ties.

Anchored in history, the partnership between the two countries pivots today on the twin axis of reciprocity and adaptability that enable them to adroitly navigate issues vital to regional stability, global peace, and mutual prosperity. Kuwait and the United States established diplomatic relations shortly after Kuwait gained independence from Great Britain in 1961.

The bonds binding Kuwait and the US were further consolidated in 1990-91 during the brutal Iraqi invasion of Kuwait, when the US support was vital in driving out the invading forces and liberating Kuwait. The US leadership in restoring Kuwait's sovereignty and ensuring the security of its borders since then have reinforced the status

of the US as a trusted and steadfast ally of Kuwait.

The deeply-rooted relations with Kuwait and US commitment to the security and sovereignty of Kuwait were stressed by the United States Ambassador H.E. Karen Sasahara. Speaking at the US Embassy reception held to mark the 248th US Independence Day last year, Ambassador Sasahara emphasized that the US would remain a strategic partner for Kuwait in a variety of domains, especially security.

The continued US support to Kuwait security was further reiterated in November 2024 by then President-elect Donald Trump immediately after he won the US presidential elections. This came during a telephonic discussion with His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, who called to congratulate the President-elect on his election victory. Thanking His Highness the Amir for his nice sentiments, President-elect Trump praised the strong friendship between both countries as allies that stood the test of time.

He said he was looking forward to strengthening the bilateral relationship, and reaffirmed the ironclad support of the US to the



security and stability of Kuwait. For his part, His Highness the Amir highlighted the deep-rooted distinguished ties between the State of Kuwait and the United States, and expressed aspiration for even deeper cooperation within the framework of the strategic partnership between both states.

That relations between Kuwait and the US at the leadership level are not just a shimmer in the pan was further underlined last February. To mark the 34th anniversary of Kuwait's liberation from the Iraqi invasion, Kuwait Petroleum Corporation (KPC) and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs jointly hosted a dialogue session at the Saud Al-Nasser Al-Sabah Diplomatic Institute. The event featured Dr. Richard Haass, former special assistant to the late US President George H.W. Bush, and Sheikh Nawaf Al-Saud Al-Sabah, Vice Chairman and CEO of KPC.

During the session, Dr. Haass highlighted how critical decisions are made in times of crisis, citing the historic decisions taken by the late US President George H.W. Bush from the onset of the Iraqi aggression against Kuwait until its liberation. He also revealed, for the first time, details of the late Amir Sheikh Jaber Al-Ahmad's visit

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Traffic law amendments set driving license validity of five years for expats

Kuwaiti Official Gazette has published Interior Minister Decision No. 425 of 2025, amending provisions of Ministerial Resolution No. 1976/81 on the executive regulations of the Traffic Law, has come into force following its publication in the official gazette, Al-Kuwait Al-Youm last week.



The amendments redefine various driving license categories and their validity periods:

Private driving license: Issued for private cars (up to 7 passengers), transport vehicles (up to 2 tons), and taxis. Valid for 15 years for Kuwaitis and GCC citizens, five years for non-Kuwaitis, and based on the review card for illegal residents.

General driving license covers Category A: Covers vehicles with over 25 passengers, public transport, heavy transport (over 8 tons), hazardous materials transport, and driving instruction. Category B: Covers vehicles carrying 7-25 passengers, public transport,

and transport vehicles (2-8 tons).

Validity for the above two categories is 15 years for Kuwaitis and GCC citizens, five years for non-Kuwaitis, and based on the review card for illegal residents.

Motorcycle license covers Category A: For all motorcycles, including driving instruction and ATVs. Category B: For three-wheel or larger motorcycles.

Validity for both the above categories is 15 years for Kuwaitis and GCC citizens, five years for non-Kuwaitis, and based on the review card for illegal residents.

Construction, industrial, agricultural, or tractor license: Covers respective specialized vehicles with validity similar to other categories.

Special activity license: Issued for service-related vehicles as specified in the license, valid for 15 years for Kuwaitis and GCC citizens and five years for non-Kuwaitis. All licenses must comply with Article 92 of the amended resolution. Existing licenses remain valid until expiration.

For illegal residents, the license is valid according to the duration of the review card. It shall be canceled if the holder changes their profession or if their residency in the country is revoked. Driving is not permitted on public roads or in areas unrelated to service activities. The procedures and fees applicable to private driving licenses also apply to this license.

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Kuwait, a trusted partner of Germany in economic, humanitarian efforts

His Excellency Hans-Christian Freiherr von Reibnitz lauded His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmed Al-Jaber Al-Sabah and his government's efforts in addressing key responsibilities and emphasized trust as essential to strong Germany-Kuwait ties in upholding the global order.

The Times Kuwait Report

Embassy of Germany held its annual iftar banquet last week for a select gathering of invitees. In his address to the distinguished guests, Ambassador of Germany H.E. Hans-Christian Freiherr von Reibnitz, lauded His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmed Al-Jaber Al-Sabah and his government's efforts in addressing key responsibilities, highlighting trustworthiness as a pillar of international relations that strengthens Germany-Kuwait ties in upholding the rules-based global order.

Welcoming the close economic cooperation between Germany and Kuwait, including within the framework of EU-GCC collaboration, the German ambassador stated that navigating the economy through crises requires a clear vision of achievable goals. He added that Germany seeks to partner with Kuwait to realize its ambitious Vision 2035 and build a sustainable national economic foundation for the coming years.

He expressed hope that German companies would join their European counterparts at the upcoming business forum, scheduled alongside the EU-GCC ministerial meeting later this year. He also anticipated that Kuwait would host the next meeting of the Kuwait-Germany Joint Economic Committee in



due course. "We must seek opportunities for joint cooperation that serve our common interests, and German companies stand ready to support these efforts," he stated.

Ambassador von Reibnitz went on to note, "As we celebrate Ramadan in Kuwait, a month of mercy and solidarity, I am hopeful for the continued humanitarian efforts of the Kuwaiti government to alleviate the suffering of those affected by

conflict, war, famine, and displacement—particularly in Gaza, Syria, and Sudan."

He noted that Germany, like many other countries, has expressed support for the Arab plan for Gaza and remains among the largest contributors of humanitarian aid to the Strip. He added, "We support all efforts to extend the ceasefire and find solutions to meet the needs of the civilian population."

Germany is also closely monitoring developments in Syria and stands ready to support any political solution that fosters stability and ensures the participation of all Syrians in shaping their future, regardless of their beliefs, ethnicity, or gender.

He stressed that humanitarian aid alone is insufficient, as it addresses only the symptoms while the root causes of global challenges remain unresolved. "The increasing use of violence and aggression to advance interests has made the world more dangerous," he warned.

He added, "While the peaceful resolution of disputes remains the ultimate goal, Germany and Kuwait are committed to upholding the international order based on fundamental principles of international law, particularly state sovereignty and territorial integrity." He emphasized that the dominance of force in shaping global affairs would only lead to further instability and chaos.



Indonesian Embassy hosts iftar reception, fosters diplomatic dialogue

Indonesian Embassy hosted an exclusive Iftar reception, bringing together heads of missions and senior Kuwaiti officials for an evening of tradition, diplomacy, and Ramadan spirit, fostering dialogue while showcasing Indonesia's rich cultural heritage.

The evening opened with recitation of the Holy Qur'an and prayer, setting a reflective and spiritual tone for the gathering. In her remarks on the occasion, Ambassador of Indonesia H.E. Lena Maryana, highlighted Indonesia's Ramadan customs and the long-standing cordial relations between Indonesia and Kuwait.

The evening continued with a culinary experience showcasing Indonesia's rich gastronomy, featuring Soto Ayam, a fragrant chicken soup with a turmeric-infused broth; Bakso, savory beef

meatballs served in a flavorful broth; Nasi Goreng, Indonesia's renowned fried rice enriched with a blend of spices; Sate Ayam, marinated grilled chicken skewers served with a creamy peanut sauce; and Rendang Daging, a slow-cooked beef dish infused with aromatic spices.

More than just a meal, the Iftar reception served as a bridge for strengthening diplomatic relations, providing a space for heads of missions and dignitaries to engage in meaningful discussions while experiencing the warmth of Indonesian hospitality. The Embassy of Indonesia expressed its sincere appreciation to all distinguished guests for their presence and participation, wishing them a blessed and peaceful Ramadan.



PACI to provide Civil ID for women with revoked nationality

Public Authority for Civil Information (PACI) has announced a new mechanism for issuing civil ID cards to women whose Kuwaiti citizenship was revoked under Article (8) of the Nationality Law. This initiative is part of the government's ongoing efforts, through various ministries and sectors, to streamline processes and provide necessary facilitation for those affected by the revocation of their citizenship.



Authority outlined six key points of the new mechanism on its official account on the X platform on 20 March. They are as follows

- Payment notification for the new civil ID card fees will be sent through the 'My Identity' app and the unified government application for electronic services, 'Sahel'.
- Card issuance fees must be paid through the 'Sahel' application or the Authority's official website.
- Await the card readiness notification, which will be sent via the 'My Identity' app and the 'Sahel' application.
- To collect the new civil ID card, the old card must be returned by depositing it in the designated receiving devices.

If the old civil ID was submitted to the General Directorate of Nationality and Travel Documents, one must first retrieve it from the same authority and then present it to the Civil Information Authority to collect the new ID, ensuring its readiness beforehand.

Readiness of new civil ID can be tracked through the official website of the Civil Information Authority without needing to visit in person.



World Bank representative hosts Ramadan Ghabga

The Times Kuwait Report

World Bank office in Kuwait hosted an elegant Ramadan gathering at the St. Regis Hotel last week, bringing together diplomats, economic leaders, and public figures to celebrate the holy month and strengthen ties with Kuwaiti society.

In his address to the gathering, World Bank's Resident Representative in Kuwait,

Ziad Al-Nakat, expressed his delight at the attendance of the distinguished guests, and emphasized that the Ghabga reflects the World Bank's pride in being part of Kuwait's economic and social fabric. He added, "Ramadan in Kuwait is marked by traditions that bring people together, fostering a spirit of love and connection. With this in mind, we wanted to share this festive atmosphere with our friends."

Speaking on Kuwait's economic classification and development prospects, Al-Nakat explained that the World Bank projects 2.5 percent economic growth for Kuwait in 2025. He added that the bank regularly updates its data and will release a detailed report on Kuwait's economic performance in the coming weeks. "Kuwait is witnessing an ambitious economic transformation, driven by the determination

of its people, propelling development in the right direction," said Al-Nakat.

Regarding the partnership between the World Bank and Kuwait, Al-Nakat highlighted the longstanding relationship dating back to 1961 with Kuwait being one of the bank's contributing countries. He stressed that the establishment of the World Bank's office in Kuwait in 2009 aimed to strengthen cooperation and expand it to new horizons.

New law abolishes Article 153 of Penal Code Law

Decree-Law No. 9 of 2025 repealed Article 153 of the Penal Code Law No. 16 of 1960, which had provided a legal excuse mitigating punishment for men who killed their wife, mother, daughter, or sister upon catching them in the act of adultery.

Announcing last week that the government planned to repeal Article 153, Minister of Justice Nasser Al-Sumait had said that the Article has no basis in Islamic law, violates the Kuwaiti constitution, and causes more harm than good. He stated, "It not only discriminates between men and women, it is also considered one of the most problematic legal provisions, drawing

criticism from international organizations against Kuwait.

The explanatory memorandum of the decree stated that "The Constitution, in Article 29, guarantees equality among people in human dignity, public rights, and duties, and prohibits discrimination based on gender, origin, language, or religion."

It further noted that Article 153 of the Penal Code, issued under Law No. 16 of 1960, provided a legal excuse to mitigate the punishment of a man who killed his wife, mother, daughter, or sister upon catching her in the act of adultery.

The memorandum emphasized that limiting this excuse to men, while



excluding women, constitutes gender-based discrimination, as it is based on the provocation of men's emotions by this crime, despite women experiencing the same feelings. Moreover, it pointed out that mitigating the punishment for such

crimes contributes to their recurrence.

Article 153 of the Penal Code had stated, "Whoever catches his wife in the act of adultery, or finds his daughter, mother, or sister in an indecent situation with a man and immediately kills her, the man, or both, shall be punished by imprisonment for a period not exceeding three years and a fine not exceeding three thousand dinars, or by one of these two penalties."

Women's groups in Kuwait along with human rights activists and civil society organizations in Kuwait have long called for abolishing Article 153, as part of eliminating all forms of discrimination against women.



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Between Dreams and Duty A Working Mom's Journey to Balance

Nada Yasser writes a heartfelt reflection on her journey as a working mother striving to balance her career and family life. Nada shares the emotional challenges, like guilt and self-doubt, alongside the determination and resilience that keep her moving forward. She details her rise from humble beginnings to becoming a Learning & Development Officer in a multinational company, while also pursuing her passion for relationship coaching and corporate wellness.



By Nada Yasser
Exclusive to The Times Kuwait

The alarm buzzes. Another day begins. Before I even open my eyes, my mind is already running—work deadlines, kids' needs, and the never-ending push to keep going. I lie there for a moment, listening to the quiet of the house, feeling the weight of another day pressing down on me. A deep breath. A whispered prayer. And then, I get up.

Being a working mom is not just about balancing schedules—it is about balancing emotions, battling the guilt that never really goes away. Every morning, I kiss my children goodbye, forcing a smile as they cling to me, their small hands pulling at my heart. "Mama, don't go."

And yet, I go. I walk out that door, carrying their voices with me, feeling the ache of absence settle deep in my chest. I tell myself I am doing this for them, for us. But some days, I wonder: Am I really?

There are moments when I feel unstoppable, when I step into my office with confidence, knowing I am carving a future for myself and my family. I work hard, I push forward, I build something meaningful. But there are also moments when I sit in my car, gripping the steering wheel, my vision blurred with unshed tears, questioning if I am making the right choices. The guilt is relentless. The self-doubt is suffocating.

I started from nothing. No shortcuts. No easy roads. Just a heart full of dreams and hands that never stopped working. Every single day, I push myself forward,

reminding myself that growth is painful, but so is staying in one place. I have learned that guilt is the price we sometimes pay for ambition, but I refuse to let it define me. Instead, I let it remind me how much I love, how deeply I care.

My career has given me purpose. Today, I stand as a Learning & Development Officer in a multinational company—a role I once only dreamed of. I help others grow, introduce mindfulness and self-compassion, and work to make workplaces more human-centered. But my journey does not stop here. My love for human connection drives me forward. I am studying relationship coaching, and one day, I will be a corporate wellness consultant. Because I know what it is like to feel unseen, unheard, exhausted. And I want to change that.

This journey has not been easy. I have been in places that drained me, jobs that tested my patience and self-worth. I have come home feeling empty, defeated, questioning if this is all life has to offer. But through every struggle, every sleepless night, every tear I wiped away in secret—I have become stronger. Every challenge has shaped me into a woman who is still searching for balance, for fulfillment, for something greater than just existing.

I believe in purpose. I believe that I was put on this earth for a reason. And while I do not have all the answers yet, I am slowly starting to understand the 'why'.

To every working mom out there who carries the weight of a hundred roles, I see you. I know your exhaustion, your longing, your love that stretches itself thin just to make everything work. I know how it feels to stand in a crowded room and still feel alone, to succeed yet wonder what you are missing.

You are not alone. You are strong. You are enough.

So I wake up every day, wipe away the doubt, and keep going. Not just for my children, not just for my dreams, but for the hope that one day, another mother will read this and realize—she is not alone.

Nada Yasser works as a Learning & Development Officer at Acico Group

Dorra gas field development enters bidding stage

Contractors specialized in oil and gas field development are reportedly preparing to submit bids to Khafji Joint Operations Company, jointly owned by Kuwait and Saudi Arabia in the Neutral Zone, for the company's multi-billion offshore gas production project.

The report, which first appeared in the MEED magazine, said that the project estimated at US\$10 billion, will focus on gas extraction from the Dorra offshore gas field, located in the Gulf waters within the Neutral Zone shared by Kuwait and Saudi Arabia.

According to MEED, contractors are preparing bids for four engineering, procurement, and construction (EPC) packages, including three offshore packages and one onshore package. The four project packages, along with their submission dates, are as follows:

Package 1: Seven marine covers and in-field lines, to be submitted by 24 March.

Package 2A: Seven Production Deck Modules (PDMs) and their corrosion-resistant alloy-lined piping connected to the gas compression plant (Submission by 30 June).

Package 2B: Compression and Auxiliary Platforms, Accommodation Platform, Main Pipelines and Associated Cables Connected to the Shore (30 June)

Package 3: Onshore Gas Processing Plant (30 June).

Khafji Joint Operations, a partnership between Saudi Aramco Gulf Operations Company (AGOC) and Kuwait Gulf Oil Company (KGOC), a subsidiary of Kuwait Petroleum Corporation, issued tenders for the project in August last year. However, progress on the project was delayed due to a dispute over its ownership with Iran.

Kuwait and Saudi Arabia assert that the field lies entirely within their shared territorial waters, known as the Neutral Zone or Divided Zone, and reject Iran's claim. In contrast, Iran argues that the field extends into its territory and insists on being included as a stakeholder in any development



project. In February 2024, Kuwait and Saudi Arabia reaffirmed their claims to the Dorra field in a joint statement issued during an official meeting, and preliminary work on the project ensued.

The following contractors have been shortlisted for bidding for the three marine packages: Lamprell (Saudi Arabia/UAE); Larsen & Toubro Hydrocarbon Energy (India); McDermott (USA); NMDC Energy (UAE); Saipem (Italy). Bidders for the marine packages have the option to submit a joint bid.

The Dorra field is estimated to hold 20 trillion cubic feet of gas and approximately 310 million barrels of oil. In September 2023, it was reported that Aramco and Kuwait Petroleum Corporation (KPC) had selected the French company Technip Energy to conduct the pre-feed engineering and design (PFE) and feeder works for the Dorra offshore field development project.

The initial feed for the Dorra field development project was completed more than a decade ago. However, the engineering design required updates to incorporate advancements in technology before the project could reach a final investment decision.

Kuwait and Saudi Arabia have collaborated on developing the Dorra offshore field since its discovery in 1965. The two countries plan to produce approximately one billion cubic feet of gas per day, and have agreed to share the production equally.

New season, new styles at LuLu Hypermarket's 'Slip Into Summer 2025'



LuLu Hypermarket's 'Slip Into Summer 2025' collection has arrived, bringing a wave of fresh fashion choices at unbeatable prices. The official launch event saw popular fashion influencers and vloggers in attendance, all eager to check out the latest summer styles. The collection, available across all LuLu Hypermarket outlets, includes a wide range of trendy outfits, stylish handbags, and fashion pieces for men, women, and kids.

The best part is that LuLu is offering



incredible promotional deals from 13 March to 5 April. Shoppers can take advantage of the 'Half-Pay-Back' special offer on fashion, ladies' bags, and baby accessories at all outlets with the exception of LuLu Hyper Hawally and LuLu Center Fahaheel. This means that for every KD20 spent, customers get a KD10 shopping voucher to use on their next purchase.

The summer fashion lineup features an impressive array of well-known brands, including Louis Philippe, Allen Solly, Peter England, Van Heusen, Killer, Sunnex, Riverblue, Ruff, Eten, Marco Donatelli, Cortigiani, Tom Smith, and Reo. Whether you are looking for something casual, elegant, or bold, LuLu has a variety of options to refresh your summer wardrobe.

With stylish new arrivals and great deals, there is no better time to upgrade your look for the season. Do not miss out—head to your nearest LuLu Hypermarket before 5 April to take advantage of the offers and step into summer with style.



Indian Ambassador hosts festive Ramadan Ghabga

The Times Kuwait Report

Ambassador of India H.E. Dr. Adarsh Swaika, hosted a festive 'Ramadan Ghabga' at India House on 17 March, that brought together the Indian community, diplomatic corps, and friends of India to celebrate the spirit of Ramadan. The event reflected the long-standing cultural ties between India and Kuwait.

In India, a land of diverse religions and cultures, Ramadan holds deep significance, reflecting the country's vibrant pluralism as home to the world's second-largest Muslim population. It embodies the spirit of unity in diversity, where people of different faiths and backgrounds coexist harmoniously. In Kuwait, the Indian community continues the tradition of hosting Iftar and



Ghabga gatherings during Ramadan, reinforcing the strong cultural and people-to-people ties between the two nations.

The event showcased the Indian way of celebrating Ramadan through traditional instrumental music and cuisine. Indian artists



performed live music on classical instruments such as the flute, tabla, and violin, playing melodies of beloved Bollywood songs from past decades. The cuisine featured live cooking of Indian delicacies, including dishes popular in both India and Kuwait. The Indian ambassador's

Ramadan Ghabga saw a distinguished gathering, including members of the ruling family, ministers, senior government dignitaries, ambassadors from various countries, heads of UN and international organizations, leading Kuwaiti business figures, media representatives, and members of Kuwait's vibrant Indian community. Notable attendees included the Minister of Oil, the Governor of Farwaniya, an Advisor from the Amiri Diwan, the Undersecretaries of Defense and Information, the CEOs of NBK and Kuwait Finance House, the Editor of Al-Qabas, the Editor-in-Chief of The Times Kuwait, and other prominent business leaders.

In his address on the occasion, the Indian Ambassador extended his heartfelt Ramadan Mubarak greetings to all attendees and well-wishers in Kuwait.

Excavations reveal pre-Islamic era water-well in Failaka Island

National Council for Culture, Arts, and Letters (NCCAL) announced last week the discovery of an ancient water-well on Failaka Island, dating back to the pre-Islamic and early Islamic eras, distinguished by its large size and flowing water.

Speaking to media on the discovery, Acting Assistant Secretary-General for Antiquities and Museums at NCCAL, Mohammed bin Redha, said that the well is located within the courtyard of a large house dating back to the 7th and 8th centuries AD. Additionally, rock foundations of a building adjacent to the well were found, along with evidence of a massive wall surrounding the courtyard, house, and well,

as well as pottery remains dating back 1,300 to 1,400 years, representing the pre-Islamic period and its early Islamic transition.

Bin Redha explained that this discovery is part of ongoing excavations by the Kuwaiti-Slovakian archaeological mission, which began in 2019 in Al-Qusur area on Failaka Island. One of the largest archaeological locations on the island, Al-Qusur contains relics from various historical periods, spanning from pre-Islamic times to the early and late Islamic eras.

Commenting on the find, Professor of Archaeology and Anthropology at Kuwait University, Dr. Hassan Ashkanani, described it as one of the most significant archaeological discoveries on Failaka Island.

Ashkanani noted that the find, dating back to the Christian era and the advent of Islam, highlights the island's cultural activity during that time. He also revealed the discovery of more than five kilograms of precious stones, including rubies and purple amethysts, reflecting the nature of the island's economic activity 1,400 years ago.

The head of the Slovak mission, Dr. Matej



Rutkay, stated that the 2025 excavation season will focus on the northern part of the Qusur settlement, where remains of a courtyard and a house, believed to have belonged to a wealthy individual of that era, were previously discovered.

Rutkay revealed that the site spans 38 meters in length and 34 meters in width, with the house covering an area of 97 square meters. The newly discovered water well measures 4.5 meters in length and 4 meters in width and is



located next to a water channel.

Al-Qusur is one of the most significant and largest archaeological sites on Failaka Island, extending approximately two kilometers from east to west and reaching about one kilometer inland to the south. Previous excavations at the site have uncovered the foundations of churches and numerous houses built from limestone and mud bricks, along with gypsum materials, precious stones, and pottery from various historical periods.

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Ladies Diwaniya helps build bridges of friendship

Breaking Barriers... Building Bonds



The Times Kuwait Report

Sheikh Suhaila Fahd Al Sabah, Managing Editor of The Times Kuwait held an exclusive ladies diwaniya on the occasion of the holy month of Ramadan. The diwaniya saw a large gathering of ladies from the diplomatic corps experience the cherished Kuwaiti tradition of Diwaniya Diplomacy.

The diwaniya has historically been a male-dominated gathering place where guests delve into matters ranging from local news, personal affairs and the past. The Diwaniya serves as a pillar of Kuwaiti social life, fostering community bonds and facilitating dialogue.

However in recent years there has been an emergence of Ladies Diwaniya's (Majlis) as Kuwaiti women have begun to carve out their own niche within this cultural tradition by establishing Ladies Diwaniyas. These gatherings provide a supportive environment where women can network, share knowledge, and empower each other.

The rise of Ladies Diwaniya (Majlis) is indicative of a broader shift towards gender equality and women's empowerment in Kuwait. By creating their own spaces for dialogue, Kuwaiti women are challenging traditional gender norms and asserting their right to participate in societal discourse.

Sheikha Suhaila Al Sabah diwaniya was widely applauded by the women diplomats who were present who welcomed the opportunity for cultural exchange and networking. Women from diverse backgrounds came together to share their experiences and perspectives, enriching the collective knowledge and fostering a sense of unity and solidarity.



Day	Ramadan	Date	Fajr	Sunrise	Dhur	Asr	Magrib	Isha
Sunday	23	March 23	4:30 AM	5:48 AM	11:55 AM	3:23 PM	6:01 PM	7:18 PM
Monday	24	March 24	4:29 AM	5:47 AM	11:54 AM	3:23 PM	6:01 PM	7:19 PM
Tuesday	25	March 25	4:27 AM	5:46 AM	11:54 AM	3:23 PM	6:02 PM	7:19 PM
Wednesday	26	March 26	4:26 AM	5:45 AM	11:54 AM	3:23 PM	6:03 PM	7:20 PM
Thursday	27	March 27	4:25 AM	5:44 AM	11:54 AM	3:23 PM	6:03 PM	7:21 PM
Friday	28	March 28	4:23 AM	5:43 AM	11:53 AM	3:23 PM	6:04 PM	7:21 PM
Saturday	29	March 29	4:22 AM	5:41 AM	11:53 AM	3:23 PM	6:04 PM	7:22 PM
Sunday	30	March 30	4:21 AM	5:40 AM	11:53 AM	3:23 PM	6:05 PM	7:23 PM

Balancing work, family life, and spiritual obligations

The holy month of Ramadan is here, and with it comes even more responsibility, considering the various religious obligations people are required to fulfill during the month of fasting, amid balancing their work and family life.

The key to maintaining a regular working schedule and meeting your religious obligations is preparation. Here are a few suggestions to help busy professionals and their families prepare for a productive and successful month of Ramadan.

Set clear goals along with specific action steps: Set some specific spiritual goals along with your home life and work goals, during the month of Ramadan. Some religious daily goals could include making an effort to be on time for each prayer, reading at least one juz of the Quran a day or participating in nightly Taraweeh prayers. Weekly goals may

include limiting time-wasting activities such as time spent on the computer and watching television. Monthly goals can be more long-term like correcting a negative character trait.

The important thing is that your goals should be specific, realistic and measurable in some way to help gauge your progress toward meeting the goal. It is important to actually write or schedule time on your calendar because it helps reinforce your commitment to reaching your goal.

Plan ahead: Think about everything you want to accomplish for the day and create a plan to make it happen. Make a simple 'to do' list that includes everything you want to accomplish for the day and week. For example, meal planning a week or so in advance can be beneficial, especially if you can double the recipe so one meal can be stored away in the freezer for those impossibly hectic days. You can plan a week's worth of healthy, well-balanced Suhoor and Iftar meals so you are not scrambling around for morning and evening meal ideas at the last minute.

Prioritize your tasks: When you create your daily 'to do' list, prioritize each task based on importance. Managing each task in order of importance will ensure you set aside enough

time to handle pressing tasks in a timely manner. You can set aside intervals of time throughout the day for completing certain tasks if necessary. Knowing that you have a designated amount of time to work on a task can do wonders for eliminating distractions and increasing productivity.



Keep your family in the loop: Sitting down with your family to discuss plans for preparing and participating in Ramadan is a great exercise to help everyone. Are there specific areas you hope to work on improving during



Ramadan such as controlling your tongue and temper or not gossiping and backbiting? This is a good time to assess our character and consider any improvements to our character.

ny scenarios that might come up and help develop strategies to avoid and/or navigate them with family members. Getting everyone involved increases enthusiasm and reinforces the goals of each individual and the family as a unit.

Take full advantage of this blessed month and plan ahead for a productive, successful Ramadan so you may reap the rewards, both spiritual and physical.



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Turkish Embassy hosts Ramadan Ghabga



The Times Kuwait Report

Turkish Embassy hosted a Ramadan Ghabga, on 16 March, at the residence of the Ambassador, H.E. Tüba Nur Sönmez. The event welcomed a large and distinguished gathering that included, welcoming a distinguished gathering of Deputy and Assistant Ministers from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, members of the diplomatic corps, cultural envoys, prominent Kuwaiti officials, business leaders, and esteemed elders.

In her welcoming speech, Ambassador

Sönmez, highlighted the deep cultural and traditional connections between the Turkish and Kuwaiti people, which is especially reflected during Ramadan with its emphasis on the values of sharing meals, unity, and acts of charity.

Ambassador Sönmez, also spoke about pressing global humanitarian crises, including the genocide in Gaza, the war in Ukraine, and the ongoing crisis in Sudan. Additionally, she touched on the situation in Syria and marked the International Day to Combat Islamophobia, advocating for constructive dialogue to promote peace and ensure a world where

everyone can practice their faith freely and harmoniously.

Videos capturing the traditions, deep-rooted customs during Ramadan in Türkiye were then screened, showcasing the country's rich cultural heritage, and the spirit of Ramadan that defines the holy month.

The evening continued with a mesmerizing musical performance by four talented Turkish artists, Vedia Ulak on the 'ney', Fatih Şanver on the 'qanun', Onur Gunduzer on the 'guitar', and Hasan Tamer on the 'baglama'. Their renditions of traditional Turkish folk art and

Sufi music captivated the audience, creating an enchanting atmosphere. The sounds of traditional drums, Al-Masharati, heard echoing along streets ahead of Suhoor in earlier times, added a festive and authentic touch to the evening. Attendees also engaged in a quiz and cultural competition about Türkiye, with special gifts and souvenirs being awarded to the winners, making the evening both entertaining and culturally enriching. The event concluded with guests relishing a variety of delicacies from traditional Turkish cuisine, including an assortment of sweets and desserts.

Banks seek to reduce financial exposure to exchange companies

Some local banks have urged exchange companies to close their accounts within a specific timeframe or risk the banks closing them and seizing the balances.

While the banks have not provided specific reasons, some believe this is a strategy to reduce exposure to accounts of exchange companies, limit business ties, and set stricter criteria for opening new accounts in line with the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) recommendations on combating money laundering and terrorist financing.

Banks that warned exchange companies to close their accounts, stated that their request

was based on the conditions for opening accounts, without specifying the issue that led to the request. They added that if no review occurs within ten working days from the date of receiving the warning letter, the bank will retain the available balances and close the account.

Exchange companies impacted by this sudden demand by some banks said they could not understand the sudden shift in stance by the banks, especially since no procedural changes have occurred in their operations recently, including in them providing sufficient guarantees for foreign currency coverage required to feed their network of external correspondents.



They indicated that they have not yet received any explanation from the involved banks, and this has prompted them to file a complaint with the Central Bank of Kuwait, given that they are under its supervision.

While the measure did not include the closure of accounts of major exchange companies, this move by the banks could eventually pose a significant challenge to the operations of all exchange companies, including by withdrawing the coverage for foreign currencies necessary for exchange companies to conduct their activities.

This could also hinder the financial role that exchange companies play in maintaining and strengthening the official exchange market against shadow exchanges, and lead to growing fears of their future inability to carry out financial transfers for both citizens and residents.

For their part, the banks involved revealed to the media that the closure of the accounts

of some exchange companies was part of a cautious banking approach based on the degree of risk and strict adherence to due diligence procedures, especially for corporate and exchange company accounts. They pointed out that the Central Bank leaves it to each bank to decide whether to begin or continue dealing with this category of customers, based on the degree and sensitivity of the risks to which it is exposed, as well as its assessment and hedging of these risks. The banks said their stance on some exchange companies stemmed from the high-risk activity their accounts represented and their inability to assess or verify the quality of their implementation of anti-money laundering and counter-terrorism financing controls.

Exchange companies said they did not dispute the need for banks to exercise strict auditing of their data, as this is in line with the requirements of global regulatory standards, oversight mechanisms, procedures, and sound practices for risk assessment. However, they expressed reservations about closing accounts without a specific reason, which they believe violates the terms of the contract with the bank.

They explained that if the bank finds specific suspicions regarding an exchange company, it must inform the company and take legal action, rather than closing its account based on general suspicion, especially since these accounts belong to companies under the supervision of the Central Bank.

Al Muzaini Exchange opens new branch as part of expansion drive



Al-Muzaini Exchange, Kuwait's leading money exchange company, has opened its newest branch in Khaitan, Block 4, Zaid Al Khali Street, Building 142. This expansion underscores the company's commitment to being closer to its customers while providing top-quality financial services, including money transfers, currency exchange, and bill payments. With a focus on convenience, safety, and competitive pricing, Al-Muzaini continues to enhance its reach and service excellence, operating seven days a week.

General Manager of Al-Muzaini Exchange Company, Hugh Fernandes, along with department managers and senior personnel, inaugurated the new branch in Khaitan. In his remarks on the occasion, Mr. Fernandes stated,

"We take great pride in strengthening our leading position in the local market and remain committed to providing the best financial services experience to meet all our customers' money transfer needs. Our mission is to always be near our customers and enhance their convenience, and the opening of our new branch in Khaitan is another step in that direction."

Al-Muzaini strives to make its financial services accessible to all. In addition to its extensive branch network, the Al-Muzaini app offers simple and secure financial solutions with valuable features, including availability on all digital platforms, new customer registration, the ability to add beneficiaries, and access to Western Union and Visa Direct services for seamless transfers anytime, anywhere.

Lulu Kuwait Celebrates Ramadan Spirit with Staff Iftar Gathering



Lulu Hypermarket Kuwait organized a special Iftar gathering for its staff on 16th March at Crowne Plaza Hotel, celebrating the spirit of togetherness and gratitude during the holy month of Ramadan.

The event brought together employees from various departments, reinforcing Lulu's commitment to fostering a positive and inclusive workplace culture. The evening

featured a delightful spread of traditional Ramadan delicacies, creating a warm and festive atmosphere. Lulu Hypermarket Kuwait continues to prioritize employee well-being and engagement, recognizing the hard work and dedication of its team members. Such gatherings serve as a token of appreciation and a platform to strengthen camaraderie among staff.



Convergence of Ramadan, Nowruz reflects shared values of peace, tolerance

His Excellency Dr. Zubaydullo Zubaydzoda, Dean of the Diplomatic Corps and Ambassador of Tajikistan to Kuwait, highlights shared achievements and strong economic, diplomatic, and cultural ties as the two countries mark 30 years of diplomatic relations.

The Times Kuwait Report

Dean of the Diplomatic Corps and Ambassador of Tajikistan H.E. Dr. Zubaydullo Zubaydzoda, hosted a Ramadan gathering last week attended by members of the diplomatic corps and other distinguished guests.

Addressing the gathering, Ambassador Zubaydzoda highlighted the strong bilateral relations between Tajikistan and Kuwait built over the past three decades of cooperation in politics, economics, and culture. He expressed deep gratitude for the warm hospitality he received during his visits to Kuwaiti diwanis, and emphasized that such gestures reflect the nation's deeply rooted values of brotherhood and solidarity.

The ambassador also underlined the significance of Nowruz, celebrated annually on 21 March and said that it was more than just a cultural tradition, "It is a shared human legacy that embodies the values of tolerance and unity among peoples". The recognition of Nowruz by the United Nations underscores its status as a holiday of renewal, hope, and peace, bringing together diverse cultures from Tajikistan, Iran, Afghanistan, Iraq, Turkey, and beyond.

The ambassador remarked that the convergence of Ramadan and Nowruz this year, coinciding with the 30th anniversary of diplomatic relations between Tajikistan and Kuwait, marks a significant milestone for reflecting on shared achievements. Over the past three decades, bridges of trust, understanding, and economic and investment partnerships have been built. He



reaffirmed his country's commitment to further strengthening cooperation across various sectors to promote greater stability and prosperity. As the last ten days of Ramadan approach and Eid al-Fitr nears, the ambassador extended his warmest congratulations and blessings to His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah, the Kuwaiti government, and the generous Kuwaiti people, wishing Kuwait continued security and prosperity.

The ambassador emphasized that the holy month of Ramadan is not only a time of fasting and worship but also a season of generosity and human connection, embodying the highest values of giving and brotherhood. He praised the Kuwaiti people's traditions of fostering solidarity and engaging



with diverse cultures, which strengthen the deep human bonds between nations.

The ambassador further underscored the importance of dialogue, tolerance, and international cooperation in addressing global challenges, reaffirming Tajikistan's commitment to enhancing coordination with Kuwait in regional and international forums to promote peace and sustainable development.

Concluding his remarks, the ambassador stated, "This Ramadan evening, with its profound significance, reaffirms our belief in the importance of working together to strengthen bilateral relations and explore new avenues of beneficial cooperation. We pray that God continues to bless our two countries with security and prosperity. Wishing everyone a blessed year ahead."



Lulu Exchange Kuwait hosts memorable Iftar for corporate clients, dignitaries

Lulu Exchange Kuwait hosted a special Iftar gathering for its corporate clients and invited guests on March 14 at the Crowne Plaza Hotel, Kuwait.

The event was honored by the presence of Shri Sanjay K. Muluka, Deputy Chief of Mission at the Indian Embassy, who attended as the Chief Guest. The gathering was well-attended by numerous corporate clients and dignitaries, making it a memorable evening.

Lulu Exchange Kuwait's General Manager, Mr. Rajesh Rangray, Deputy Manager, Mr. Subaheer Thayil, and Head of Operations, Mr. Shafaz Ahamed, extended a warm welcome to all attendees.

In his opening remarks, Mr. Rajesh Rangray expressed his gratitude for the opportunity to share this sacred moment of Ramadan with the esteemed guests. He conveyed his heartfelt wishes for peace, joy, and harmony during the holy month.

The gathering provided an excellent platform for attendees to reconnect, exchange ideas, and strengthen their professional

networks. People from diverse cultural backgrounds participated, enjoying a wide array of traditional dishes and desserts that reflected the spirit of togetherness and celebration.



Amended law sets minimum age for marriage at eighteen

Decree-Law No. 10 of 2025, published in the official gazette, 'Al-Kuwait Al-Youm' amends Article (26) of Law No. (51) of 1984 on personal status, prohibiting the documentation or ratification of marriage contracts for individuals under the age of eighteen.

The explanatory note for the law, which entered into force on 16 March, stated that the amendments to the law are based on the Constitution of the State of Kuwait, which affirms the protection of the family, motherhood, and childhood, and is in accordance with the provisions of Islamic Sharia, as well as considers Kuwait's obligations under international conventions, including the Convention on the Rights of the Child, and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women.

The former convention defines a child as anyone under the age of eighteen and requires states to protect them from early marriage, while the latter guarantees the free and full consent of spouses, and encourages setting a minimum age for marriage. Accordingly, it was decided to replace Article (26) of Law No. (51) of 1984 regarding personal status to prevent the documentation of marriage unless both spouses are at least eighteen years old. It added that the draft decree-law has been prepared, and its first article stipulates the replacement of Article (26) of Law No. (51) of 1984, prohibiting the documentation or ratification of a marriage contract for anyone under the age of eighteen at the time of documentation. The second article stipulates that the Prime Minister and relevant ministers are obligated to implement this decree-law, effective from the date of its publication in the official gazette. In the same issue, Decree-law 11 of 2025 was issued adding a new paragraph to Article 15 of the Jaafari Personal Status Law, stating that "It is prohibited to document or authenticate a marriage contract for anyone under the age of 18 at the time of documentation."



Indian Heritage Opens New Retail Store at Warehouse Mall, Kuwait

A Blend of Tradition and Contemporary Elegance

Indian Heritage, a name synonymous with exceptional textiles, ready to wear designs and handicrafts, has unveiled its latest retail destination at Warehouse Mall in Al Sabahiyah, Kuwait. The grand opening ceremony, held on February 22, marked a significant milestone in the brand's expansion in the region. The event was attended by distinguished members of the diplomatic corps adding to the excitement of this momentous occasion.



With this new store, Indian Heritage reinforces its commitment to bringing the richness of India's artisanal craftsmanship with a blend of Kuwait fashion influences closer to shoppers in Kuwait. The store spans over 200 sqm and showcases an extensive collection that blends the timeless elegance of traditional designs with contemporary flair. This new store promises to become a go-to destination for fashion lovers who want to try a new outfit regularly.

Indian Heritage is well-regarded for offering high-quality products at competitive prices, and the new store is no exception. Shoppers



can expect a wide array of items that combine intricate craftsmanship at good prices. Whether you're looking for a statement piece for a special occasion or daily trendy ready to wear, Indian Heritage has something to suit every taste.

This store opening marks just the beginning of Indian Heritage's expansion journey in Kuwait. After successful openings in Oman and Bahrain the brand is now set to enter the Saudi Arabian market, further solidifying its mission to make India's rich heritage and craftsmanship accessible to the world.

The Indian Heritage store at Warehouse Mall is ready to welcome shoppers who are eager to

discover a world of exceptional fashion, home furnishings, and accessories. With its perfect blend of quality, affordability, and authenticity, the store is sure to captivate the hearts of those who appreciate fine craftsmanship and timeless style.

Don't miss out on this exciting new shopping experience! Visit Indian Heritage at Warehouse Mall and explore a diverse range of products that bring the essence of India's vibrant culture to Kuwait.



Harvard Club Kuwait organizes Global Networking Night



Harvard Club of Kuwait, official representative of Harvard University alumni in the country, successfully organized its annual Global Networking Night (GNN) on 19 March. The prestigious event brought together a distinguished audience, including ambassadors, diplomats, ministers, and prominent figures from various sectors.

Harvard's Global Networking Night is a worldwide tradition that brings together Harvard alumni and friends for an evening of connection, collaboration, and shared experiences. The occasion serves as a valuable platform for strengthening professional and personal relationships among Harvard communities across the globe on the same day.

In Kuwait, the event was a remarkable gathering of Harvard alumni and distinguished guests, including the US Ambassador, as well as the Ambassadors of France, Greece, Canada, Australia, and Palestine, alongside prominent ministers and esteemed dignitaries. The evening fostered global connections, cultural exchange, and meaningful discussions, reinforcing the club's commitment to leadership, collaboration, and professional growth.

The event also highlighted Harvard's legacy of excellence and global impact by facilitating insightful discussions, professional networking, and cross-cultural engagement. The Harvard Club of Kuwait remains dedicated to fostering connections among alumni and thought leaders, further strengthening Kuwait's intellectual and

professional landscape. The Harvard Club of Kuwait (HCK) is an officially recognized alumni organization that connects Harvard graduates in Kuwait, fostering professional growth, intellectual engagement, and social impact. It strengthens alumni ties through networking events, speaker series, and collaborations with local and

international entities. HCK also works closely with the Harvard Alumni Association to maintain strong links with the University, promote lifelong learning, and support Harvard's presence in Kuwait. Through its initiatives, the club cultivates an engaged alumni network, reinforcing Harvard's values of education, leadership, and service.

Kuwait secures seventh spot among top Arab financial centers

Kuwait ranked 80th globally and seventh in the Arab world in the 37th edition of the Best Financial Centers Index by Z/Yen Group and the China Development Institute, dropping 11 spots to score 672 points, Al Rai newspaper reported.

The index evaluates 119 financial centers using data and survey results from thousands of financial services professionals who participated in an online survey.

Dubai ranked first in the Arab world and



12th globally, followed by Abu Dhabi at 38th, Casablanca at 55th, Riyadh at 71st, Doha at 73rd, and Bahrain at 75th.

The China Development Institute (CDI) in Shenzhen and Z/Yen Partners in London jointly prepare the Global Financial Centres Index (GFCI), which is published and updated every March and

September, attracting significant attention from global financial circles.

The 37th GFCI ranking is based on 140 performance-related factors, with quantitative data provided by third parties such as the World Bank, the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), and the United Nations. These factors were combined with 31,314 financial center assessments from 4,946 participants in the GFCI's online survey.

Globally, New York topped the index, followed by London in second, Hong Kong in third, Singapore in fourth, and San Francisco in fifth. Chicago, Los Angeles, and Shanghai ranked sixth, seventh, and eighth, respectively, with Shenzhen in ninth and Seoul in tenth.

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Canada stands firm on values of La Francophonie, gender-equality



The Times Kuwait Report

Ambassador of Canada H.E. Aliya Mawani, reaffirmed Canada's strong commitment to La Francophonie and gender-equality, emphasizing the nation's pride in being bilingual, with French and English as official languages. She highlighted that linguistic and cultural diversity are integral to Canada's national identity, reflecting its vision for a more inclusive and diverse society.

Ambassador Mawani, in her speech at the Francophone Diwaniya organized by the Canadian Embassy on the occasion of International Francophonie Day and

International Women's Day, expressed her happiness in hosting the event. She highlighted the special significance of this year's Francophone Diwaniya, as it coincides with the 60th anniversary of diplomatic relations between Canada and Kuwait.

"We are proud to be part of La Francophonie, a global community of some 320 million French speakers across five continents. We are also committed to supporting the goals of the International Organization of La Francophonie, which promotes cooperation among member states, advances the French language, upholds democracy and human rights, supports education and scientific research, and fosters

sustainable development," she said.

Regarding the event's alignment with International Women's Day, Ambassador Mawani emphasized its importance in fostering dialogue on gender-equality and women's empowerment. She stressed that La Francophonie is fundamentally rooted in the values of inclusiveness and diversity, ensuring the full and equal participation of all, including women.

"Studies show that investing in women strengthens societies and economies. Experience has also shown that the most diverse companies achieve greater success, and that the presence of women

in leadership and negotiation positions leads to more sustainable and effective outcomes. When women succeed, society as a whole prospers, because equality is not just a matter of justice but also a key driver of development and prosperity," the Canadian ambassador said.

Concluding her speech, Ambassador Mawani emphasized that La Francophonie is not just a shared language but a space for values and solidarity. She noted that "the diversity of Francophone cultures represents immense wealth, but it can only fully thrive when everyone enjoys the same rights, opportunities, and recognition."

Kuwait, US relations anchored by history, friendship, shared values

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

to the United States in September 1990 and the decisive actions taken by the Bush administration that led to an international alliance to liberate Kuwait.

In his address to the gathering, Sheikh Nawaf Al-Saud emphasized that hosting this dialogue session serves as a valuable opportunity to remind current generations of the political struggles endured by past generations for the country's liberation. Highlighting the importance of decision-making during global crises, he said that one of the key factors in crisis resolution is the ability to make decisions based on clear principles fostering trust and facilitating communication and cooperation at both commercial and political levels.

In a further sign that bilateral relations transcend political exigencies, early this month, US President Donald Trump appointed Amer Ghalib as the new US Ambassador to Kuwait. The president expressed his enthusiasm for Ghalib's new role, and added that the new ambassador to Kuwait, would represent the US with pride in his new role. Ghalib, born in Yemen, was elected in 2021 as the first Arab American and Muslim mayor of Hamtramck in Michigan. At the same time, the city swore in its first all-Muslim city council since its incorporation.

Besides political and diplomatic ties, Kuwait and the US also share strong economic and commercial relations. The Kuwait Investment Authority (KIA), which manages Kuwait's sovereign wealth fund has diversified its nearly a trillion dollar fund into various US economic sectors, including technology, infrastructure, and real estate. Kuwait and the US signed the Trade and Investment Framework Agreement (TIFA), which aligns with Kuwait's Vision 2035 to reduce hydrocarbon dependence. US firms actively engage in Kuwait's energy, aviation, defense, and technology sectors.

Kuwaitis frequently travel to the United States, with approximately 13,000 plus Kuwaiti students continuing their education at U.S. colleges and universities. Americans and U.S. brands, as well as products, are warmly welcomed due to familiarity with U.S. culture.

According to the Office of the US Trade Representative (USTR) total US goods trade with Kuwait was an estimated \$4.1 billion in 2024. The US goods exports accounted for \$2.4 billion, while US goods imports from Kuwait totaled \$1.6 billion. The US trade surplus with Kuwait was \$768.2 million in 2024. From 2018 to 2023 exports of US to Kuwait increased at an annualized rate of 3.44 percent. In the same period, exports of Kuwait to the US decreased at an annualized rate of 3.05 percent.

Transportation equipment, including automobiles and automotive parts, is one of the top exports to Kuwait. In

2022, the United States exported \$1.2 billion worth of transportation equipment to Kuwait. This accounted for 34% of all U.S. exports to Kuwait. Oil and gas field equipment, telecommunications and IT equipment, medical equipment, and electronics were also leading export sectors for U.S. firms. The Office of the US Trade Representative (USTR) is responsible for developing and coordinating US international trade, commodity, and direct investment policy, and overseeing negotiations with other countries. Ambassador Jamieson Greer, the current US Trade Representative is a key member of President Trump's cabinet. He has made it a priority to put America First on trade by combating unfair foreign trade practices, expanding market access for America products, and ensuring the US has balance and reciprocity in its trading relationships.

USTR is part of the Executive Office of the President and serves as the president's principal trade advisor, negotiator, and spokesperson on trade issues, coordinating trade policies, resolving disagreements and framing issues for presidential decisions.

The enduring partnership between Kuwait and the US pivots on the twin axis of reciprocity and adaptability allows the two countries to adroitly navigate evolving geopolitical, economic and commercial issues. The cherished friendship and mutual cooperation are based on shared values, democratic traditions, and time-tested institutional relationships, as well as the strong people-to-people interactions.

The relations at the highest government levels on shared goals and common interests have further ensured that the robust relations between Kuwait and the US is poised to broaden and deepen in the years ahead to the benefit of both peoples and their nations.



Tareq Yousef AlShumaimry, served as Chairman of the Finance Committee and Chairman of the General Budget Committee of the Permanent Court of Arbitration in The Hague (PCA) and an observer in the Administrative Council of the Court and the Consular at International Court of Justice (ICJ) and the Embassy of the State of Kuwait in the Netherlands during this period from 2013 to 2020. Email: tareq@alshumaimry.com



Azerbaijan's foreign minister to visit Kuwait for key bilateral talks in April

His Excellency Emil Karimov, the Ambassador of the Republic of Azerbaijan to Kuwait, announced that Azerbaijan's Foreign Minister will visit Kuwait at the end of April to lead his country's delegation at the third session of the Joint Bilateral Committee on 29-30 April.

In a statement on the sidelines of an iftar banquet he hosted for media representatives, Ambassador Karimov emphasized the strength and depth of Kuwait-Azerbaijan relations across various sectors, noting their continuous development in political, cultural, and religious spheres. He highlighted the remarkable progress in bilateral ties, reflected in the first round of political consultations held earlier this year. He also referenced the historic visit of His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled to Azerbaijan last year for the Global Climate Action Summit in Baku. This high-level visit, during which His Highness was received by Azerbaijani President Ilham Aliyev in a warm and friendly atmosphere, further strengthened bilateral relations and was deemed highly successful. He expressed hope for even greater cooperation between the two nations.

The Azerbaijan ambassador added, "In the economic field, the Kuwaiti side is keen and interested in further developing this sector."

He emphasized the vast opportunities for enhancing bilateral cooperation, particularly in agriculture, noting that Azerbaijan plans to organize a business forum in Kuwait to bring together businessmen from both countries and explore investment prospects and joint ventures. "There is significant potential to increase trade volume between our two countries," he added.

On tourism, the ambassador welcomed Kuwaiti visitors, highlighting that over 31,000 Kuwaitis traveled to Azerbaijan last year. He noted Azerbaijan's advanced infrastructure and diverse tourist attractions, adding that Kuwait is eager to strengthen tourism ties. He also revealed the launch of direct flights from the United Arab Emirates to Qabala and expressed hope for a future direct route from Kuwait.

In the cultural sphere, ambassador Karimov affirmed Azerbaijan's commitment to fostering cultural exchange, announcing upcoming cultural events in Kuwait. He also shared insights into Azerbaijan's Nowruz (spring) traditions, which coincide with Ramadan, drawing parallels between Nowruz rituals and Kuwait's "Qarqan" celebrations.

Concluding his remarks, ambassador Karimov thanked the Kuwaiti press for its role in covering Azerbaijan-related news and embassy activities, as well as for strengthening bilateral relations.



Understanding Women's Health Issues After Pregnancy

New mothers must prioritize rest and recovery as much as possible. Enlisting help from family members, accepting offers of assistance, or hiring help for housework can help manage the demands of caring for a newborn while still getting much-needed sleep.



By Hermoine Macura-Noble
Special to The Times Kuwait

Pregnancy is a life-changing event, but once the baby is born, many new and unexpected challenges arise for the mother. While the focus tends to be on the baby, it's equally important to understand the health issues women may face postpartum. Recovery after childbirth is a complex process, and women's bodies undergo significant changes that can affect their physical, emotional, and mental well-being.

"During pregnancy, no matter if we deliver vaginally or have a cesarean section, our body goes through tremendous changes. Muscles and supportive tissues in the pelvis get stretched and relaxed to make space for the baby in the womb. That leads to anatomical changes in the pelvic organs. The uterus, bladder, vagina, and rectum are not supported as they used to be. The pelvic floor muscles are stressed and not that strong anymore. Also, the vaginal wall, which also keeps the organs in the right position, will be affected as well," explains Dr. Maria Karakoulaki, Functional Gynecologist and Menopause Expert at Gyneco in the Gulf.

Experts say the consequence of these changes can be urinary incontinence and painful intercourse because of the stressed vaginal wall. Urinary incontinence, the unintentional leakage of urine, is a common concern for many women during and after pregnancy. It can range from occasional dribbling to more frequent



and noticeable leakage, and while it can be distressing, it's often a temporary condition that can be managed or improved with proper care.

During pregnancy, urinary incontinence is primarily caused by the growing uterus pressing down on the bladder, which can lead to a feeling of urgency or the involuntary release of urine, especially when sneezing, coughing, laughing, or exercising. After childbirth, urinary incontinence



may continue due to the physical changes the body undergoes during labor. This is especially true for women who experience perineal tears or episiotomies during childbirth.

While urinary incontinence often improves within a few weeks after childbirth as the body heals, there are ways to manage and reduce symptoms. One of the most effective treatments is pelvic floor exercises, known as kegel exercises, which help strengthen the muscles that control urination.

Other options include technology like the Emsella chair – a revolutionary, non-invasive treatment designed to strengthen the pelvic floor muscles using high-intensity focused electromagnetic (HIFEM) technology. Ideal for individuals experiencing pelvic floor weakness, urinary incontinence, or postnatal recovery challenges, the treatment involves sitting fully clothed on the Emsella chair while the device strengthens and re-educates your muscles. Each session lasts about 30 minutes, and an entire course typically includes 6 sessions over a few weeks.

"There is no downtime, and you can resume your daily activities immediately after treatment. The Emsella chair's benefits are that it is non-invasive, pain-free, and comfortable. There is no need for surgery or medication...Emsella is an effortless yet highly effective way to regain control and confidence," shares Dr. Karakoulaki.

When it comes to mental health, postpartum depression is one of the most significant emotional health concerns after childbirth. It affects up to 15% of new mothers and can occur any time within the first year after giving birth. Symptoms of PPD can include persistent sadness or hopelessness, difficulty bonding with the baby, excessive crying, difficulty sleeping or sleeping too much, loss of appetite or overeating, and suicidal thoughts.

"It's important to know that there is a difference between 'Baby Blues' and postpartum Depression. 'Baby Blues' is a pervasive state of hypersensitivity, tearfulness, exhaustion, desperation, anxiety, and sadness, which occurs in

the first days or first hours after delivery and lasts only a few days and/or up to 2-3 weeks. Postnatal Depression, on the other hand, is a mental health disease similar to Depression. It will affect 1 out of 10 women and usually occurs within the first months after delivery. If a new mum is in this state for a couple of weeks, then she should talk with her doctor and address her symptoms and seek a proper treatment plan like psychotherapy and/or medication," concludes Dr. Karakoulaki.

Caring for a newborn is physically and emotionally draining, and sleep deprivation is another significant issue for many new mothers. Lack of sleep can exacerbate postpartum Depression and increase the risk of other health issues, such as heart disease and diabetes.

New mothers must prioritize rest and recovery as much as possible. Enlisting help from family members, accepting offers of assistance, or hiring help for housework can help manage the demands of caring for a newborn while still getting much-needed sleep.

While pregnancy and childbirth are life-

altering experiences, the health issues women face after pregnancy can be just as significant. Postpartum care should extend beyond the immediate weeks following childbirth and address physical, mental, and emotional health. New mothers need a strong support system, proper medical care, and the freedom to seek help when necessary. By prioritizing their health and well-being, women can make a smoother transition into motherhood and enjoy a healthier postpartum recovery.

Hermoine Macura-Noble

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



Stem-cell therapy repairs 'permanent' corneal damage

Elaborating on their findings, the researchers said that in general, diets emphasizing higher consumption of fruits and vegetables and lower intakes of meat, fast food, and sugar-sweetened beverages were associated with slower biological aging.

A groundbreaking clinical trial using stem cells has been found to be feasible and safe in treating corneal injuries that would previously have led to permanent blindness. The clinical trial, which treated and then monitored 14 patients with corneal injuries for 18 months, found a high proportion of complete or partial success.

The treatment, called cultivated autologous limbal epithelial cells (CALEC), was developed at Mass General Brigham Healthcare in the United States. The innovative procedure consists of using biopsy to remove stem cells from a healthy eye, growing them into a cellular tissue graft in a novel manufacturing process that takes two to three weeks, and then surgically transplanting the graft into the eye with the damaged cornea.

Experimental trial on the first 14 patients showed that CALEC was safe and the treatment was possible. Further monitoring of the patients showed CALEC completely restored the cornea in 50 percent of participants at their 3-month visit and that rate of complete success increased to 79 percent and 77 percent at their 12- and 18-month visits, respectively.

With two participants meeting the definition of partial success at 12 and 18 months, the overall success of CALEC was 93 percent and 92 percent at 12 and 18 months. Three participants received a second CALEC transplant, one of whom reached complete success by the study end visit. An additional analysis of CALEC's impact on vision showed varying levels of improvement of visual acuity in all 14 CALEC patients.



The new data supports the assessment that CALEC is more than 90 percent effective at restoring the cornea's surface, which makes a meaningful difference in individuals with cornea damage that was earlier considered untreatable. The clinical trials with CALEC also displayed a high safety profile, with no serious events occurring in either the donor or recipient eyes.

One adverse event occurred in one participant, eight months after the transplant, which was linked to a bacterial infection due to chronic contact lens use. Other adverse events were minor and resolved quickly following the procedures. Despite the early success, the scientists emphasized that CALEC remains an experimental procedure and is currently not offered at Mass Eye and Ear or any US hospital, and additional studies will be needed before the treatment is submitted for federal approval.

It is worth noting that the CALEC trial is the first human study of a stem cell therapy to be funded by the National Eye Institute (NEI), which is part of the US National Institutes of Health

(NIH) and was the first stem cell therapy in the eye in the US.

A basic explanation of the cornea is perhaps needed to understand the science behind the new technique. The cornea is the clear, outermost layer of the eye. The outer border of the cornea, the limbus, contains a large volume of healthy stem cells called limbal epithelial cells, which maintain the eye's smooth surface. When a person suffers a cornea injury, such as a chemical burn, infection or other trauma, it can deplete the limbal epithelial cells, which can never regenerate.

The resulting limbal stem cell deficiency renders the eye with a permanently damaged surface such that it cannot undergo a corneal transplant, which is the current standard of care for vision rehabilitation. People with these injuries often experience persistent pain and visual difficulties. It was this medical shortcoming that led researchers at Mass Eye and Ear to explore a new approach for regenerating limbal epithelial cells.

A two-decade-long research, involving

preclinical studies and collaborations with researchers at other specialized medical centers, led to the development of the innovative technique and the ability to consistently manufacture CALEC grafts that met stringent quality criteria needed for human transplantation. Studies like this show the promise of cell therapy for treating incurable conditions, and in contributing to the translation of scientific discoveries made by researchers into first-in-human clinical trials and, ultimately, life-changing treatments for patients.

As an autologous stem-cell therapy—a medical procedure that uses a patient's own cells to treat a disease—there was a limitation to the approach in that it can be applied only to patients who have injury in one of their eyes, as a healthy second eye is necessary to provide starting material for the stem-cell technique. The researchers said that studies were ongoing to explore the possibility of removing limbal stem cells from healthy cadaveric donor eyes. If successful, it would expand the use of CALEC and enable treatment of patients with damage in both eyes.

Additional trials conducted with a larger number of patients, at multiple health centers, and with longer periods of post-operative monitoring will be needed before the technique receives approval from the US Federal Drug Administration (FDA). Until then the researchers said they felt proud to have been able to bring a new treatment from the lab bench to clinical trials, and that their guiding objective was, and always will be, for patients around the world to have access to this effective treatment.

Rising temperatures fuel population decline

Amid the rise in global average temperatures over the past decade, and projections of further increases in the years ahead, there is growing concern over the impact higher temperatures have on living organisms. Rising global temperatures have led to an increase in frequency and intensity of extreme weather events, from floods and droughts to the melting of ice sheets and glaciers, and rising sea-levels. In addition to the death and destruction caused by repercussions of higher global temperatures, global warming has also spurred an increase in mortality among many species.

Now, a new study by researchers at Rice University in the United States has found a crucial factor linking increase in temperatures with a decline in population of species. The study, which provides a window on how global warming threatens natural ecosystems, shows that rising temperatures exacerbate competition within species and ultimately cause a sharp fall in their population at higher temperatures.

In addition to providing experimental evidence that rising temperatures alter the forces that control population dynamics in nature, the research also gives a deeper understanding of the effects of global warming on natural populations. The study shows that even when individual organisms seem to thrive at higher temperatures, the population as a whole may still suffer as competition for resources intensifies.

To reveal how temperature influences



competition and population growth, the team focused on *Daphnia pulex*, a species of freshwater microscopic organism collectively referred to as zooplankton, which drift with the water currents and play a vital role in food webs and water quality.

By manipulating temperature and population density in a controlled laboratory setting, the researchers isolated the effects of rising temperatures on population dynamics. The results were both fascinating and troubling.

The experiment revealed that competition

among the individuals became significantly stronger as temperatures rose. In fact, for every 7 degrees Celsius increase in temperature, competition effects doubled, causing a dramatic 50 percent population decline at the highest tested temperature. While moderate warming (12-19 C) initially boosted population growth by accelerating metabolism and reproduction, at higher temperatures these benefits evaporated as the increase in competition took a heavy toll.

Generally, warmer temperatures increase metabolism and reproduction in ectotherms—

organisms that depend on external sources for regulation of their body temperature—but the study shows that warmer temperatures also create competition that limits survival and reproduction. Even though individual organisms could tolerate the higher temperatures, the species overall saw a sharp decline in population due to increased competition for limited resources.

The findings challenge the assumption that warming always benefits ectotherm populations by boosting individual growth. Instead, they show that rising temperatures can harm populations by intensified competition even before physiological stress becomes a critical factor. This increase in competition can also destabilize populations, further intensifying the risk of local extinctions, especially in environments with frequent temperature fluctuations.

The findings have major implications for conservation efforts, as it means that temperature-driven population collapses could occur at lower warming thresholds than previously expected, and that this could affect species that were thought to be resilient to temperature changes.

As global temperatures continue to rise, research like this provides crucial insights that can help predict and mitigate biodiversity loss, a key step to ensuring that vulnerable species and ecosystems receive the protection they need before it is too late for the species involved, as well as for the biodiversity of the planet.



MAYBOURNE BEVERLY HILLS

A Luxurious Escape



By Nourah Khan
Travel Writer
The Times Kuwait

When I think of an unforgettable hotel stay—where luxury meets impeccable service—The Maybourne Beverly Hills is the first name that comes to mind. This hotel is not just a place to stay, it is a destination in itself, where exceptional design, personalized service, and an atmosphere of refined luxury create a truly unique experience.

Situated within the Los Angeles Golden Triangle, The Maybourne Beverly Hills is a sophisticated escape from the hustle and bustle of the famous city, a rare and special place to unwind, right in the heart of Beverly Hills.

From the moment I arrived, I felt as though I had stepped into a world of understated elegance, where contemporary interiors blend seamlessly with timeless sophistication. But what truly sets this hotel apart is the sense of privacy and personal attention—this was not just another luxury stay, but rather an experience carefully curated to create lasting memories.

One of the hotel's greatest assets is its prime location in the heart of Beverly Hills, just steps away from the world-famous Rodeo Drive. This means guests are surrounded by some of the most prestigious designer boutiques, fine dining establishments, and iconic landmarks in Los Angeles.



Being in such an exclusive location made my stay incredibly convenient, allowing me to explore the city effortlessly. From the moment I stepped into my expansive and beautifully designed suite, I was captivated by its blend of timeless luxury and modern refinement. Every element of the space was designed to offer the utmost comfort, creating an ambiance that felt both opulent and inviting. One of the most breathtaking highlights was my balcony view—offering an uninterrupted panorama of Beverly Hills' skyline. Sitting there during sunset, watching the city lights gradually illuminate the landscape, was one of the most memorable moments of my stay.

The suite itself was thoughtfully curated with plush furnishings, state-of-the-art technology for effortless room control, and a spa-like marble bathroom, where every detail—from the luxurious bathtub to the finest amenities—added to the overall indulgence.

With panoramic views of the rolling hills of Hollywood, The Rooftop Pool at The Maybourne Beverly Hills is one of the city's most breathtaking spots to relax and unwind in. Private cabanas are open for reservations to hotel guests. Monday through Sunday, and spacious enough to accommodate six guests. They are complete with televisions, mini fridges and complimentary WiFi. Whether you choose a chaise lounge, a private cabana, or a table in the shade, you can enjoy superlative poolside luxury.



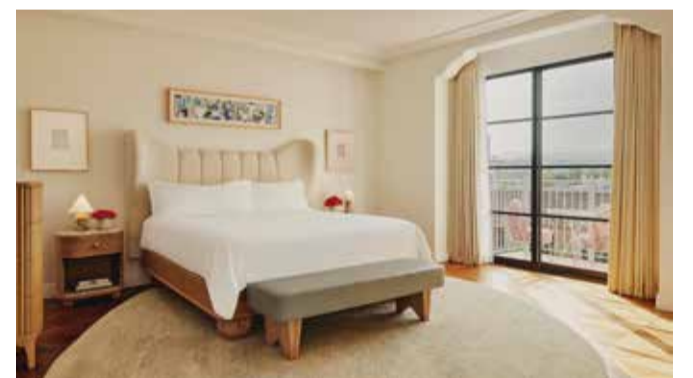
Dining at The Maybourne Beverly Hills was an experience in itself, offering exceptional flavors and exquisite settings. Every morning, I enjoyed a delightful breakfast at The Terrace, an elegant outdoor space overlooking beautifully manicured gardens. The dishes were crafted with fresh, seasonal ingredients, making each meal a perfect start to the day.

One of the hotel's standout features is its Home Cars service, providing guests with a chauffeur-driven luxury car to explore Beverly Hills and Los Angeles. This was more than just



a transportation service—it was an extension of the hotel's elegance and exclusivity. Whether heading to a designer shopping spree on Rodeo Drive, a fine dining reservation, or simply cruising through the city, this service made every outing feel even more glamorous and effortless. Beyond the grand interiors and luxury amenities, what truly defines The Maybourne Beverly Hills is its commitment to exceptional, thoughtful hospitality.

After this incredible experience, I can confidently say that The Maybourne Beverly Hills is one of the finest luxury hotels in Beverly Hills.



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 105k 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.

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