Issue No: 1234
Established 1996
18 - 24 May 2025

THE TIMES
KUWAIT'S PREMIER WEEKLY NEWS MAGAZINE
www.timeskuwait.com
250 Fils

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US and GCC forge new economic partnership

By Tareq Yusuf AlShumaimry

United States President Donald Trump ended his four-day eventful tour of the Middle East (ME) on Friday in the United Arab Emirates. Earlier in the week, on Tuesday, he arrived in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia before heading to the Qatari capital Doha on Wednesday. President Trump's visit to the three Middle Eastern states that are part of the six-nation Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC), is considered significant, as it is the first overseas trip by the US President since taking office for a second term—excluding his visit to the Vatican for the funeral of Pope Francis in late April..

Tellingly, President Trump's trip to the Middle East did not include a visit to America's supposedly closest ally in the region, Israel, even though Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Nethanyahu was the first world leader to visit the White House since inauguration of the second Trump presidency. Although some political observers read much into the exclusion of Israel, the fact is Trump's first trip to the Middle East is less of a political visit, and largely geared towards signing lucrative trade deals with some of the richest nations in the world.

Underlining the economic aspect of Trump's visit, his talks in Riyadh, Doha, and Abu Dhabi were centered on garnering investments into the US economy and promoting mega deals for US businesses. Politics, when it did feature during the trip, came largely from the president's characteristic off-the-cuff remarks, including on Iran, Lebanon and Palestine. However, the US President did spring a political surprise by announcing that the US would remove sanctions on Syria, and then following up on this by meeting Syria's new leader Ahmed al-Sharaa in Riyadh.

In the days ahead President Trump will no doubt trumpet that his visit to the Gulf countries led to trillions of dollars in investment and business deals that will foster development, manufacturing, and more jobs in the US economy. And, he would be right. Multi-billion dollar purchases in US defense

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We are the Oceans

France to host the Third United Nations Ocean Conference to advance global ocean protection

By H.E. Olivier Gauvin
Ambassador of France to Kuwait

France will host the third United Nations Conference to Support the Implementation of Sustainable Development Goal 14—'Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development'—from 9–13 June at Nice on the French Riviera.

Together, we can make the third United Nations Ocean Conference a defining moment—for our communities, for future generations, and for the planet.

This vital event is expected to bring together around 100 Heads of State and Government, along with tens of thousands of researchers, scientists, economic leaders, activists, and global citizens. France's objective for the conference is unequivocal: to protect the oceans through concrete, action-oriented commitments.

The oceans are a shared global heritage. They nourish and safeguard populations, fuel innovation, inspire exploration, and provide sustainable energy, trade routes, natural resources, and boundless scientific potential. One in every three people worldwide depends on the oceans for their livelihood.

However, the oceans are under severe threat. Despite their immense importance, they remain insufficiently understood, lack cohesive global governance, and suffer from inadequate funding for preservation.

Alarmingly, over eight million tons of plastic waste are dumped into the oceans each year, according to a study published in Science. Additionally, more than one-third of global fish stocks are overexploited, while ocean acidification, rising sea levels, and ecosystem destruction continue to accelerate as direct consequences of climate change.

Action is urgent. The need for effective multilateral cooperation to safeguard the oceans has never been greater.

Ten years after COP21 and the signing of the Paris Agreement—which set a binding international framework to combat climate change —the 2025 United Nations Ocean Conference represents a historic moment.

The expected outcome, known as the 'Nice Ocean Agreements' aims to serve as a landmark global pact to protect and sustainably use the oceans, aligned with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) adopted by the United Nations in 2015. To achieve this, the discussions in Nice must be highly practical and centered on action — focusing on improved ocean governance, increased funding, and enhanced scientific knowledge.

Central to ocean governance is the ratification and implementation of the Agreement on the Conservation and Sustainable Use of Marine Biological Diversity of Areas Beyond National Jurisdiction (BBNJ Agreement).

The high seas, which account for more than 60 percent of the world's oceans, currently lack comprehensive international legal regulation. This legal vacuum has led to severe ecological degradation, including extensive hydrocarbon and plastic pollution, unregulated fishing, and harm to protected marine species. To address this, the BBNJ Agreement must be ratified by at least 60 countries to enter into force.

Effective ocean protection also hinges on robust public and private sector investment and a committed shift toward a sustainable blue economy. Maintaining the oceans' economic potential requires preserving their capacity to regenerate. During the conference, various commitments are expected in sectors such as global trade, maritime transport, tourism, and responsible investment.

Moreover, we cannot protect what we do not sufficiently understand. While we have mapped the surface of the Moon and Mars, vast portions of the ocean floor—covering 70 percent of the Earth's surface—remain unexplored. Enhancing and democratizing ocean knowledge is vital. Science, innovation, and education must be leveraged to deepen our understanding of marine environments and foster global awareness.

In a time of rapid climate change and escalating marine exploitation, ocean protection is not a peripheral issue — it is a global priority. It embodies our shared responsibility amid mounting challenges to multilateralism. The oceans connect us all and are essential to our collective future.

Together, we can make the third United Nations Ocean Conference a defining moment—for our communities, for future generations, and for the planet.

ALSAYER Group Champions Youth Empowerment and Safety at First Gulf Conference for Secondary School Students

ALSAYER Group proudly took the lead to sponsor The First Gulf Conference for Secondary School Students, held under the topic "Health Awareness with a Gulf Perspective." The event was organized in collaboration with the Ministries of Education, Interior, and Defense, the Kuwait Society for Awareness and Prevention of Drug Abuse (Giras) and the Arab Bureau of Education for the Gulf States. The conference gathered youth from across the GCC, providing an enriching platform to address critical issues related to health, safety and responsible citizenship.

As part of its longstanding commitment to social responsibility and community engagement, ALSAYER Group delivered a series of impactful contributions during the event. These included an interactive and engaging lecture on road safety, where students learned about the life-saving importance of responsible driving behavior, adherence to traffic laws and the consequences of negligence on the road.

In a significant moment of unity and awareness, students also participated in the Road Safety Pledge, a collective promise to serve as safety advocates within their schools, families, and communities. The pledge symbolized a shared commitment to building a safer, more responsible generation.

In addition to road safety, the conference addressed a range of vital topics targeting the comprehensive development of youth. Workshops and discussions covered issues such as digital addiction and its impact on different segments of society, psychological and family therapy, personal development and awareness of the health, social, and psychological risks of drug and substance abuse. These sessions equipped participants with the knowledge and skills needed to make positive decisions in their daily lives.

Eng. Nehad Al-Haj Ali, Group Manager of Excellence Group at ALSAYER Group, remarked: "Our participation in this conference reflects our deep belief in the power of early education. By engaging directly with youth, we're helping lay the foundation for safer behavior and informed choices. This is more than sponsorship, it's a meaningful step toward empowering a responsible and proactive generation".

Eng. Ibrahim Al-Fouzan, Senior Business Director & Vice Chairman of Sustainability Committee at ALSAYER Group, also emphasized the broader impact of such initiatives: "Supporting youth-centric initiatives is a strategic priority for us. These events create opportunities to instill values that align with long-term sustainability and community development. By fostering awareness today, we are shaping tomorrow's leaders who can drive real and lasting change in the Gulf region."

ALSAYER Group's involvement in the conference is a reflection of its broader vision to promote sustainable development, community well-being and youth empowerment. Through meaningful engagement and education, the Group continues to lead driving positive change, one pledge at a time.

Malaysia to host next ASEAN-GCC Summit

The ASEAN-GCC Summit 2025 will take place in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, on 26–27 May. The summit will mark a pivotal moment in global cooperation bringing together leaders from the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) and the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) states to discuss economic collaboration, trade expansion, and geopolitical coordination between the two influential regions.

The Summit will seek to forge new pathways for collaboration, reinforcing diplomatic ties and unlocking vast opportunities for trade and innovation. With an ambitious agenda and a shared vision for progress, the summit signifies a powerful step toward a more sustainable, inclusive, and economically resilient future.

At the heart of this summit is a push toward stronger trade and investment partnerships. ASEAN and GCC economies collectively represent a significant portion of global trade, with energy, technology, and infrastructure investments driving mutual interests. During the summit discussions will focus on kick-starting negotiations for a comprehensive Free Trade Agreement (FTA), easing trade restrictions and boosting cross-border commerce. Meanwhile, governments and private-sector players from both regions will explore joint investment projects, particularly in energy, logistics, and digital transformation.

Heads of state from ASEAN—Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, Vietnam—and from the GCC—Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, UAE- are expected to attend the summit). In addition, representatives and executives from Fortune 500 companies, sovereign wealth funds, and major investors will be present at the summit, along with policy experts from the ASEAN Secretariat, GCC Secretariat, and global economic organizations.

Kuwait takes center stage in Geneva, plays active role in global health, humanitarian efforts

Committed to play its role as a leading donor and humanitarian partner, guided by the vision of its political leadership to uphold Kuwait's legacy as a global capital of humanitarian action

Kuwait is reaffirming its commitment to global health and humanitarian issues through active participation in key international events, including the 78th session of the World Health Assembly and the launch of its first-ever strategic dialogue with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), according to Ambassador Nasser Al-Hayyen, Kuwait's Permanent Representative to the United Nations and other international organizations in Geneva.

Speaking to the Kuwait News Agency (KUNA), Ambassador Al-Hayyen stated that a high-level Kuwaiti delegation, led by Minister of Health Dr. Ahmad Al-Awadhi, will attend the World Health Assembly in Geneva, which runs from May 19 to 27. The event brings together representatives from member states and health stakeholders under the theme "One World for Health," aiming to address critical and emerging global health challenges.

"This session comes at a vital time for international public health," said Al-Hayyen. "With shifting dynamics in global development and the health sector — particularly following the U.S. withdrawal as the World Health Organization's largest donor — this meeting is essential for adopting resolutions that enhance international cooperation and reinforce the organization's ability to respond effectively."

Ambassador Al-Hayyen emphasized that Kuwait's participation reflects its steadfast support for the World Health Organization (WHO) and its dedication to advancing preventive health strategies and sustainable healthcare systems worldwide.

Moreover, Kuwait is also set to hold its first joint strategic dialogue with the UNHCR this month, led by Deputy Foreign Minister Sheikh Jarrah Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah. This initiative underscores the country's long-standing partnership with the UN agency and its deep involvement in humanitarian and relief operations.

"The dialogue aims to strengthen institutional cooperation at a time when the global refugee crisis is escalating due to prolonged conflicts and emergencies," Al-Hayyen noted.

He affirmed that Kuwait remains committed to its role as a leading donor and humanitarian partner, guided by the vision of its political leadership to uphold Kuwait's legacy as a global capital of humanitarian action.

These efforts form part of Kuwait's broader strategy to maintain and expand its influence in international forums, further solidifying its position as a key player in promoting global stability, health, and humanitarian aid.

Dairy firms urge ministry action as Foot and Mouth disease cuts milk supply, raises costs

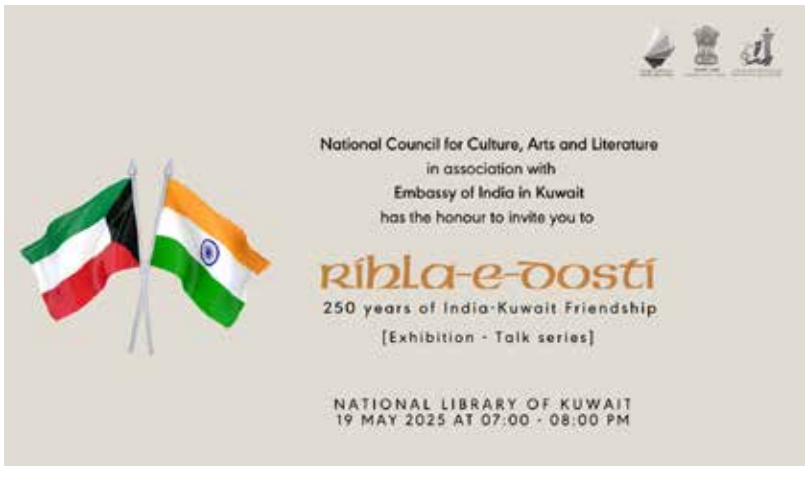
Amid a recent surge in foot-and-mouth disease cases affecting some local dairy farms, the price of fresh milk has risen sharply — by approximately 40 percent, according to several companies.

These companies have formally requested the intervention of the Ministry of Commerce and Industry to find appropriate solutions to the crisis.

The Ministry has received reports from companies stating their operating expenses have increased by 30 to 40 percent due to the impact of the outbreak. The disease has led to a decline in local milk produce by 20 to 30 percent, significantly affecting supply, which has negatively affected suppliers' financial performance, especially considering that fresh milk is also a component of the state's ration card system.

The companies which contacted the Ministry proposed financial compensation mechanisms to help bridge the gap between rising costs and shrinking revenues. However, Minister of Commerce Khalifa Al-Ajeel has emphasized that any proposed solution must not involve raising the current prices of fresh milk — in whatever manner.

Rihla-e-Dosti' celebrates 250 years of India-Kuwait ties at National Library



Embassy of India is organizing an exhibition titled 'Rihla-e-Dosti: 250 years of India-Kuwait Relationship' from 19–24 May at the National Library of Kuwait, showcasing the centuries-old rich history of India and Kuwait relationship.

The exhibition is being jointly organized by India and Kuwait, with collaboration from the National Council for Culture, Arts and Literature (NCCAL) and Kuwait Heritage Society in Kuwait, and the National Archives of India and Ministry of information and Broadcasting of India.

The exhibition will highlight the enduring legacy of cooperation and shared heritage chronicling everything from early trade routes to contemporary collaborations in politics, culture, and development. The exhibits include an array of invaluable artefacts, manuscripts, documents, rare books, personal letters, coins, Indian rupee (legal tender in Kuwait till 1961) and other significant items from the shared past of both nations. The event will also feature cultural performances and panel discussions on various facets of bilateral ties between India and Kuwait.

KISR, Spain, EU Delegation celebrate women's role in green economy

Forum brings together speakers and stakeholders from Kuwait, the European Commission, and Spain to honor and amplify the vital role of women in driving sustainable development across science, education, business, and community engagement

The Times Kuwait Report

In celebration of Kuwait Women's Day on 16 May, and as part of activities marking Europe Month in May, the Kuwait Institute for Scientific Research (KISR), in joint collaboration with the Delegation of the European Union to Kuwait, the Embassy of Spain, and the EU-GCC Cooperation on Green Transition Project, hosted an landmark event highlighting the role of women in driving sustainable development.

The forum, titled 'Empowering Women in the Green Transition Science, Society & Skills', brought together distinguished speakers and stakeholders from Kuwait, the European Commission, and Spain to honor and amplify the vital role of women in sustainable development across science, education, business, and community engagement—both within Kuwait and across the European Union.

The event commenced with an exhibition by the Geological Society of Spain titled 'GEAS: Women Who Study the Earth', which drew focus on the pioneering contributions by women in geosciences and environmental leadership, underscoring the global impact of female experts in earth sciences.

In his welcome address, Acting Director General of KISR, Dr. Faisal S. AlHumaidan, reaffirmed the institute's commitment to gender equity in scientific advancement, and stated, "At KISR we believe that empowering women scientists and innovators is essential to achieving Kuwait's environmental goals. By enabling their leadership, we strengthen the solutions we need for the challenges ahead."

Ambassador of the European Union H.E. Anne Koistinen, highlighted the EU's dedication to gender empowerment and climate action. "This event builds on our longstanding cooperation with various Kuwaiti institutions on the critical intersection between women and the environment. Empowering women lies at the heart of the European Green Deal and our global partnerships. Through inclusive leadership in science, innovation, and policy, we collectively advance toward a sustainable and equitable future — for Kuwait, for Europe, and for the world," said the EU envoy.

For his part, Ambassador of Spain H.E. Manuel Hernández Gamallo, emphasized Spain's active role in the initiative: "Spain is honored to contribute to this dialogue. Women play a transformative role in the green transition, leading efforts in research, entrepreneurship, and policymaking." said the Spanish envoy. The day's program featured a series of thought-provoking panel discussions addressing women's leadership in environmental research, legal frameworks, green technologies, and social innovation. Experts from Kuwait, Spain, and the EU shared both strategic insights and personal narratives, engaging an audience of students, academics, entrepreneurs, policymakers, and representatives from civil society.

The event provided a platform for participants to connect, exchange ideas, and explore collaborative opportunities to strengthen women's contributions to sustainability efforts both locally and globally. The forum underscored a shared commitment between Kuwait and the European Union to promote gender-inclusive solutions in the fight against climate change, as part of the broader vision of New Kuwait 2035 and the EU's Green Deal.

British Ambassador announces end of tenure, new envoy

British Ambassador H.E. Belinda Lewis announced last week the end of her tenure in Kuwait and that a new ambassador would take charge in September. In a statement to the media, Ambassador Lewis noted: "As I come towards the end of my posting here, I would like to thank Kuwait's leadership, government and people for more than four years of support, partnership and collaboration in many different fields.

"The relationship between Kuwait and the UK is unique, underpinned by a rich shared history and strong people-to-people links. This country will always hold a special place in my heart, both personally and professionally. I look forward to continuing to strengthen our partnership in the coming months."

H.E. Belinda Lewis

H.E. Qudsi Rasheed

She also revealed that Qudsi Rasheed OBE has been appointed as His Majesty's Ambassador to The State of Kuwait, He previously served as Deputy Head of Mission at the British Embassy in Cairo; Deputy Director Multilateral Policy in the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office; and was Head of the UK Syria Office in Beirut. He is scheduled to take up his appointment in September 2025. Ambassador Lewis added, "I wish Qudsi every success when he has the privilege of taking office as His Majesty's Ambassador from September." Looking ahead to his arrival in Kuwait, Mr. Rasheed said: "I am deeply honoured to be appointed as the new British Ambassador to Kuwait. Taking on this role is a tremendous privilege, and I am looking forward to arriving in Kuwait in September.

"Kuwait and the UK share a rich history, marked by deep cooperation in diplomacy, defence & security, trade & investment, and education & culture. Kuwait holds significant importance for the UK as a trusted partner in the region and a key contributor to our economic prosperity.

"I look forward to further deepening this special relationship, continuing and building on the work of Ambassador Lewis and her team," he said.

KISR project aims to meet Kuwait's water needs, reduce environment pollution

Kuwait Institute for Scientific Research (KISR) has launched a groundbreaking sustainability project that seeks to secure Kuwait's future water needs, using renewable energy and without contributing to environmental damage.

The ambitious project, being conducted under the leadership of Director of Water Desalination Technologies Program Dr. Mansour Ahmed, is a revolutionary 'zero salt return' system—a sophisticated, interconnected web of technologies designed to treat and desalinate water without releasing salt waste into the sea.

"This innovation isn't just about cleaner water—it's a comprehensive vision," said Dr. Ahmed while explaining that the system is a powerful answer to Kuwait's environmental and economic challenges. It not only produces freshwater efficiently, but also extracts valuable minerals like sodium, magnesium, and lithium from the waste brine, transforming what was once pollution into industrial resources. These can be reused in sectors like pharmaceuticals, fertilizers, and battery production—boosting both sustainability and economic returns.

In addition, the system uses renewable energy, like solar power, reducing carbon emissions and preserving marine ecosystems. This makes it a dual solution—producing freshwater and usable minerals while protecting Kuwait's environment.

Dr. Ahmed pointed out that farmers, especially in agricultural areas suffering from rising groundwater levels and soil salinity, stand to benefit greatly. By treating and reusing this water for irrigation, the technology could prevent crop damage and infrastructure erosion, supporting food security and agricultural sustainability.

From a national perspective, the project is a strategic pillar of Kuwait Vision 2035. It supports localization of technology, training of national cadres, and the creation of specialized jobs. This aligns with the country's long-term goals of sustainable development and economic diversification. He also revealed that the institute had already run a successful pilot project with Japanese partners to treat oil-contaminated water using similar technology—turning waste into industrial-grade distilled water.

Strategic locations across Kuwait are already being considered for implementation, including coastal

areas, agricultural zones, and remote islands. These areas could be equipped with solar-powered, mobile desalination units, making clean water accessible even without traditional infrastructure.

Dr. Ahmed concluded by stating, "This is not just a technological upgrade—it's a vital national necessity. With the zero salt return system, Kuwait can lead the region in sustainable water technology, just as it once pioneered early desalination methods. The opportunity is now — to secure the nation's water, environment, and economy for generations to come."

Decades of nationality forgery unearthed, as more lose citizenship

"This renewed campaign is not only about correcting the past - it's about safeguarding Kuwait's future" says Acting Prime Minister and Minister of Interior Sheikh Fahad Al-Yousef Al-Sabah

Supreme Committee for the Investigation of Kuwaiti Citizenship held a decisive meeting on 14 May to review and resolve, as well as revoke the citizenship of 1,291 people, pending referral to the Council of Ministers.

The cases are categorized as follows:

- Loss of nationality in 9 cases under Article (11) of the Kuwaiti Nationality Law No. 15 of 1959, due to dual nationality.
- Revocation of citizenship under Article (21 bis A) in 113 cases, involving forgery, false statements, and dependent acquisitions.
- Revocation of citizenship under Article (13), Paragraph (1) in 86 cases, also involving forgery and dependency.
- Revocation of citizenship under Article (13), Paragraph (4) in 1,083 cases, for reasons tied to Kuwait's supreme national interest. This includes individuals granted nationality for noble deeds and their dependents.

This renewed campaign is not only about correcting the past, it is about safeguarding Kuwait's future, said Acting Prime Minister and

Minister of Interior Sheikh Fahad Al-Yousef Al-Sabah. Kuwait is continuing to find out how many crimes were committed against the nation over the years, undermining its identity, resources, and rightful citizens, until a new era emerged determined to place this difficult file at the top of its priorities.

He added that for decades, the forgers were under the impression that they had escaped justice. They tampered with Kuwait's national identity, falsified documents, and took for themselves and their dependents what was not rightfully theirs. Yet, the Department of Nationality Investigation has remained ever-vigilant, digging through layers of deception to protect the integrity of the nation.

The investigations unfolding today are not entirely new. In fact, they are a continuation of efforts that began over 50 years ago, as evidenced by the reports and findings of Captain Abdullah Al Tayyar and his colleagues. What was uncovered then is now being confirmed with certainty—proving the depth of the crime and the long-standing commitment of the department's officers across generations.

The revelations continue to emerge—day after day, week after week, month after month—showing how foreign infiltrators plundered Kuwait's wealth, displaced genuine citizens from opportunities, and altered the national fabric. Now, under the leadership of Acting Prime Minister Sheikh Fahad Al-Yousef Al-Sabah, this once 'untouchable' file is finally being handled with the seriousness and precision it demands.

The message is clear: no forgery will go unnoticed, and no violator will remain unaccountable. The path ahead is one of transparency, accountability, and national integrity — and the new era is just getting started.

Court convicts 3 of manslaughter in Mangaf fire; 6 others found guilty of perjury

The Misdemeanor Court, presided over by Judge Anwar Bastaki, has issued verdicts in the high-profile Al-Mangaf fire case, sentencing a total of nine defendants.

Three defendants—two Kuwaitis and one Egyptian—were convicted of manslaughter and sentenced to three years in prison with hard labor. Meanwhile, six others—three Egyptians and three Indians—received one-year prison sentences with hard labor on charges of perjury and harboring a fugitive, a person who was the subject of an active arrest warrant.

The Public Prosecution had classified the incident as a misdemeanor rather than a felony, following a technical investigation that concluded the fire was not intentional. The case was accordingly referred to the General Department of Investigations at the Ministry of Interior for further legal proceedings. The ruling brings a measure of accountability in a case that sparked public concern over safety and negligence in residential buildings.

KFF highlights importance of gas leak detectors in kitchens

Kuwait Fire Force (KFF) has sounded the alarm with a firm reminder to households on the dangers of gas leaks in kitchens, and urging residents to take a small yet potentially life-saving step —installing gas leak detectors.

The call came as part of the continued efforts by KFF to safeguard public safety and reduce domestic accidents. According to the statement, these compact devices are designed to detect even the slightest leakage from gas cylinders, offering early warnings that could help prevent devastating fires.

Emphasizing that kitchen fires caused by gas leaks are often avoidable, the KFF outlined the following simple precautions:

Ensure cylinders are always placed securely and correctly.

Never flipping a switch or creating a spark if you suspect a gas leak. Instead, the advice is to shut off the gas valve immediately in case of a gas leak, open all doors and windows to ventilate the space, and evacuate the area until it is safe.

Routine maintenance and regular inspection of hose connections between gas cylinders and cooking appliances.

As Kuwait enters the hotter months when heat could build-up in kitchens, the KFF hopes that households will take the warning seriously. A gas leak detector may seem like a minor addition, but it could mean the difference between a safe home and a tragic fire.

Kuwaiti women break barriers in every field, reshape the nation's future

With unshakable resolve, unmatched impact, Kuwaiti women drive Vision 2035 in a new era of leadership, equality, and legacy with 'voices of vision'

The Times Kuwait Report

Kuwaiti Women's Day stands as a powerful celebration of resilience, achievement, and national pride — an annual tribute to the remarkable women who have helped shape Kuwait's history and continue to drive its future.

Commemorated every year on May 16, the Kuwaiti Women's Day honors the groundbreaking moment in 2005 when Kuwaiti

women secured their full political rights, setting the stage for generations of leadership, innovation, and trailblazing accomplishments across every sector.

Today, from ministerial offices to scientific labs, courtrooms to boardrooms, Kuwaiti women are not just participants in the nation's development — they are architects of its progress, visionaries of its future, and symbols of a society that values equality, ambition, and purpose. In a heartfelt tribute to Kuwaiti women on the occasion of Kuwaiti Women's Day, His Highness the Amir Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah highlighted the extraordinary role Kuwaiti women have played — and continue to play — in shaping the nation's journey toward progress and prosperity.

With deep admiration, His Highness hailed Kuwaiti women as pillars of strength, resilience, and innovation, whose dynamic contributions span across every sector of society — from government and business to education, healthcare, and diplomacy. Whether leading at home or representing Kuwait on the world stage, these women are not only making their mark, but are defining the future.

Recalling their historic sacrifices and noble stands, the Amir lauded the unwavering loyalty and patriotic spirit of Kuwaiti women, whose courageous service and dedication to the homeland remain a source of national pride. Their journey, marked by determination and purpose, is a shining example of what it means to rise and lead with conviction.

Among their greatest milestones, His Highness celebrated the landmark achievement of full political rights, praising Kuwaiti women for their competence, wisdom, and proven leadership. This, he affirmed, is more than a right — it is a recognition of their exceptional merit and unshakable resolve.

His Highness extended warm congratulations and heartfelt blessings to all Kuwaiti women. He expressed his sincere hope for their continued success and empowerment as they forge ahead — raising Kuwait higher, inspiring generations, and leaving an indelible legacy of excellence.

His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah also expressed his deep pride in the prominent role played by Kuwaiti women in the nation's ambitious journey of growth and progress.

His Highness highlighted the significant contributions of Kuwaiti women to the advancement of society, emphasizing the achievements they have made across various fields and their active participation in shaping a brighter future for the country.

Congratulating all Kuwaiti women — whom he warmly referred to as his sisters and daughters — His Highness wished them continued success in their efforts to serve the homeland and elevate its stature on all fronts.

Meanwhile, as Kuwait celebrates Kuwaiti Women's Day on May 16 each year to honor the historic granting of political rights to women in 2005, the day highlights the vital role women play in national development, recognizing their achievements across sectors such as education, healthcare, business, politics, and diplomacy. It serves as a tribute to their leadership, resilience, and lasting contributions to society.

The roots of Kuwaiti Women's Day trace back to May 16, 2005, when the National Assembly approved legislation granting women full political rights, including the right to vote and run for office. This historic reform was championed by the late Amir, Sheikh Jaber

Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, whose vision for a more inclusive society was grounded in his deep belief in the importance of women's participation in national progress.

In the 2006 National Assembly elections, Kuwaiti women cast their votes and stood as candidates for the first time. Just two years later, 27 women filed candidacy applications for the 2008 elections, many of them garnering votes that surpassed those of long-established male counterparts.

Then, in 2009, history was made again when four Kuwaiti women—Dr. Masouma Al-Mubarak, Dr. Aseel Al-Awadhi, Dr. Rola Dashti, and Dr. Salwa Al-Jassar—secured seats in Parliament, a defining moment in Kuwait's democratic evolution.

Today, Kuwaiti women continue to break barriers and set new precedents. The current Cabinet includes three female ministers -- Dr. Noura Al-Mishaan, Minister of Public Works; Dr. Amthal Al-Huwailah, Minister of Social Affairs, Family and Childhood Affairs and Eng. Noura Al-Fassam, Minister of Finance and Minister of State for Economic Affairs and Investment

In 2023, women held 28% of ministerial and senior government posts, a percentage that continues to grow in sectors such as diplomacy, the police force, the oil industry, and the judiciary. Their leadership extends well into the economic and banking sectors too, where they represent 54.8% of leadership roles at the Central Bank of Kuwait, and 23.6% of supervisory positions in the banking sector. Women now account for 34.1% of the total workforce in Kuwaiti banks.

Kuwaiti women are also excelling in fields such as medicine, engineering, scientific research, space science, and cybersecurity. These advances have been made possible thanks to the steadfast support from Kuwait's political leadership, which has made women's empowerment a national priority under Kuwait Vision 2035 — the country's roadmap for sustainable development.

This commitment has earned international recognition. Six Kuwaiti women were recently featured on Forbes' list of the 100 Most Powerful Businesswomen, while others have garnered prestigious awards in science and technology.

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Kuwait Women's Day marks 20 years of progress in women empowerment

The Times Kuwait Report

Minister of Social Affairs, Family and Childhood Affairs, Dr. Amthal Al-Huwaila, affirmed that Kuwaiti Women's Day, marked annually on 16 May, is a national milestone celebrating two decades of exceptional contributions and achievements since Kuwaiti women obtained their full political rights on 16 May, 2005.

Speaking during a ceremony held in collaboration with the UN Permanent Mission in Kuwait under the theme 'Strategies for Supporting Kuwaiti Women in Accordance with Sustainable Development Goal 5', Al-Huwaila said the occasion reflects national pride in the solid gains Kuwaiti women have made across all fields.

"We are currently standing at a luminous historical milestone," she noted, "during which we recall a long journey of challenges, aspirations, and successes, where Kuwaiti women have proven themselves as true and effective partners in the renaissance and progress of the State of Kuwait." She credited this progress to the visionary political leadership, which consistently emphasized the importance of empowering women and supporting their roles in building society.

Al-Huwaila emphasized that Kuwaiti women now constitute 60 percent of the government workforce; 48 percent of the private sector workforce and 28 percent of leadership positions nationwide. She highlighted their strong presence in key sectors, noting that 54 percent of senior positions at the Kuwait Petroleum Corporation are held by women and 41 percent of senior positions at the Central Bank of Kuwait are also occupied by women.

Internationally, she said, Kuwait has made notable strides such as advancing 62 places in the Women and Peace Index; improving by 10 points in closing the gender gap; and leading the Gulf region in the 2023 Women's Empowerment in the Private Sector Initiative. Al-Huwaila also cited key legislative achievements, including the abolition of Articles 153 and 182 of the Kuwaiti Penal Code, which enhanced protection for women and aligned with the Kuwaiti Constitution's emphasis on human dignity, equality, and opportunity (Articles 29, 8, and 9). She reiterated the Ministry's commitment to being a strategic partner in empowering Kuwaiti women by launching social, economic, and familial initiatives in collaboration with government institutions, civil society, and the private sector.

For her part, UN Secretary-General's Representative and Resident Coordinator in Kuwait, Ghada Al-Taher praised Kuwait's tangible progress in women's empowerment. She noted that during the 2025 Universal Periodic Review, the UN Human Rights Council commended Kuwait's advances, particularly policies addressing protection from violence, economic empowerment and greater decision-making roles for women.

On a same note, US Ambassador H.E. Karen Sasahara also praised the accomplishments of Kuwaiti women, saying, "I greatly admire the accomplishments made by Kuwaiti women and look forward to hearing their voices as they assess their current position, determine priorities, and define aspirations aligned with the vision of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad for Kuwait's future."

Goverment approves traffic plan to address congestion, improve road flow

In a concerted effort to tackle traffic congestion and improve flow of traffic on Kuwait's roads, the Cabinet has approved a comprehensive report prepared by the Ministry of Interior outlining six practical solutions categorized into short-, medium-, and long-term phases.

Short-Term Measures (1–2 Years): The Ministry of Finance has been asked to allocate funds to increase public transport buses for school students, addressing peak-hour congestion. Proposals include implementing flexible work schedules, evening shifts, staggered school timings, and shared school transportation.

Medium-Term Measures (3–5 Years): Reactivate the Traffic Congestion Committee with a dedicated budget. Empower the Public Authority for Roads and Land Transport to finalize the regulatory and legislative framework for public transport.

Long-Term Measures (Over 5 Years): Expedite the tendering and follow-up of previously approved road development projects. Approve the fourth master plan for Kuwait Municipality. Accelerate the study and development of new radial and ring roads, especially the Sixth and Seventh Ring Roads. Introduce smart transportation systems, a metro network, and Bus Rapid Transit (BRT).

Nine government agencies have been assigned responsibilities to implement the proposed measures, each within their area of jurisdiction. The Ministry of Interior has been designated as the lead authority for overseeing and coordinating efforts among the involved entities. All participating agencies must submit monthly progress reports, detailing developments and adherence to approved timelines.

The Cabinet emphasized the importance of removing obstacles hindering progress and ensuring each agency fulfills its assigned role. The General Secretariat has issued formal directives to the relevant ministries and authorities, calling for unified legal, financial, and technical efforts to implement the traffic solutions.

The government institutions that will be involved are: Ministries of Finance, Public Works, Education, Communications, and Information; Kuwait Municipality; Public Authority for Roads and Land Transport; Civil Service Commission; Public Authority for Manpower; Fatwa and Legislation Department.

The Cabinet has set a six-month deadline for a final report detailing implementation stages, specific actions by each body, and a comprehensive timeline.

EU hails Di Maio's strategic and successful visit to Kuwait

European Union Embassy in Kuwait described the recent visit of the EU Special Representative for the Gulf, Luigi Di Maio, as "a success by all measures," highlighting that it comes at a time when the European Union seeks to elevate its longstanding partnership with Kuwait to a strategic level.

In a statement, the EU Embassy noted that Di Maio was pleased to join Kuwait's Foreign Minister Abdullah Al-Yahya at an event organized by the EU delegation to mark the fifth anniversary of the opening of its mission in Kuwait. The statement added that the Union also looks forward to commemorating the 40th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between the European Union and Kuwait in 2026.

During the two-day official visit, Di Maio held high-level meetings with Foreign Minister Abdullah Al-Yahya, Minister of Oil Tariq Al-Roumi, and the Director General of the Kuwait Direct Investment Promotion Authority (KDIPA), Sheikh Dr. Meshaal Al-Jaber Al-Sabah. He also attended a working luncheon hosted by Deputy Foreign Minister Sheikh Jarrah Al-Jaber Al-Sabah. As part of his visit, Di Maio also toured Sadu House, where he was introduced to Kuwait's rich textile heritage—a reflection of the country's deep-rooted cultural traditions.

The trip to Kuwait marked Di Maio's fourth visit to the country since his appointment in June 2023 as the EU's first-ever Special Representative for the Gulf region. Before departing, Di Maio expressed his satisfaction with the outcomes of the visit, saying: "I am pleased to return to Kuwait for these highly productive and important meetings aimed at advancing the strategic partnership between the European Union and the countries of the Gulf Cooperation Council, including Kuwait. I remain optimistic given the clear political will and mutual commitment to furthering our shared initiatives."

He emphasized Kuwait's vital role as current chair of the GCC, noting its responsibility in driving forward the EU-GCC partnership. Kuwait will host the 29th Joint Ministerial Council between the EU and GCC later this year, as well as the 9th EU-GCC Business Forum, scheduled to take place in Kuwait by the end of 2025

Smart meters installations enable MEW to remotely manage power usage

The installation of smart electricity meters across Kuwait is enabling the Ministry of Electricity, Water and Renewable Energy (MEWRE) to more effectively and efficiently monitor and regulate power distribution and usage in the country. In a media statement, the ministry said that smart meter installation in public buildings is gathering pace, with nearly 95 percent of schools and mosques in the country being now fitted with the new equipment.

According to the ministry, these smart meters enable ministry officials to efficiently manage electricity usage by remotely disconnecting power to schools after the school day ends and to mosques following each prayer. This measure aims to curb unnecessary energy waste.

The initiative emphasizes the commitment of Minister of MEWRE Dr. Subaih Al-Mukhaizeem and senior ministry officials to implementing energy conservation policies, particularly during peak demand periods. On a related note, MEWRE has confirmed that the ministry is pressing ahead with the installation of smart meters across the agricultural, industrial, and commercial sectors.

The initiative is being carried out in coordination with the Public Authority for Agriculture Affairs and Fish Resources, the Public Authority for Industry, and the Ministry of Commerce with the aim to promote energy conservation and improve overall efficiency in resource usage.

Teams from the electricity department are currently operating in the Al-Wafra area, working on farms in collaboration with the Public Authority for Agriculture. These efforts are part of a nationwide plan

to replace outdated mechanical meters with advanced electronic ones that offer precise consumption monitoring and better management capabilities.

More than 182,000 electronic meters have reportedly been already installed across Kuwait, marking a major milestone in the country's digital transformation journey and its efforts to minimize electricity wastage.

Kuwait, Google discuss strategic digital partnership

Minister of State for Telecommunications Affairs Omar Al-Omar held high-level talks with Chief Executive Officer of Alphabet Inc. (Google) Ruth Porat, to explore opportunities for deepening strategic cooperation in the fields of technology, digital transformation, and investment.

A statement issued by the Ministry of Communications noted that the meeting took place during Porat's official visit to Kuwait, accompanied by a senior delegation from Google. Discussions focused on ways to accelerate digital integration across government entities and to align with Kuwait's national development blueprint, 'New Kuwait 2035'.

The ministry emphasized that the dialogue is

part of its broader efforts to position Kuwait as a regional leader in digital innovation and public sector modernization. The talks are expected to pave the way for future initiatives aimed at enhancing Kuwait's technological infrastructure, cloud adoption, and digital economy through public-private partnerships.

Swiss Embassy hosts landmark conference on diabetes research

The Times Kuwait Report

Embassy of Switzerland, in cooperation with the Swiss-Kuwaiti Business Platform, organized a high-profile conference at the residence of the Swiss Ambassador H.E. Dr. Tiziano Balmelli on 12 May, under the title 'Diabetes Research: An International Synergy'.

The event brought together leading experts from Switzerland and Kuwait to discuss groundbreaking research on diabetes, fostering dialogue and cooperation between the two nations. The conference featured a co-presentation by Professor Pedro Marques-Vidal from the Centre Hospitalier Universitaire Vaudois (CHUV) Lausanne and Dr. Abdulla Al Kandari from the Kuwait Institute for Scientific Research (KISR). They shared their collaborative research conducted over the past three years, focusing on the prevalence of diabetes, management, and preventive strategies in both Kuwait and Switzerland.

Dr. Ebaa Al Ozairi, Chief Medical Officer at the Dasman Diabetes Institute, presented her current research initiatives at the institute. She also highlighted her ongoing collaboration with Wolfram Anderson, Executive Manager for Research and Innovation at KDD Company.

For his part, Mr. Anderson elaborated on KDD's efforts to develop 2/2 a new line of products aimed at combating the diabetes pandemic, alongside their research partnership with the Dasman Diabetes Institute.

In his remarks on the occasion, Ambassador Balmelli expressed gratitude to the distinguished speakers, especially to Professor Marques-Vidal for traveling from Geneva to participate in the event. He also thanked Dr. Faisal Al-Refai, Acting Director General of the Dasman Diabetes Institute, for his attendance, and KDD company for their resolute dedication to scientific advancement and societal wellbeing.

The ambassador also reiterated his aspiration for a sustained and institutionalized framework of scientific cooperation between the academic and medical communities of Switzerland and Kuwait. He affirmed the indispensable value of such bilateral engagements in confronting the escalating global burden of non-communicable diseases. The conference demonstrated the strong commitment of both Switzerland and Kuwait to address public health challenges through innovative research and bilateral cooperation.

Jazeera Airways migrates to Navitaire New Skies

Jazeera Airways, Kuwait's foremost low-cost carrier, has successfully completed its migration to the latest generation of Navitaire's New Skies retailing and reservations platform in an unprecedented timeframe of just 100 days. This accomplishment marks a pivotal milestone in the airline's ongoing digital transformation agenda and heralds a new era of advanced retailing, enhanced reservation systems, and an elevated customer experience.

The migration underscores Jazeera Airways' strategic commitment to innovation and operational excellence. Through its continued partnership with Navitaire, a subsidiary of Amadeus, the airline is setting new industry benchmarks for digital agility and technological advancement.

The upgraded platform, built with cloud-native architecture and hosted on Microsoft Azure, empowers Jazeera Airways with mobile-first, omni-channel capabilities designed to meet the evolving expectations of modern travelers. This transition enables the carrier to optimize workflows, bolster data security, and scale productivity—laying the groundwork for future-readiness in a dynamic aviation landscape.

In his remarks on the migration, Chief Executive Officer of Jazeera Airways, Barathan Pasupathi, said: "We are proud to be the first airline globally to adopt Navitaire's newest version of New Skies. Digital innovation lies at the heart of our transformation strategy, and this advancement equips us to deliver a seamless, highly personalized travel experience across all customer touchpoints. This milestone reflects our vision for scalable, technology-driven growth and positions Jazeera Airways at the forefront of digital excellence in aviation."

Justice Ministry launches remote travel ban service via Sahel App

The Ministry of Justice has officially activated a remote travel ban service through the "Sahel" application and the ministry's website, effective from Wednesday, May 14, 2025. This new service allows creditors, who have obtained a court ruling to request a travel ban on debtors electronically, without incurring any fees.

In an official letter addressed to the head of the Directorate-General of Enforcement, the Ministry stated, "We are pleased to inform you that the travel ban service has been activated on the Ministry of Justice's website and via the Sahel application free of charge starting from Wednesday, May 14, 2025.

"This is in accordance with the procedure document sent by the Undersecretary of the Ministry, approving it according to letter No. (106386_17_2025_M) dated May 14, 2025. Therefore, we kindly ask you to take the necessary measures in this regard."

Kuwaiti women break barriers in every field, reshape the nation's future

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 6

On the legal front, Kuwait has taken important strides. It is the first Gulf country to implement the "My Paper" regional project, aimed at improving legal protections for women and enhancing their ability to participate fully in society. In the economic arena, Kuwaiti women are increasingly empowered through small business support. The Ministry of Social Affairs and Labor facilitates the growth of productive families by providing soft loans, business incubators, and outlets to market their goods and services.

Kuwait's strong advocacy for women is also visible in its ratification of multiple international conventions, including:

- The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW)
- The International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination
- The Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, especially women and children

Kuwait maintains close partnerships with the United Nations and numerous regional and global organizations to advance the status of women. These collaborations focus on building capacity, supporting leadership roles, and ensuring women are central to achieving the UN Sustainable Development Goals.

As a result, Kuwait has earned widespread international praise for its sincere and strategic efforts to empower women, integrate them fully into society, and recognize their essential contributions to national prosperity.

From the parliament floor to boardrooms, from scientific laboratories to courtrooms, Kuwaiti women are leading change, inspiring generations, and shaping the future of the nation. Kuwaiti Women's Day is not just a celebration of past victories—it's a reminder of the journey still ahead, and the essential role women continue to play in crafting a stronger, more inclusive Kuwait.

Lulu Exchange Celebrates International Nurses Day

Lulu Exchange marked International Nurses Day with a heartfelt celebration honoring the selfless service and unwavering dedication of nurses to society.

The event featured a cake-cutting ceremony and the distribution of thoughtful gifts as tokens of appreciation for the tireless compassion nurses demonstrate in their daily work. This meaningful gesture served to highlight the vital role nurses play in healthcare and reflected Lulu Exchange's ongoing commitment to honoring community heroes.

The celebration was attended by senior officials from Lulu Exchange, including: Mr. Rajesh Rangray – General Manager; Mr. Shafaz Ahmed – Head of Operations; Mr. Nirmal Singh – Marketing Manager; Mr. Muhammad Aslam – Manager of Digital Product.

In his address, Mr. Rajesh Rangray expressed heartfelt gratitude to the nursing community:

"Thank you for your unwavering compassion, tireless dedication, and strength in the moments that matter most. You are the heart of healthcare—healing not just bodies but also minds and spirits. Today, we celebrate you and the incredible difference you make every day."

This event underscores Lulu Exchange's strong commitment to social responsibility and community engagement, reaffirming the organization's dedication to recognizing and supporting the essential workers who continue to make a profound impact every day.

Lavang: Downtown Dubai's New Culinary Star Blends Indian Flair with Modern Elegance

By Hermoine Macura-Noble
Special to The Times Kuwait

Located in the heart of Downtown Dubai, Lavang offers a sophisticated and elegant dining experience. The chic new restaurant near the iconic Burj Khalifa, is redefining Indian cuisine with a bold contemporary twist – and it's quickly becoming one of the city's most talked-about dining destinations.

The restaurant is the brainchild of Diviya Kalra, who draws inspiration from her father, the legendary Chef and entrepreneur Ashok Kalra, whose four-decade culinary legacy includes the iconic Mughal Mahal in Kuwait. Named after the Hindi word for 'clove' — Lavang is more than just a name, it symbolizes warmth, depth, and a quiet strength, like the spice itself, a constant in Diviya's life and cooking memories. "Lavang is a love letter to my father, to the culture that raised me, and to a new era of Indian dining defined by elegance," explains Founder, Diviya Kalra.

Diviya's journey to Lavang was not just a professional one, but a deeply personal and emotional one. It began long before Lavang took shape on paper, with a barefoot little girl in her father's restaurant kitchen, entranced by the scent of cloves, cardamom, and gravies simmered with care and purpose. In a home where food was both a livelihood and a love language, she learned that cuisine could stir both appetites and emotions.

Her father – a pioneering restaurateur in Kuwait – wasn't just a chef but a quiet force who stirred hearts as often as he stirred pots. The kitchen was Diviya's playground and the dining room was her first classroom. It was there she absorbed the unspoken lessons of

Diviya Kalra with her father
Legendary Chef and entrepreneur Ashok Kalra

hospitality, resilience, and grace, watching stories unfold across linen-draped tables and learning that every dish carried meaning far beyond its ingredients.

Though her formal education would later take her to Canada, her most formative schooling happened in the gentle chaos of evening service, where she shadowed her father through the rhythm of a bustling dining room. There, she discovered that flavor and feeling are inseparable – that food, at its finest, evokes memory, comfort, and belonging.

Today, as the Founder of Lavang, Diviya reclaims that legacy and reimagines it through a modern lens. With entrepreneurial vision and instinctive elegance, she has shaped Lavang into a deeply personal expression of her heritage. It is a space where the rich soul of Indian cuisine meets contemporary artistry, quiet luxury whispers rather than shouts, and every detail – from the spice blend to the ambiance – is crafted with intent. "While my dad was heavily involved in the menu and focused on traditional dishes I focused on fusion dishes and plating, the interiors are 100% me," gushes the Indian beauty.

The interiors exude understated luxury with a 12-meter tall ceiling adorned with elegant chandeliers, gold accents and bespoke tableware from Turkey. Every element has been chosen to reflect the essence of hospitality – gracious, refined, and deeply personal.

Working in close collaboration with Chef Ashok Kalra and Diviya Kalra, Executive Chef Chetan leads Lavang's culinary direction, shaping a menu that pays homage to the rich diversity of Indian cuisine while reinterpreting it for contemporary palates. Each dish is crafted with restraint and artistry, maintaining a deep respect for traditional roots while embracing modern techniques and presentation. The restaurant's offerings promise more than just taste – they tell stories of culture, lineage, and thoughtful evolution. At Lavang, food is not simply cooked – it is composed.

Guests can look forward to delicate starters such as the crisp pani puri with chilled tamarind water—a coastal homage turned into a fine-dining starter or the Jalebi Chaat where Jalebis meet tangy chaat for a savory delightful flavor. For the salads guest can try the Malai Caesar's which is Chicken Malai tikka served on a creamy Caesar's salad or the Wild Sea

Fresh seafood with greens, citrus dressing, and sea-inspired flavors. For mains, diners can savor the Mangalorean Crab a Juicy crab with a rich Mangalorean spice-infused sauce or from the grill the Chicken Tikka Trio which is a Vibrant chicken tikka marinated in methi, bell pepper, onion, malai and tandoori flavors.

Set in Downtown Dubai, Lavang finds its natural home in a city that celebrates ambition, tradition, cosmopolitan flair, and cultural depth. Here, at this global crossroads, Divya Kalra brings to life not just a restaurant but a feeling of a homecoming. Whether you come seeking comfort in familiar flavours, or the thrill of discovering something entirely new, Lavang invites you to experience the joy of food as it was always meant to be:deeply personal, artfully crafted, and beautifully shared. At Lavang, every plate carries a memory, every spice tells a story, and every guest is welcomed like family.

Hermoine Macura-Noble
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EXCLUSIVE to THE TIMES KUWAIT

Getting Debt Sustainability Right in Developing Countries

Kevin P. Gallagher, José Antonio Ocampo, and Kunal Sen

A slowing global economy, rising trade tensions, and increased risks of recession could mean a perfect storm for low- and middle-income countries (LMICs) burdened by high sovereign debt. Faced with exorbitant borrowing costs and an increasingly jittery international environment, these countries' potential for economic growth and development will be severely curtailed.

Given the circumstances, the current international financial architecture, particularly its approach to debt sustainability, needs to be overhauled. Only by embracing a new approach to developing-country debt will these countries be able to generate the investment flows they so desperately need to kickstart long-term growth. The concept of debt sustainability remains heavily influenced by the International Monetary Fund-World Bank Debt Sustainability Framework, even though economists within both institutions have long recognized the DSF's inadequacies. It is supposed to balance the need for development financing with debt sustainability, but it often advocates suboptimal levels of government spending and investment, inadvertently contributing to future economic distress in developing countries. It also frequently fails to account for the scale of investment required, and it is insufficiently sensitive to economic and external shocks.

Moreover, the DSF has historically overstated the potential of fiscal consolidation to spur economic growth, leading to persistent forecast errors and higher-than-anticipated debt ratios. One critical flaw is its limited consideration of the long-term benefits of debt-financed investments, particularly in areas like the green transition. The framework needs to evolve from a tool focused on debt reduction at all costs to one that incentivizes investments designed to drive future growth and long-term fiscal sustainability.

We are already seeing some advanced economies, namely Germany, moving beyond their debt ceilings to increase public spending on defense and other urgent needs. Policymakers in these countries understand that borrowing to fund government consumption is fundamentally different from making strategic investments in infrastructure or climate adaptation, which can offset future economic losses and bolster debt sustainability over time.

Similarly, lending decisions for LMICs should be based on long-term models of debt sustainability, not simplistic rules-of-thumb like countries' debt-to-GDP ratio. Achieving debt sustainability is more likely if adjustment programs facilitate high investment, since this can underpin stronger economic growth. Investment-driven borrowing, when managed effectively, has been linked to low sovereign debt risks, and therefore should be encouraged.

Of course, the most immediate issue is the large debt overhang many LMICs face. Past successful interventions have already shown that debt relief, deep reductions or suspensions of interest payments, cuts to charges and surcharges on credit, and increases in grant allocations and available special drawing rights (SDRs, the IMF's reserve asset) should all be on the table.

But addressing LMICs' long-term financing needs requires broader reforms. A major boost in long-term, low-cost financing is essential. Multilateral development banks and international development finance institutions can and should play a central role in gradually increasing affordable lending. They are the only ones who can provide countercyclical lending when private financing is limited, commodity prices are falling, or the global economy is in crisis. We need more initiatives like the African Development Bank's African Development Fund, which provides concessional funding, grants, project preparation resources, and guarantees for low-income regional members.

Creating a permanent institutional mechanism for sovereign-debt restructuring is also essential. Such an instrument preferably would operate through the United Nations, but it also could be housed within the IMF, provided that decision-making is left to a specialized agency that is independent of the Executive Board and Board of Governors. This body could provide a structured, predictable, and fair framework for renegotiating debts through a three-stage process involving voluntary renegotiation, mediation, and arbitration, each with fixed deadlines. The current conception of debt sustainability for LMICs is based on a fallacy that hinders global growth and sustainable development. We must move from a narrow focus on debt reduction to a broader understanding of debt sustainability that focuses on long-term investment-driven growth.

By rethinking debt sustainability, the international community can empower LMICs to embark on a path of sustained economic development. A bold reimagining of the international financial architecture is imperative to avert prolonged debt crises, restore fiscal sustainability, and ensure global economic stability.

The Fourth UN International Conference on Financing for Development that will take place in Seville in July will give developing countries an opportunity to speak with one voice to the Western-backed institutions that oversee the current international financial architecture. These institutions hold the key to unlocking developing countries' shackles of unsustainable debt and bringing about the systemic changes that could revolutionize development finance.

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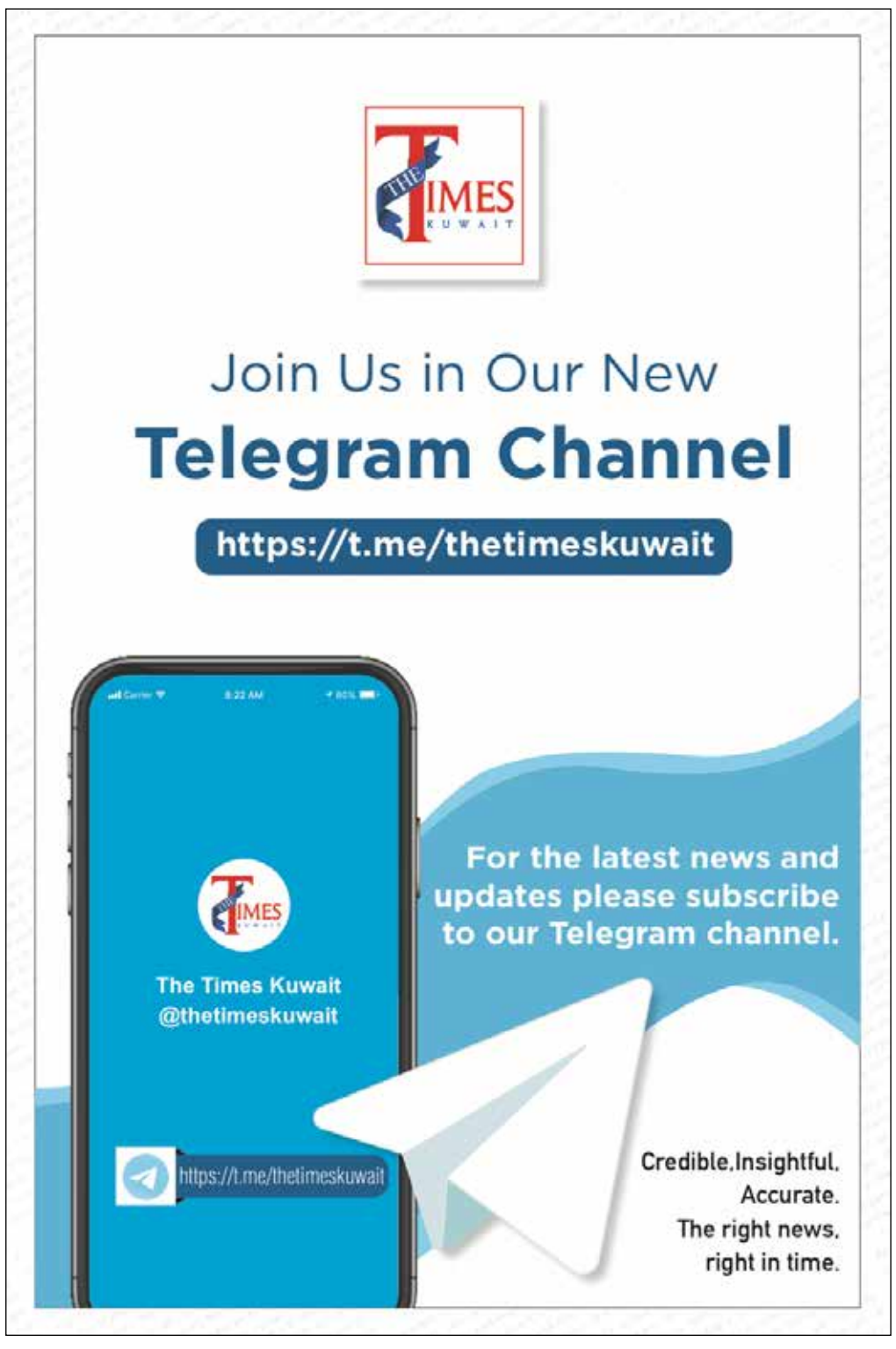


EXCLUSIVE to THE TIMES KUWAIT

Don't Remember Me, Remember the Ideas

In memory of José Mujica, former president of Uruguay

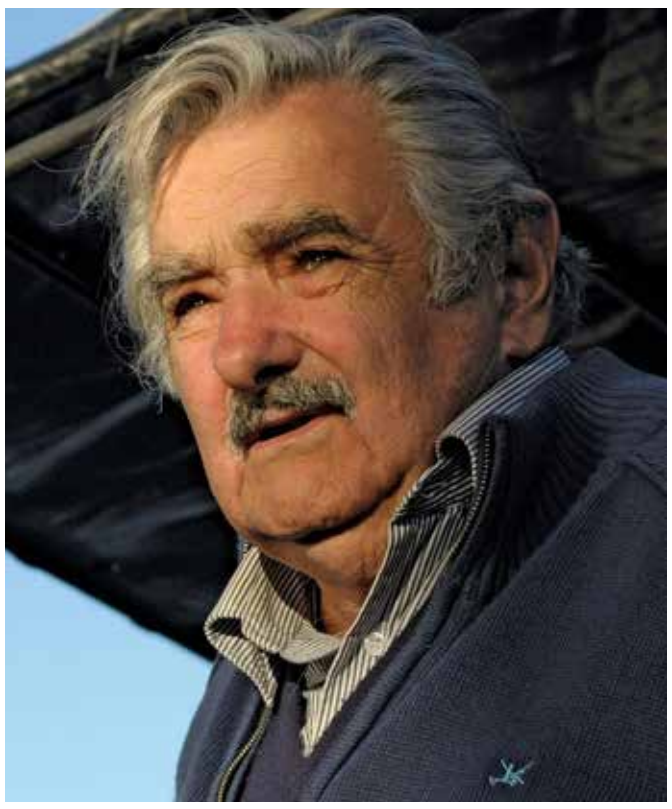
Qais A. Aljoan
Advisory Board member, Reconnaissance Research

In an age when public office too often amplifies vanity, the life of José Mujica offers a rare counter example. From his early days as a militant, imprisoned and tortured under Uruguay's military regime, to his ascent as a president known for refusing luxury and rejecting vengeance, Mujica lived a paradox—and a principle. His recent passing has stirred reflections far beyond Latin America, especially among those who still believe that politics can be a form of moral labor.

Mujica never denied his past. Nor did he mythologize it. Instead, he transformed it—not by erasing it, but by reinterpreting it through modesty and coherence. He chose to live in a humble rural home, drove a 1987 Volkswagen Beetle, and donated most of his salary. When asked about this simplicity, he answered, "I am not poor. Poor are those who need too much." For Mujica, wealth lay in time—the most irreplaceable human asset. "You don't buy things with money," he said, "you buy them with the time of your life."

There is something uncannily familiar in this ethical stance. One thinks of figures such as Umar ibn al-Khatāb or Alī ibn Abī Tālib—rulers who feared the seductions of power and insisted that leadership must reflect the lives of the people. Mujica's rejection of personal vengeance, even against those who had tortured him, also recalls a prophetic ethic: justice without hatred, memory without vendetta.

I do not know why the news of his passing struck something so deep. Perhaps it is because, for those of us raised in the shadow of the pan-Arab moment—when Ahmad Shawqi's verses were



still etched into the classroom walls—Mujica awakened an old ethical instinct. "I will bear my soul in the palm of my hand," Shawqi wrote, "and cast it into the abyss of death—either a life that delights my friends, or a death that enrages my enemies." Mujica did not speak our language, but he lived a truth that would not have felt foreign in that world—a world where simplicity, courage, and coherence once mattered more than strategy.

In a region like ours, where forgiveness is too often seen as weakness, Mujica's restraint feels radical. And at a time when political legitimacy is frequently rooted in the logic of force, his life poses another question: might authenticity and humility still hold political power?

That question resonates more sharply today as the international stage shifts. Syria—long trapped in devastation—has witnessed an unexpected transition. A new leadership has emerged, sanctions have been softened, and figures once labeled as threats are now being shyly welcomed into the periphery of international diplomacy—signs of a possible reintegration, though the symbolic gestures that often define reconciliation have not yet occurred.

History is often stingy with second chances. Yet sometimes, from the margins of defeat or disgrace, a figure rises—not to erase the past, but to carry its weight differently. Could it be that, amid Syria's long night, the soil is being turned for a quieter kind of leadership? Not one that dazzles with slogans or strength, but one that, in the spirit of Mujica's ethos, might disturb us with its humility—and its refusal to hate.

In the end, Mujica asked not to be remembered. "Don't remember me," he said. "Remember the ideas." Because what matters is not the origin of the leader, but the destiny they chart for their people—and the price they are willing to pay to live as they speak.

US and GCC forge new economic partnership

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

armaments from the region, mega deals on hundreds of Boeing aircraft, engines and spare-parts by Saudi Arabia, Qatar, and the UAE, as well as plans for trillions of dollars in investment in the US economy were announced during the presidential visit.

However, the GCC states are likely to evaluate the success of Trump's trip in terms of its tangible, as well as intangible benefits to the region. On a palpable note, during his visit, President Trump reiterated US commitment to the strategic partnership and defense of the region, waived restrictions on sale of advanced semiconductor chips to Saudi Arabia and the UAE. And, in a politically momentous decision, announced the lifting of sanctions against Syria.

On a more impalpable level, the GCC states will consider their trillion dollar investments and purchases from the US as economically prudent decisions, but also as a politically strategic move. During President Trump's first term in office, it had become evident that the easiest way into the presidency's good books was through trade deals and investments in the US economy. Political analysts see the mega deals and investments signed with GCC states, as a means for the region to gain an influential voice in the White House in matters related to the Middle East.

Following the decision to scrap the Biden-era 'AI Diffusion Rule'—which prevented sale of advanced AI microchips to the Middle East and elsewhere, for fear it would be 'leaked' to adversarial states—President Trump is now considering selling advanced AI chips to the UAE. During his visit to Riyadh, President Trump also witnessed the signing of a commitment by Saudi state-owned AI company, Humain, to build AI infrastructure using advanced chips from US chip manufacturer, Nvidia.

The chip deals with Saudi Arabia and the UAE could indicate a shift in US policy on AI chips. By developing DeepSeek, an AI based large language model, China had already shown its capacity to overcome US chip restrictions. Apparently the US now believes that rather than attempting to deny China access to the latest chips, it would be more prudent to foster partnerships and garner investments into the AI industry in the US. This would allow the funding of research and development of more advanced chips that will enable the US to stay ahead of competition.

Before departing Riyadh and heading to Qatar, President Trump attended the Gulf-US Summit on 14 May, where he met with their majesties and leaders of the GCC states. The summit focused on reviewing regional and international developments, coordinating joint efforts to enhance security and stability of the region, promote sustainable development, and strengthen strategic partnership between the GCC and the US.

In his address to the summit, His Highness the Amir of Kuwait Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah emphasized the pivotal role of economic collaboration in the strategic partnership between the GCC and the United States. Stressing the importance of mutual cooperation, built on a shared vision for peace, stability and development, His Highness voiced his aspiration to expand bilateral projects and deepen economic ties with Washington.

Pointing out that the summit was being held amid critical global circumstances, marked by rising tensions, conflicts, and cross-border challenges, His Highness underlined the GCC's unified stance in preserving the security and stability of the region, while rejecting any violations of their land, waters, and resources. He also recalled with appreciation the historic American leadership in the coalition that liberated Kuwait from Iraqi occupation in 1991, a memory, he said, which remains etched in the minds of the Kuwaiti people and the Gulf nations.

On the humanitarian front, the Amir reaffirmed Kuwait's strong commitment to relief efforts in conflict and disaster-stricken areas. He called for coordinated US-Gulf development-aid to ensure an effective and sustainable response to the needs of affected communities. Concluding his speech, His Highness proposed the establishment of a Gulf-American forum for educational and cultural dialogue, aimed at fostering scientific and joint research programs, empowering youth, and promoting values of tolerance, openness, and civic understanding.

The GCC states and the US have a long and cherished history of strong relations characterized by friendship, cooperation, shared values and institutional relationships. Anchored in history, the partnership between the GCC states and the US today hinges on shared strategic interests based on the dual axis of reciprocity and adaptability. At a time of evolving global geopolitical landscape, the robust and friendly relations between the GCC and the US is a testament to what the two sides can achieve in terms of stability, global peace and economic sustainability.

During his four-day whirlwind tour of the region that took him to Saudi Arabia, Qatar and the UAE, as well as his participation in the Gulf–US Summit in Riyadh, the US President had a hectic schedule that covered diplomacy, trade and security issues. While Trump the self-styled global peacemaker is still interested in reaching a political deal with Iran on its nuclear file, with Russia on the Ukrainian conflict, and transforming Gaza into a 'MIddle East Riviera', or as he said in Qatar, a 'Freedom Zone' these plans will for the moment still remain largely aspirational.

The bilateral trade between the United States and the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries reached $120 billion in 2024. This was highlighted during the recent GCC-U.S. Summit, where leaders emphasized the growing economic partnership between the two regions. The trade relationship spans various sectors, including energy, defense, technology, and infrastructure. If you're interested in more details, you can check out the full report

However, Trump the passionate dealmaker has much to show from his highly successful tour of the Middle East. The president has raked in trillions of dollars of investments and business deals for the US economy, and is clearly delivering on his election promise to Make America Great Again (MAGA). Only this time, his promise of MAGA and to accelerate American development, employment, and prosperity is being catalyzed by investments and purchases from wealthy Middle East 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

Oman

Land of Authenticity and Heritage

By Fajr Sabah
Special to The Times Kuwait

Oman is often called the land of heritage, a country that holds its past and priceless antiquities dear. Its people are frequently described as kind, generous, and warm-hearted. And indeed, this is very true—everyone who has visited Oman across its various regions can attest to that.

But Oman is also marked by development, with each region progressing in its own unique way. The country's growth is evident without overshadowing its heritage; instead, it embraces every beautiful piece built with the spirit of the modern age.

This was not my first visit to Oman—I have visited many times, whether for tourism or work, to visit family, meet friends, attend

events, or simply enjoy the atmosphere.

I have had many opportunities: climbing Jabal Shams and Jabal Akhdar, enjoying the Khareef (monsoon) season in Salalah, sleeping in homes at Sur with its gentle breezes , and passing through Rustaq, Nakhal, Sohar, and more. I have sat on the beaches of Al-Azaiba, and I have not forgotten Wadi Nakhur, the hot springs, Al-Hadd, or the development in Nizwa, and the charm of the Green Mountain. The nature, the adventures, the capital city of Muscat and all the progress—I have seen so much in Oman

And I did not stop there. I once shared in festive rituals, and more recently, I took part in Omani weddings.

Visiting the different areas in Oman has always been a special and unique experience. I go with excitement and longing, and return with love, joy, and eagerness.

This is how I always see Oman: a country of kindness and beauty, of regions steeped in tradition and touched by modernity, of mountains, islands, and changing seasons. Each area feels like its own town, with distinct dialects, yet united by a shared spirit of kindness, good manners, and respect.

Oman is a nation of genuine people, a country rich in all the blessings of the world—full of tourism potential, safety, comfort, and joy.

LuLu Hypermarket launches Lulu Bridal Wedding Expo 2025

LuLu Hypermarket, the region's leading retailer, launched its exciting 'Lulu Bridal Wedding Expo 2025' across all its outlets on 15 May. The ten-day long exhibition, which runs until 25 May, showcases exclusive bridal collections, offering a unique opportunity to explore the finest bridal wear at incredibly competitive prices.

The event was inaugurated on 15 May at the Lulu Al Rai outlet by renowned influencers, vloggers, and fashionistas in Kuwait, in the presence of LuLu Kuwait management. Fantastic 25 Percent discounts are being offered on a wide range of bridal collections, including exquisite lehengas, gowns, sarees, and churidars from some of the finest brands

The expo is beautifully designed with separate stalls displaying various bridal categories, ensuring a personalized shopping

experience for those ladies seeking to wear something memorable on their big day. To provide further inspiration to the brides-to-be, influencers and vloggers attending the event showcased their favorite collections during the event.

The bridal collections feature the latest designs and styles, offering something for every bride—from striking traditional to chic contemporary looks. Shoppers can find a wide variety of options, from luxurious bridal lehengas to elegant gowns and timeless bridal sarees. The event is designed to cater to brides and their families, offering an all-in-one wedding shopping experience.

Do not miss out on this amazing opportunity to shop for your dream bridal outfit at unbeatable prices—only at Lulu stores in Kuwait during the 10-day bridal-wear spree.

EXCLUSIVE to THE TIMES KUWAIT

True Cost of Ocean Plastic Pollution

Romain Troublé
Executive Director of the Tara Ocean Foundation

The problem of maritime plastic-waste pollution first became apparent in the 1970s. In the half-century since then, the problem has become ever more widespread, as scientific expeditions conducted by the Tara Ocean Foundation (of which I am executive director) have shown.

Large pieces of debris, such as fishing nets, and their disastrous effects on marine life, are the most visible symptom. Such waste is estimated to kill more than one million seabirds and over 100,000 marine mammals annually, often through entanglement or suffocation, and promotes transport of invasive species, triggering a cascading effect on the ecosystems in which they play a central role.

Less visible, but more pervasive, are microplastics, which have been found in the deepest ocean trenches and in all types of marine life. Microplastics can, among other things, modify bacterial and viral communities and disperse chemical toxins in food chains (often after being ingested by marine organisms). Some of these toxins, such as phthalates, are associated with the chemistry of plastics, while others, such as pesticides and heavy metals, are absorbed by the plastic before it reaches the ocean and enters the food chain.

How these toxic substances interact with plastics has been the subject of much study. Plastic is comprised of monomers that have been chemically bonded to form long chains of polymers—ethylene, styrene, and propylene become polyethylene, polystyrene, and polypropylene. But the process of polymerization is often imperfect, and some of the unpolymerized monomers that remain in plastic, like different types of styrene and bisphenol, pose major environmental and health risks.

Moreover, other chemical additives, including plasticizers, fillers, colorants, flame retardants, and antioxidants, are incorporated into polymer formulations to modify their properties. And non-intentionally added substances (NIAS)—impurities, raw materials used in manufacturing, byproducts, and degradation products—bind to finished plastics.

> “Because plastic degrades the entire biosphere, not just the ocean, it is not a waste problem that can be solved by a few sustainability-minded citizens’ recycling efforts. This is a systemic crisis that requires an economy-wide solution.”

In most cases, because free monomers, additives, and NIAS are simply trapped within the tangle of polymer chains, rather than being chemically bound to them, they are more likely to leach out during the production, use, and disposal of plastic, migrating into liquids, gases, and solids. Some 16,000 such molecules have been identified, but their effects are still not fully known, nor is their toxicity, which can change depending on how they are combined. What we do know is that one-quarter of these 16,000 molecules pose a hazard to human health or the environment by disrupting biochemical processes in living organisms.

Halting the flow of microplastics and toxic pollutants into the world’s bodies of water is a Sisyphean task. Nevertheless, scientists are trying to stem the problem. For example, the Tara Europa expedition, in coordination with the European Molecular Biology Laboratory and more than 70 scientific institutions across the continent, has spent the past two years investigating how these hazardous substances make their way into the seas and oceans bordering Europe. The mission plans to share its findings soon.

But the generation of toxic waste and debris is not the only way that plastic can harm ocean health. The plastics industry has been a major driver of climate change, accounting for an estimated 3.4 percent of global greenhouse-gas (GHG) emissions. Plastic production is on track to contribute 15 percent of GHG emissions by 2050, exacerbating global warming and thereby increasing the threats to marine life, which is sensitive to rising water temperatures.

Because plastic degrades the entire biosphere, not just the ocean, it is not a waste problem that can be solved by a few sustainability-minded citizens’ recycling efforts. This is a systemic crisis that requires an economy-wide solution. A better approach is to understand plastic as one of the ‘new entities’ that must not leak into the environment, a view initially formulated by the Stockholm Resilience Centre in its work on planetary boundaries and later endorsed by the United Nations. While acknowledging the impossibility of defining a precise threshold for harm, such an approach highlights the need for a drastic reduction in plastic use.

Research suggests that it would be economically feasible to halve global plastic production at a cost which would almost surely be less than the cost of inaction. But, according to a recent study by researchers at the University of California, Berkeley, even this reduction would not be enough to limit global warming to 1.5° Celsius above pre-industrial levels, the target set by the Paris climate agreement. Instead, they found that meeting this goal would require a 75 percent reduction in plastic production compared to 2015, when the agreement was adopted.

Addressing this global crisis with the necessary urgency will require mobilizing investment and support to reduce the production of single-use plastics, increase the lifespan of plastic objects through regulation, and promote reuse and reparability. While it is tempting to lean on short-term fixes, such as replacing plastic packaging with other disposable materials like paper, cardboard, aluminum, steel, and glass, the goal must not be merely to mitigate the symptoms of the underlying ailment.

Our economies are on the cusp of upheaval as the need for a habitable and healthy planet becomes inescapable. Ignoring or even denying the economic reality of the current ecological emergency would be to shut one’s eyes to the close dependence of human activities on a stable and favorable environment. Working with, rather than against, nature requires a paradigm shift, and it starts with plastics.

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Nearly a third of antibiotics end up in surface waters

A landmark study warns that 8,500 tonnes of antibiotics—consumed by humans—are flowing into surface waters every year, posing a critical threat to both environmental and public health.

Global consumption of antibiotics has increased exponentially over the last two decades, and their rampant use continues to rise, especially in low-and middle-income countries. While antibiotics are critical to global healthcare, their use, overuse, and misuse has resulted in a concomitant increase of antibiotics in the environment, especially in surface water sources.

A new landmark study reveals that nearly a third of global antibiotic use ends up in rivers, lakes and other surface water sources, threatening aquatic ecosystems and accelerating the rise of drug-resistant bacteria. Urgent global monitoring and mitigating strategies are required to safeguard our water sources and to protect human and environmental health.

The study, led by researchers at McGill University in Canada, warned that millions of kilometres of rivers worldwide are carrying antibiotic pollution at levels high enough to promote drug resistance and harm aquatic life. The World Health Organization (WHO) has recognized antimicrobial resistance (AMR) caused by drug-resistant bacteria as a critical global threat, with projections suggesting that AMR could become the leading cause of global deaths by 2050

The McGill study is the first to estimate the scale of global river contamination from human antibiotic use. Researchers calculated that about 8,500 tonnes of antibiotics—nearly one-third of what people consume annually—end up in river systems around the world each year.

The research team used a global model validated by field data from nearly 900 river locations across the world. They found that amoxicillin, the world's most-used antibiotic, is the one that is present at risky levels in many rivers, especially in Southeast Asia, where rising use and limited wastewater treatment amplify

the problem. The volume of antibiotic pollution is particularly alarming as the study only evaluated pollution by households, and not that from agriculture, livestock and pharmaceuticals.

The presence of household antibiotics in surface waters poses risks to aquatic ecosystems and human health due to their toxicity and influence on antimicrobial resistance. In addition to unused antibiotics that are disposed of improperly, antibiotics consumed by individuals enter the environment after they are excreted following partial metabolism in the body.

The excreted antibiotic residues go through complex accumulation and decay processes as they pass through wastewater treatment facilities to natural waterways such as rivers and lakes. While some countries have advanced treatment methods that can substantially decrease or virtually eliminate antibiotic residues in wastewaters, this technology is not available or affordable to most municipal wastewater treatment plants (WWTPs). In effect, almost half of the world's wastewater is released to the environment without any treatment

Based on data over a three-year period from 2012 to 2015, the researchers estimated the total global human consumption of antibiotics annually to be 32,200 tonnes, of which the 40 most-used antibiotics by the world's population accounted for a combined 29,200 tonnes per year.

By differentiating the various pathways of antibiotics in the aquatic environment the research team estimated that around 20,700 tonnes (70%) of this combined consumption are excreted after metabolism, and that 8,500 tonnes (30%) are discharged into surface waters after treatment or natural attenuation in soils. Around 3,250 tonnes (11%) of the combined consumption eventually reaches the world's oceans or inland sinks through rivers, after a portion of the discharge is removed in lakes and through decay in streams and rivers.

The study also estimated that only 43 percent of the load of antibiotics from domestic sources is processed through wastewater systems, while 57 percent of households do not have access to proper wastewater treatment facilities, On average, WWTPs are estimated to contribute 17 percent of the total emission of antibiotics into surface waters, while the combined untreated domestic wastewaters from rural and urban areas contribute around 54 percent of total emissions into rivers.

The study found that in more than 6 million km of global rivers the total risk quotient (RQ) of antibiotics exceeded the high risk threshold, of which 2.2 million km surpassed risk levels deemed to be very high. The dominant antibiotics contributing to the pollution were amoxicillin, ceftriaxone, and cefixime. Total risk quotient (RQtot) is calculated as the sum of individual risk quotients of all 40 antibiotics in the global river system under low-flow conditions

The study model found that areas that exhibit the most widespread distribution of rivers that are antibiotic polluted are also those with a high population density and high antibiotic consumption, and places where antibiotics are readily available without prescription and are sometimes used prophylactically. These places also offer only poor access to wastewater treatment and/or are subject to water scarcity, which causes a lack of antibiotic dilution in source waters. The study findings highlight the need to develop and implement appropriate wastewater management plans, upgrade existing wastewater treatment practices and facilities, and improve regulatory guidelines with a particular focus on high-risk substances and locations that pose the greatest risk.

Expanding access to wastewater treatment facilities to areas of the world currently without such services would generally improve the quality of surface waters that receive waste effluents. This would not only reduce the prevalence of disease but also decrease the demand for antibiotics to treat diseases arising from contaminated water supplies.

Unique sound alleviates motion sickness

Researchers at Nagoya University in Japan have discovered a simple and effective method to treat motion sickness. They found that by using a unique sound device that stimulates the inner ear with a specific wavelength of sound, motion sickness could be significantly reduced. Even a single minute of stimulation was shown to reduce the staggering and discomfort felt by people who are affected by sitting in a moving vehicle.

Motion sickness is a common and complex syndrome that occurs in response to either real or perceived motion. It could happen when sitting still while moving in a vehicle, whether a car on land, a boat out at sea, or seated in a plane. Symptoms could include dizziness, sweating, headache, and even vomiting. This is most

often caused by conflicting sensory perceptions reaching the brain from parts of your body that sense motion: your eyes, inner ear, muscles and joints.

For instance, while riding in a car, the eyes register movement because they sense road-signs, trees and other stationary objects come into the line of sight and then drop out of sight, and send the brain a message of movement. But then, nerve endings in the inner ear and in muscles and joints, which convey the sense of balance and motion, inform the brain that there is no movement. The brain has difficulty processing the contradictory messages and this results in the person feeling dizzy, nauseated, and sweaty.

The study demonstrated that short-term stimulation using the unique sound, termed 'sound-spice' by the researchers, alleviates symptoms of motion sickness, such as nausea and dizziness. The sound level used by the device was also found to be both effective and safe, as the sound produced by the device is within the range of everyday environmental noise exposure.

The discovery adds to the body of recent knowledge on sound and its effect on the inner ear, and suggests that stimulating the part of the inner ear associated with balance using a unique sound can potentially improve balance. Using a mouse model and humans, the researchers identified a unique sound at 100 Hz as being the optimal frequency. Vibrations at this unique sound level were found to stimulate the otolithic organs in the inner ear, which detect linear acceleration and gravity, which is responsible for maintaining balance and spatial orientation.

To test the effectiveness of the devices, they recruited voluntary participants who were exposed to the unique sound. Following the stimulation, motion sickness was induced by a swing, a driving simulator, or riding in a car. The researchers used postural control, ECG readings, and Motion Sickness Assessment Questionnaire results to assess the effectiveness of the stimulation.

Exposure to the unique sound before being exposed to the driving simulator enhanced sympathetic nerve activation. The researchers found symptoms such as 'lightheadedness' and 'nausea', which are often seen with motion sickness, were alleviated. The results suggest that activation of sympathetic nerves, which are often dysregulated in motion sickness, was objectively improved by the unique sound exposure. Moreover, the health-risk of short-term exposure to the unique sound was found to be minimal.

The study results suggest a safe and effective way to improve motion sickness, potentially offering help to millions of sufferers. The researchers plan to further develop the technology with the aim of practical application for a variety of travel situations including air and sea travel

THE TIMES KUWAIT'S PREMIER WEEKLY NEWS MAGAZINE
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Printed in: Al Khat Printing Press Co.
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Milk and Coffee for Uric Acid

Ask Mira: Eating Right to Live Happy & Healthy

A friend of mine has been suffering from severe gout for the past month. His leg was swollen although he has been really watching his diet and his foods. He asked me if he could consume milk and coffee in his case of gout

Let me first tell you about gout, a painful form of arthritis caused by an excess of uric acid in the blood.The body makes uric acid naturally when it breaks down chemicals called purines found in certain foods and drinks. The kidneys usually filter uric acid out of your blood, and then it leaves your body when you pass urine.

If the body makes too much uric acid, or the kidneys do not remove it from blood fast enough, it results in high levels of uric acid (hyperuricemia) that form uric acid crystals which could build up and settle into the joints. The sharp crystals clump together and cause sudden episodes of pain, swelling and other symptoms of gout..

Gout usually occurs in the extremities of the body, like feet or toes, causing redness, swelling and extreme pain. It appears in midlife and primarily in males.

Eating or drinking foods high in purines are more likely to lead to high uric acid levels in your body that cause gout. These foods include: Sugary drinks and sweets: Standard table sugar, which is half fructose (fruit sugar), breaks down into uric acid. Any food or drink with high sugar content can trigger gout.

Packaged food products and processed snacks can contain plenty of high fructose corn syrup.

Alcohol: Alcoholic beverages prevent your kidneys from eliminating uric acid, pulling it back into your body, where it continues to accumulate.

Organ meats: These include liver, tripe, sweetbreads, brains and kidneys.

Game meats: Specialties such as goose, veal and venison all contain high levels of purines.

Certain seafood: Herring, scallops, mussels, codfish, tuna, trout and haddock.

Red meat: Beef, lamb, pork and bacon.

Turkey: Especially processed deli turkey.

Gravy and meat sauces.

So, a balanced diet for gout sufferers includes foods that are high in complex carbohydrates, low in protein and low in fat, because foods that are high in fat and cholesterol are also high in purines.

Back to the question, posed by my friend about whether milk and coffee can be consumed by someone with gout. Although water, which helps dissolve uric acid, is the number one drink that you should take in case of gout, drinking milk can help your gout eventually. Milk and dairy products can help reduce the risk of gout because it helps get rid of uric acid. So, milk can prevent this from occurring.

It is recommended to drink at least four cups a day to reduce the risk of gout by 40 percent. But be careful to consume the low-fat milk, as the aim is to reduce the fat and cholesterol intake.

In the case of coffee, a study conducted at the University of British Columbia in, 2017 showed a direct link between increased coffee consumption and decreased uric acid levels. It appeared that men who consumed four cups of regular coffee a day had a drop of uric acid levels by 40 percent.

But when men consumed four cups of decaffeinated coffee, they had a drop of uric acid levels by only 20 percent.

It seems that there is a strong antioxidant in the regular coffee called phenol chlorogenic acid, which may have something to do with reducing uric acid levels.

Although a high consumption can help in decreasing high levels of uric acid, it is still not recommended for other diseases like hypertension.

All kind of teas have a high content of oxalic acid and are not recommended for people having gout.But for those who think that they cannot have milk or coffee, now you know, milk helps building your bone mass, will help you get rid of uric acid, thus prevents gout.

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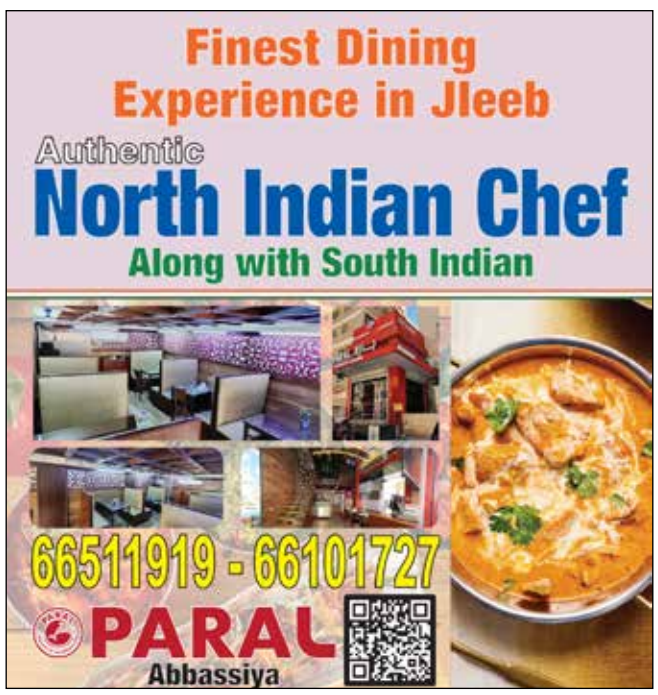

Absorbing the US Brain Drain

Sergei Guriev

Dean and Professor of Economics at the London Business School.

In times of political turbulence, leading research universities often become both targets of populist rhetoric and beacons of hope. For voters dissatisfied with 'elites' and the status quo, higher education bears responsibility for spawning the political class that they blame for all society's ills. And yet, in the face of so many global crises—environmental, geopolitical, economic, social, technological, and health-related—the world desperately needs new solutions, independent research, and trained future leaders.

In the United States, President Donald Trump's administration and a substantial share of the electorate identify universities with a malign domestic and global 'system', and as a major battleground in the country's long-running culture wars. The administration has cut universities' federal research funding, threatened to revoke their tax-exempt status, and demanded institutional reforms that limit their autonomy and academic freedom. Some US universities have decided to pause or cancel research programs and slow the recruitment of faculty. This is a tragedy, and not just for the US. Frontier research and education is a global public good. New insights and innovations relating to AI, climate change, health, inequality, and geopolitics benefit all of humankind, wherever they are generated. With US universities facing unprecedented political pressure, the rest of the world must step up its efforts to support path-breaking research, education, and innovation.

Doing so will require coordinated action among universities, which should roll out new research projects and recruit faculty who want to relocate from the US to pursue their work in a more welcoming and productive environment. It will also require large new contributions of public- and private-sector resources.

There are already encouraging signs that this is happening. Canada's University Health Network Foundation recently launched an initiative to raise $30 million to recruit 100 top early-career scientists from around the world. The British government is preparing a £50 million ($67 million) scheme to attract international research talent to the United Kingdom. The French government has announced a 'Choose France for Science' platform that would fund 50 percent of initiatives to attract international talent to French universities and research institutions. And on 5 May, European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen delivered a passionate speech touting a new initiative, 'Choose Europe for Science', which will include a €500 million ($562 million) package (for 2025-27) to make Europe a "magnet for researchers."

But as impressive as these announcements are, public-sector efforts will not be enough. All the public initiatives announced so far represent less than what a single major US university risks losing in federal research funding this year. Worse, most governments face very tight fiscal constraints and cannot afford to plug the emerging global research funding gap. Private donors will have to step in.

While private support for US universities could help them weather a loss of federal funding, financial resources alone will not address the government's attack on academic freedom. Undue political pressure has already heightened the risk of an exodus of faculty from the US. A March Nature survey of US-based scientists found that 75 percent of respondents were looking for jobs abroad, particularly in Europe and Canada. An analysis of Nature's jobs-board data in April confirmed the beginning of a brain drain from the US.

Trump's assault on academic freedom also worries students. For international applicants looking at the US, the question is no longer just about an institution's ranking or reputation. Even more important is whether they will be safe, welcomed, and included. Students from the Middle East, Sub-Saharan Africa, Latin America, and parts of Asia, especially those whose nationality may bring extra scrutiny, are increasingly cautious about pursuing higher education in today's America.

As the dean of the London Business School, my own recent conversations with potential applicants (and their parents) suggest that students are becoming more reluctant about attending top US institutions as a matter not of protest, but of prudence. MBA students who previously would have viewed US schools as the gold standard are now considering more fundamental questions: Where will I feel welcome? Where can I be confident that my visa will be honored for the duration of my studies? Where can I build an international network that is not vulnerable to political headwinds?

> "Public initiatives announced so far represent less than what a single major US university risks losing in federal research funding this year. Worse, most governments face tight fiscal constraints and cannot plug the research funding gap."

For European universities and business schools, this shift creates both opportunities and responsibilities. Top schools outside the US must ensure that they will be equal to the moment. That means investing more in world-class faculty, building bridges with industry and government, and reaffirming their fundamental values of academic excellence, inclusion, and internationalism.

It also means engaging donors who want to make a difference. UK and European universities and business schools with global ambitions often lack the billion-dollar endowments of their US peers. For philanthropists committed to open societies, inclusive education, and world-changing research, this is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to invest in institutions that are ready to lead, but need the resources to match their mission.

The gap between ambition and capacity has never been wider. But bridging it would be a game changer. The next generation of leaders is watching, and deciding where to go.