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Kuwait: The GCC's Quiet Digital Disruptor

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INTERVIEW

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August 2: A Homage to Martyrs, a Tribute to National Unity



THE TIMES KUWAIT REPORT

Saturday, 2 August this year marked the 35th anniversary of the vicious Iraqi invasion of Kuwait in 1990. This indelible day still remains poignant in the collective consciousness of a nation traumatized by the agony of the invasion and horrors of a seven-month long occupation more than three decades ago.

The second of August each year is a solemn day when we pay respects to the martyrs and to all who stood steadfastly with the nation and its sovereignty. This day serves as a testament to Kuwait's ability to rise above adversity, showing the world a rare example of unity, humanity, transcendence, and tolerance. While that fateful day 35 years ago is a stark reminder of the tragedy of aggression, it is also an attestation of the ultimate triumph of a nation's resilient spirit.



Remembering both triumphs and tragedies in life and not being overwhelmed by either, is a human trait that has engendered the progress of humanity through eons. Science shows us that

remembrance is crucial for growth; recollecting past experiences of trauma or grief is known to be cathartic, as it allows our mind to process sorrow, acknowledge a loss, find meaning

to a painful event, to heal, and to reconcile. Recalling a past event also helps build resilience, it enables us to pick up, and to move forward a key ingredient in human development..

In particular, the annual remembrance of a tragic and traumatic event in a nation's history such as a natural disaster, an aggression, or an invasion, is vital, as it contributes to a sense of collective identity, connecting individuals to their shared history, culture, and values. It allows us to acknowledge and honor the sacrifices made by individuals and groups, and the ultimate price paid by martyrs to a cause. Studies have shown that collective acts of remembrance also strengthens community bonds and creates a shared sense of purpose that fosters social cohesion and preserves cultural heritage for future generations. Recalling a tragic incident also allows us to examine the causes and consequences of the event and avoid or prevent similar harrowing experiences in future.

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Kuwait: The GCC's Quiet Digital Disruptor

Kuwait is emerging as a digital powerhouse in the Gulf, albeit with far less fanfare than some of its neighbors. Long known for its oil wealth, the country is now investing heavily in technology, digital infrastructure, and human capital to transform its economy for the 21st century. This op-ed examines how Kuwait's strategic investments, forward-looking government agenda, and young tech-savvy population are quietly but steadily turning the nation into a regional leader in digital innovation.



By Sarah Al Sabah
Special to The Times Kuwait

Strategic Investments and Vision:

US\$1.1 billion for Digital Infrastructure:

Kuwait's recent budgets have earmarked roughly \$1.1 billion for digital infrastructure projects: from smart city developments to broadband networks and next-gen connectivity. These investments signal a serious commitment to building the backbone of a digital economy. Crucially, they are backed by the Kuwait Investment Authority (KIA): the sovereign wealth fund that manages an estimated \$1.1 trillion in assets, ensuring ample financing for the country's high-tech ambitions. KIA has not only financed local initiatives but also partnered with global tech players (such as Microsoft, BlackRock, and others) to develop AI infrastructure on a worldwide scale. This alignment of fiscal might with tech development underscores Kuwait's drive to shift from heavy oil dependency to the new frontier of growth, algorithms.

Vision 2040 and New Kuwait 2035: Kuwait's digital agenda is guided by long-term national strategies. Kuwait Vision 2040 and the New Kuwait 2035 plan are blueprints that place economic diversification, e-government, and a knowledge-based economy at the forefront of policy. All major digital initiatives are funneled toward these goals, creating a unified roadmap for transformation. The government's partnership with Microsoft in 2025 to establish new AI cloud centers aligns with Vision 2035's focus on innovation and governance reform. In short, Kuwait's leadership has articulated a clear narrative: invest today in digital capacity to ensure prosperity and sustainability tomorrow.

KIA as a Tech Enabler: The Kuwait Investment Authority has become a key enabler of this vision. Already one of the world's largest sovereign funds, KIA is leveraging its global clout to support Kuwait's digital transformation. It recently joined an international AI Infrastructure Partnership aimed at mobilizing up to \$100 billion for next-generation AI and cloud computing investments. By infusing capital and confidence into tech ventures at home and abroad, KIA is effectively underwriting Kuwait's journey "from hydrocarbons to high-performance compute," as one industry strategist observed. The message is clear: Kuwait's financial firepower is now firmly behind its digital future.

Digital Infrastructure and Connectivity:

Nationwide Internet and 5G Coverage: Kuwait today boasts near universal internet access and advanced mobile networks. Home internet penetration is 99.4 percent and 5G coverage reaches about 97 percent of the population, placing Kuwait among the top tier of GCC countries in digital connectivity. The country's telecom sector is already trialing 6G technologies and expanding fiber-optic broadband and satellite links to ensure every community is connected. In practical terms, this means Kuwait's citizens and businesses enjoy some of the fastest internet speeds



and most reliable digital access in the region. A critical foundation for everything from e-government to fintech.

'Smart Kuwait' Urban Vision: Digital infrastructure development in Kuwait goes hand in hand with ambitious urban planning. The government's Smart Kuwait initiative envisions seamlessly integrating technology into new city projects and public services. Plans for Silk City and Boubayan Island, massive developments in the works, include smart city frameworks leveraging IoT sensors, AI, and big data for sustainable urban living. The aim is to coordinate public and private efforts so that smart infrastructure (traffic systems, utilities, public safety, etc.) evolves in tandem with digital government platforms. By aligning its digital blueprint with physical development, Kuwait is future-proofing its cities to be both high-tech and highly livable.

National Broadband Network: A robust

can rival Kuwait in the quiet efficiency of its e-government rollout. As of 2025, over 90 percent of government services are available in digital form. Whether via web portals or mobile apps. This aggressive digitization has slashed bureaucracy and wait times for citizens and residents. Need to renew a license, pay a fee, or request a permit? It can likely be done online in minutes, with minimal human interaction. The COVID-19 pandemic further accelerated this transition, and Kuwait's public sector largely succeeded in moving workflows online, saving millions of paperwork transactions. The government continues to work towards an official target of fully digitizing services (over 90%) in the coming few years.

Sahel Unified App: A cornerstone of Kuwait's e-government strategy is the 'Sahel' app, a unified mobile platform that brings together services from dozens of agencies. Launched

provides a mobile ID app that serves as a secure digital identity and enables verified e-signatures. From opening bank accounts to accessing healthcare or signing legal documents, Kuwaitis can use their digital ID instead of physical cards. The secure e-ID system, developed with global tech partners like Thales, has laid the groundwork for widespread e-commerce and remote services by ensuring trust and authentication. This digital identity initiative exemplifies how Kuwait is merging technology with governance reforms to improve service delivery.

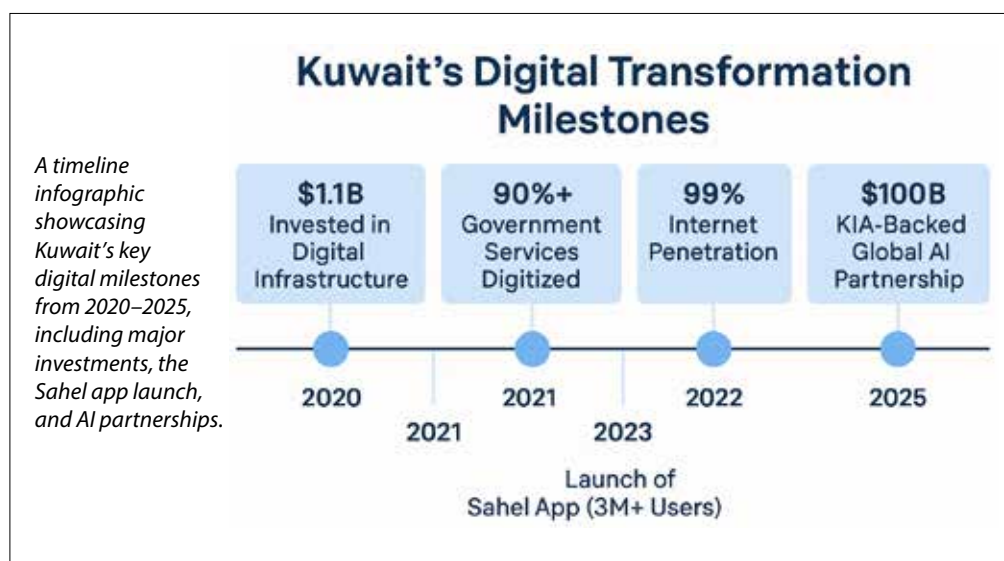
AI in Public Services: The government is also deploying artificial intelligence to make public services smarter and more efficient. AI tools are being used in Kuwait's customs service to enhance border security and automate inspections, in the judiciary to assist with case management, and in the labor ministry to streamline work permit processes. For example, predictive analytics and machine learning help flag suspicious shipments at customs, improving contraband detection, while AI chatbots guide users through e-government portals. These early forays into AI for public good are improving transparency and cutting red tape. Kuwait is even experimenting with AI-driven traffic management and smart utility grids under its Smart Kuwait vision. Over a dozen government entities have piloted AI or big-data projects in the last two years. A number poised to grow as the tech matures.

Talent and Workforce Development:

Youthful Demographics: Kuwait's digital rise is powered by its people. Notably a young, tech-savvy population. Roughly 70 percent of Kuwait's residents are under the age of 35, a demographic structure that naturally embraces new technology and innovation. This youth creates strong demand for digital services and provides a large talent pool for the tech industry. The government sees its young human capital as a strategic asset: a new generation that can pivot from oil-era jobs into ICT, startups, and knowledge economy roles. As one observer noted, Kuwait is "betting on...a young talent base" as it repositions for the post-oil era.

National Upskilling Initiatives: To harness this talent, Kuwait has launched aggressive training and upskilling programs. The Central Agency for Information Technology (CAIT) and partners train thousands of Kuwaitis annually in digital skills like AI, cybersecurity, cloud computing, and coding. In the span of just 2020-2021, CAIT trained over 4,000 government employees in IT and ran digital leadership workshops for dozens of public-sector leaders. This effort has only expanded. Current initiatives like the National Digital Transformation Academy aim to train 5,000+ Kuwaitis each year in emerging tech fields. The private sector is pitching in as well: tech majors like Microsoft, Huawei, and Amazon Web Services have all sponsored training programs or academies in Kuwait to build local expertise. The clear goal is to fill the digital skills gap and ensure Kuwaiti youth can compete in, and lead, the new economy.

Academic and R&D Leadership: Kuwait's universities and research institutions are also stepping up in the digital realm. Kuwait University has established an AI and Robotics lab that is conducting research on machine learning applications, often in collaboration with international partners. Meanwhile the Kuwait Foundation for the Advancement of Sciences (KFAS) is funding research



national broadband network is being rolled out to connect homes, small businesses, and government institutions on a single fiber backbone. High-speed fiber-to-the-home and fiber-to-the-office projects are well underway, extending affordable high-bandwidth access across the country. This inclusive connectivity drive ensures that not only urban centers, but also smaller municipalities benefit from the digital economy. Early evidence shows that widespread broadband is boosting e-commerce activity, digital education, and ICT growth for SMEs. The outcome is that widespread broadband access contributes directly to Kuwait's economic diversification. In short, the foundations are laid for a truly nationwide digital ecosystem.

Government and Public E-Services:

E-Government Transformation: Few Gulf states

in 2021, Sahel quickly gained traction; it has now been adopted by over three million users who can access over 450 services through a single login. Through Sahel, a citizen can receive government notifications, renew their civil ID, pay bills, make medical appointments, and more. All in one place. The app's success is evident: more than 100 million government e-transactions have been processed via Sahel as of this year, reflecting huge time and cost savings for the public. Officials are continually adding new features and even an English version to serve expatriates, pushing Kuwait's digital government toward greater inclusivity and convenience.

Digital IDs and E-Signatures: Kuwait has implemented a fully integrated Digital Civil ID system, which is now accepted across both public and private sectors. The country's Public Authority for Civil Information (PACI)

Advocating for Humanitarian Causes Through Diplomacy

Continuing our series on 'Honoring Women Reshaping World Diplomacy', The Times Kuwait talks this week with **H.E. Nisreen Rubaian**, Representative of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees in Kuwait, on the increasingly vital role and influence that women bring to diplomacy, She also elaborates on the signature styles and approaches that women bring to leadership on the international stage.

The Times Kuwait Report

What inspired you to pursue a career in diplomacy?

It has always been a dream to work in the humanitarian and diplomacy field. It grew inside me and I knew it was the only thing I wanted to do. This was also triggered by my mother, who is a daughter of a diplomat, who was my best motivator to



My career with UNHCR started at a young age back in 2000, and since then, I am more than happy that I chose this path and decided to advocate for humanitarian causes through diplomatic relations.

What challenges have you faced as a woman in diplomacy, and how did you overcome them?

Females may face different challenges as diplomats, namely having to be far away from family, losing an opportunity to share memorable moments at times because work obligations require you to be away. Which adds to the burden of life-work balance.

I am lucky to be working in an international organization where these challenges are actually taken into consideration and policies are made to counter them. The UN system is keen on offering equal opportunities for both genders, addressing the representational gap and putting in place policies to protect both males and females from work challenges.

How do you think gender influences diplomatic styles or approaches?

Gender can significantly influence diplomatic approaches, not because women and men are inherently different in capability, but because of socialization, expectations, lived experiences, and the way gender roles are constructed and reinforced in both domestic and international arenas.

Traditionally, diplomacy has been a male-dominated field, with stereotypes associating effective diplomacy to be led by men. While women may still be underrepresented in diplomatic fields, they can bring unique perspectives and skills to diplomatic roles, particularly in areas like social and cultural affairs, and peacebuilding.

For example, the diwaniya cultural gatherings are very influential and key in Arab countries, and particularly

in Kuwait and other GCC countries. Recently, we started to see a progressive move in Kuwait empowering 'Women Diwanis' and offering female diplomats the chance to interact and exchange with the local community regardless of gender restrictions. This reflects Kuwait's empowerment to both gender and its progressive diplomatic approach.

Can you share a moment when you felt you made a meaningful impact through your diplomatic work?

My work experience in Libya has to be the closest to my heart which I value deeply. I was able to work closely with partners to ensure that women and children refugees are able to secure permanent solutions in a safe and dignified manner and be able to live a decent life after facing severe persecution that forced them to leave countries of origin!

My work as a humanitarian gives me purpose to keep going regardless of the challenges that are getting tougher year by year. It does sometimes get to me, however, working closely with partners across different governments, sectors and domains, as well as serving refugees and displaced populations, keep me motivated to achieve the impact we aspire as global citizens to see in this world.

What leadership qualities do you believe are essential for success in this field?

Essentially, leadership qualities are key. This involves being close to your team, focusing on solutions, taking decisions and understanding your partners and respecting different cultures, no judgement and zero tolerance to toxic environments and work breaches.

What advice would you give to young women aspiring to join the foreign service?

Throughout my service in Kuwait, I came across many aspiring young female volunteers who personally taught me



a lot. My advice to them is to never underestimate what change they can bring. The new generation is full of hope, innovation and creativity, and they know exactly what future they will need. So, to all females getting into Foreign service in future, focus on harnessing your skills into shaping the future you want to have.

How can diplomacy better reflect the diversity of the societies it represents?

In my opinion, diplomacy is made to overcome these differences and diversities, while respecting them. Diplomacy is our bridge to gap these diversities, and to maintain an open, constructive and respectful dialogue no matter what.

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enter into this field. Also, after pursuing my higher studies in the field of Law, I became more certain that I would like to put this knowledge I learned into the service and help of those who need to have justice serving them right.



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Canada, Kuwait ties built on shared values, respect for diversity

Canadian envoy bids farewell to Kuwait after an impactful tenure marked by a transformative diplomacy, humanitarian triumphs and lasting partnerships.

By Reaven D'Souza
Executive Managing Editor

Ambassador of Canada H.E. Aliya Mawani expressed her deep gratitude to the government and people, both citizens and residents who supported her during her three-and-a-half-year tenure in Kuwait. She recalled arriving in Kuwait in November 2021, at a time when COVID-19 restrictions were just being lifted, to begin a new era of cooperation between Canada and Kuwait, marked by openness and a focus on strengthening bilateral relations in all fields.

"At that time, people were rediscovering human interaction after the pandemic, which created the perfect environment for me as an ambassador to engage in warm and dynamic relationships," she said.

Ambassador Mawani emphasized that Canada has long viewed Kuwait as a strategic partner, particularly since the establishment of a Canadian military contingent at the Ali Al Salem Air Base. This base serves as a hub and allows Canadian forces to play a vital role in both humanitarian and security operations across the region—from Iraq to Lebanon. Speaking of the evacuation efforts following the

cooperation. Another MOU to promote development cooperation.

"What stands out to me, personally, is the openness and enthusiasm I've encountered from Kuwaiti institutions. There's a clear willingness to engage, to collaborate, and to grow—qualities that make partnership truly meaningful. Canada and Kuwait share more than just economic or security interests—we are aligned in our belief in multilateralism, international law, and a commitment to a safer, more prosperous world.

"The 60th anniversary of diplomatic relations offers a unique opportunity for collaboration: Kuwait holds the presidency of the GCC, while Canada holds the G7 presidency. Both countries are in leadership positions within their respective international groupings, and this alignment offers momentum for dialogue and cooperation at a global level. Amid a rapidly changing world, it has never been more important to maintain strong, values-based partnerships.

"We must continue engaging with each other, talking regularly, and building bridges in new areas as new challenges and opportunities arise. Looking ahead, we anticipate a meeting between our foreign ministers during the UN General Assembly in New York. This will mark the next major step in deepening our bilateral ties, and discussions will continue beyond that on areas like strategic cooperation, mobility, and more."

On the issue of expanding cooperation across various sectors, the Canadian envoy noted that the Canada-Kuwait relationship has seen tangible growth in several key areas, including trade and investment, healthcare, education and scientific research, artificial intelligence and data protection, security and defense cooperation.

In healthcare, she praised the collaboration between Kuwait's Ministry of Health and the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada, which conducts the annual Canadian Board exams in Kuwait. An increasing number of Kuwaiti institutions now seek Canadian accreditation due to Ottawa's high academic standards.

She disclosed, approximately 450 Kuwaiti students study medicine in Canada each year, and all available seats are filled annually. "It has been such a pleasure to connect with doctors and healthcare professionals trained in Canada who are leaders and mentors in their fields across Kuwait and I'm proud that Canadian education is contributing to Kuwaiti society in this way."

There is growing interest among Kuwaiti women to pursue education in Canada — a reflection of the trust in its academic environment. We are working to strengthen cooperation with Canadian universities and gain recognition for them in Kuwait," said the envoy.

"Canada is also a leader in Artificial Intelligence, and we have been actively working to foster B2B partnerships and innovation exchanges in this fast-moving sector. Similarly, food security is another critical area where Canada has much to offer as a major global producer and innovator in agricultural technology.

"Thanks to our work across sectors, Kuwait has become Canada's third-largest market in the GCC, a testament to the strength and diversity of our economic ties. We're continuing to build in key sectors like defense, security, education, and healthcare—responding to Kuwait's priorities and offering solutions that align with our shared values.

Ambassador Mawani described her experience as a female diplomat in Kuwait as overwhelmingly positive. She praised the leadership role of Kuwaiti women in academia, women leaders in the private sector and civil society and educational institutions and commended Kuwaiti society for its support of female diplomats.

"I never felt discriminated against or faced obstacles because I was a woman. On the contrary, I had full freedom to engage with all sectors, from women-led events to formal diplomatic meetings."

She also praised Kuwait's media landscape, calling it active, respectful, and rooted in a culture of dialogue and openness. She said the embassy's relationship with local media fostered trust and transparency. "Kuwaiti media is distinguished by its ability to manage debates professionally



and respectfully, even in the face of differing opinions."

Ambassador Mawani noted that Canada's visa application process is now entirely online and fingerprinting and passport submission is done through the VFS application office in Kuwait City. She noted that visas are generally granted for the validity of the passport to make things more efficient for travelers. Regarding regional developments, Ambassador Mawani stated that Canada is closely monitoring rising tensions with concern, and supports regional stability, adherence to international law, and multilateralism. Canada is working with partners in the region, particularly the United Nations, to promote de-escalation and peaceful resolution of conflicts. Canada is also engaged in UN reforms to maintain a relevant and effective multilateral system. As current president of the G7, Canada plays a role in convening parties, both within and outside the G7, to address regional and global challenges.

Asked what it is about Kuwait that she will miss most after leaving Kuwait, Ambassador Mawani said, three things about Kuwait that I will always treasure are the warmth and openness of the people and the deep friendships that I formed here. Another is the rich and fantastic Kuwaiti cuisine. And, on a professional level, I will miss the unique

Ambassador Mawani praised Kuwait's media landscape, calling it active, respectful, and rooted in a culture of dialogue and openness. She said the embassy's relationship with local media fostered trust and transparency. "Kuwaiti media is distinguished by its ability to manage debates professionally and respectfully, even in the face of differing opinions."

environment that Kuwait offers of an openness that fosters real opportunities to collaborate and to turn conversations into impactful programs, such as partnerships with the ICRC, the UNHCR, and the Kuwaiti government initiatives.

The Canadian envoy disclosed that at the end of her tenure in Kuwait she will be playing a key role at the headquarters implementing Canada's Arctic foreign policy and engagement, which is a top government priority. She explained that this would allow her time to be closer to family and spend time with her parents in Canada. Ambassador Mawani also revealed that her successor will be Tara Scheurwater, a seasoned diplomat who has previously served in Japan and India. She wished Scheurwater all success during her upcoming posting in Kuwait.



Thanks to our work across sectors, Kuwait has become Canada's third-largest market in the GCC, a testament to the strength and diversity of our economic ties. We're continuing to build in key sectors like defense, security, education, and healthcare—responding to Kuwait's priorities and offering solutions that align with our shared values.

fall of Kabul, she noted that "Kuwait was instrumental in helping us evacuate close to 4000 Canadians and Afghans."

Among other notable milestones in Canada-Kuwait relations was the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) on Strategic Dialogue, covering political, commercial, educational, health, and security

Security campaigns in 2025 lead to arrest and deportation of thousands

In a sweeping crackdown on illegal residency and criminal activities, Kuwaiti authorities have deported over 19,000 expatriates in the first half of 2025 alone, marking one of the country's most aggressive enforcement drives in recent years.

Authorities in Kuwait, spearheaded by the Ministry of Interior (MoI) have been implementing a no-tolerance policy against residency violators and those involved in criminal activities, resulting in the arrest and deportation of over 19,000 expatriates in just the first half of this year.

The ongoing widespread campaign is aimed at reducing if not eliminating the presence of illegal residents in the country, and curbing unlawful activities by deporting those arrested in public interest, or being involved in alcohol or drug-related cases.

The deportations were through both judicial and administrative channels. While judicial deportations followed formal court rulings for crimes ranging from theft and drug possession to violent offenses, summary administrative deportations were for a range of offenses.

According to official details released by the MoI, the authorities have carried out dozens of coordinated security campaigns across the country since the start of 2025, leading to a spike in the number of law violators arrested and deported. The security campaign is part of Kuwait's broader strategy to regulate its labor market, enforce immigration laws, and safeguard internal security.

Figures from the Mol show that on 13 January the ministry deported 648 persons. These deportations stemmed from 28 separate security campaigns, which also resulted in the detention of 509 visa violators. The operations primarily targeted individuals with expired visas or those working in violation of their residency status.

Between 19–23 January the authorities conducted coordinated raids across the country that led to the arrest of 461 persons and the deportation of an additional 505. Notably, many of those deported during this wave were not only in breach of immigration regulations, but were also involved in more serious criminal offenses.

Law enforcement efforts escalated further between 11–18 May, with another concentrated round of security operations that resulted in the arrest of 1,084 violators of residency regulations, as well as those engaged in illegal employment or working under unauthorized sponsors.

Perhaps the most substantial enforcement phase took place during May and June, when the Deportation and Detention Department at MoI announced the deportation of around 6,300 expatriates. Those deported in this wave included individuals apprehended through wide-reaching security campaigns and those referred from departments such as criminal investigations, labor inspection units, and residency affairs.

The arrests and deportation in the first half of the year underlines the fact that despite the opportunity offered during multiple amnesty campaigns in the past to rectify their residency status or exit the country voluntarily, thousands of illegal residents chose to stay on, in the belief that they could evade arrests.

However, following the end of the amnesty period, thousands of illegals were arrested, fingerprinted and deported and barred from entering Kuwait and the five other Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries as per an agreement between members of the six-nation GCC bloc.

Fake drug case backfires; five men and a stateless woman end up behind bars

The Criminal Court, presided over by Counselor Hamoud Al-Shami, sentenced three Interior Ministry employees to 10 years in prison with hard labor, imposed a fine of 10,000 Kuwaiti dinars on each, and ordered their dismissal from service.



The men in uniform were convicted of fabricating a report that falsely accused a Kuwaiti man of possessing narcotic and psychotropic substances.

The court also handed down 10-year prison terms with hard labor and 10,000-dinar fines to a stateless woman and two accomplices. They were found guilty of conspiring with the 'Interior' men to frame him the victim.

The court's verdict underscores a zero-tolerance stance against abuse of authority and the manipulation of justice for malicious purposes.



Amnesty periods in the past have allowed thousands to exit the country or amend their residency status. The

most recent amnesty initiative ran from 17 March to 30 June, offering illegal residents an opportunity to either correct their status or voluntarily exit the country without penalties. The amnesty period was subsequently extended by a further month.

Media reports indicate that an estimated 1,000 people per day visited the Residence Affairs Departments between April and June of 2024, during the then prevailing amnesty period, and either regularized their stay or left the country voluntarily.

Although Kuwait is reliant on a large

expatriate workforce for many of the services rendered to the county, the authorities have over the past few years tightened residency and labor law enforcements due to demographic and economic pressures.

While taking a tough stance on illegal residents, the government has also not spared those who aid and abet such unlawful activities, irrespective of whether the perpetrators were citizens or residents. Penalties for those who shelter or employ undocumented migrants range from KD600 per offense in fines and/or up to six months imprisonment.

A promotional advertisement for Exotica Cafe. The top left features the 'Exotica Cafe' logo in green and red. The top right shows a logo for 'Mughal Mahal' with the text 'SINCE 1985' and 'مغل محل' (Mughal Mahal). The main text in large yellow and white letters reads 'We are OPEN for BREAKFAST AT 7:00 AM'. Below this, a large image shows a breakfast meal: a long sandwich filled with lettuce, tomato, meat, and cheese, served on a white plate. Behind the sandwich is a white cup of coffee with latte art and a tall, clear plastic cup of orange smoothie with a white circular logo that says 'Exotica Cafe'. At the bottom, the address is written in Arabic and English: 'تيراس مول السالمية - مظل على شارع الخليج شارع سالم المبارك' and 'Terrace Mall Salmiya Overlooking Gulf Road Salem Al Mubarak Street'. The phone number '1800 188 / 5501 1985' is displayed in large yellow digits at the very bottom.



Ms. Mpungose, Acting Head of Mission (AHoM), pictured with Embassy staff and Officials from the Public Authority of Manpower (PAM) and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MoFA)



Ms. Mpungose, Acting Head of Mission (AHoM), signed the visitors' book at the shelter, marking the Embassy's meaningful visit and commitment to supporting the residents.



Engaging with women residents at the shelter through outdoor volleyball and indoor billiards - fostering connection and fun through sports and activities.

In Mandela's footsteps South African Embassy spreads hope, dignity, unity

"67 minutes of compassion, a day of kindness in tribute to Mandela as his legacy lives on at Women's Shelter in Jleeb"

The Embassy of South Africa marked Nelson Mandela International Day, which is observed annually on 18 July, with a heartfelt tribute and an act of solidarity at the Public Authority of Manpower (PAM) Women's Shelter in Jleeb Al-Shuyoukh.

Led by the Acting Head of Mission, Busisiwe Mpungose, the event emphasized the enduring legacy of Nelson Mandela and the universal call to action, kindness, and justice. In her remarks, Ms. Mpungose highlighted the 2025 theme for the Day, "It's still in our hands to combat poverty and inequity," describing it as a poignant reminder of Madiba's enduring call for justice and humanity.

She echoed Mandela's famous words, "It is in your hands to make our world a better one for all, especially the poor, vulnerable, and marginalized," urging everyone to embrace their responsibility in shaping a more equitable world.

Ms. Mpungose praised the collaboration with Kuwait's Ministry of Foreign Affairs, particularly the Humanitarian Rights and

Africa Affairs Departments, and the Public Authority of Manpower, acknowledging their tireless efforts to support vulnerable persons in Kuwait. She noted that such partnerships reflect Mandela's vision of collective service to humanity and reinforce the relevance of his ideals in today's world.

"Mandela Day is not just about remembering a great man," she stated, "but about continuing his legacy of kindness, care, and humanity in our daily lives."

The Embassy's 2025 commemoration included a 67-minute visit to the PAM women's shelter, symbolizing Mandela's 67 years of public service. The delegation, led by Ms. Mpungose, engaged in a variety of recreational activities with the shelter's residents—ranging from indoor billiards to outdoor volleyball — to promote unity, healing, and emotional well-being. The team also received detailed briefings about the shelter's critical services, including legal aid, healthcare, and psychological support.

In a gesture of solidarity and compassion,



Engaging with women residents at the shelter through outdoor volleyball and indoor billiards - fostering connection and fun through sports and activities.

the Embassy donated clothing to support the needs of the residents. Ms. Mpungose commended the dedication of the shelter's staff and reiterated South Africa's commitment to human rights and empowerment, particularly for women in vulnerable situations. Addressing the women and families at the

shelter, Ms. Mpungose expressed admiration for their strength and resilience. "We stand here to encourage you to remain hopeful for the brighter days ahead," she said.

She also conveyed warm greetings and wishes of good health and success to His Highness the Amir of the State of Kuwait, Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, and His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Mubarak Al-Sabah. She concluded with wishes for continued peace and prosperity for the people of Kuwait.

On Nelson Mandela International Day, people across the globe are encouraged to dedicate 67 minutes to community service in honor of the 67 years Mandela spent in public life fighting for equality and human rights. This year's commemorative visit in Kuwait not only celebrated Mandela's legacy but also symbolized a deep commitment to compassion, partnership, and human dignity. Ms. Mpungose concluded by saying: "Every act of kindness counts. Let's make today another step toward a better tomorrow."



A cultural sojourn: Indian Heritage booth charms visitors at Avenues Mall

Avenues Mall, virtually a vibrant global village is hosting 'Around the World' event exhibiting a stunning display of India's rich cultural tapestry through the Indian Heritage booth. The exhibit is quickly becoming a crowd favorite, offering an immersive experience of India's timeless traditions, artistic mastery, and contemporary fashion revival.

Positioned as a colorful celebration of India's diversity, the booth draws in visitors with its striking visuals and interactive attractions. From the sparkle of handmade jewelry to the tactile allure of textiles, every corner tells a story.

One of the standout features is the saree try-on experience, which invites guests to step into the elegance of Indian heritage by draping themselves in one of the country's

most iconic garments. It's not just a photo opportunity — it's a moment of cultural connection.

Central to the booth is a curated collection of traditional handcrafted jewelry, showcasing techniques that date back centuries. Styles such as Kundan, Meenakari, and Polki take center stage, shimmering under the lights and reflecting the intricate workmanship of Indian artisans. Each piece carries with it the legacy of generations, offering a wearable glimpse into India's royal past.

Equally captivating is the selection of handloom fashion, designed for today's style-conscious global woman. The collection, made with eco-friendly fabrics like Khadi, Chanderi, and Ikat, bridges the gap between heritage and modernity. These pieces blend traditional weaves with minimalist

silhouettes, making them both fashionable and sustainable — a nod to India's evolving design narrative.

More than just a shopping experience, the Indian Heritage booth serves as a cultural ambassador, introducing Kuwait's cosmopolitan crowd to the diversity, elegance, and soul of Indian craftsmanship. Whether you're drawn to the tactile beauty of handwoven cloth, the sparkle of age-old jewelry, or the joy of trying on a saree for the first time, the booth promises a journey through India without leaving the mall.

The "Around the World" exhibition continues to offer a passport-free adventure through global cultures, but it's the Indian Heritage booth that leaves a lasting impression — one rich in history, artistry, and a shared celebration of tradition.

New rules to prevent money laundering in real estate, jewelry trade

Ministry of Commerce and Industry has issued Ministerial Resolution No. (25) of 2025, outlining new rules and procedures for identifying and addressing violations related to money laundering and terrorist financing among real estate brokers and dealers in precious jewelry.

The resolution categorizes 19 specific violations based on Law No. (106) of 2013, its executive regulations, and related ministerial decisions. These violations are classified according to their risk level: four of these are considered low risk violations, nine have been labeled medium-risk, and five are categorized as high-risk violations.

The ministry clarified that the goal of imposing financial penalties is not to punish or harm the violating parties, but rather to enforce compliance and strengthen Kuwait's efforts in the global fight against financial crimes.

This regulatory step reflects ongoing efforts to tighten controls over specific non-financial businesses and professions (DNFBPs), which are often vulnerable to being misused for illicit financial activities. The decision aims to ensure transparency and legal accountability across both sectors.

'Sovereignty is not for sale, freedom is not for bargain'...

35 years on, Kuwait still stands tall

"Kuwait stands firmly grounded in political and democratic stability. It honors its past while advancing confidently into the future. The wounds of invasion still linger in the Kuwaiti consciousness, but the message to the world is loud and clear: Sovereignty is not for sale, the homeland is not to be taken, and freedom is not to be bargained."



By Sheikhha Suhaila Al-Sabah
Managing Editor

Each year on August 2, Kuwait commemorates a day that remains deeply etched in the nation's collective memory: the anniversary of the brutal Iraqi invasion in 1990.

Now marking its 35th year, the remembrance comes at a time when the region has witnessed profound changes—not least in the evolving and significantly improved relationship between Kuwait and Iraq, which, despite the deep scars, has progressed steadily toward reconciliation and cooperation.

The invasion was a shocking chapter in modern history—a treacherous dawn when the Iraqi forces stormed into Kuwaiti territory, trampling on sovereignty, human dignity, and every principle of international law.

But what began as an act of aggression quickly ignited a historic wave of resistance. The Kuwaiti people—both men and women—responded with unparalleled courage, from civil disobedience and underground resistance to the tireless efforts of the legitimate Kuwaiti leadership in exile, which galvanized global opinion and diplomatic momentum.

Those dark days witnessed unforgettable sacrifices. Hundreds of Kuwaiti citizens were martyred in defense of the homeland, including national icons like Martyr Faisal Al-Sanea, who chose death over submission, and Mubarak Al-Nowat, who gave his life defending constitutional legitimacy. Women-led protests defied bullets and repression, breaking the silence of occupation and planting the seeds of a new Kuwaiti history.

After seven months of occupation, Kuwait



was liberated on 26 February 1991, at the hands of a historic international coalition led by the United States under UN Resolution 678, in what became known as Operation Desert Storm. This operation not only restored Kuwait's freedom but also reshaped global military and political balances at the dawn of the post-Cold War era.

But the end of the occupation did not mark the end of the story. Iraq faced years of UN sanctions under Chapter VII due to the crimes of its former regime—sanctions that strained the Iraqi people and affected the entire region.

With the fall of Saddam Hussein's regime in 2003, a new chapter began. Successive Iraqi

governments have since sought to turn the page, building relationships based on mutual respect and good neighborliness.

This year's commemoration is symbolically significant, reminding us not only of the tragedy of the invasion but also of the maturity of Kuwaiti-Iraqi relations. Bilateral ties have reached unprecedented levels of coordination, as reflected in the historic 2012 visit of the Iraqi Prime Minister to Kuwait and the participation of the late Amir of Kuwait in the Arab Summit in Baghdad the same year.

Today, Kuwait and Iraq stand as an example of what can be achieved through genuine political will. Officials on both sides affirm

that the majority of outstanding issues have been resolved, and both countries are moving confidently toward a more stable regional partnership.

Yet this rapprochement has not come at the cost of Kuwait's national memory. The government and citizens alike insist on preserving the memory of the invasion—not to dwell on pain, but to pass on the lessons of dignity and patriotism to future generations.

Efforts to document the period extend beyond politics. Civil society organizations, in particular the Association of Families of Martyrs, Prisoners, and Missing Persons, have played a vital role in cultivating a culture of remembrance. Through publications, films, calls to name streets after martyrs, and efforts to include their stories in the national curriculum, they ensure that the flame of memory remains alive.

Equally, the heroic role of Kuwaiti women during the invasion must never be forgotten. Women were 'on the frontlines', engaging in civil resistance and sacrificing their lives for sovereignty and legitimacy. Martyrs like Wafa Al-Amer and Asrar Al-Qabandi embody this spirit. Their stories have been documented in Arab encyclopedias, highlighting that heroism in Kuwait was not limited to any single group—it was a nationwide epic of resistance.

Though Kuwait paid a heavy price, what followed was a stronger, more united country with a solid constitutional foundation and a vigilant civil society. The October 1990 Jeddah Conference captured this spirit—where Kuwaitis reaffirmed their unwavering commitment to their legitimacy and constitution as non-negotiable principles.

Today, 35 years later, Kuwait stands firmly grounded in political and democratic stability. It honors its past while advancing confidently into the future. The wounds of invasion still linger in the Kuwaiti consciousness, but the message to the world is loud and clear: Sovereignty is not for sale, the homeland is not to be taken, and freedom is not to be bargained.

May God bless the souls of Kuwait's martyrs and protect Kuwait and its people from all harm.



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Embassy of Benin commemorates 65th Independence Day

As Benin marked its 65th Independence Day with a vibrant celebration in Kuwait, the event underscored not only national pride but also the strengthening of more than five decades of diplomatic, economic, and cultural ties — signaling a shared vision for deeper Arab-African cooperation and mutual growth.

The Times Kuwait Report

The Embassy of Benin in Kuwait celebrated its 65th Independence Day, a day which has a special significance for the Beninese community in Kuwait and highlights the deepening ties between Cotonou and Kuwait City.

The Independence Day celebration was attended by the chief guest Deputy Assistant Foreign Minister for African Affairs, Ambassador Nayef Al-Mudhaf, ambassadors accredited to Kuwait, invited guests and the Beninese community.

In his remarks commemorating the occasion, Benin's Ambassador to Kuwait, H.E. Professor Baderou Dine Aguemou, described the 65th Independence Day as more than a celebration of sovereignty; it is a collective pledge toward a brighter and more collaborative future. The Day serves not only as a moment of national pride but also as a reaffirmation of the country's commitment to building a future anchored in peace, prosperity, and international cooperation.

He emphasized that modern Benin is a forward-looking, open, and ambitious republic, eager to strengthen strategic partnerships with Kuwait and other Arab nations. "The Embassy stands ready to serve our citizens and provide all necessary support for Kuwaiti investors interested in exploring opportunities in Benin," stated Ambassador Aguemou.

Highlighting the country's favorable business environment, the ambassador pointed to Benin's steady economic growth, political stability, and attractive tax incentives. He invited Kuwaiti companies to invest in key sectors such as agri-industry, logistics, tourism, renewable energy, and digital services, encouraging robust public-private partnerships that could benefit both nations.

He extended heartfelt thanks to His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah and His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah for their continued support of the growing bilateral relationship. He also praised the warm reception and spirit of cooperation extended by the Kuwaiti government and people. Turning to

the Beninese community in Kuwait—estimated at around 10,000 members—Ambassador Baderou hailed them as the true ambassadors of their homeland. He commended their positive contributions and strong values, urging them to remain unified and continue enhancing Benin's reputation abroad.

In conclusion, the ambassador expressed his hope that the Kuwait-Benin relationship will evolve into a model for broader Arab-African cooperation. "Our shared future holds great promise for fruitful collaboration that meets the hopes and ambitions of both our peoples," he said.

For his part, Ambassador Al-Mudhaf, affirmed that relations between Kuwait and the Republic of Benin span more than 50 years and are marked by deep-rooted ties and fruitful cooperation across various sectors. He revealed that 11 bilateral agreements have been signed, including one on skilled labor, with an active joint committee and ongoing political consultations strengthening bilateral frameworks.

He revealed that coordination is underway

to arrange a visit by Benin's Foreign Minister to Kuwait, with an official announcement expected once preparations are finalized. Foreign ministers of both countries previously met in Antalya, Turkey, last April to discuss topics of mutual interest and future cooperation, with further meetings anticipated.

Regarding the domestic labor agreement, Al-Mudhaf said negotiations are still ongoing, expressing hope for a near-term resolution. He emphasized that labor agreements aim to protect the rights of both parties and align with local laws, though some provisions may require amendments due to differences in legislation—necessitating additional time.

Al-Mudhaf also underscored that Kuwait, through the Kuwait Fund for Arab Economic Development (KFAED), has extended 14 development loans to Benin, amounting to approximately KD42 million, reflecting the depth of their development partnership. He praised the contributions of Kuwaiti charities, especially Direct Aid Society, for their efforts in supporting humanitarian and development projects in Benin.



Shrimp-fishing season begins, emphasis on sustainable fishing

Public Authority for Agriculture Affairs and Fish Resources announced the start of the shrimp fishing season on 1 August for vessels operating in Kuwait's territorial waters.

Announcing this in a statement on its social media handle, the Authority confirmed that Director-General Eng. Salem Al-Hai has given the green signal for shrimp fishing, provided the fishing vessels obtain the necessary permits beforehand.

The announcement also clarified that shrimp fishing in Kuwait's territorial waters, for vessels

licensed to fish by trawling, will begin only on 1 September. These vessels must be equipped with environmentally friendly Kufa nets, as part of the Authority's sustainable fishing policy.

The directive aims to support the replenishment of marine life and ensure a stable supply of shrimp in the local market following the seasonal fishing ban. The Authority called on all fishermen and vessel operators to fully comply with regulations to help preserve Kuwait's marine ecosystem and safeguard fish stocks.

New regulation for charities bans politicization

In a bid to streamline and improve efficiency as well as increase transparency in the charity sector, Minister of Social Affairs and Minister of Family and Childhood Affairs, Dr Amthal Al-Huwailah, has issued Ministerial Resolution No. 183 of 2025, establishing new organizational regulations for charity societies.

The resolution, which came into effect with its publication in the official gazette, Kuwait AlYom on 3 August, abrogates previous regulations outlined in Resolution No. 48/A of 2015. The updated regulations comprehensively govern the formation, structure, management, and oversight of charitable associations across Kuwait. They emphasize transparency, integrity, and national unity, aiming to prevent sectarian or political influence within the nonprofit sphere.

Under Article 5, the resolution outlines the following seven key conditions that must be met for the official registration and operation of any charitable organization:

- Kuwaiti citizenship is mandatory for all founders and general assembly members, who must be at least 21 years old. Members of the board of directors must be 30 or older.
- The number of founders must be no fewer than 10, and all must have a clean legal record, particularly regarding crimes of honor or trust—unless their legal status



has been rehabilitated.

- Founders must submit a declaration of commitment to the association's charitable objectives. Founders must waive any demand for government-provided headquarters, rent payments, or annual financial support from the Ministry.
- The association must serve to fill a real gap in community care within Kuwait.
- Founders are required to uphold national unity, avoiding sectarianism, tribalism, and any involvement in religious or political disputes.
- The organization must be strictly charitable and non-profit, with no intent to generate material gain.

The new regulations reinforce the government's commitment to community cohesion, responsible civic engagement, and accountability in charitable work, ensuring these entities operate with a clear public interest focus.

IOM Commends Kuwait's Efforts in Combating Human Trafficking

On the occasion of World Day Against Trafficking in Persons, observed annually on 30 July, the International Organization for Migration (IOM) agency in Kuwait, commended Kuwait's continued efforts and proactive measures to address human trafficking through a coordinated victim-centric approach.

The global community is marking the World Day Against Trafficking in Persons, this year under the theme, 'Human Trafficking is Organized Crime—End the Exploitation'. The theme highlights the urgent need to dismantle criminal networks and ensure comprehensive support for survivors.

In a statement issued on the occasion, the Migration Agency noted that human trafficking remains a grave violation of human rights, affecting millions of people worldwide. The statement added that the IOM is committed to combatting this crime through a multifaceted approach encompassing prevention, protection, prosecution, and partnerships.

The State of Kuwait has demonstrated a strong commitment to tackling human trafficking through a comprehensive national strategy for 2025–2028. This strategy focuses on strengthening legal frameworks, implementing a national referral system, enhancing the capacity of enforcement agencies, and fostering regional and international cooperation.

Kuwait has enacted robust counter-trafficking legislation, including Law 91 of 2013,

and continues to improve deterrence and enforcement. The establishment of a national referral system ensures that victims receive timely and effective support. Specialized training is provided to law enforcement and relevant agencies to build their capacity to identify, investigate, and respond to trafficking cases, while cross-border cooperation remains a key pillar of Kuwait's approach.

"On this World Day Against Trafficking in Persons, we recognize the State of Kuwait's leadership role in combating human trafficking through its national strategy, legal reforms, and victim-centered protection. The 2025 theme highlights the organized and harmful nature of trafficking. Continued collaboration among government, civil society, and international partners is essential to dismantle trafficking networks and ensure justice and support for survivors. IOM Kuwait remains committed to this mission," said Mazen AboulHosn, IOM Kuwait's Chief of Mission.

The fight against trafficking must be anchored in training and coordination. Law enforcement, immigration officials, healthcare



Mazen AboulHosn
IOM Kuwait's Chief of Mission

workers, and consular staff must be able to detect signs of trafficking and respond with a victim-centred approach.

These national efforts are further amplified by Kuwait's leadership at the regional level. The successful hosting of the Sixth Government Forum to Combat Human Trafficking in the Middle East, held earlier this year demonstrated Kuwait's commitment to advancing protection and justice for victims of trafficking.

The forum produced key outcomes, including the launch of a unified Gulf digital platform to enhance cross-border information sharing and the initiation of a revised regional strategy focused on labour market reforms and comprehensive victim protection.

IOM Kuwait remains committed to working alongside national and regional partners to implement these outcomes and strengthen coordinated responses aligned with international standards.

Around the world, survivors of trafficking are arrested, prosecuted, and jailed for crimes they were forced to commit—ranging from immigration violations to drug smuggling and cybercrime. This misidentification is not only unjust—it actively benefits traffickers by silencing victims and destroying key evidence.



Moroccan Embassy celebrates 'Throne Day'

The Times Kuwait Report

Ambassador Of Morocco H.E. Ali Ben Issa, praised the strength and depth of Moroccan-Kuwaiti relations, describing them as built on a solid foundation of trust and mutual respect.

Speaking to reporters during a reception hosted by the Moroccan Embassy in celebration of Throne Day, Ambassador Issa highlighted the broad scope of cooperation between the two countries. He noted that the relationship spans political, economic, and cultural fields, and reflects the strong bonds between the leaderships and peoples of both nations. He added that the bilateral harmony serves as a model for successful Arab partnerships and provides a firm platform for further cooperation and integration in the future.

"The presence of Minister Al-Huwailah embodies the good, solid, and close relations between the Kingdom of Morocco and the State of Kuwait," the ambassador said.

He emphasized that while political relations are robust, economic, trade, and investment cooperation should rise to meet the same level of engagement. He also called for greater efforts to elevate economic, trade, and investment

relations to match the already strong political ties. He noted that while existing agreements and ongoing cooperation are in place, more active engagement is needed. "We are working closely with various Kuwaiti institutions, and I sincerely thank Kuwaiti officials for their continuous support and desire to expand our bilateral relations," he added.

Turning to the tourism sector, the ambassador revealed that Morocco welcomed approximately 17.5 million tourists last year, including over 23,000 Kuwaiti visitors—a significant increase from previous years, which saw around 16,000 to 17,000 Kuwaiti tourists annually. He attributed this growth to Morocco's rising global tourism appeal and noted that Kuwait Airways now operates four weekly flights to the Kingdom, signaling increased demand.

As for investments, the Moroccan envoy stated that Kuwaiti investments in Morocco have a long-standing presence and that the Kingdom is actively working to modernize its economic infrastructure to attract more investors, particularly from Kuwait. "We offer a favorable environment and clear incentives for Kuwaiti investors from both the public and private sectors," he said.

Government affirms commitment to implementing major projects

His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Al-Abdullah chaired the 21st meeting of the Ministerial Committee at Bayan Palace, to follow up the implementation of agreements and memoranda of understanding signed between Kuwait and China. The committee reviewed the latest progress in various development projects, including key areas of cooperation with China.

These include the Mubarak Al-Kabeer Port project, development of the national electrical grid and renewable energy systems, establishment of a low-carbon green system for waste recycling, housing development, wastewater treatment infrastructure, and development of free and economic zones. Discussions also covered joint efforts to combat desertification.

His Highness directed the committee to reinforce a spirit of initiative and achievement in advancing Kuwait's economic development. He emphasized that recent positive indicators in economic growth and the influx of foreign investments reflect the success of the committee's work and Kuwait's

progress toward fulfilling the goals of its comprehensive development plan, aligned with the vision of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah.

The Prime Minister underscored Kuwait's strong and serious commitment to deepening strategic ties with China, particularly in accelerating the implementation of large-scale development projects that contribute to expanding economic relations between both nations.

Assistant Foreign Minister for Asian Affairs and committee rapporteur, Ambassador Samih Jawhar Hayat, presented follow-up reports on the execution of agreements with China. He noted that high-level official communications between the two sides are advancing rapidly under leadership directives to elevate bilateral relations.

Ambassador Hayat also revealed that Kuwait is set to receive four official delegations from major Chinese state-owned enterprises next month. These visits aim to explore investment and cooperation opportunities in infrastructure, logistics, and other vital development sectors.

PAM handles over 20,000 labor complaints in six months

The Public Authority for Manpower announced it received 20,898 labor complaints related to work permits during the first half of this year, alongside 21,350 absenteeism reports and job termination notices. During this period, 7,827 absenteeism reports were officially dropped.

According to the Authority's semi-annual statistics, the majority of complaints focused on work permits. These included issues concerning family reunification, employer transfers, final exit cancellations, and sectoral transfers—altogether accounting for 9,430 complaints. This was followed by 8,646 individual labor disputes.

The Authority also rejected 843 absenteeism reports, citing that the establishments in question were either closed or did not exist. In addition, 3,341 complaints were escalated to inspection teams, and 1,200 complaints were

filed manually outside the electronic system.

On the sheltering front, a total of 1,362 workers were received by shelter centers during the first six months of 2025. This included 110 men at the Hawalli shelter and 1,252 women at the Jleeb Al-Shuyoukh center, along with 15 children.

In terms of digital services, the Authority processed over 1.129 million electronic transactions via the "Ash'al" platform for employers. Of these, 41.2% were completed by employees, with the remainder processed automatically.

Additionally, 59,908 transactions were manually completed by Authority staff, 16,100 were handled through the "Sahl Business" app, 154,608 via the Labor Services Portal, and 81,272 through the Inspection app. The Authority also facilitated 3,252 student training opportunities.

Law establishes PACA, replaces DGCA in governing civil aviation

Civil aviation in Kuwait marked a historic turning point this week with the issuance of a new Civil Aviation Authority Law. Decree Law No.85 of 2025 establishes the Public Authority for Civil Aviation (PACA) to succeed the Directorate-General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) in governing civil aviation in Kuwait. The new law aligns with international standards set by the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) and regional aviation bodies.

Announcing this transformation, former Director-General of DGCA and now the Chairman of PACA Sheikh Hamoud Mubarak Al-Hamoud Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, pointed out that new law comes 65 years after Kuwait first introduced legislation governing civil aviation through Law No. 20 of

1960 and Decree No. 27 of 1960.

Sheikh Hamoud emphasized that the new law strengthens the authority's independence and regulatory capabilities, bringing Kuwait in line with best international practices in aviation oversight and management.

He affirmed that PACA is committed to enhancing safety, efficiency, and sustainability in the sector, in accordance with the vision of Kuwait's leadership. The law also supports efforts to modernize airport operations, improve services for passengers and airlines, and boost Kuwait's position in



global aviation forums.

Additionally, Sheikh Hamoud noted that the law contributes to diversifying Kuwait's non-oil revenues and enables the authority to serve national interests with greater transparency and professionalism.

He extended heartfelt thanks to His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled, and the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Al-Abdullah for their unwavering support to the civil aviation sector in the country.

Kuwait: The GCC's Quiet Digital Disruptor

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 2

grants and incubators for AI, renewable energy tech, and other innovations. KFAS has been at the forefront of supporting local startups and even runs programs to bring cutting-edge tech education (like AI and data science bootcamps) to Kuwaiti students and professionals. Such efforts are cultivating a homegrown research community that can adapt global technologies to local needs. The presence of these knowledge institutions ensures Kuwait's digital push is grounded in local capacity-building and not just imported expertise. Over time, this will help drive a sustainable, innovation-driven economy.

Fintech and the Digital Economy:

Regulatory Innovation (Open Banking): Kuwait's financial regulators are embracing innovation to make the country a fintech-friendly hub. The Central Bank of Kuwait (CBK) has launched a regulatory sandbox (called 'Wolooj') and issued a comprehensive Open Banking framework. One of the first comprehensive Open Banking frameworks in the region, this allows fintech startups and banks to safely test new digital banking products (like open APIs, digital wallets, and AI-driven financial services) under CBK oversight. The open banking regulations, rolled out in 2025, encourage banks to collaborate with fintech companies and give customers more control over their financial data. By proactively updating rules and encouraging experimentation, the Central Bank hopes to spur a wave of fintech innovation. From mobile payments and peer-to-peer lending to personal finance apps. All the while keeping risks in check. Early results are promising. A digital ecosystem where multiple Kuwaiti banks are piloting open API services, and a homegrown fintech firm approved to trial open banking services in the sandbox. At the same time legislation has been adapting to the new landscape.

AI-Powered Banking Services: Established banks in Kuwait are also evolving. Leading Islamic banks such as Boubayan Bank, as well as conventional players like National Bank of Kuwait (NBK), are investing in AI-driven customer onboarding and biometric KYC solutions. For example, some banks now use facial recognition or fingerprint biometrics to let customers open accounts or apply for loans remotely, with AI algorithms instantly verifying IDs. A process that used to take days now is done in minutes. Kuwait's banking sector, guided by the Central Bank, mandated biometric registration for all customers recently as a security measure, and even froze accounts of those who failed to provide fingerprints. These measures underscore how seriously Kuwait takes fintech modernization and security. Banks are also deploying AI chatbots (Boubayan's 'Msa3ed' being an example) for customer service and using data analytics to personalize product offerings. The upshot is a banking experience that is increasingly digital-first and user-centric, aligning with global fintech trends.

Booming Digital Payments: Thanks to high internet and smartphone penetration, Kuwait has seen a surge in digital payments and fintech adoption. Cashless transactions have soared. A recent study showed Kuwait now leads the GCC in digital payment usage, with about 92 percent adoption of non-cash payment methods, and 99 percent of in-person payments being contactless via tap cards or mobile wallets. The Central Bank's promotion of platforms like K-Net (a national electronic payments network) and support for Apple Pay, Samsung Pay, etc., have greatly modernized the consumer payment landscape. Fintech startups are emerging in areas like e-wallets, online remittances, and buy-now-pay-later services, often under the wing of the Kuwait Fintech Center or supported by venture funding from local investors. The government's emphasis on cybersecurity (as highlighted by partnerships with companies like Visa to improve fraud prevention) further boosts public trust in digital finance. All these factors contribute to a vibrant digital economy where money moves faster, and new financial products can take root.

Startup Ecosystem: Kuwait's broader startup ecosystem is steadily expanding, especially in digital sectors. By some counts, over 120 tech startups have been incubated or

funded through government programs like KuwaitTech and by organizations such as KFAS and the National Fund for SMEs. Many of these startups focus on fintech, e-commerce, logistics tech, and online services. Reflecting the digital needs of a young, connected market. The government has introduced business-friendly reforms (easier licensing, startup visas, funding schemes) to encourage entrepreneurship. Notably, a 'Digital Future Fund' was established with a \$200 million allocation specifically to invest in Kuwaiti tech startups and AI ventures. Early success stories include fintech apps for Islamic banking, ride-hailing and delivery services, and e-learning platforms that are now scaling in the GCC region. While Kuwait's startup scene is smaller than that of the UAE or Saudi Arabia, it is growing rapidly and benefits from strong public-private support networks. Each successful startup further validates the possibility of a diversified, innovation-led economy beyond oil.

Key National AI and Digital Economy Players:

Kuwait's digital transformation involves a constellation of government agencies, research bodies, and companies each playing a role:

Organization	Role & Focus
Central Agency for Information Technology (CAIT)	Leads national IT policy, e-government governance, and overall digital strategy coordination. CAIT implements key initiatives like the national data center and has driven the digitization of government services (+90%) target (over the past decade).
Kuwait Foundation for the Advancement of Sciences (KFAS)	Provides R&D funding, tech grants, and startup support. KFAS has sponsored AI research programs and incubators, helping bridge academia and industry and seeding the growth of tech startups in Kuwait.
SABAH.AI	The country's national AI platform named after the ruling family (focused on predictive analytics). It is used for developing AI solutions in governance and industry and exemplifies Kuwait's push for indigenous AI capabilities.
Digital Future Fund	A 200\$ million government-backed fund dedicated to investing in technology startups and AI ventures. It provides venture capital and mentorship to promising Kuwaiti and regional tech companies, ensuring they have the resources to scale.
Kuwait University's AI Laboratory	A research hub for machine learning and robotics at Kuwait University. It churns out skilled graduates and homegrown innovations and collaborates with global universities to keep Kuwait on the cutting edge of AI and automation research.
ZainTech & STC Kuwait	The digital services arms of Kuwait's major telecom operators (Zain and STC). They offer cloud computing, data center services, and AI solutions. These companies are key private-sector partners in building Kuwait's digital infrastructure and have launched local data centers and 5G-powered services.

(Together, these players form the backbone of Kuwait's digital ecosystem. Combining government direction, funding, talent development, and enterprise-level execution.

From Oil to Algorithms: The New Kuwaiti Narrative:

Kuwait's transformation from an oil-based economy to a digital-driven future is characterized by a few distinctive traits:

Low Profile, High Impact: Unlike some of its Gulf peers, Kuwait has been relatively quiet in its digital rise, making steady progress without constantly seeking the spotlight. The impact of that progress is now being felt. Major tech investments are translating into tangible outcomes: faster government services, new tech jobs, and increased foreign investment interest. As one regional tech expert remarked, Kuwait "has always had the capital and the talent but now it is matching that with bold digital execution," with momentum building to the point that it is only a matter of time before the region and world take closer notice. In other words, Kuwait is becoming a 'sleeping giant' in GCC tech, content to let results speak louder than hype.

Scale and Sustainability: Kuwait's digital strategy is built for national scale and long-term sustainability rather than quick wins. The state-led approach, backed by the massive KIA fund, treats digital transformation as a form of industrial policy and even national security strategy.

Public-private partnerships are robust: Telecom companies, banks, and global tech firms are all tied into executing the national vision. Kuwait is also careful to balance rapid innovation with stability. For instance, rolling out new fintech services in a controlled sandbox to get regulations right. This measured approach means Kuwait's digital infrastructure and policies are being designed to stand the test of time. The country is effectively future-proofing its economy, ensuring that today's projects (from smart grids to AI education) will yield sustainable benefits for decades. In the GCC context, where regional influence will hinge on prowess in AI, data, and connectivity, Kuwait's focus on 'digital neutrality, internal know-how, and a young talent base' positions the country for the long game.

Navigating Challenges: The journey is not without challenges. Kuwait recognizes that it must continually update its regulatory frameworks, data privacy laws, and cybersecurity defenses as it goes digital. For example, crafting comprehensive personal data protection rules is on the to-do list, as is enhancing legislation to combat cyber threats. There is also the ongoing task of streamlining bureaucratic procedures to be more tech-friendly (a known hurdle in Kuwait's public sector). However, these issues are being actively addressed. New cybersecurity centers have been established, and draft data privacy regulations have been introduced. Officials stress that the opportunities far outweigh the challenges, and that maintaining public trust through strong cyber safeguards is paramount. By tackling these concerns head-on, Kuwait is strengthening the foundations of its digital future even as it builds upon them.

To conclude, Kuwait is quietly shifting its national narrative from oil to algorithms, backed by prudent investment and strategic vision. The country has managed a digital leap in a short time without much fanfare. It is now positioning itself as a formidable digital disruptor in the Gulf. From nearly ubiquitous 5G coverage and AI-enabled services to a generation of youth being trained for high-tech jobs. Kuwait's story is one of 'low noise, high momentum' progress. The nation's economic engine, once fueled solely by hydrocarbons, is increasingly powered by cloud computing, data centers, and code. If current trends continue, Kuwait's transformation could well become a model of sustainable digital development. One where a rich state reinvented itself through technology, while preserving the stability and welfare of its people. Do not let the lack of buzz fool you: Kuwait's digital revolution is real, and it is building towards a breakthrough moment. The Gulf's quiet achiever may soon demand a much louder share of the region's tech spotlight.



Peru marks 204th Independence Day, 50th year of diplomatic ties with Kuwait

As Peru celebrated its 204th Independence Day in Kuwait, the occasion took on added significance — marking 50 years of diplomatic relations with Kuwait and reaffirming a deepening partnership rooted in mutual respect, shared values, and a growing economic alliance.

The Times Kuwait Report

Embassy of Peru commemorated the 204th Independence Day of the country with a special celebration in Kuwait, reflecting not only Peru's rich history and enduring values of freedom and peace but also the growing bond between Peru and Kuwait.

The event served as a dual celebration—honoring Peru's national milestone and the 50th anniversary of diplomatic relations between Peru and Kuwait, highlighting a legacy of friendship, cooperation, and mutual respect.

The event was attended by the chief guest of the evening, Assistant Foreign Minister for Development and International Cooperation Affairs, Ambassador Hamad Al-Meshaan,

diplomats of several countries and invited guests.

Speaking on the occasion, Ambassador of Peru H.E. Carlos Enrique Tomas Jiménez Gil, reaffirmed the strength of bilateral relationship and his country's commitment to standing by Kuwait in times of need. "We pledge before God and before you that Peru will continue to stand by Kuwait in support and cooperation whenever needed." He added that his nation remains eager to foster new partnerships with Kuwait in a wide range of fields.

He also took the opportunity to mark a major milestone in Peru's national history, as it marked the 204th anniversary of its independence. The ambassador described this occasion as a moment of deep national pride, honoring Peru's longstanding values of

freedom, openness, and peaceful coexistence.

"Peru has always been, and will remain, a land of peace and liberty," he declared. "Since gaining independence, our country has welcomed the world with open arms—embracing diverse peoples and cultures, integrating them into our social fabric, and providing a safe, inclusive home for all who seek peace, equality, and dignity."

In his concluding remarks, Ambassador Jiménez Gil underscored that in Peru, freedom is more than just a political system; it is a fundamental promise to every citizen. "Freedom in Peru is not just about governance; it is a pledge that every voice matters, that everyone has the right to choose, and that each individual has the power to shape their own future."

As both nations look to the future, this golden

jubilee of diplomatic ties serves as a testament to the strong foundations of mutual respect, shared values, and strategic cooperation that continue to define Peru-Kuwait relationship.

For his part, Ambassador Hamad Al-Meshaan, highlighted the enduring friendship between the two countries. He noted that Kuwait's diplomatic ties with Peru began in 1975, and that the two nations have already signed three key agreements, with 13 additional agreements currently under negotiation.

Ambassador Al-Meshaan also pointed to the growing economic partnership, stating that Kuwaiti investments in Peru have now reached half a billion US dollars. He expressed optimism about further enhancing investment opportunities and deepening collaboration in the years ahead.

Fourth Ring Road maintenance to conclude by mid-2026

Municipal Council member Eng Alia Al Farsi said the Public Authority for Roads and Land Transport has confirmed the completion of maintenance work on the Fourth Ring Road by mid-2026, according to the official project timeline provided in response to her recent inquiry.

Al Farsi explained that, based on responses from both the Kuwait Municipality and PART, current work on the Fourth Ring Road includes asphalt paving, rainwater drainage, earthmoving, concrete repairs, guardrail restoration, bridge pillar maintenance, and camera wiring.

However, she emphasized that these activities are not part of the "AH/218" agreement, which pertains to the full-scale development of the Fourth Ring Road. That agreement, she noted, is still in the final tendering phase, with design and tender documents under preparation.

Al Farsi added that although the preliminary design for the road's development was previously reviewed by the Municipal Council and initially faced technical rejection due to

various comments, the project was eventually approved in accordance with regulations.

Despite her satisfaction with ongoing maintenance, Al Farsi raised concerns about resource duplication, stating, "I am pleased with the current maintenance work, but I do not understand the logic of conducting maintenance on a road that is already set for redevelopment. Doesn't this represent duplication and waste?"

In response to her inquiry about defacements and the role of Kuwait Municipality in addressing them, the executive body clarified that any modifications outside the scope of the work site require municipal licensing.



Kuwait approves sweeping amendments to residential construction code to boost investment and urban development

The head of the Technical Committee of the Municipal Council, Munira Al-Amir, has announced the approval of major amendments to the construction requirements for residential complexes both within and outside Kuwait City.

These changes, described as some of the most significant regulatory updates in recent years, were the result of extensive discussions within the Technical Committee and among relevant authorities. The primary aim is to streamline construction procedures, encourage real estate investment, and enhance urban planning and design outcomes across the country, reports Al-Rai daily.

Al-Amir explained that the revisions were guided by the principles of simplifying language, unifying standards, and ensuring a balanced approach between investor interests and societal well-being. Many outdated or repetitive clauses were removed, while new provisions were added to reflect contemporary construction practices and urban development needs.

A key change is the unification of the definition for a "residential complex," which now refers to a group of investment buildings—apartments, villas, duplexes, or studios—constructed on a minimum area of 2,000 square meters, regardless of whether the complex is located inside or outside Kuwait City.

In terms of design flexibility, the updated regulations introduce radical changes to building ratios. Developers are now allowed to construct up to 400 percent of

the plot area within Kuwait City and up to 250 percent outside, with additional allowances of 30 to 80 percent depending on the total plot size.

Notably, the limit on the floor area for each level has been eliminated, allowing developers more freedom in distributing building heights and interior layouts. Setback requirements have also been standardized, with a minimum of 3 meters on all sides, and shared basements or adjoining structures permitted under clear municipal conditions.

The committee also preserved the investment dimension of residential complexes by maintaining the 5 percent allocation for commercial services, subject to strict conditions. Shops may now be built along internal or main roads, either within the main structure or as standalone buildings, as long as they do not obstruct key access points and stay within the allowed limits.

Each shop must be at least 20 square meters, and developers may use the first basement—or part of it—for recreational purposes such as swimming pools or gyms, while still prioritizing its use for parking.

A new clause for mixed-use residential complexes has also been introduced within Kuwait City. This allows the



integration of residential and commercial functions on plots of 2,000 square meters or more, provided that commercial activities do not exceed 30 percent of the total 400 percent building ratio.

Commercial units are to be located on the ground and first floors (shops) and second and third floors (offices), while mezzanine floors are prohibited. Importantly, developers

must separate commercial and residential access points and provide distinct parking areas for each function.

The amendments also cover investment plots outside the city, allowing combinations of residential, commercial, and hotel uses within a single plot, provided that residential units occupy at least 3,000 square meters. Only one type of commercial use is allowed per building unless specific conditions are met.

The regulations emphasize the need for sufficient parking on-site. Finally, in a socially responsive move, the amended code mandates disability-accessible design, the inclusion of gender-friendly restrooms, and offers incentives—such as an additional 30 percent building allowance—to developers who collaborate with the Public Authority for Housing Welfare to provide community service units.

Major Revamp of Healthcare to Enhance Efficiency, Quality, Accessibility

Kuwait's healthcare system transforming into a model of excellence that rivals global standards, as the result of sustained efforts guided by Kuwait's leadership, which has placed

Healthcare remains at the forefront of national priorities for the government, resulting in significant developments in healthcare systems through sustained efforts over the decades. Today, Kuwait has a modern and integrated healthcare infrastructure supported by advanced technologies and comprehensive medical services that aim to meet the evolving needs of its population.

In a recent statement to state media, Assistant Undersecretary for Engineering Affairs and Projects, Eng. Ibrahim Al-Nahham pointed out that the Ministry of Health (MoH) is currently executing a national health strategy in line with Kuwait's broader development plan, focusing on expanding major hospitals, increasing capacity, upgrading healthcare centers, and introducing state-of-the-art technologies across services to ensure efficiency, quality, and accessibility.

He added that in this regard several major projects are either underway or recently completed. These include the new Maternity Hospital in the Sabah medical zone, which is built to the highest international standards. An integrated facility that merges advanced medical technologies with compassionate patient care, the new Maternity Hospital is designed to address women's health and



neonatal care, incorporating environmentally friendly and energy-efficient building standards.

Highlighting other significant health projects underway, Al-Nahham noted that the 88,710-square meter new Al-Sabah Hospital, currently under construction in the Sabah medical zone, is designed as an independent and self-sufficient structure that will provide both general and specialized healthcare services.

The hospital comprises three towers, a parking facility, and an engineering services building, and it will include 512 inpatient beds, 105 intensive care beds, 72 outpatient clinics, and a helipad, with all necessary medical departments integrated within.

Another key project is the Communicable Diseases Hospital, built on 74,000 square meters, has the capacity for 224 patient beds, and includes departments for emergency care,



radiology, pharmacy, medical records, and support services..

The new Kuwait Cancer Control Center, which is being developed within the Sabah medical zone on a total area of 303,536 square meters has a 226,525-square meter main cancer treatment hospital, which is divided into two towers: the western tower for outpatients and the eastern tower for inpatients, with a total capacity of 618 beds. The facility features fully automated systems, and both towers are equipped with advanced mechanical and electrical infrastructure to support specialized cancer care.

To the south of the country, in the Ahmadi Health District is the new Al-Adan Hospital complex, which is currently being developed within the Al-Adan Hospital area. The complex includes seven separate buildings interconnected through underground tunnels.

The complex features a maternity and pediatrics hospital covering 226,369 square meters, with 637 fixed and 471 mobile beds, 14 floors, a basement, and a helipad for emergencies.

The second building, the surgical and central services facility, spans 34,417 square meters and includes 141 mobile beds across two floors, the third is a physical therapy and rehabilitation center built over 28,525 square meters with a basement and three upper floors.

The Ahmadi Health District Administration and a parking building, with a total area of 118,696 square meters across eight floors, and the remaining buildings serve as parking structures and strategic storage facilities.

These projects reflect Kuwait's commitment to implementing the goals of its development vision 2035, particularly in enhancing the healthcare sector. Meanwhile, MoH is also reported to be working to strengthen international cooperation, attract global expertise, and adopt leading healthcare models to improve the quality of care and ensure the long-term sustainability of the healthcare system.

In line with this vision, the ministry is investing in national human resources through training programs, scholarships, and partnerships with local and international academic and health institutions. These efforts aim to develop a new generation of skilled healthcare professionals equipped to meet future health challenges.

August 2: A Homage to Martyrs, a Tribute to National Unity

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Remembering 2 August provides us with a similar opportune moment to build a better, stronger, more resilient, peaceful and equitable Kuwait. It also reminds us to solemnly bow our heads in honor and gratitude to the countless men and women who stood up to the invasion. Acting individually or collectively, these bravehearts stood firm in the face of a brutal invasion and occupation. Many of them ended up as martyrs, paying with their lives for the freedom and sovereignty we enjoy today.

The invasion, occupation and subsequent liberation of Kuwait should be etched deep in our national consciousness. If we allow 2 August to slowly fade from our memories, the sacrifices of martyrs and hardships endured by people through the invasion and occupation will have been in vain. We need to remember that those who resisted the invasion and occupation, acted not only to safeguard their homes, families, and friends, but also to protect the sovereignty and integrity of Kuwait, and the rights of people to a life of their choice, in peace under a free Kuwait flag.

We must embrace and remember 2 August even more fervently with each passing year and decade, and never allow it to be erased or diluted from our national sentience. Perhaps the authorities will formalize this day as a national Remembrance Day, and build a dedicated monument to honor the martyrs, and to pay tribute to the resilience, steadfastness, and unity displayed by the nation in the face of a vicious invasion and seven-month long occupation

A dedicated Remembrance Day will remind generations to come of the sacrifices made by their forebears, as well as the horrors of wars and conflicts, and the need for peace. It will also help foster in future generations the value of freedom, and that eternal vigilance is the price of freedom. Vigilance not just against external menaces, but also from internal threats to national unity, identity, and sovereignty, as well as to subversions of democratic processes.

For those born after 2 August, or did not live

through the invasion and occupation, those brutal days and months may be nothing more than imaginative stories far removed from their daily lives. This raises the importance of instilling national pride and patriotic sense in children from a very young age. In this regard, the 'Education Reform Plan for 2025-2027', presented last week by the Minister of Education Eng. Sayed Jalal Al-Tabtabaei, is a step in the right direction.



The planned reforms include updating curriculums from kindergarten to ninth grade, with the focus on shaping young people's awareness, and planting the seeds of loyalty and belonging in them, as well as promoting national identity as a firm pillar that safeguards the country's freedom, security and stability. The second of August should serve to remind future

generations of their responsibility to sustain the peace and freedom bestowed on them, and pledge to keep the flag of freedom flying high over Kuwait forever.

On this occasion, a look back on history in local media is pertinent: The treacherous assault and subsequent heinous occupation of Kuwait remains the darkest chapter in the country's history. The forces of the former Iraqi regime aimed to erase Kuwait's identity, sovereignty,

moments of the invasion, the Kuwaiti people and leadership displayed unparalleled national unity and defiance against the aggression.

As the occupation dragged on, the Iraqi regime intensified its atrocities, looting and destroying public and private properties, as well as killing and maiming resistance fighters and innocent citizens. Despite these horrendous acts, the people stood firm against the aggression, rejected the occupation's false legitimacy, and rallied around their rightful leadership, igniting a national epic that culminated in the liberation of Kuwait on 26 February 1991.

In the waning days of the occupation, realizing their imminent defeat, the Iraqi forces unleashed a scorched-earth policy. It set ablaze 752 oil wells, sabotaged infrastructure, planted mines, dug oil trenches, and released oil into the seas. These vicious acts caused one of the worst environmental disasters in history. In contrast, Kuwait's political leadership rose to the occasion with courage and foresight.

The late Amir Sheikh Jaber Al-Ahmad, Father Amir Sheikh Saad Al-Abdullah, and then-Foreign Minister Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad (later Amir) played historic roles in mobilizing international support and navigating the crisis with wisdom and determination. Diplomacy became Kuwait's most potent weapon, uniting the Arab world and galvanizing global support, achieving a rare international consensus for liberation and justice.

Globally, the response was swift and resolute. The UN Security Council issued Resolution 660, condemning the invasion and demanding Iraq's immediate withdrawal. What followed at the United Nations was a succession of binding resolutions under Chapter VII, laying the legal foundation for the formation of a powerful and righteous international coalition to liberate Kuwait.

Today, the annual August 2 commemoration is marked not by anger, but by remembrance, resolve, and a call for peace. Kuwait has turned tragedy into testimony—proof of a people's strength, a leadership's wisdom, and a nation's unshakeable values. On this 2 August let us rededicate ourselves to these noble values.

and existence as an independent state and a respected member of the international community.

The invasion and occupation was not only a military agenda, it was also a political strategy aimed at dismantling an entire nation. But what the invaders did not anticipate was the firm will and unity of the Kuwaiti people. From the earliest

EXCLUSIVE TO THE TIMES KUWAIT

Europe's Economic Surrender



By Alberto Alemanno

Professor of European Union Law at HEC Paris and visiting professor at the College of Europe in Bruges and Natolin, is Founder of The Good Lobby, is the author of Lobbying for Change: Find Your Voice to Create a Better Society



When US President Donald Trump and European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen shook hands at Trump's Scottish golf resort on Sunday, they were not just announcing a new trade deal—they were formalizing Europe's economic and ideological surrender. By agreeing to 15 percent tariffs on most exports to the United States, the European Union has capitulated to Trump's zero-sum worldview. In doing so, it has abandoned the principles of multilateralism that have long guided global trade.

The economic consequences are immediate and severe. European exporters now face tariffs nearly ten times higher than the previous trade-weighted average of 1.6%. Volkswagen alone has reported a €1.3 billion (\$1.5 billion) hit due to higher US tariffs.

But the tariff rate itself is just part of the problem. The real damage lies in what the EU agreed to pay for the 'privilege' of maintaining access to the US market: a commitment to purchase \$750 billion worth of American energy over three years and to invest another \$600 billion in the US economy.

These staggering sums will inevitably divert resources from European development and innovation while legitimizing bilateral coercion over the multilateral, rules-based World Trade Organization system. As critics have rightly pointed out, this massive outflow comes

example, could have barred US companies from government contracts, revoked intellectual-property rights, and imposed broader trade restrictions. Yet national leaders, fearing Trump's retaliation and under pressure from domestic industries eager to maintain access to the US market, refused to authorize von der Leyen to use any of these tools, forcing her to negotiate from a position of weakness.

The contrast with other US trading partners could not be starker. When the United Kingdom secured a 10 percent tariff rate from Trump in May, European leaders expressed concern about accepting similar terms. Now, they hail 15 percent tariffs on EU exports as a diplomatic breakthrough. The uncomfortable truth is that Britain, acting alone, negotiated better terms than the EU as a whole.

This failure exposes the fundamental weakness of European governance. Lacking a true EU-wide governance system, the bloc remains incapable of translating competing national agendas into a unified position. With von der Leyen hamstrung by member states prioritizing narrow domestic interests over European cohesion, the result was a deal that pleases no one but Trump and locks Europe into a state of structured dependency.

The EU's failure to push back against Trump is especially troubling given its stated goal of achieving strategic autonomy. Some may argue that the deal – technically not a formal trade agreement but rather a set of statements outlining an ongoing negotiation process – buys time. By appeasing Trump, the argument goes, the Commission has maintained transatlantic ties while creating space for future carve-outs.

But if this were truly a time-buying strategy, we would expect the EU to take concrete steps to advance strategic autonomy: boosting defense spending, accelerating supply-chain diversification, and investing in retaliatory capabilities. Instead, after years of pledging to reduce reliance on foreign powers, EU leaders chose to replace Russian energy imports with American supplies and commit to massive purchases of US military equipment.

Europe's subordination both reflects and reinforces the continent's dependence on US power. For decades, European countries have failed to meet NATO's defense-spending targets, content to shelter under the US nuclear umbrella. Now, the same deference is playing out on the economic front, as the EU proves unable to marshal its collective weight in the face of Trump's pressure tactics. This military and economic dependency has created a structural imbalance that extends across

broader geopolitical objectives. The \$600 billion investment pledge, much of it earmarked for military-equipment purchases, forces Europe to subsidize American defense contractors while undermining its own industrial base.

By giving in to Trump's demands, the EU missed a rare opportunity to demonstrate that large markets cannot be bullied. Instead of setting a powerful precedent for other regions confronting US economic pressure, it has validated Trump's transactional approach, emboldening not only future American administrations but also other global powers eager to turn trade into an instrument of geopolitical coercion.

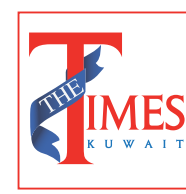
While the immediate crisis may have passed, the long-term damage to EU credibility and autonomy will be long-lasting. The widespread perception that Europe surrenders without resistance will undoubtedly invite further challenges to European interests.

Rather than attempting to shift the blame to von der Leyen, EU member states must ask themselves whether avoiding a trade war was worth abandoning Europe's foundational commitment to multilateralism and forfeiting any credible path toward strategic autonomy. Until European leaders find the courage to break the cycle of dependency by empowering EU institutions to act decisively against external coercion, these humiliating capitulations will only multiply, reducing the continent to a prosperous yet powerless appendage of the American empire.

“Europe's subordination reflects and reinforces the continent's dependence on US power. For decades, European countries have failed to meet NATO's defense-spending targets, content to shelter under the US nuclear umbrella.”

directly at the expense of domestic investment. What makes the EU's surrender especially troubling is how unnecessary it was. As America's largest economic partner, with nearly \$1 trillion in annual trade, the EU has considerable leverage. While the US runs a \$235.6 billion goods deficit with the EU, the bloc's €148 billion services deficit with the US offered clear avenues for retaliation, from digital taxes to restrictions on American tech giants.

Weeks earlier, anticipating a stalemate, European policymakers had prepared counter-tariffs targeting €93 billion worth of American goods. But the EU had far more potent weapons at its disposal. Its Anti-Coercion Instrument, for



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Thought “ for the week

Those who don't believe in
magic will never find it.

– Roald Dahl

When Your Skin Speaks...

Ask Mira: Eating Right to Live Happy & Healthy

Your skin is more than just a reflection of your beauty, it's a reflection of your health. Acting like a mirror for what's happening inside your body, the skin can show early signs of nutrient deficiencies, hormonal imbalances, and even chronic conditions. Here's what some common skin changes might be trying to tell you.

Dull, Dry, or Flaky Skin: Dry skin is often your body's way of asking for more hydration or essential fatty acids. It may also signal deficiencies in vitamins A, C, or E, or poor thyroid function. If your skincare routine isn't helping, take a closer look at your diet and hydration.



Acne and Oily Skin: Persistent acne, (especially in adults), may be a sign of hormonal imbalance or high insulin levels. Diets high in sugar, dairy, and processed foods can contribute to inflammation and clogged pores. Supporting your gut health and managing blood sugar can lead to clearer skin from the inside out.

Redness and Flushing: Sudden or chronic redness can indicate food sensitivities or even liver congestion. Alcohol, spicy foods, and stress can worsen the symptoms. If redness is accompanied by digestive issues or fatigue, it's worth digging deeper.

Hyperpigmentation or Dark Patches: Skin discoloration, especially around the mouth or neck, may be linked to insulin resistance or vitamin B12 deficiency. Women with PCOS often notice these changes. A balanced, low-glycemic diet and targeted supplementation can help address the root cause.

Pale Skin: Pale skin that lacks vibrancy may reflect anemia or low levels of iron, B12, or folate. If accompanied by fatigue, hair loss, or brittle nails, a blood test may be necessary to evaluate nutritional status.

Puffy or Swollen Skin: Facial puffiness may point to water retention, high salt intake, poor lymphatic circulation, or food sensitivities. Supporting detox pathways with antioxidant-rich foods and staying active can help reduce swelling naturally.

Your skin speaks, sometimes louder than you think. By paying attention to what it's showing you, and supporting your health from the inside out, you can unlock not only clearer skin, but better energy and immunity, and long-term wellness.

Eat like Mira
Create healthy habits, not restrictions

To subscribe to my diet programs,
don't forget to log in to:
www.eatlikemira.com.



Mira is a go-to source for nutrition and wellness and has joined The Times Kuwait team in a new weekly column discussing nutrition and answering queries. You can send in your questions to infotimeskuwait@gmail.com

RECIPE

Green Glow Tartare



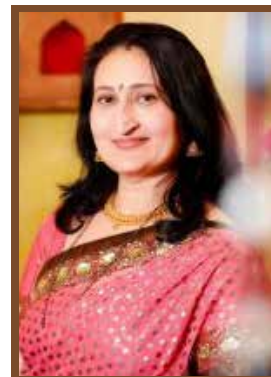
A refreshing, layered tartare made with creamy avocado, juicy tomatoes, and protein-rich moong sprouts, seasoned with lemon and herbs for a zesty vege twist to the traditional raw meat or fish tartare. The colorful, nutrient-packed, gluten-free vegetarian version of tartare can be served both as a starter or a light meal.

Total Time: 25–30 minutes.

Servings: Makes four small tartare portions

Ingredients:

- 1 ripe avocado (Mashed or diced)
- 1/2 cup cherry tomatoes (finely chopped or deseeded)
- 1/2 cup boiled or sprouted green moong (green gram)
- 1 tsp olive oil
- 1/2 lemon juice
- Salt and pepper to taste
- Chopped coriander or parsley
- Finely chopped onions, green chilies for spice (optional)



Chef Chhaya Thakker

Instructions:

- Mix sprouted moong with salt, pepper, lemon juice, and chopped coriander. Set aside.
- Combine chopped tomatoes with a pinch of salt, olive oil, and optional chopped onions or herbs
- Mash or dice avocado, season with lemon, salt, pepper, and herbs
- Use a ring mold or small bowl to assemble the moong, tomato and avocado mixes as layers. Start at the bottom with the moong mix layer, followed by the tomato mix, and topped with the avocado mix layer
- Press gently and unmold onto a plate.
- Garnish with sprouts, or cilantro. Drizzle with olive oil and serve fresh or chilled.



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

Wearable tech simulates real touch sensations

Sense of touch, also known as tactile sense, is one of the most important of our five primary senses, allowing us to detect and process information from inside and outside the body. Touch is fundamental to who we are and to everything we do,

Tactile sense allows us to interact with and understand our environment through physical contact. It enables us to detect various sensations, including pressure, temperature, vibration and pain, through specialized nerve endings in the skin that send a steady stream of information signals to the brain.

Most of the time our tactile sense works in the background without direct input from our side, and despite its primacy to bodily functions there is a lot that we do not know about it. Research on touch has generally lagged behind work on other sensory systems such as sight or hearing.

In a contribution to reducing the gap in our understanding of touch, scientists at Northwestern University in the United States have developed a haptic (touch) substrate that mimics real touch. When it comes to feedback on haptic sensations, most technologies are limited to simple vibrations. But our skin is a complex organ that can detect a whole range of sensations from stretching and contracting to pressure, pain, and temperature differences and more.

The new technology developed by the researchers can now create precise movements to mimic the complex sensations of human skin. The compact, lightweight device they devised is a wireless actuator—a product that converts a signal into mechanical motion or force.

When placed on the skin the new device applies force in any direction to generate a variety of sensations, including vibrations, stretching, pressure, sliding and twisting. It can also combine sensations and operate fast or slow to simulate a more nuanced, realistic sense of touch.

Powered by a small rechargeable battery, the device uses Bluetooth to wirelessly connect to virtual reality headsets and smartphones. Since it is small and efficient, it can be placed anywhere on the body, and combined with other actuators



in arrays or integrated into current wearable electronics.

The researchers said they hope that their device would eventually enhance virtual experiences that include providing assistance to individuals with visual impairments to navigate their surroundings, reproduce the feeling of different textures on flat screens for online shopping, delivering tactile feedback for remote health care visits and even enabling people with hearing impairments to 'feel' music.

Almost all haptic actuators available in the market today just poke at the skin but the tiny actuator in the new device can push the skin in any direction and in any combination of directions. This enables researchers to finely control the complex sensation of touch in a fully programmable way.

In recent years, visual and auditory technologies have experienced explosive growth, delivering unprecedented immersion through devices like high-fidelity, deeply detailed surround-sound speakers and fully immersive virtual-reality goggles. Haptics technologies, however, mostly have plateaued. Even state-of-the-art systems only offer buzzing patterns of vibrations, said the team.

The scientists explained that this developmental gap stems largely from the extraordinary complexity of human touch.

The sense of touch involves different types of mechanoreceptors (or sensors), each with its own sensitivity and response characteristics, located at varying depths within the skin. When these mechanoreceptors are stimulated, they send signals to the brain, which are translated as touch.

Replicating that degree of sophistication and nuance requires precise control over the type, magnitude and timing of stimuli delivered to the skin. This presents a massive challenge, which current technologies have struggled, and failed to overcome. To simulate the complexity of human touch, the Northwestern team developed the first actuator with full freedom of motion (FOM). This means the actuator is not constrained to a single type of movement or limited set of movements.

Instead, the FOM of the device enables it to move and apply forces in all directions along the skin, both individually and in combination with one another. As a result, the new device can be used to produce a remarkable range of tactile sensations. The skin can be pushed in or stretched sideways, and this stretching can happen slowly or quickly, and it can happen in complex patterns across a full surface, such as the full palm of the hand.

Measuring just a few millimeters in size, the device harnesses a tiny magnet and set of wire

coils, arranged in a nesting configuration. As electricity flows through the coils, it generates a magnetic field. When that magnetic field interacts with the magnet, it produces a force strong enough to move, push, pull or twist the magnet. By combining actuators into arrays, they can reproduce the feeling of pinching, stretching, squeezing and tapping. The team also developed computational and analytical models to identify optimal designs, ensuring each mode generates its maximum force component while minimizing unwanted forces or torques."

On the other side of the device, the team added an accelerometer, which enables it to gauge its orientation in space. With this information, the system can provide haptic feedback based on the user's context. If the actuator is on a hand, for example, the accelerometer can detect if the user's hand is palm up or palm down. The accelerometer also can track the actuator's movement, providing information about its speed, acceleration and rotation.

This motion-tracking capability is especially useful when navigating spaces or touching different textures on a flat screen. If you run your finger along a piece of silk, it will have less friction and slide faster than when touching corduroy or burlap. This could help if you are shopping online for clothes or fabrics and want to feel the texture of the fabric.

Besides replicating everyday tactile experiences, the platform also can transfer information through the skin. By changing the frequency, intensity and rhythm of haptic feedback. For example, the team converted the sound of music into physical touch. They also were able to alter tones just by changing the direction of the vibrations. Feeling these vibrations enabled users to differentiate between various instruments.

These are just examples of how the sense of touch could be used individually or to complement another sensory experience. The system could help further close the gap between the digital and physical worlds by making digital interactions feel more natural and engaging through the sense of touch.

AI creates proteins to fight cancer, AMR in seconds

Over the past year there has been a surge in proteins developed by Artificial Intelligence (AI) that could potentially be used to treat everything from snakebites to cancer. A custom-made protein to treat a particular disease would normally take scientists years to create; AI helps achieve this in a matter of seconds.

For the first time, scientists at Monash University and the University of Melbourne in Australia have used AI to generate a ready-to-use biological protein that can kill antimicrobial resistant (AMR) bacteria such as Escherichia coli (E.coli). The study provides a new way to combat the growing crisis caused by antibiotic resistant super bugs.

The researchers developed AI platforms that



are capable of rapidly generating thousands of ready-to-use proteins, paving the way for faster, more affordable drug development and diagnostics that could transform biomedical research and patient care.

According to the researchers, the AI Protein

Design Platform used in this work is the first in Australia that models the work done by David Baker (who won the Nobel Prize in Chemistry last year) developing an end-to-end approach that could create a wide range of proteins. They added that these proteins are now being developed as

pharmaceuticals, vaccines, nanomaterials and tiny sensors, with many other applications yet to be tested.

For this study, the AI Protein Design Platform used AI-driven protein design tools that are freely available for scientists everywhere.

Using these tools, as well as in-house tools developed at the universities involved, the researchers engineered enzymes with improved activity and stability, as well as developed ligands — which are proteins that bind to a receptor on the cell surface or within the cell. The ligands then act as agonists, antagonists, or inhibitors that can trigger or block a cellular response, or interfere with downstream signalling pathways respectively.

Currently proteins used in the treatment of diseases like cancer or infections are derived from nature and repurposed through rational design or in vitro evolution and selection. The new methods using AI and deep learning enable efficient de novo design of proteins with specific characteristics and functions, lowering the cost and accelerating the development of novel protein binders and engineered enzymes,



EXCLUSIVE to THE TIMES KUWAIT

How Central Banks Jeopardized Their Independence



By Otmar Issing

A former chief economist and member of the board of the European Central Bank, is Honorary President of the Center for Financial Studies at Goethe University, Frankfurt.

US President Donald Trump's fierce attacks on Federal Reserve Chair Jerome Powell have attracted global attention, rattled markets, and, perhaps most importantly, sparked debate about the wisdom of central-bank independence—a complex issue with constitutional and economic implications.

Central-bank independence refers to monetary policymakers' authority to make decisions free from political influence, albeit restricted to measures that fulfill the mandate established by the legislature. This independence would be called into question if political leaders could dismiss the central bank's management at any time.

Some critics consider central-bank independence to be at odds with democracy, because it places monetary policy in the hands of 'unelected bureaucrats', underscoring the need for justification. But equating central-bank independence with judicial independence, as is sometimes done, is inappropriate. The legislative branch transfers authority for monetary policy to an independent institution, while the judicial branch determines, when necessary, whether this institution has adhered to its mandate.

The independent status that many central banks currently have is a historical exception. It was only around 1989-90 that independence came to be viewed as necessary to ensure monetary stability. Following the double-digit inflation of the



can revoke this authority just as it can grant it. And all it takes to tip the scales in this direction is a change in political opinion—brought about by a rise in populist parties, for example.

Trump's repeated threats to remove Powell, which prevailing opinion holds is legally impossible, and appoint a successor who would conduct monetary policy according to his wishes demonstrates the system's vulnerability. It is reminiscent of the early 1970s, when then-Fed Chair Arthur Burns yielded to pressure from President Richard Nixon to cut rates—one of the most inglorious eras in Fed history, culminating in the so-called Great Inflation of the 1970s. While one might think that this unequivocally grim outcome had settled the question of central-bank independence, Trump's rhetoric shows otherwise.

The current debate over central-bank independence re-emerged when these institutions were at the height of their prestige. Tragically, monetary authorities fueled the fire by expanding their mandate into areas reserved for parliaments and governments.

After making a significant contribution to a decades-long period of low inflation and steady growth, monetary authorities were celebrated as saviors following their decisive actions in the wake of Lehman Brothers' collapse and the global financial crisis of 2007-08. After all, they, together with fiscal policymakers, had prevented the world from sinking into a second Great Depression.

While the personality cult surrounding Alan Greenspan, who served as Fed Chair from 1987 to 2006, had already taken on grotesque proportions, this reverence spread across the entire central banking world. Global financial market players welcomed central banks' expansionary monetary policies after the 2007-08 crisis and raised expectations about what they could accomplish, partly because of this hero worship, and partly because they were the primary beneficiaries of interest-rate cuts and bond purchases.

These excessively high expectations inevitably led to disappointment, and central banks took a serious reputational hit as a result. Both theory and experience have shown that expansionary monetary policy cannot increase employment and growth in the long term. What it can do is ensure monetary stability and low inflation—the foundations for steady growth and social justice.

By expanding their own understanding of their mandate, monetary authorities became caught up in fiscal policy and triggered inflation—precisely what central-bank independence is intended to avert. To be sure, the decision to implement drastic interest-rate cuts and make massive purchases of government bonds during the global financial crisis was instrumental in preventing an economic catastrophe.

But the longer that quantitative easing continued after the acute crisis passed, and even

with inflation above the 2 percent target, the less justifiable it became. Central bankers were suspected of trying to lower long-term interest rates, thereby facilitating government financing (and potentially supporting weak banks).

Around the same time, central banks were also given additional responsibilities in the areas of banking supervision and macroprudential policy, further blurring the lines between monetary and government policy. With their growing authority,

monetary authorities become increasingly entangled in political debates.

For years, central-bank independence was taken for granted. But that era seems to be over, partly owing to monetary authorities' own actions. The less central banks push the limits of their mandate, the less that they will put their independence at risk. Focusing solely on the mandate requires a certain degree of humility and constant reminders of what monetary policy can and cannot achieve.

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Central-bank independence requires continued support from politicians: the legislature can revoke this authority just as it can grant it. And all it takes to tip the scales in this direction is a change in political opinion.

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1970s and early 1980s, Western politicians began to recognize that when monetary policy is in the hands of the executive, higher and more volatile inflation is inevitable. The temptation to stimulate growth and employment, to the detriment of price stability, is too strong. Governments deliberately decided to disempower themselves.

In 1997, Gordon Brown, then the United Kingdom's Chancellor of the Exchequer, spelled out this new consensus when granting independence to the Bank of England: "The previous arrangements for monetary policy were too short-termist, encouraging short but unsustainable booms ... and higher inflation, which was inevitably followed by recession." He went on to explain that reforming the Bank of England would "ensure that decision-making on monetary policy was more effective, open, accountable, and free from short-term political manipulation."

But central-bank independence requires continued support from politicians: the legislature

CONDOLENCES

The Owners,
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Extend their Heartfelt
condolences to

Mr. Bins Joseph

(Documentation Executive)

and his Family

on the sad demise of his Father



Mr. Joseph Chacko

(Manager Marafie Insurance)

who passed away in Kerala on 03rd August 2025.

May his soul Rest in Peace