



OP-ED

People, Purpose, and
Progress: Unleashing
Kuwait's Vision 2035

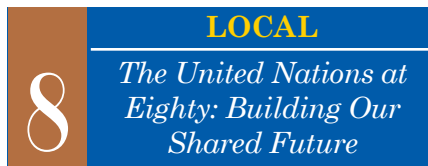
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EU-GCC Business Forum, fostering dialogue, boosting trade, investment

The European Union and the Gulf Cooperation Council will chart a new phase of strategic cooperation in Kuwait next week, advancing economic diversification, sustainability, and innovation across both regions.



By Tareq Yousef Shumaimry
Former Secretary-General of the GCC
Commercial Arbitration Centre

European Union (EU) and the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) are set to mark a significant milestone in their strategic partnership with the 9th EU-GCC Business Forum, to be held at the Sheikh Abdullah Al Salem Cultural Centre in Kuwait City on 5-6 November. The event will bring together high-level officials, business leaders, and innovators to strengthen collaboration in trade, innovation, and investment.

Rooted in the 1988 Cooperation Agreement and the 2022-2027 Joint Action Program, the Forum will push forward efforts to promote climate-friendly trade, investment, and economic affairs, and promote dialogue and cooperation between stakeholders from the EU and GCC at both regional and individual country levels.

The 1988 Cooperation Agreement between the two blocs established regular dialogues on trade and investment issues, macro-economic matters, climate change, energy, the environment, and research. Since signing the Agreement, the EU and GCC have witnessed a significant increase in trade and investment between the two sides.

In 2024, the EU was the GCC's second-biggest trade partner, representing 11.7 percent of the GCC's total trade in goods with the world, with GCC imports from the EU constituting 15.7 percent of the bloc's

billion, 6.0%). Two-way trade in services between the EU and the GCC in 2023 amounted to €75.2 billion, with EU's imports of services representing €25.2 billion and exports €49.9 billion.

In 2024, to further advance their cooperation, leaders of member states of the EU and GCC met in Brussels, Belgium for the first EU-GCC Summit in October. In a joint statement issued at the end of the summit, EU and

GCC leaders stressed their desire to build a strategic partnership based on mutual respect and trust, for the benefit of people in the two regions and beyond.

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Being held under the theme 'Together for Shared Prosperity', the Forum is organized as part of the wider 'EU-GCC Dialogue on Economic Diversification' project launched in 2018. The Dialogue on Economic Diversification has the objective of contributing to stronger EU-GCC relations by leveraging the experiences of the EU to support GCC states as they diversify their economies away from an overdependence on hydrocarbon revenues, and enhancing trade and investment flows between the two sides.

The Forum is hosted by Kuwait, which chairs the GCC presidency in 2025, and supported by the European Commission, GCC Secretariat General, Kuwaiti Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and Kuwait Direct Investment Promotion Authority (KDIPA).

total imports, making the EU the GCC's number two import partner. The EU was also the GCC's fourth-biggest export partner, as 7.9 percent of the region's exports went to the EU.

Meanwhile, in 2024, the GCC remained the EU's sixth-biggest trading partner, sixth-biggest export destination, and tenth biggest importer. EU-GCC total trade in goods in 2024 amounted to €161.7 billion, with EU's imports from the GCC worth €62.3 billion. They were led by fuel and mining products (€47.0 billion, 75.4%) and base metals (€4.1 billion, 6.6%).

The EU's exports to the Gulf region totalled €99.4 billion (+6.2%) and were dominated by machinery and appliances (€29.4 billion, 29.6%), chemicals (15.4 billion, 15.5%), transport equipment (€12.4 billion, 12.5%) and foodstuffs (€5.9



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People, Purpose, and Progress: Unleashing Kuwait's Vision 2035

Kuwait Vision 2035 places people at the center of national transformation. By investing in talent, strengthening communication, and engaging communities, Kuwait can build a future that is innovative, inclusive, and sustainable. This op-ed highlights how talent development, public-private collaboration, and civic participation together form the foundation of a purpose-driven national strategy. A strategy where every citizen has a role in shaping the country's progress.



By Sarah Al Sabah
Special to The Times Kuwait

Kuwait Vision 2035 is more than an economic plan. It is a blueprint for a thriving future anchored in people and purpose. Launched in 2017, the vision aims to transform Kuwait into a diversified, sustainable economy and regional hub led by a dynamic private sector.

True national development does not mean only infrastructure or GDP growth. It is about investing in Kuwait's people and harnessing their potential. The vision calls for a society that mobilizes youth, women, civil society, and the private sector to remain future-ready.

At its core are seven pillars focused on economic diversification, good governance, sustainability, and human capital. Reducing reliance on oil, modernizing public services, and promoting innovation are vital steps, but so are preserving social values and equality. Empowering people through education and opportunity is just as essential as building new infrastructure. This article explores how talent development, strategic communication, and community engagement together form the foundation of Kuwait Vision. Investing in talent, building strong communication systems, and fostering inclusive communities will unlock Kuwait's full potential.

Empowering Talent: Kuwait's greatest resource is its people. Nearly 60 percent of the population is under 25. A generation eager to lead change. Youth empowerment is not a slogan; it is a national strategy. The Creative Human Capital pillar of the vision focuses on developing young talent and increasing women's participation in the workforce. Education reform is central to this effort. Curricula are being updated to strengthen science, technology, and critical thinking. Vocational and leadership programs are helping students bridge classroom knowledge with real-world experience.

Organizations such as LOYAC and INJAZ



Kuwait have been instrumental in nurturing civic responsibility and entrepreneurship. Their programs prepare youth to lead community projects and create businesses that merge purpose with innovation.

Empowering talent also means including



Engaged Communities – Volunteerism & Sustainability: Volunteers in Kuwait planting trees along a coastal reserve, embodying civic participation and sustainable living under Vision 2035."

youth in decision-making. Platforms like the Kuwait Youth Council ensure young people contribute ideas to national policy and reform. When youth are treated as partners, their creativity becomes a national asset.

Strategic Communication: If talent is the engine of Vision 2035, communication is its

in charities and NGOs. As people see measurable results from community initiatives, they are more likely to join.

Civic participation also builds unity. When people from different generations collaborate, they strengthen trust and renew Kuwait's long tradition of social solidarity. Vision 2035 thrives on this collective spirit; a model of inclusive, citizen-driven sustainability.

Partnership for Progress: Delivering Kuwait Vision requires cooperation among all sectors. Public-private partnerships (PPPs) are key to creating value and diversifying the economy. When government and business collaborate, they generate innovation, jobs, and shared growth.

Companies like Zain and the National Bank of Kuwait are investing in digital innovation and youth development. These initiatives align business success with national progress.



Kuwait's digital skyline tells the story of transformation – where technology meets purpose. Under Vision 2035, the nation is building a connected ecosystem that empowers people, amplifies voices, and unites progress through innovation.

compass. For reforms to succeed, citizens must understand, trust, and engage with them. Transparent communication turns plans into shared progress.

Kuwait's strong digital infrastructure supports this. With extensive connectivity, online services, and digital platforms, citizens can access information and participate in dialogue more easily than ever. Communication is no longer one-way; it is a partnership between institutions and the public. Public outreach campaigns, townhall meetings, and youth forums have helped increase awareness and trust. When citizens see tangible results, such as faster services, cleaner spaces, or new jobs, they see themselves as part of the vision.

An informed society is an empowered one. Communication must continue to bridge government, business, and community voices, aligning them around a shared goal: building a prosperous and inclusive Kuwait.

Engaged Communities: Vision 2035 will be realized not only through ministries and boardrooms but through communities. Active citizenship and volunteerism are the heartbeat of national progress. With benefits comes responsibility. As a society a key value to nurture is a sense of deep citizen responsibility towards their country. A country that is the source of their security and identity.

Across Kuwait, civil society and youth groups are leading environmental, educational, and social initiatives. Projects such as AlManakh, founded by young environmentalists, promote climate awareness and sustainable living. Tree-planting, recycling, and clean-up drives show how small actions can create national impact.

The government has supported these efforts by reforming laws that strengthen transparency

Transparent frameworks and fair governance further attract private investment and foster confidence. Such partnerships show that progress is not achieved by one sector alone. Progress is built through shared accountability and shared ambition.

A Call to Action: Building the Future Together: Kuwait Vision 2035 is not a distant aspiration. Kuwait Vision is a responsibility we all share. Policymakers must continue investing in education, innovation, and opportunity. Businesses must drive creativity with purpose and integrity. Communities must stay engaged and united in shaping solutions.

Every action counts. From mentoring a student, launching a start-up to volunteering in a local initiative. Together, these efforts shape the Kuwait of tomorrow.

Kuwait Vision's success depends on our collective will to act now. By empowering people, communicating with clarity, and strengthening community, Kuwait can build a future that reflects its values and fulfills its promise: a nation driven by purpose, powered by its people, and ready for the world.

A Kuwait built by our people, for our people, and with our people.



Talent Development – Youth & Skills: Young Kuwaitis collaborating in a STEM innovation workshop, preparing to lead the knowledge economy of Vision 2035."

Editor's Note: This article was written by Sarah F. Al Sabah, a strategic development professional and contributor to The Times Kuwait. She currently leads initiatives supporting Kuwait's media and policy transformation aligned with Vision 2035. Her work focuses on human-capital development, communication strategy, and sustainable national growth across the public and private sectors.

A European Explorer's Forgotten Tale

Barklay Raunkiaer's desert trip, one of the
best accounts of Arabian Travel



On 24th February, 1912, the day after his twenty-third birthday, Danish explorer Barclay Raunkiaer left Kuwait on a perilous desert journey by camel caravan. His goal was to find a base for a Danish expedition into the great southern desert of Arabia, then quite unknown to the Western world.

By Claudia Farkas Al Rashoud
Special to The Times Kuwait

Originally from California, Claudia Farkas Al Rashoud has enjoyed working in Kuwait since 1979, when she became the first professional female photojournalist for the Arab Times newspaper. She has written five books, with photographs, about Kuwait. Working as a freelance photographer for London-based picture libraries, her articles and photographs have appeared in many publications. She also serves as an ethnographic researcher and consultant.

Claudia has also worked in the field of animal welfare in Kuwait for many years. All proceeds from her books and other work benefit Touch of Hope Kuwait, the largest animal shelter in the country. As a founding board member of the Kuwait Society for Animal Welfare and director of the education program, she gives presentations on animal welfare for schools, universities and community groups. She also speaks on other subjects including Kuwait's history, heritage, natural history and environment, journalism and photography, and palliative care.

Please see @claudia_alrashoud @touch_of_hope_q8 @ksaw_q8

On 24th February, 1912, the day after his twenty-third birthday, Danish explorer Barclay Raunkiaer left Kuwait on a perilous desert journey by camel caravan. His goal was to find a base for a Danish expedition into the great southern desert of Arabia, then quite unknown to the Western world.

For three weeks Raunkiaer had been a guest of the Amir of Kuwait, Shaikh Mubarak Al Sabah, lodging in the Sief Palace while preparing for his trek across largely unmapped desert to Riyadh, Buraidah, Hofuf, and ultimately Bahrain. After bidding farewell to his generous host, Raunkiaer's caravan made its way out of Kuwait town, through streets so narrow that sometimes the camel packs scraped both sides of the walls.

During the long journey, the men endured incredible physical hardship. Raunkiaer had become seriously ill with fever in Kuwait. By the time he reached Riyadh he was barely able to walk, yet still managed to ride, clinging tenaciously to the back of his camel. The fever kept recurring throughout the journey, but despite his weak condition his powers of observation were keen. After his return to Denmark he wrote a detailed account of

his trip titled "Through Wahhabland On Camelback" published in Copenhagen in 1913.

Sadly, Raunkiaer never regained his health and succumbed to tuberculosis just two years later, at the age of 25.

In 1916, Raunkiaer's manuscript was translated from Danish into English and published by Great Britain's Arab Bureau in Cairo. T.E. Lawrence, then affiliated with the Arab Bureau, praised it as one of the best accounts of Arabian travel. But with just one hundred copies printed, it would not have been read by many had it not been discovered by Gerald de Gaury who had it republished in 1968.

De Gaury is himself a fascinating character. A highly-decorated military man and author of many books and articles on Arabia, he served as British Political Agent to Kuwait from 1936-39, directly succeeding Colonel Harold Dickson. Such



a brave and adventurous man as de Gaury warrants much further description, but his story will be told in another article. For now, let's return to Barclay Raunkiaer and his vivid portrayal of Kuwait in 1912.

By the time Raunkiaer reached Kuwait he had already undergone an arduous overland journey from Copenhagen to Baghdad, sailed on a Tigris paddle steamer to Basra, and travelled south on horseback the rest of the way. The first settlement he came to in Kuwait was Jahra, which he described as "a village in flat, open surroundings with about

five hundred inhabitants. North of the houses are a few fields...and a couple of date plantations, the number of palms not exceeding a hundred."

The caravan stopped to water the camels and horses and take a midday rest in the shade of Jahra's Red Fort. Upon leaving, Raunkiaer noted, "We constantly pass Arabs, either singly or in groups driving loaded donkeys—a sign that here is more public security than usually obtained in Arabia."



Raunkiaer's observation was correct. In those days, with most of the Arabian Peninsula in turmoil, Sheikh Mubarak's strong rule of law made Kuwait an oasis of stability. In the desert outside Kuwaiti territory, Raunkiaer once nearly lost his life at the hands of hostile tribesmen but was spared when they learned he was traveling under the protection of Sheikh Mubarak.

Heading south, the approach to Kuwait town on weary horses plagued by flies, had its own austere beauty. "On we go, slowly and limpingly through the grey-green country. Not a breath of wind is astir. Eastwards stretches the Kuwait bay, glittering like a sheet of glass and on the far side of it lies Kuwait, a long low line of yellow dots," wrote Raunkiaer. "Hour after hour passes without our seeming to come any nearer to the town; a beautiful sunset left all the western sky aglow, but it was soon quenched by rapidly falling darkness and still we have not reached Kuwait."

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Turkey, Kuwait relations rooted in shared values, mutual respect

Turkey and Kuwait's friendship stands as a model of regional cooperation, rooted in shared values, mutual respect, and unwavering solidarity," — H.E. Tuba Sonmez, Ambassador of Turkey



The Times Kuwait Report

Relations between Turkey and Kuwait are a distinguished example of friendship and cooperation, rooted in mutual respect, shared values, and deep historical connections, said Ambassador of Turkey H.E. Tuba Sonmez, while addressing the gathering at a ceremony hosted by the Turkish Embassy to mark the country's 102nd anniversary of the Republic.

The event, which was held on 29 October, was attended by Kuwait's Minister of Health

Dr. Ahmed Al-Awadi, along with members of the diplomatic corps, and special invitees. Ambassador Sonmez highlighted that the bilateral relationship has achieved an exemplary level of regional cooperation and strategic understanding under the wise leadership of both nations.

She noted that His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad's historic visit to Turkey in May 2024 marked a significant milestone, initiating a new phase of fruitful collaboration. This was followed by Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan's visit

to Kuwait in October 2025, during which multiple agreements were signed in maritime transport, investment, and energy, supporting the goals of the New Kuwait 2035 vision.

Ambassador Sonmez also expressed gratitude for Kuwait's swift humanitarian support to Turkey following the recent devastating earthquakes, emphasizing that this gesture reflects enduring solidarity and loyalty between the two nations.

She added that Turkey and Kuwait share aligned principled stances on key regional issues, particularly concerning the Palestinian

cause and the Syrian crisis, noting that their cooperation contributes to peace and stability in the region. The ambassador also stressed the importance of the international community, particularly United Nations institutions and the Security Council, acting urgently and responsibly to address pressing regional challenges.

The event underscored the ongoing commitment of both countries to strengthen ties across political, economic, and humanitarian dimensions, reinforcing a model of strategic partnership in the Gulf region.

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LuLu Hypermarket Celebrates 24th Anniversary with Spectacular Offers and Festivities Across Kuwait

LuLu Hypermarket, the leading retail chain in Kuwait, marked its 24th Anniversary with great fanfare and overwhelming participation from customers across all its branches in the country.

The celebration kicked off on Wednesday, October 29, 2025, and will continue until Tuesday, November 4, 2025, featuring exclusive discounts of Flat 50% across a wide range of categories and products.

The event was officially inaugurated with a cake-cutting ceremony led by LuLu Kuwait's top management team in the presence of a large gathering of loyal customers, partners, and well-wishers. The management expressed heartfelt gratitude to all LuLu patrons for their continued support and trust over the years.



This year's anniversary celebration offers customers, 50% off on selected grocery items, including food and non-food essentials, fresh fruits and vegetables, delicatessen products, fish, meat, and health & beauty ranges.

Adding to the excitement, customers can also enjoy a Big Brand Sale on footwear with discounts from 50% to 70%, a Factory Clearance Sale on garments with up to 70% off, a Special Fish Fiesta and Meat Festival featuring premium selections, and a Spin the Wheel and Win promotion offering exciting gifts from October 30 to November 1, 2025, at all LuLu outlets. Additionally, Daily Deals feature 24 special products at unbeatable prices, while Mega Anniversary Offers bring up to 70% off on electronics, IT accessories, home appliances, household items, home linen, luggage, toys, ladies' bags, eyewear, and more.

LuLu's 24th Anniversary campaign underscores the brand's commitment to delivering exceptional value, quality, and variety to its customers, reinforcing its position as Kuwait's favorite shopping destination. The management extended sincere thanks to all shoppers, well-wishers, and partners for making LuLu Hypermarket's 24-year journey a story of success and trust — and invited everyone to join the ongoing celebrations before the offers conclude on November 4, 2025.

British minister confirms UK-GCC set to finalize FTA

Bryant revealed that the UK expects the FTA to increase trade with the Gulf by at least 16.6%, calling it: "One of the most ambitious trade agreements in the world — and possibly the strongest agreement the Gulf has ever concluded."

The Times Kuwait Report

British Minister of State for Trade, Chris Bryant, affirmed that the United Kingdom and the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) states are in the process of finalizing a comprehensive Free Trade Agreement (FTA), expressing his strong optimism that the deal will be signed in the coming weeks.

During his first official visit to Kuwait last week, Minister Bryant, a historian and author of several history books, expressed his deep admiration for Kuwait's heritage, adding, "I am delighted to be in one of the oldest areas of human settlement in the world. As a historian, coming to a place where humans have lived since ancient times is very exciting."

Speaking at a media meet, Minister Bryant emphasized the long-standing economic and cultural ties between the Gulf and the United Kingdom, and said that the purpose of his visit was to support and enhance trade cooperation. "Many people in the Gulf have been doing business with the United Kingdom for years, decades, even centuries. We want to build on this legacy and finalize the free trade



agreement as soon as possible," he said.

He revealed that the latest round of discussions with Kuwaiti officials was one of the longest and most productive, with only a few technical points still under negotiation. He added that another round of talks will take place in London next week. He also stressed that the partnership is not solely about attracting Gulf investment into the UK, but also encouraging



British companies to invest in the region. "I want to see investments flowing both ways. Kuwait has historically invested significantly in the United Kingdom—in infrastructure, stock markets, football clubs, and more."

He revealed that the UK recently launched a multi-billion-pound fund under the UK Export Finance (UKEF) framework to support British companies wishing to expand into the Gulf.

He added, "It is easy to sign an agreement, but what matters is using it. This is where Gulf and British business leaders come in — to achieve shared prosperity."

Linking the FTA to Kuwait's Vision 2035, Bryant emphasized the importance of economic diversification: "Any country relying on a single industry will eventually face shocks. We are ready to support Kuwait in its diversification journey."

He highlighted that the agreement goes far beyond oil or raw materials, and includes opportunities in advanced engineering and aerospace, financial services, creative industries (including film, music, and design). He pointed out that British creative exports have cultural resonance in the region: "Artists like Ed Sheeran, Adele, and Dua Lipa have large fan bases in the Gulf, and we want to enhance cooperation in these creative sectors."

The minister revealed that the UK expects the FTA to increase trade with the Gulf by at least 16.6 percent, calling it, "One of the most ambitious trade agreements in the world, and possibly the strongest agreement the Gulf has ever concluded."



'Visit Kuwait' inks partnerships to boost tourism sector

Ministry of Information's Visit Kuwait platform committee announced in a statement last week that it is in the process of signing a series of partnership agreements with entities from the public and private sectors, as well as civil society institutions, as part of its efforts to enhance Kuwait's presence on the regional and international tourism map.

The committee said the initiative aims to promote domestic tourism and strengthen Kuwait's standing in line with Kuwait Vision 2035, and in implementation of the directives of the Minister of Information, Culture, and Minister of State for Youth Affairs Abdulrahman Al-Mutairi.

The committee explained that the directives focus on unifying national tourism efforts, developing the tourism marketing system, and integrating key sectors by investing in modern digital platforms to showcase Kuwait's cultural, heritage, and entertainment assets.

As part of these efforts, the committee revealed that a partnership agreement will be signed with Jazeera Airways, followed by another with Kuwait Airways in early November. These agreements aim to launch joint promotional campaigns and link Kuwait's tourist destinations with regional and international travel plans, supporting the national economy and enhancing Kuwait's position as a distinguished tourist destination in the region.

The committee added that additional agreements are being finalized with a number of partners across government, private, and civil society sectors to ensure comprehensive integration under the Visit Kuwait platform's tourism marketing system.



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ITL World, named Kuwait's Leading Travel Management Firm for Fourth Consecutive Year

This remarkable feat solidifies ITL World's commitment to excellence, innovation and unparalleled service within the industry.

ITL World, a premier travel management company in the region, has once again been recognized as Kuwait's Leading Travel Management Company at the prestigious World Travel Awards, marking the fourth consecutive year the firm has received this honor.

This recognition underscores ITL World's unwavering commitment to excellence, innovation, and leadership in the travel and tourism sector. The World Travel Awards, widely regarded as the benchmark for excellence in global travel and hospitality, are voted on by professionals across the industry and highlight organizations that exemplify outstanding service and innovation.

Chairman and Managing Director of ITL World, Dr. Siddeek Ahmed, expressed pride in the achievement, stating: "We are immensely proud to receive this recognition, which reflects our ongoing commitment to excellence and innovation in the travel and tourism sector. This award serves as a testament to the tireless efforts of my team and reaffirms our position as a leader in the industry."

Echoing the sentiment, Chief Executive Officer of ITL World,



Rafeeq Mohammed, added, "As an industry leader, ITL World remains committed to advancing the travel sector through innovation, collaboration, and a relentless pursuit of excellence. We continue to stay ahead of market trends and deliver cutting-edge solutions that drive tangible results."

For her part, Director of ITL World Kuwait, Najida Abdulla remarked, "This acknowledgment is a testament to the hard work, dedication, and innovation of every member of our team. It motivates us to continue pushing boundaries and delivering unparalleled value to our clients and stakeholders."

Since its establishment in 1998, ITL World has been a game-changer in the regional travel management industry. The company's accolades include being recognized as one of the most powerful Travel Management Companies in the Middle East, multiple Superbrand awards, and a strategic partnership with the globally renowned travel conglomerate CTM (Corporate Travel Management). With one of the highest client retention rates in the region, ITL World continues to set the benchmark for quality and innovation in travel management.



Indonesian Embassy in Kuwait Celebrates 80th Independence Anniversary with Community Festival

Indonesian Embassy celebrated the 80th Anniversary of Indonesia's Independence by hosting the "Indonesian Independence Festival", bringing together the Indonesian community, diplomats, Kuwaiti friends, and media representatives for a vibrant day of culture, heritage, and unity.

Indonesian Ambassador to Kuwait Lena Maryana highlighted that this year's celebration—traditionally marked on August 17—was held in October due to better weather conditions. The festival, which began in the morning and ran till the evening featured an array of cultural showcases, including artistic performances, music, and traditional games that are hallmarks of Independence Day celebrations across Indonesia.

One of the most popular traditional competitions, "Panjat Pinang," where teams climb a tall greased pole to win prizes such as bicycles or televisions, was humorously noted

by the Ambassador: "But we can't do that here in Kuwait," she said with a smile.

A major attraction of the event was the culinary zone dedicated to traditional Indonesian cuisine, organized under the global campaign "Indonesia Spice Up the World." Ambassador Maryana emphasized the richness of Indonesian food culture. "Indonesian cuisine is incredibly diverse, with hundreds of traditional dishes," she said. The Ambassador revealed that approximately 6,000 Indonesians live in Kuwait and expressed pride in the community's spirit and involvement. She noted that the entire festival—from planning to execution—was led by volunteers from the Indonesian community itself.

"I am very grateful to this wonderful community that works with love and cooperation," she said. "They take the initiative without us even asking them for anything."



KOC to invest over a billion dinars in exploration, development



Kuwait Oil Company (KOC), the state-owned entity responsible for upstream oil and gas operations, revealed that it plans to invest KD1.2 billion in exploratory drilling and development activities through 2030, including the drilling of 79 offshore and onshore wells.

Speaking to the media last week, Deputy CEO for Exploration and Drilling Khaled Al-Mulla, explained that the KD1.2 billion investment is part of a broader KD9.8 billion budget allocated for drilling and well-maintenance projects. The projects, considered the largest in the company's history, will include the drilling of up to 6,193 wells by the end of the decade.

He emphasized that the company is relying on human capital and cutting-edge technologies, including artificial intelligence applications, to enhance oil and gas production from deep and complex reservoirs, in line with the company's long-term strategy to reach 3.65 million barrels of oil and 1.5 billion cubic feet of gas per day by 2035, and maintaining these output levels until 2040.

Al-Mulla noted that many Kuwaiti oil fields have been producing since the 1930s, leading to natural production declines and rising water levels. "This requires more precise reservoir management and exploration of deeper layers, such as the Triassic and Paleozoic formations," he said.

He added that technological advancements have made it feasible to economically develop unconventional reservoirs, citing the Mutriba field in northwest Kuwait, which began production in 2025—decades after its discovery. Among the company's other key initiatives

is the establishment of the Ahmadi Oil Technology Valley, a 275,000-square-meter research complex that will host world-class centers specializing in reservoir management, digital transformation, and sustainability. The facility will also provide technical consultation in exploration, development, and production.

Kuwait Oil Company has also launched several AI-based projects, including the 'Sanad' smart assistant for drilling teams and a predictive maintenance program designed to anticipate equipment malfunctions before they occur.

Since July 2024, the company has announced three major offshore oil and gas discoveries, part of a strategic effort to boost national production. The latest, the Jazza field, was unveiled on 13 October, with an expected output exceeding 29 million cubic feet of gas per day and 5,000 barrels of condensates.

Earlier discoveries include the Al-Julaia offshore field, with estimated reserves of 800 million barrels of oil and 600 billion cubic feet of gas, and the Al-Nokhatha field, discovered in 2024 east of Failaka Island, with an estimated 3.2 billion barrels of oil equivalent.

Al-Mulla highlighted that Kuwait Oil Company achieved a 100 percent success rate in its first offshore exploration phase with the Al-Nokhatha, Al-Julaia, and Jazza finds. The company now plans to drill 18 additional offshore wells under its second exploration phase.

Offshore production capacity is projected to reach 150,000 barrels per day as part of the company's 2035 plan—a figure expected to increase further as exploration continues and new discoveries are brought online.

Huawei: "AI Will Not Replace Teachers - It Will Empower Them"

The Times Kuwait Report

Huawei has announced a significant milestone in its global education strategy with the launch of the "1 + 3 All-Scenario Education Digitalization Blueprint," an innovative framework that places artificial intelligence (AI) at the center of future learning ecosystems.



The blueprint, revealed by Mehedi Limon, Huawei Vice President for Public Sector Education & Healthcare for Middle and Central Asia, during an exclusive interview with The Times Kuwait, outlines how the company aims to accelerate digital transformation in education across the region.

According to Limon, the blueprint was developed through extensive collaboration with ministries of education, universities, and industry partners across the Middle East and Central Asia. "Education is the backbone of all industries. When we build digital education, we build the talent foundation for national and economic development," he emphasized.

A Model Built Around Talent and Technology

At the core of Huawei's digital education roadmap is ICT talent cultivation. The company offers comprehensive digital training to school and university students, educators, and professionals. Through its global Huawei ICT Academy, more than 500,000 students worldwide have already received training, contributing to the development of future-ready digital talent.

The new model is driven by three key technology pillars:

1. Smart Classroom Solutions – AI-enabled tools for teaching, content creation, and personalized learning
2. Campus Connectivity & Infrastructure – high-speed networks and data centers enabling seamless digital access
3. Research Platforms & High-Performance Computing – providing advanced computing power to support research and innovation

AI That Supports Not Replaces — Teachers

Limon stressed that Huawei's approach to AI is centered on increasing teacher efficiency, not replacing educators.

"Artificial intelligence is not replacing teachers — it is empowering them," he said.

Huawei's Smart Classroom 3.0 integrates AI into every stage of the teaching process:

Before class: AI generates lesson plans, learning materials, and presentations in minutes — reducing preparation time from 8–10 hours to mere minutes.

During class: AI can automatically generate quizzes, collect student responses via tablets, and grade them instantly.

After class: Intelligent analytics track student engagement, attendance, and performance, helping administrators identify effective teaching practices and top-performing educators.

With this end-to-end system, learning becomes immersive, data-driven, and student-centric. Arabic Language Support and Regional Expansion

Huawei has also strengthened the system's accessibility through Arabic language support, in addition to English, Chinese, and Russian. The platform can automatically detect spoken language, generate subtitles, and archive classroom sessions into searchable digital files.

The company is currently collaborating with governments and universities across the UAE, Saudi Arabia, Oman, and Central Asian countries, with plans for broader regional expansion. Huawei now operates in over 120 countries, continuously investing in digital education partnerships and infrastructure.



Empowering the Next Generation

Limon expressed strong confidence in the transformative impact of AI on education. By automating administrative tasks, he noted, teachers gain more time to focus on what matters most — inspiring and engaging students.

He reaffirmed Huawei's commitment to supporting nations in building smart, connected, and innovation-driven education ecosystems that prepare youth for success in the digital economy. Limon concluded by adding "AI is transforming education — not by replacing teachers, but by freeing them to inspire students to reach their full potential."

Spending on international tourism by Kuwaitis declines

Spending by Kuwaitis on international tourism registered a modest decline during the first half of 2025, reaching approximately KD1.902 billion compared to 2.003 billion dinars during the same period of 2024, a decrease of nearly 5 percent, or around KD100 million.

This trend reflects a gradual shift in travel patterns, following several years of robust growth in outbound tourism. Data shows that expenditures peaked in the first quarter of 2025 at KD1.2 billion before easing to approximately KD721 million in the second quarter.



Additionally, the growing popularity of short regional trips within Gulf countries has contributed to the moderation in international spending. Local promotional campaigns and regional travel offers have successfully redirected part of the demand closer to home, positively impacting Kuwait's foreign currency outflows.

Despite this slight dip, total outbound spending of nearly KD2 billion underscores the continued

appeal of international travel among Kuwaiti households, particularly during the summer months. Experts expect spending to stabilize in the second half of the year, supported by policies encouraging controlled household expenditures and expanded regional tourism options within the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC).

On the inbound side, spending by visitors within Kuwait decreased to approximately KD318 million in the first half of 2025, compared to KD342 million dinars during the same period in 2024, marking a 7 percent decline.

The limited drop in domestic tourism revenues notwithstanding, Kuwait continues to pursue measures to attract visitors from Gulf, Arab, and international markets. Procedural reforms by the Ministry of Interior and other relevant authorities, including simplified e-visa procedures, flexible entry systems, and expanded entry categories

for GCC residents, have facilitated short- and medium-term visits and eased family visits to the country.

These initiatives have supported the hospitality, retail, and restaurant sectors and strengthened collaboration between airlines and hotels to offer seasonal promotions targeting Gulf and Arab travelers. While the full impact of these measures will unfold gradually, they are already enhancing Kuwait's competitiveness as a cultural and urban tourism destination in the region.

Industry experts say that Kuwait has an opportunity to achieve greater balance between domestic and foreign travel budgets in the coming years, provided it continues diversifying domestic tourism offerings, expanding entry facilities for international visitors, and developing regular cultural and sporting events and festivals to boost average domestic tourist spending.

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The United Nations at Eighty Building Our Shared Future

'As the United Nations marks eighty years of service to humanity, Kuwait's unwavering engagement reinforces a timeless truth: that the journey toward peace and development is one shared by all, and that through unity and purpose, nations—large and small—can build a world where justice prevails and hope endures.'



By Sheikha Suhaila Al-Sabah
Managing Editor

The twenty-fourth of October each year marks a significant day in human history. It is the day the Charter of the United Nations entered into force in 1945, heralding a new era of international cooperation after two devastating World Wars. This day is an annual opportunity to reflect on the journey of an organization that, since its inception, has been a symbol of unity and hope, a platform for defending human dignity, and a comprehensive framework embodying the will of peoples to build a world of peace, justice, and equality.

For eight decades, the international organization has played a pivotal role in maintaining peace and security, promoting human rights, and establishing the concept of sustainable development as the optimal path to the advancement of societies. Through its programs and initiatives, it has contributed to improving the lives of millions across continents, providing access to education and healthcare, extending a helping hand to peoples affected by disasters and conflicts, and demonstrating that collective action is the only way to confront challenges that transcend national borders.

As it reaches its 80th year, the United Nations finds itself facing a world changing at an astonishing pace, with political, economic, social, and environmental transformations accelerating at an unprecedented rate. Therefore, it is working to renew the foundations of international cooperation through ambitious visions and initiatives aimed at consolidating multilateralism and promoting justice, development, and peace, ensuring its continued ability to meet the needs of people in the 21st century.

United Nations Day carries a profound symbolic significance that transcends mere protocol. It is a constant reminder that humanity, in all its diversity of cultures, religions, and interests, shares a common destiny, and that the challenges facing the world today—from climate crises, poverty, and food security to armed conflicts and environmental degradation—



cannot be addressed by any single nation alone. Genuine international cooperation based on the principles of equality, mutual respect, and common interest is essential.

The 80th anniversary of the organization's founding represents a moment for reflection and review. The international community must reconsider its mechanisms for joint action and develop its tools to be more responsive to current changes. It must also strive to reform its institutions to achieve greater fairness in the representation of nations and ensure everyone's participation in global decision-making.

The world today stands at a crossroads, and a collective will is essential to uphold the spirit of the UN Charter, which was founded on the belief in human dignity and the right to live in freedom, security, and peace. In this context, the importance of adhering to the principles born from the crucible of human experience is reaffirmed. These principles have demonstrated that peace can only be built on justice, that development can only flourish in an environment of cooperation and understanding, and that human rights remain the cornerstone of any society striving for progress.

From this perspective, this year's call to action 'Building Our Future Together', aims to unite efforts towards a brighter future that achieves a balance between development, dignity, and the environment. This day, in its essence, reflects the aspirations of peoples for a more equitable and transparent international order, for institutions better equipped to protect the vulnerable and uphold human dignity, and for cooperation based on partnership, not domination, and

on dialogue, not conflict. It is also an occasion to renew our commitment to our shared responsibility towards planet Earth, which today faces the most serious challenges in its modern history, from accelerating climate change to the scarcity of natural resources and the widening economic gap between nations.

Celebrating United Nations Day is not merely a historical commemoration; it is a reaffirmation that humanity's journey towards peace and development continues, and that hope for a more just and secure world remains undiminished, no matter how severe the crises. It is a day that reminds us that human solidarity is the only way to confront the crises plaguing the world, and that the future can only be built through collective action for the sake of future generations, who deserve to inherit a planet of harmony and sustainability. Thus, this global occasion remains a renewed call to revive the spirit of the UN Charter, consolidate the values of international cooperation, and reaffirm the belief that what unites humanity is greater than what divides it, and that building a shared future is the responsibility of everyone without exception, in a world that expands with peace, rises with justice, and flourishes with hope.

In this context, the State of Kuwait plays a leading and distinguished role as a member of the United Nations in promoting the values of international cooperation and actively participating in humanitarian and development endeavors. It represents a committed partner in global efforts aimed at achieving peace, stability, and sustainable development. Kuwait has been keen to consolidate the principles

of dialogue, understanding, and cooperation among nations, and has provided continuous support for initiatives aimed at alleviating the suffering of those in need and those affected by conflicts and disasters, making it a model of ethical and humanitarian commitment on the international stage.

Its contribution is evident in many vital areas, as it has not been limited to providing financial support and humanitarian aid, but has also included active participation in developing policies and plans that serve sustainable development, promote human rights, and work to protect the most vulnerable groups in societies. Kuwait has also contributed to promoting social inclusion, empowering youth and women, combating corruption, and mitigating disasters, in addition to working to combat organized crime and human trafficking. This reflects its deep understanding that global stability requires a comprehensive and integrated approach to all humanitarian, social, and economic issues.

Alongside its humanitarian role, Kuwait continues to support peace and the peaceful resolution of conflicts. It is keen to offer constructive visions for enhancing regional and international stability, maintains its commitment to the principles of international law and human rights, and works to strengthen multilateral cooperation to promote justice and equality among nations. These efforts reflect Kuwait's unwavering commitment to building a safer, more just, and more sustainable world. This is not merely a slogan, but a practical responsibility requiring continuous action and close coordination with the international community.

At the level of major initiatives, Kuwait strives to host and promote events and programs that highlight humanitarian and development issues, encourage the exchange of expertise, and strengthen cooperation among various countries and institutions. This contributes to developing practical solutions to global challenges and underscores Kuwait's pivotal role as a bridge for understanding and solidarity among peoples.

Kuwait's ongoing contribution to this endeavor makes it a living example of small nations' commitment to upholding fundamental human values. It demonstrates that sincere will and dedicated action can make a tangible difference in the lives of millions, reinforcing its position as a trusted strategic partner in the pursuit of a peaceful world. Its global message remains one of enduring hope, addressing every new challenge and supporting all those striving to build a shared future characterized by security, prosperity, and human dignity.

LuLu Exchange Hosts Breast Cancer Awareness Seminar

As part of its commitment to promoting health and wellbeing among employees, LuLu Exchange organized a Breast Cancer Awareness Seminar in collaboration with Shifa Al Jazeera Clinic at its Dajeej branch, commemorating Breast Cancer Awareness Month.

The session was led by guest health professional Dr. Adithya Rajendra, who shared valuable insights on early detection, prevention, and the importance of regular screening for breast cancer.

The event was graced by Mr. Rajesh Rangray, General Manager of LuLu Exchange, Ms. Mona Hassan, Marketing Head of Shifa Al Jazeera Clinic, and



senior officials from both organizations. Through this initiative, LuLu Exchange aimed to:

- Promote health awareness among employees.
- Encourage early detection and preventive care.
- Empower staff with knowledge to support their families and communities.

Foster a culture of wellbeing within the workplace.

This collaborative effort highlights LuLu Exchange's ongoing commitment to employee wellness and social responsibility, reinforcing the company's belief that a healthy workforce is the foundation of sustained success.



United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, Mr Filippo Grandi with Mr Tareq Al Shumaimry and Abdel Rehman Al Houti during a private reception held at St Regis during the High Commissioner's visit to Kuwait

UNHCR Chief visits Kuwait, urges greater global support for displaced people

The Times Kuwait Report

UN High Commissioner for Refugees Filippo Grandi concluded an official visit to Kuwait last week, during which he expressed his appreciation for Kuwait's steadfast humanitarian commitment and praised the country's continued support for refugees and displaced communities worldwide. He also used the occasion to call on the international community to intensify support for vulnerable forcibly displaced populations, as global

displacement reaches a record 123 million people amid rising humanitarian needs and funding shortfalls.

During his visit, Grandi met with His Highness the Amir Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah, His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, and His Excellency Abdullah Al-Yahya, Minister of Foreign Affairs.

Grandi also held discussions with Director General of the Kuwait Fund for Arab Economic

Development (KFAED), Waleed Al-Bahar, and signed two grant agreements from the Fund totaling US\$5.7 million to assist displaced Sudanese and host communities in Sudan and Chad.

The first agreement, worth \$2.5 million, will enhance access to education, clean water, and healthcare for more than 300,000 people affected by the ongoing conflict in eastern Sudan. The second, valued at \$3.2 million, will support 50,000 Sudanese refugees in eastern Chad through the construction of durable shelters, solar-powered lighting, and clean water systems.

"These agreements will significantly improve the lives of tens of thousands of Sudanese refugees and displaced families by providing shelter, clean water, and access to essential

services," said Grandi. "We deeply value our enduring partnership with the Kuwait Fund for Arab Economic Development, a trusted partner in times of urgent humanitarian need."

The High Commissioner concluded his visit by meeting representatives of Kuwaiti charitable organizations, the private sector, and philanthropists, emphasizing the importance of strengthened partnerships to sustain humanitarian action and expand support for displaced populations across the region and beyond.

Grandi's visit underscores Kuwait's longstanding role as a global humanitarian leader and comes at a time of intensifying humanitarian crises, calling for greater international solidarity to meet the needs of millions forced from their homes worldwide.

IBPC Announces Annual Function & Awards Night on November 12

Celebrating Excellence and Strengthening Business Connections



"The Indian Business & Professional Council (IBPC) Kuwait proudly announces its Annual Function & Awards Night, scheduled to take place on November 12, 2025, bringing together business leaders, industry influencers, diplomats, and distinguished professionals from across Kuwait", Kaizar Shakir – Chairman of IBPC, announced.

"This signature event is one of IBPC's most prestigious gatherings of the year, serving as a platform to celebrate outstanding achievements, recognize contributions of Indian and Kuwaiti businesses and professionals in Kuwait, and foster deeper engagement between the Indian community and Kuwait's business ecosystem"

The evening will feature an Awards Ceremony honoring excellence across multiple categories, Keynote addresses from prominent business and government leaders, Cultural performances and entertainment segments. Indian Ambassador H E Paramita Tripathi will be the chief guest along with Guest of Honor and Keynote speaker Roshni Nadar, Chairperson of HCL Tech one of the

largest IT companies in the world.

Speaking on the announcement, K P Suresh, IBPC Secretary said "The IBPC Annual Function & Awards Night reflects our commitment to empowering professionals and entrepreneurs, highlighting their contributions to Kuwait's economic growth. It is a celebration of success, collaboration, and the dynamic India-Kuwait friendship."

The event aims to strengthen bilateral business ties, spotlight innovation within the Indian business community, and provide a forum for professional advancement and collaboration. The Indian Business & Professional Council (IBPC) Kuwait is a leading organization representing Indian entrepreneurs and professionals, provides a platform for networking, knowledge-sharing, and business advocacy.

IBPC also plays a significant role in supporting economic cooperation between Kuwait and India while empowering its members with opportunities for professional and business growth.



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Nicaragua attracting rising number of tourists from Kuwait

Kuwaitis, GCC citizens require no visa to enter country

The Times Kuwait Report

Ambassador of Nicaragua H.E. Mohamed M. Farara Lashtar, said there is a growing interest among Kuwaiti citizens to explore Latin American destinations, particularly Nicaragua.

Speaking at a press conference at the Nicaraguan Embassy, the ambassador noted that while visitor numbers remain modest, awareness of Nicaragua's scenic landscapes and diverse tourism experiences has increased significantly. He explained that in recent years Nicaragua has seen a steady rise in tourists from Kuwait and the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries, especially among adventure-seekers and nature enthusiasts. "This growth reflects an increasing fascination with unconventional destinations and cultural or eco-tourism experiences," said the ambassador, while stressing that.

Nicaragua boasts high levels of safety and stability, combined with breathtaking natural landscapes—mountains, volcanoes, lakes, and beaches on both the Pacific and Caribbean coasts. The country also offers affordable living and tourism costs, warm and welcoming locals, and a rich cultural heritage blending Spanish and Latin American traditions.

Regarding entry requirements, Ambassador Lashtar confirmed that GCC citizens, including Kuwaitis, do not need a visa to enter Nicaragua. Most nationalities can obtain a visa on arrival at air, land, or sea ports, while a few require prior application through Nicaraguan embassies or consulates. Visa rules include having a passport valid for at least six months, two passport-sized photos, a completed application form, proof of hotel reservation or invitation, return ticket, and financial means to cover the stay. Tourist visas are valid for 90 days and extendable once, and holders of US, Canadian, or Schengen visas can enter Nicaragua easily on arrival.

Highlighting infrastructure developments,



Ambassador Lashtar revealed that Nicaragua is building a new international airport in partnership with a Chinese firm, expected to be operational by 2027. The facility will serve as a global air hub connecting the Americas, Europe, Asia, and Africa, with runways capable of handling the world's largest aircraft and multiple gates to accommodate international traffic. Preliminary talks are also underway with airlines to establish



direct flights between Kuwait and Nicaragua, aiming to strengthen tourism and investment ties with the GCC.

Nicaragua is positioning itself as a family-friendly destination, offering safe and diverse experiences like beach resorts, horseback riding, rafting, and wildlife sanctuary visits. Hotels and tourism facilities provide comprehensive services for families and children, offering alternatives to

conventional vacation experiences.

On the investment front, Ambassador Lashtar emphasized that Nicaragua offers exceptional incentives, including up to 20 years of tax exemptions in tourism, energy, agriculture, livestock, and free-trade industrial zones. With its natural beauty, adventure offerings, and upcoming global airport, Nicaragua is emerging as a top choice for Kuwaiti tourists and Gulf investors alike.

Jahra Reserve to reopen, displays diversity of Kuwait environment

Al-Jahra Reserve is set to reopen to the public on 9 November, offering visitors the opportunity to explore the rich environmental diversity and the vibrant bird and wildlife population frequenting the landscape.

Announcing this in a statement last week, Environment Public Authority (EPA) spokesperson and Director of Public Relations and Media, Sheikha Al-Ibrahim, said that the reserve offers visitors an opportunity



to experience Kuwait's natural beauty and ecological heritage first-hand.

She explained that entry tickets are priced at KD2 per person, while families of up to five

members can book an observatory tour for KD10, allowing them to explore the reserve and enjoy views from specially prepared observation points. She added that visitors can book entry through the EPA's official website or pay directly via K-Net at the reserve's entrance.

Established in 1987, Al-Jahra Reserve is one of Kuwait's oldest nature reserves. It has undergone extensive environmental rehabilitation over the years to restore its ecosystems and support wildlife conservation efforts. The reopening marks a renewed opportunity for residents and tourists to connect with nature and raise awareness about the importance of preserving Kuwait's biodiversity.

A European Explorer's Forgotten Tale

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3

Raunkiaer's mindset of a punctual European who didn't want to waste time, sometimes put him at odds with his travel companions. A hint of that can be perceived in his following remarks, "Already, at three o'clock in the afternoon, I had enquired of one of my Arabs how far it was to Kuwait. 'An hour's ride' he answered. Two hours later I repeated the question. 'An hour' was again the answer. When two hours on, I put the same question and got the same reply, I gave up further enquiry, profoundly distrusting the Arabs' estimate of time."

They finally arrived at "a fortress-like building eight to ten meters high and of such great extent that its full bulk could not be made out in the night. Into this otherwise seemingly inaccessible mass of clay a very narrow lane penetrates and at its mouth we call a halt, because our pack-horses would have wholly blocked the passage. The lane is immediately filled by armed men...Very deliberately they take my letters of recommendation to be conveyed to Mobarek."

Raunkiaer drew much attention as he and his men were led past heavily-armed men into the labyrinth of the fort. Eventually his baggage was piled into a room with a carpet on the floor where he could rest. Raunkiaer had arrived at the Sief Palace. During his stay, Sheikh Mubarak's trusted man, Mohammed, was put at his disposal and instructed to show him the town. Although Raunkiaer would have liked to set off without delay, it is during this sojourn that he provided the only detailed description of Kuwait during this time period by a Westerner.

Raunkiaer remarked that of all Arab coastal towns, Kuwait town was "the least disturbed by foreign civilization." It extended just over two kilometers along the seafront and barely one kilometer inland. Along the busy seafront he saw boats drawn up on shore for repair along with piles of timber for shipbuilding. "Bales of goods lie stacked in disorderly piles, the sun shines from a perfectly cloudless sky and out on the bay move various boats, whose curving lateen sails gleam in the sunshine on the blue green sheet of water like little white wings," he wrote.

Raunkiaer put the number of Kuwait's sailing vessels at about five hundred, with the larger ships used for trading voyages down the Gulf and over to India and Africa, and the smaller craft for pearling. He calculated the number of men engaged in the pearling industry to be between ten to fifteen thousand.

Kuwait's population was much too small to provide so many men, so crews

were recruited from the central Arabian hinterland through Mesopotamia to Persia, he observed. "In the month of April when the season is approaching, large caravans of young men are prepared in the Nejd oases, and these arrive on the coast, after several weeks' journey through dangerous and forbidding deserts, to engage in an industry itself by no means free of danger and far from their homes deep in the motherland."

Raunkiaer described the British Political Agent's house as a conspicuous building on the waterfront with the flag of Great Britain waving from a mast. A red lantern was hoisted on the mast at night to guide sailors. Known today as the

Dickson House Cultural Centre, the blue and white house that served as the Political Agency was in those days situated directly on the water. Arabian Gulf Street was constructed on reclaimed land many years later.

Captain William Shakespear was British Political Agent at the time of Raunkiaer's visit. The young Dane was grateful to him for securing camels and a guide for his trip and providing him with letters of recommendation to other British officials in the Gulf. Raunkiaer also enjoyed many hours of hospitality at the Agency. The two men must have had a lot in common as Shakespear was also an avid explorer. He mapped uncharted areas of Northern Arabia and made the first official British contact with Ibn Saud, then the future king of Saudi Arabia. As fate would have it, both young men were to die the same year; Shakespear was killed in battle fighting alongside Ibn Saud's forces in central Arabia in January 1915.

Raunkiaer spent a good deal of time in Kuwait's cosmopolitan bazaar, noting that it attracted traders, merchants, and craftsmen from around the region. The market's Safat Square was the arrival and departure point for camel caravans.

Other observations were about the modest style of local architecture, including Sheikh Mubarak's audience hall in the bazaar, still in existence today. The mosques with their low, square minarets were barely taller than the roofs of the houses. The sandy lanes were conspicuously clean. The houses were usually only one story and made of sun-dried clay, with small windows facing the interior courtyard.

"The clay for houses comes from south and east of the town, where in consequence the ground

is all uneven and full of holes. Clay is dug out anywhere a man happens to fancy or where his donkey has minded to stop. When the panniers on the donkey are full he is urged back to town, where the clay is soaked with water and kneaded with straw and twigs into a good cohesive mixture with which the houses' walls are luted up."

In summary Raunkiaer remarked, "Kuwait is emphatically a town of the desert and the sea, without any arable or garden ground whatever. Greenstuff and dates must be fetched from Fao and elsewhere and not a shady or beautiful growth is anywhere to be seen. It has not one single tree, if groups of stunted tamarisk be ruled out. To the mixture of seafaring men and nomads in its population, to both of whom digging and planting are uncongenial, it is owed that Kuwait is just a place of clay between steppe and sea." Introducing Raunkiaer's manuscript, Gerald de Gaury wrote that although the young adventurer didn't fulfill his goal of establishing a base for an expedition into the south Arabian desert, his journey was still remarkable. His early death and the fact that de Gaury's edition of his manuscript has been out of print for so long are probably why Raunkiaer is hardly known.

In 1968 de Gaury wrote, "Where Barclay Raunkiaer rode, no caravans pass today. Giant trucks loaded to capacity pound at high speed along motor roads....taking two days where he took a month or where he took two days, taking an hour. 'Acceptance of a rafiq, or companion, from the tribes, and the payment of a toll as surety while in the dira of each one of them, is practice no longer. Desert lawlessness is cowed and there is peace.'"

Austrian envoy highlights deep ties with Kuwait, calls for peace in the Middle East

Austrian Ambassador to Kuwait H.E. Ulrich Frank emphasized on the depth and strength of relations between the Republic of Austria and the State of Kuwait, describing them as “distinguished and built on mutual respect and growing cooperation.”

In his remarks during the celebration of Austria’s National Neutrality Day, attended by Undersecretary of the Ministry of Defense Sheikh Abdullah Al-Mishaal, Assistant Foreign Minister for Economic Affairs Sami Al-Hamad, ambassadors, and heads of diplomatic missions, Frank affirmed that both nations share common economic and humanitarian values.

He expressed Austria’s aspiration to play an active role in supporting the implementation of Kuwait Vision 2035, highlighting Austria’s readiness to contribute its expertise and capabilities toward Kuwait’s sustainable development goals.

Reflecting on the occasion, Frank noted the significance of Austria’s National Neutrality Day, commemorated on October 26, which marks the country’s full independence following World War II. He explained that Austria’s neutrality “does not mean ideological or moral neutrality,” stressing that Austria remains an active member of the European Union and the United Nations, firmly



committed to democracy, human rights, and the principles of an open society.

Turning to current developments in the Middle East, the ambassador expressed profound concern over the tragic situation in Gaza, describing the scenes as “shocking and heartbreaking.”

He stressed that “civilians should not pay the price for terrorism,” and underscored that “lasting peace will only be achieved through a ceasefire and the revival of political solutions.”

Frank reaffirmed that the two-state solution remains the only viable path toward achieving a just and lasting peace, allowing Israelis and Palestinians to live side by side in security and stability.

For his part, Assistant Foreign Minister for Economic Affairs Sami Al-Hamad praised the strong and distinguished relations between Kuwait and Austria, emphasizing the deep friendship and cooperation that unite the two friendly nations.

Speaking on the sidelines of the event, Al-Hamad reiterated Kuwait’s commitment to strengthening collaboration with Austria in investment, trade, and economic development, noting that both sides seek to enhance partnerships serving their mutual interests.

He added, “God willing, we will see active participation from the Austrian side in achieving Kuwait Vision 2035, given Austria’s expertise and capabilities that support Kuwait’s sustainable development goals.”



The Smurfs, a Belgian legacy, have a home in Kuwait

The Smurfs, or Les Schtroumpfs as they are known in French, were created in 1958 by Belgian cartoonist Pierre Culliford, known as Peyo.

What began as a comic book series soon became a worldwide phenomenon, translated into dozens of languages and beloved across continents.

In a quiet corner of a home in Kuwait City, a small blue world comes to life everyday. Hundreds of smiling Smurfs, the iconic Belgian comic strip character, fill the shelves of Issa Abdul Rasoul Dashti’s home, each one carrying a story of nostalgia, art, and cultural connection.

For more than two decades, Dashti, a Kuwaiti researcher in British affairs, has been collecting Smurf memorabilia with the care of an archivist and the joy of a lifelong fan. His devotion recently caught the attention of the Ambassador of Belgium H.E. Christian Doms, who, together with his wife, visited Dashti’s home to explore this rare and colorful collection that ranges from vintage figurines to rare magazine editions.

Deeply impressed by what he saw, Ambassador Doms said “What I saw here is not just a passion for collecting, it was a unique and exceptional experience. It reflects a refined cultural spirit and a genuine effort to preserve a beautiful Belgian legacy that continues to inspire people around the world.”

Dashti’s fascination with The Smurfs began in early childhood, when the cheerful blue characters first appeared on Kuwaiti television in the late 1970s and 1980s. Like many children of that era, he was captivated by their simplicity, their songs, and their sense of community. “I started collecting Smurf toys when I was in kindergarten,” he recalls. “Back then, I didn’t realize that what began as play would one day become a cultural project.”

Over time, that childhood curiosity evolved



into a sophisticated and historically rich collection that now includes pieces from West Germany, Iraq, and even Arabic-language editions of Smurf magazines. Each item tells a small part of a global story—how a Belgian comic strip from 1958 became a universal symbol of joy and cooperation. The Belgian Ambassador’s visit was more than a friendly gesture, it was a celebration of the soft power of art and storytelling. Ambassador Doms was so moved by the collection that he announced plans to display selected Smurf figurines from Dashti’s archive during Belgium’s National Day celebration on 17 November in Kuwait.

For Dashti, it was a proud moment, one that linked his personal passion to a broader cultural



dialogue between Belgium and Kuwait. “This visit is the second time I’ve shared my collection with the Belgian Embassy,” he said. “It reflects how art can bring nations closer.”

Beyond his Smurf collection, Dashti has spent years documenting Kuwaiti-Belgian relations. He has written a book and two booklets—one chronicling the history of bilateral relations and another detailing Princess Astrid’s visit to Kuwait—as well as organizing a documentary exhibition dedicated to the same theme.

The Smurfs, or Les Schtroumpfs as they are known in French, were created in 1958 by Belgian cartoonist Pierre Culliford, known as Peyo. What began as a comic book series soon became a worldwide phenomenon, translated into dozens

of languages and beloved across continents.

In Kuwait and the Arab world, The Smurfs hold a special place in the collective memory. The Arabic-dubbed versions that aired in the 1970s and 1980s became part of childhood for an entire generation, often accompanying children’s programming on Kuwaiti television. Their songs, voices, and gentle humor inspired local theater plays, musical adaptations, and artistic works.

“The Smurfs represent more than animation, they symbolize cooperation, simplicity, and the happiness of shared life—values that resonate deeply with us,” recalled Dashti. He added that collecting Smurf memorabilia has become much more than a hobby. It is a form of cultural preservation—a way of documenting how stories from one small European village of blue characters have touched hearts in Kuwait and beyond. Each figurine, comic, and magazine in his home tells two stories at once: one of Belgian creativity and another of Kuwaiti affection for art that transcends borders.

“When I look at these characters,” he said, “I see not only my own childhood, but also a reminder that culture, no matter where it begins, belongs to everyone who loves it.”

As Belgium prepares to celebrate its National Day with a touch of Smurf-blue charm, Issa Dashti’s collection stands as a bridge between two cultures; a heartfelt reminder that the magic of childhood can travel far, connecting hearts from Brussels to Kuwait City, one tiny Smurf at a time.



Downtown Design Returns to Dubai Design District (d3) with a Global Showcase of High-Quality Contemporary Design

The Times Kuwait Report

Returning to the Waterfront Terrace at Dubai Design District (d3), Downtown Design, the anchor fair of Dubai Design Week, will run from 5–9 November 2025. The fair unites a selection of international design brands and regional design studios, from emerging talent to established names, reinforcing its position as the Middle East's leading platform for high-quality contemporary design.

Held in strategic partnership with Dubai Design District (d3), a member of TECOM Group PJSC, and supported by Dubai Culture, Downtown Design continues to serve as the region's most important meeting point for the design industry, fostering collaboration and commercial opportunity.

This year's edition will span furniture, lighting, surfaces, textiles, home accessories, and limited-edition design from around the world. Alongside the fair's extensive programme of talks, keynotes, and creative pop-ups, visitors can look forward to the return of Editions Art & Design.

"The world of design is evolving rapidly, and Dubai is playing an ever-greater role in shaping a more collaborative, innovative, and inclusive future for all," said Khadija Al Bastaki, Senior Vice President of Dubai Design District (d3), part of TECOM Group. "Through dedicated platforms like Downtown Design and Dubai Design Week, we nurture a rich and distinctly native design narrative that reflects the city's ambitions. Most importantly, these stages give creatives from our region and global brands a vital and dynamic platform to exchange ideas and set new benchmarks for the industry. At d3, we are committed to contributing to the goals of Dubai Design Sector Strategy, strengthening Dubai's reputation as a global hub for design excellence."



Mette Degn-Christensen, Director of Downtown Design, said: "Over the past decade, we have witnessed Dubai transform into a genuine design capital, carried by the confidence of its own creative ecosystem. Every year, the fair grows in layers, continuing to bridge the worlds of the design industry and contemporary culture, and this year we have put together the Downtown Design 2025 fair experience as a human-centric place to discover, to evolve, and to connect."

This year's programme tells the story of an industry that is maturing with purpose and ambition. I am excited to see how that evolution feels tangible in this year's fair, from the exceptional roster of iconic names of the international design scene to the local initiatives and regional studios and collectives, championing craftsmanship and converging collaboration – reflecting the strength and high-quality of the region's design market and celebrating the diversity and spirit that has come to define Dubai's design scene." Returning international heavyweights include

Kartell, presenting their signature industrial design furniture, and Poltrona Frau, unveiling a series of new collaborations. Obegi Home will stage an immersive, multi-brand showcase of contemporary luxury living, while Huda Lighting returns with a large-scale lighting exhibition and Venini brings a bespoke amber glass installation. The fair also welcomes first-time international participants, among them Roche Bobois, Draga & Aurel, Desalto, Ceramicah, Flou and Porada.

UAE-based talent takes centre stage, with MAKE making its Downtown Design debut, showcasing the latest cohort of its Athath Fellowship, the Abu Dhabi-based platform empowering emerging designers to explore furniture design and entrepreneurship. The annual Tanween Design Programme by Tashkeel, which champions sustainable design in the UAE, returns with a new group of nine designers for its 2025 edition, and Sharjah's 1971 Design Space will spotlight material innovation through works by Egyptian designers Lina Ghalib and Nuhayr Zein.

The spotlight also extends to the wider region. Highlights include Strata, the debut collection by Pakistan's mother-son duo Saira Ahsan and Yousaf Shahbaz; the collection launch of Egyptian sister-design duo Doodle & The Gang's designs for Hands Carpets; and the Designed in Saudi showcase, a strategic initiative led by the



Architecture and Design Commission of Saudi Arabia's Ministry of Culture, dedicated to advancing the Kingdom's industrial design sector. BEIT Collective will present collaborations between Lebanese artisans and international designers, while independent studios such as Jagdish Sutar and Dubai-based Studio Obliq will present contemporary furniture creations among other regional highlights.

Collaborations and creative concepts

Stellar Works makes its Dubai debut presenting alongside with Calico Wallpaper in a space designed by Emirati architect and designer Omar Al Gurg, Nordic Homeworx unveils an immersive pop-up conceived by Dubai-based design studio Styled Habitat, spearheaded by Rabah Saied, while Cosentino introduces a contemporary lounge experience titled 1930, inspired by the charm of Art Deco speakeasies, designed by Etereo. Dhow Architectural Solutions will showcase a multi-functional space headlined by Vitra and featuring Artemide, and Louis Poulsen.

Other highlights include a concept designed by Dubai-based Marco Maximus for Kohler, an immersive hospitality concept brought by Porcelanosa and conceptualised by VELA Design, Interiors from Spain's collaboration with Swiss Bureau Interior Design to create a vibrant, multi-brand showcase, the Italian Trade Agency showcase of over 20 Made-in-Italy participants, and UAE-based female duo Fronteriors make their fair debut at Downtown Design, while Casa Milano returns to the fair with the third season of its design challenge, Talking Walls.

The fair's immersive environments will also feature the Solaire

Lounge by Veuve Clicquot, created in collaboration with Studio Marcel Poulain, offering visitors a vibrant retreat to relax and connect, and an exclusive Buccellati pop-up, designed by david/nicolas, exploring craftsmanship through a contemporary lens. Blending shade, light and greenery, Universal Design Studio has conceived a sculptural landscape intervention, supported by Green Trend Landscape and crafted from ARDH Collective's desert-sand Dune Blocks, welcoming visitors to the fair, and Dubai-based creative studio creatorandcurator will transform the Downtown Design Café by One Life Kitchen and Café into an immersive experience that redefines how visitors encounter design.

A highlight of the fair, Editions Art & Design will again showcase limited-edition art and design from regional and international creators, spanning photography, ceramics, prints and editions, works on paper, contemporary design, and artist multiples. A highlight this year, Bureau of Innovation makes its international debut with limited-edition pieces by names such as Sophie Dries, Tom Fereday and Kym Ellery, while AASSTIINN joins the event with a showcase of sculptural objects by Iranian artists Emrooz Studio and Studio Honarvar. Contemporary sculptural lightings will be highlighted through presentations by Superbia Domus, A.D.U. Studio and Tokio. In art, Galerie Geek Art will showcase works by Japanese artists including Takashi Murakami, and Wadi Finan Art Gallery presents works on paper and fabric. In digital creation, Ila Colombo explores AI through digital and print works. In craft and material innovation, Antilla Di Lauro presents a new collection of ceramics and tapestries made from recycled materials.

In its sixth edition, the UAE Designer Exhibition returns with an expanded curatorial scope to bolster mentorship opportunities and visibility for emerging UAE-based designers. Supported by Dubai Culture, this year's edition will feature celebrated designer Nada



Debs as the headline mentor, offering direct guidance and insights to early-career participants alongside other experts in the fields of product design, craft and manufacturing, as well as materiality.

The Forum at Downtown Design, the week's flagship talks programme, will once again convene leading global and regional voices through a series of keynote presentations, panel discussions, and masterclasses. This year's edition welcomes Marcel Wanders, the internationally acclaimed designer celebrated for his human-centred design philosophy, Tom Dixon, one of the most influential figures in contemporary design, making his Dubai debut with a keynote exploring material innovation and the evolution of global design narratives.

He will be joined by other globally-acclaimed voices Lee Broom, Stephanie Couts, and David Hicks, alongside prominent regional designers including Rabah Saied, Pallavi Dean, Abdalla Almulla and Mohammed Al Suwaidi among others, joining a line-up of design directors of studios such as Bone, SAY Studio and 1508 London.

EXCLUSIVE to THE TIMES KUWAIT

What AI Means for Growth and Jobs



Philippe Aghion, Simon Bunel, Xavier Jaravel

Philippe Aghion, a 2025 Nobel laureate in economics, is a professor at the College de France and the London School of Economics and an associate at the Centre for Economic Performance. Simon Bunel is an economist at Banque de France. Xavier Jaravel is Professor of Economics at the London School of Economics.



As more businesses begin to experiment with AI and consider how it might improve their profitability, debates about the implications for workers have intensified. In the United States, the apparent disconnect between soaring stock-market valuations and falling total (non-farm) job openings has fueled media narratives about technologically driven job destruction.

Hardly a week goes by without new headlines about companies using AI to perform white-collar jobs, especially those typically filled by new graduates and those lower down the career ladder. According to a report issued by the US Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions earlier this month, AI and automation could destroy nearly 100 million US jobs over the coming decade. Those voicing such fears can even point to prominent economists who argue that the AI revolution will have only moderate effects on productivity growth, but unambiguously negative effects on employment, owing to the automation of many tasks and jobs.

We disagree on both counts. Our own recent work shows that the situation is far more complicated, and not nearly as dire, as these pessimistic narratives suggest. When it comes to productivity growth, AI can operate through two distinct channels: automating tasks in the production of goods and services, and

automating tasks in the production of new ideas.

When Erik Brynjolfsson and his co-authors examined the impact of generative AI on customer-service agents at a US software firm, they found that productivity among workers with access to an AI assistant increased by almost 14 percent in the first month of use, then stabilized at a level approximately 25 percent higher after three months. Another study finds similarly strong productivity gains among a diverse group of knowledge workers, with lower-productivity workers experiencing the strongest initial effects, thus reducing inequality within firms.

Moving from the micro to the macro level, in a 2024 paper, we (Aghion and Bunel) considered two alternatives for estimating the impact of AI on potential growth over the next decade. The first approach exploits the parallel between the AI revolution and past technological revolutions, while the second follows Daron Acemoglu's task-based framework, which we consider in light of the available data from existing empirical studies.

Based on the first approach, we estimate that the AI revolution should increase aggregate productivity growth by 0.8-1.3 percentage points per year over the next decade. Similarly, using Acemoglu's task-based formula, but

with our own reading of the recent empirical literature, we estimate that AI should increase aggregate productivity growth by between 0.07 and 1.24 percentage points per year, with a median estimate of 0.68. In comparison, Acemoglu projects an increase of only 0.07 percentage points.

Moreover, our estimated median should be seen as a lower bound, because it does not account for AI's potential to automate the production of ideas. On the other hand, our estimates do not account for potential obstacles to growth, notably the lack of competition in various segments of the AI value chain, which are already controlled by the digital revolution's superstar firms.

What about AI's implications for overall employment? In a study of French firm-level data collected between 2018 and 2020, we show that AI adoption is positively associated with an increase in total firm-level employment and sales. This finding is consistent with most recent studies of the firm-level effects of automation on labor demand, and it supports the view that AI adoption induces productivity gains by helping firms expand the scope of their business.

This productivity effect appears to be stronger than AI's potential displacement

effects (whereby AI takes over tasks associated with certain types of jobs and workers, thus reducing labor demand). We find that the impact of AI on labor demand is positive even for occupations that are often classified as vulnerable to automation, such as accounting, telemarketing, and secretarial work. To be sure, while certain uses of AI (such as for digital security) lead to employment growth, other uses (administrative processes) do tend to have small negative effects. But these differences appear to stem from different uses of AI, rather than from inherent characteristics of the affected occupations.

All told, the main risk for workers is that they will be displaced by workers at other firms using AI, rather than by AI directly. Slowing down the pace of AI adoption would likely be self-defeating for domestic employment, because many firms will be competing internationally with AI adopters.

While our interpretation of the data shows that AI could drive both growth and employment, realizing this potential will require suitable policy reforms. For example, competition policy must ensure that the superstar firms that dominate the upper segments of the value chain do not stifle entry by new innovators. Our own study finds that AI adopters are predominantly much larger and more productive than non-adopters, suggesting that those already on top are positioned to be the biggest winners of the AI revolution.

To avoid increased market concentration and entrenched market power, we must encourage AI adoption by smaller firms, which can be achieved through a combination of competition policy and suitable industrial policy that improves access to data and computing power. To enhance the employment potential of AI and minimize its negative effects on workers, broad-based access to high-quality education, together with training programs and active labor-market policies, will be crucial.

The next technological revolution is already underway. The future of entire countries and economies will hinge on their willingness and ability to adapt to it.

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EU-GCC Business Forum, fostering dialogue, boosting trade, investment

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

The leaders also underlined the need to foster multilateral, regional, and bilateral frameworks and hold regular dialogues among stakeholders in trade, investment, and economic affairs with a view to further strengthen cooperation between the two blocs. In line with the Brussels summit communique, Kuwait hosted the 29th EU-GCC Joint Council and Ministerial Meeting on 6 October.

Core topics discussed at the Joint Council meeting included deepening the Strategic Partnership through strengthening political dialogue and institutional frameworks. The communique issued at the conclusion of the Joint Council meeting also called for reviewing the implementation of the EU-GCC Joint Action Program (2022-2027). The two-day 9th EU-GCC Business Forum, which comes in the wake of the Joint Council meeting, will provide a dynamic platform to public and private stakeholders to discuss shared ambitions in a range of activities.

Key stakeholders participating in the Forum include EU and GCC institutions, government officials, business associations, financial institutions, large corporations, SMEs, startups, academia, and media representatives. Dialogue at the Forum will center around strengthening trade and investment, promoting sustainable growth, and exploring opportunities for economic integration

and diversification. The Forum is designed not only to foster dialogue but also to deliver concrete, actionable outcomes, in EU-GCC trade and investment, enable SME market access, and share regulatory and innovation best practices. The Forum will also seek to showcase clean and smart technologies, and strengthen the participation of youth and women entrepreneurs. It will also aim to build sustainable networks across key sectors such as digital transformation, green energy, cybersecurity, artificial intelligence (AI), connectivity, and sustainable development.

During the upcoming two-day Forum, policymakers, business leaders, investors and innovators from Europe and the Gulf will engage in B2B, G2B, and G2G meetings, aimed to further boost trade and investment between the two sides. The program includes a plenary section on EU-GCC economic outlook, followed by sessions on trade, innovation and skills, on day-one.

Meanwhile, day-two at the Forum will focus on facilitating investment and co-investment dialogues involving major EU investors, the European Investment Bank and GCC sovereign funds, culminating in the signing of cooperation agreements between the two sides. Several MoUs and investment commitments are anticipated, particularly in areas related to digital transformation, green energy, infrastructure, trade corridors, food security and healthcare. Although specific parties and deal values have not

yet been disclosed, both sides confirm that the forum will move the partnership from dialogue to implementation. High-level figures slated to attend include Maroš Šefčovič, EU Commissioner for Trade and Economic Security; Ioannis Tsakiris, Vice-President of European Investment Bank; and Luigi Di Maio, EU Special Representative for the Gulf.

As host nation, and current Chair of the GCC, Kuwait will play a central role in shaping the outcomes of the Forum, by providing a strong institutional framework and a results-driven agenda to the talks. Kuwait aims to use the Forum as a launchpad for concrete, outcome-oriented initiatives, particularly in sustainability, innovation, trade, and investment. Discussions will also address economic challenges such as the EU's Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism (CBAM) which will be launched in 2026 and its impact on exports from the GCC to the EU.

The 9th EU-GCC Business Forum will mark a pivotal milestone in the partnership between Europe and the Gulf, moving from dialogue to action, and from aspiration to implementation. It reflects the shared ambition of the two sides to catalyze the next phase of their cooperation founded on innovation, sustainability, and shared prosperity, accelerating integration and economic diversification while positioning both regions as dynamic players in the global economy.



Thought for the week

“ Education and justice are
democracy's
only life insurance.

Nannie Helen Burroughs
- African-American educator

Everyday habits that secretly slow your metabolism

.....
Ask Mira: Eating Right to Live Happy & Healthy



Well, eating red meat, chicken, low-fat dairy products, eggs and seafood can be a really good source of high quality proteins, so thumbs up for those who are doing that. Protein shakes are also a good thing to have as long as your protein intake is minimal.

I usually go for seafood as it is the leanest protein choice to have, plus it is high in Omega-3 which is excellent for brain health. And people who suffer from

But for those people, and all crab lovers, we warned that crab sticks have no crab meat in them and are usually around 20 percent the ground meat paste of other fish—the rest of surimi comprises of artificial processed paste made of salt, sugar, starch and preservatives with no nutritional value at all.

They add it simply because it is cheap, which makes those 'crab-like' sticks less expensive and always available. So eat this in moderation, focus on other seafood options, or order the real crab when it is available.

Surimi Ingredients include cheap mashed fish, white eggs, salt, water, sugar, starches, flavorings, preservatives, and spices. Their protein content is nothing to talk about, while real crabs are loaded with zinc, selenium and iron, needed for better health.

If what looks and tastes good is bad for you, then you have plenty of other food options that taste even better, and are healthful. Eat Smart



high triglycerides levels surely do the same: Omega-3 is the best natural nutritional remedy for that.

But lately I am seeing a lot of people who are on a high protein diet eating surimi, either in their sushi rolls, in their salad, or just buying it from the supermarket and having it as a late night snack. They are no doubt tempting as they are low in calories and taste good.

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



Eat like Mira
 Create healthy habits, not restrictions

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

RECIPE

Labneh Zingy Parcel



Labneh Zingy Parcel is soft and crusty on the outside while remaining creamy inside. This delicious pie, originally created by the chefs at Domino's, the American multinational pizza restaurant chain, is also known as Domino's Veg. Zingy Parcel. The versatility of this simple offering has led to the proliferation of various iterations that go by different names. The main advantage of preparing this is that it can be filled with anything you fancy, whether it is chicken, meat or your choice of vegetables.

Total time: 1:30 minutes
Serving: yields 6

Ingredients

For the dough:

- 1 cup milk or warm water
- 1 tsp sugar
- 1 tsp instant yeast
- 1 tbsp olive oil
- 1 cup all purpose flour
- For the filling:
- 1 cup labneh (cheese made from strained yogurt)
- ¼ cup finely chopped capsicum
- 1 tbsp finely chopped tomatoes
- 1 tbsp chopped parsley
- 1 tbsp olive slice
- 1 tsp chili flakes
- 2 tbsp zaatar powder
- Now mix all the ingredients for filling in a bowl and set aside.
- Filling is ready, keep it aside.

Instructions

Making the dough:

- Mix together all purpose flour, sugar, yeast and salt in a bowl
- Add milk or warm water to the mixture, a little at a time, and knead to a dough
- Add 2 tsp olive oil and continue to knead the dough.
- Tuck the dough, cover and rest for 1 hour or until the dough doubles in size.

Making the filling:

- After an hour, gently punch down the risen dough, and continue kneading
- Pinch a ball sized dough and roll gently.
- Fold the sides shaping into a triangle.
- Spoon some filling in and top with labneh, sprinkle some zaatar powder
- Bring together the corners and seal the tips with water
- Brush the parcel with a little milk to give it a golden color
- Bake in the oven for 15 minutes
- Brush with olive oil to get the shiny crust
- Finally, serve warm and enjoy this zingy parcel.



Chef Chhaya Thakker

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

Weekend Luxury at Sofitel Bahrain

From Moroccan Charm to Overwater Bliss

By Nourah Khan
Travel Writer
The Times Kuwait

Few places manage to blend Arabian elegance, French sophistication, and island serenity quite like Sofitel Bahrain Zallaq Thalassa Sea & Spa. During my recent weekend stay, I had the opportunity to experience two of the resort's most extraordinary accommodations: the Moroccan-style Opera Suite and one of its spectacular Overwater Villas, often dubbed the 'Maldives of



Bahrain'. What unfolded was a journey through luxury, culture, and serenity, all within a single breathtaking resort.

My stay began in the Opera Suite, an opulent Moroccan-inspired haven that instantly transported me to North Africa. Every corner echoed the warmth and artistry of Moroccan design—vibrant tiles, carved wooden details, ornate lanterns, and rich textiles that bathed the room in golden hues.

Spanning 120 square meters, the suite features a lavish bedroom, an elegant living area, and all the modern comforts of a five-star escape, from a Bose sound system to a Nespresso coffee corner.

The highlight, however, was the private terrace with its own infinity pool, offering uninterrupted views of the Arabian Gulf. Whether it was a sunrise dip or an evening swim beneath the stars, the tranquility of that space made it easy to forget the world beyond. It was pure indulgence; a Moroccan oasis perched above the sea.

The following day, I transitioned to a completely different world—the resort's Overwater Villa, a 360-square-meter masterpiece suspended above the turquoise sea. Connected by a short wooden pier, these villas redefine coastal luxury in the GCC, merging tropical island design with the warmth



of Bahraini hospitality.

The villa boasted three spacious bedrooms, floor-to-ceiling glass doors, and panoramic sea views from nearly every angle. Outside, the private infinity pool seemed to blend seamlessly with the horizon, surrounded by plush loungers and a shaded dining area.



One of my favorite moments was waking up to a floating breakfast—a beautifully arranged tray gliding on the pool's surface, complete with fresh juices, pastries, and coffee. Enjoying breakfast while the gentle waves rippled below and sunlight danced across the water was a surreal experience, the kind usually reserved for remote island resorts.

With a personal butler available 24/7, in-villa dining options, and complete privacy, this stay truly lived up to its 'Maldives of Bahrain' reputation—an exclusive world of peace, luxury, and sea breeze.

Sofitel Bahrain is not only a haven for relaxation but also a paradise for food lovers. The resort is home to twelve distinctive restaurants, cafés, and lounges, each with its own character and cuisine, offering guests a world of culinary discovery without ever leaving the property.

From Saraya, the vibrant international buffet and breakfast favorite, to Fiamma, an elegant

Italian dining experience, and Pashawat, where traditional Arabic flavors meet live oriental music, every venue tells a story.

The resort also features Yamaz, a Greek-inspired seaside restaurant perfect for sunset views, alongside several other specialty outlets and lounges serving gourmet coffee, pastries, seafood, and light bites throughout the day.

Whether craving Mediterranean freshness, Italian comfort, or Middle Eastern spice, guests can embark on a global gastronomic journey across twelve destinations of flavor within one luxurious resort.

Among the resort's dining experiences, Yamaz stood out as a highlight. Arriving just before sunset, I was greeted by the sight of the sun dipping into the Gulf, painting the sky in soft shades of amber and rose.



The terrace, overlooking the water, radiated a carefree Greek spirit. A live band played upbeat bouzouki tunes, while the scent of olive oil and herbs filled the air. The combination of music, sea breeze, and sunset views created an atmosphere so immersive that I momentarily

forgot I was in Bahrain. Dining at Yamaz was not just a meal, it was an experience that stirred the senses and captured the heart. Beyond its accommodations and restaurants, Sofitel Bahrain excels in wellness and recreation. The Thalassa Sea & Spa, the only one of its kind in the Middle East, offers unique seawater-based therapies, hydrotherapy pools, and a serene indoor seawater pool for ultimate rejuvenation.

The resort also features a private beach, kids' club, fitness center, tennis and squash courts, and multiple outdoor pools. Whether for couples, families, or solo travelers, it offers a perfect blend of relaxation and activity. Families will especially appreciate the thoughtful touches—child-friendly menus, warm staff, and safe play areas that make every guest feel



at home. My weekend at Sofitel Bahrain Zallaq Thalassa Sea & Spa felt like a journey across continents—Morocco's mystique in the Opera Suite, the Maldives' serenity in the Overwater Villa, and Greece's vibrancy at Yamaz. Yet, everything was connected by the soul of Bahraini hospitality and the unmistakable elegance of the Sofitel brand. It is rare to find a resort that captures so many worlds in one place, but Sofitel Bahrain does so, effortlessly. As I left, I carried with me not just memories of luxury, but a sense of calm, and a wish to return soon to this Arabian paradise by the sea.

Noura Khan, a travel influencer and content creator, is a Kuwaiti national, holds a degree in law from Kuwait University and has worked as a journalist prior to taking up a position in the government. In 2018 she started blogging on travel and visited more than 57 countries since. She has more than 105k followers on her blog post @nourajtraveller is well appreciated for content and travel information. Noura writes exclusively for The Times Kuwait on her travel visits.



EXCLUSIVE to THE TIMES KUWAIT

Courts Are Shaping the Future of Climate Action



Francesca Mascha Klein, Laura Schäfer

Francesca Mascha Klein is Legal Officer for Strategic Litigation at Germanwatch. Laura Schäfer is Head of the Division for International Climate Policy at Germanwatch.

Amid rising geopolitical tensions, pressure to comply with climate obligations increasingly comes from courts. Earlier this year, both the International Court of Justice (ICJ) and the Inter-American Court of Human Rights (IACtHR) issued landmark advisory opinions affirming that countries must address climate change, and that failure to do so may carry serious legal consequences.

This renewed legal clarity comes at a critical moment. Last year was the hottest on record, with global average temperatures exceeding 1.5° Celsius above pre-industrial levels, yet the gulf between the urgency of the climate threat and the policy response continues to widen.

In the absence of political will, the legal system has become a key driver of climate progress. As the United Nations Climate Change Conference in Brazil (COP30) approaches, the groundwork has been laid for stronger, fairer, and more accountable climate action. The task now is for governments to adapt their policies in accordance with both international law and environmental needs.

The most immediate implication of the ICJ and IACtHR opinions is that national climate plans, known as Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs), must reflect the 'highest possible ambition' and be consistent with the 2015 Paris climate agreement's goal of limiting global warming to 1.5°C.



“But litigation alone cannot deliver justice at scale. Governments must establish clear legal frameworks to hold major emitters fully accountable for their role in driving the climate crisis before the damage becomes irreversible.”

Alarming, as of 2024, global temperatures are on track to rise by up to 3.1°C by the end of the century. Following the September deadline for new NDCs, only half of greenhouse-gas (GHG) emissions are covered by updated climate pledges, most of which fall well short of science-based targets.

The ICJ and IACtHR decisions, however, offer some cause for hope. At COP30, negotiators and civil-society representatives can push for ambitious measures, as noncompliance with the Paris agreement's temperature goals can be challenged not only in diplomatic forums but also in courts.

A rapid phaseout of coal, oil, and gas remains essential to effective climate action. But despite the so-called 'UAE consensus' to move away from fossil fuels, many countries continue to obstruct progress. Here, too, the ICJ provides negotiators with new tools, explicitly recognizing that governments may be held liable for failure to reduce GHG emissions, including through fossil-fuel production, consumption, exploration, and subsidies. The international climate regime must evolve to reflect these changing legal realities. That requires creating stronger compliance mechanisms that ensure countries meet their targets and deliver on

climate-finance commitments. The legal shift is particularly evident in climate finance. For decades, developed countries have treated funding for climate adaptation and loss and damage as discretionary. Consequently, despite the establishment of the Fund for Responding to Loss and Damage at COP28, contributions remain far below what is needed.

The path forward is clear. The ICJ's opinion affirms that wealthy countries have a legally binding duty to support mitigation, adaptation, and loss and damage efforts across the developing world. To meet these obligations, at least \$1.3 trillion must be mobilized annually by 2035, with dedicated provisions for loss and damage.

Crucially, the private sector is not being let off the hook. The ICJ, IACtHR, and the International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea have all recognized that governments must regulate corporations where necessary to protect the environment, safeguard the climate system, and uphold human rights.

At the same time, corporate accountability is taking shape in domestic courts. In a landmark decision, Germany's Higher Regional Court of Hamm ruled that large emitters can, in principle, be held liable for climate-related impacts. The

case, brought by Peruvian farmer Saúl Luciano Lliuya, shows that individuals on the front lines of the climate crisis can force polluters to pay their fair share.

But litigation alone cannot deliver justice at scale. Governments must establish clear legal frameworks to hold major emitters fully accountable for their role in driving the climate crisis before the damage becomes irreversible. Mechanisms such as mandatory reserves, disclosure rules, insurance schemes, and compensation funds can help internalize liability risks and embed accountability into the system, rather than leaving it to goodwill or the courts.

The momentum for such measures is building. In countries like the Philippines and Pakistan, as well as US states such as Vermont and New York, lawmakers are advancing 'polluter pays' legislation. Remarkably, climate lawsuits, by plaintiffs ranging from indigenous groups in Canada to farmers in Korea, are already invoking the ICJ's reasoning and a Brazilian court explicitly cited it when ordering a fossil project to cease operations.

Instead of waiting for the next court ruling, governments should now take steps to uphold the rule of law and assume responsibility for confronting the climate crisis. That means charting a credible path toward drastic emission cuts, accelerating the phaseout of fossil fuels, and ensuring that climate finance is effective, equitable, and fit for purpose. At COP30, international policymakers should harness the current legal momentum by proposing a global levy on fossil-fuel profits and high-emitting sectors, including shipping and aviation, to ensure sustainable financing of the Adaptation Fund and the Loss and Damage Fund.

A decade after the Paris agreement, the world can no longer afford half-measures. Vanuatu has already announced plans to pursue a new UN resolution aimed at translating the ICJ's opinion into concrete political action. By supporting this initiative and acting decisively now, policymakers can build a global climate regime capable of delivering real solutions at the speed and scale this crisis demands.



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