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Eradicating Gender Violence, a Deep-Rooted Social Scourge



THE TIMES KUWAIT REPORT

Violence against women and girls is a global social scourge that has persisted and escalated across wide settings, from schools, workplaces and public spaces to the privacy of homes, and from real world to the online world. Despite continued efforts by international organizations, governments, businesses, academia, civil society organizations, and individuals, the menace of gender-based violence (GBV) remains prevalent and deeply pervasive.

In Kuwait, while the authorities have introduced legislative and institutional reforms, and supported social efforts to combat GBV, challenges persist. The Domestic Violence Law enacted in 2020, created a national committee to develop policies against domestic violence and establish shelters, a hotline, and legal assistance for victims of violence, including



allowing women to obtain restraining orders against their abusers.

However, several provisions in the Domestic

Violence Law have shortcomings. For instance, the law also does not set penalties for domestic violence as a crime itself, and it excludes

former partners and those in relationships outside of marriage. Moreover, since the issue of domestic violence is often considered a private family matter, this leads to significant under-reporting. Activists and experts have also cited the continued lack of legal resources and shelters for survivors as issues exacerbating the problem.

Also, in March this year, the government enacted other significant reforms to the 1960 Penal Code, including repealing Article 153, which had allowed for reduced sentences in ‘honor killings’. Additional key changes include the repeal of Article 182, which allowed perpetrators of kidnapping to avoid punishment by marrying their victim, and amendment to the Personal Status Law that raised the minimum marriage age to 18 for both sexes. Nevertheless, in certain aspects of the law, such as in relation to marriage and divorce, women and men are still not deemed equal.

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Listening First: Leadership Skill That Can Transform Kuwait Vision 2035

What If Better Government Communication Starts Not with Talking — But with Listening?



By Sarah Al Sabah
Government Advisor
& Communication Strategist
Special to The Times Kuwait

In government, communication is often understood as the message we deliver. We focus on what we need to announce, explain, or clarify. But real communication does not begin with talking. It begins with listening.

In my work with teams across the public sector, I always start with one question: Who are you as a person? Not the title. Not the role. The human being.

When people understand their values, their motivations, and their strengths, they communicate differently. They become clearer. They become more empathetic. They lead with more purpose. This is exactly what Kuwait needs today as we move toward Vision 2035.

Our national transformation is not only digital or economic. Our national transformation is deeply human.

Listening Builds Trust: Trust is the foundation of strong public institutions. It grows when people feel heard. It grows when concerns are acknowledged and when communities see that their input matters. Listening turns communication into a relationship instead of a broadcast. But even two-way communication is no longer enough for the world we live in today.

To succeed under Vision 2035, the public sector must embrace participatory multi-way communication. This is a system where information flows in all directions and invites co-creation. The government speaks to people. People speak to the government. Communities speak to each other. All the while co-creating through in-person consultation, AI tools, social media interactions and surveys. In the evolving digital age we live in, all of this happens within an environment that supports openness, feedback, and shared problem-solving.

Participatory multi-way communication turns the public from passive recipients into active participants. Transforms ministries from authorities into partners. It strengthens social cohesion by connecting voices across communities, ages, and sectors.

At its core, participatory multi-way communication recognizes one truth. A nation moves forward when the conversation is shared. Progress comes not from talking at people but from speaking with them.

Storytelling Creates Connection: Facts inform people. Stories move them. Government communication must explain policies clearly, but it must also communicate the meaning behind decisions. Storytelling builds connection and helps people understand the purpose of national reforms.

Countries that excel in public-sector communication, including the UAE, Singapore, and Estonia, rely on narrative as much as information. Kuwait can do the same by using stories that reflect our identity, our values, and our aspirations.

Transparency Strengthens Credibility: In a fast digital environment, silence creates speculation. Transparency has become



This article highlights the shift from traditional one-way government communication to a more inclusive, multi-way model essential for Kuwait's Vision 2035. The author argues that effective communication starts with listening, which builds trust, strengthens institutions, and enhances public engagement. She outlines how storytelling, transparency, and self-aware leadership can shape a more human-centered government. The piece concludes by calling for a national culture of dialogue where individuals, civil society, and the private sector collaborate to shape Kuwait's future.

essential. Clear and timely communication signals confidence and respect for the public. It helps citizens feel included in national progress rather than distant from it.

Transparent institutions do not wait for moments of crisis. They speak early. They speak clearly. They speak consistently.

Self-Awareness Makes Leaders More Authentic: Communication reflects leadership. Self-aware leaders understand the weight of their words and the tone of their message. They recognise the impact of their decisions on people's daily lives. This emotional intelligence is a modern leadership requirement. It strengthens teams. It builds

resilient institutions. It creates trust.

Self-awareness as a principle guided my recent conversation on the Journey to the Summit podcast, where we discussed how knowing oneself leads to better, more authentic communication. The same applies to institutions. The more they understand their identity and purpose, the clearer their message becomes.

From Broadcasting to Engaging: Kuwait stands at a moment of opportunity. Vision 2035 can only succeed when people feel part of the journey. Communication must evolve from sending messages to encouraging participation. Engagement is no longer a tool.



It is an expectation.

Countries that lead in governance today share one common feature. They treat communication as a national asset. They build systems that allow every voice to matter and every insight to contribute. Kuwait can do the same.

Vision 2035 Happens One Conversation at a Time: National visions become reality when people feel seen, heard, and included. Strong communication is not a press release or a campaign. It is a continuous dialogue that grows trust and strengthens connection.

Government communication is not only about providing information. It is also about igniting a national conversation about the kind of country we want to build and the role each of us plays in shaping our nation. Individuals, the private sector, and civil society all contribute to this shared vision.

Communication becomes a tool of impact and influence. It guides actions, attitudes, and behaviors. It also reflects them back to decision-makers in a way that translates public sentiment into meaningful progress.

Transformation begins with a simple question: Who needs to be heard?

The answer to that question shapes policies, institutions, and national progress.

Real communication starts with listening. It starts with empathy. It starts with the human connection at the heart of every successful society.

In this op-ed, **Sarah F. Al-Sabah** explores how listening, not speaking, can become Kuwait's most powerful tool for public-sector transformation. As the country advances toward Vision 2035, she argues that trust, leadership, and effective governance begin with multi-way communication that includes citizens, institutions, and communities. Her perspective is informed by her work in government strategic development and her recent appearance on the Journey to the Summit podcast.

Kuwait affirms deep bonds as UAE Embassy marks 54th Union Day

Large turnout highlights enduring 'Brotherhood' as leaders hail historic ties



The Times Kuwait Report

A remarkable official and public turnout marked the UAE Embassy's celebration of the 54th Union Day in Kuwait, held under the theme "United," underscoring the depth of the historic relationship between the two nations and the special place the UAE holds in the hearts of Kuwaitis.

The event was attended by Prime Minister His Highness Sheikh Ahmed Al-Abdullah, First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior Sheikh Fahd Al-Yousef, Foreign Minister Abdullah Al-Yahya, and a large gathering of senior officials, diplomats, community representatives, and members of Kuwaiti society.

In remarks on the occasion, Sheikh Fahd Al-Yousef highlighted the longstanding and exceptional nature of Kuwaiti-Emirati ties. "Since I became aware of the world, I have known the relationship between Kuwait and the UAE to be a strong one — built by successive leaders who nurtured and strengthened it throughout the years," he said. He also expressed pride in the

outcomes of the 46th session of the GCC Supreme Council held in Bahrain, noting that the summit had reinforced cohesion among Gulf leaders and delivered positive results across political, economic, and security fields.

Foreign Minister Abdullah Al-Yahya likewise affirmed the deep and firmly established relations between Kuwait and the UAE, stressing Kuwait's commitment to participating in the national celebrations of the Emirati brothers.

Speaking to the press after arriving directly from the Gulf Summit in Manama, he said: "We were keen to be present on this blessed day. We share the joy of our people in the Emirates and extend our heartfelt congratulations. May it be a year of goodness, progress, and prosperity."

Reflecting on the Gulf Summit's outcomes, Al-Yahya said the meeting was "excellent," with a final communiqué that demonstrated GCC unity.

He added that the coming period will focus on advancing joint Gulf work, particularly in unified customs procedures, economic coordination, security cooperation, cybersecurity, and broader regional security — areas he described as urgent

priorities for the bloc. On the proposed unified Gulf visa, he noted that no new details were available but promised transparent updates once discussions progress.

Al-Yahya also highlighted the regional praise Kuwait received during its presidency of the previous GCC session, stressing that the success resulted from collective efforts and close coordination among member states.

He extended his best wishes to Bahrain as it assumes the current presidency and expressed optimism for further Gulf integration in the months ahead. For his part, UAE Ambassador Dr. Matar Al-Neyadi emphasized the profound and enduring nature of Emirati-Kuwaiti relations. He described the bilateral bond as one rooted not only in political and economic cooperation but also in historical loyalty between the two peoples.

He recalled the generous directive of UAE President His Highness Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed Al Nahyan to honor and celebrate the brotherly relationship, noting: "There is loyalty that cannot be forgotten. The UAE will never forget Kuwait's stances in the sixties and seventies, just

as Kuwait will never forget the UAE's support. This mutual loyalty is the foundation on which our relationship was built."

Al-Neyadi said the overwhelming attendance by Kuwaiti citizens reflected genuine affection between both societies. "You could see the joy on people's faces today," he remarked. "The UAE loves Kuwait, and Kuwait adores everything Emirati. This is a living reality we witness on every occasion."

The ambassador expressed pride in the participation of Minister Al-Yousef and Minister Al-Yahya, describing their presence as a testament to the sincerity of the relationship and a powerful symbol of mutual appreciation. He added that such high-level attendance was entirely consistent with the depth of ties between the two nations. "Today's large gathering reaffirms that our motto is one — our celebrations in the UAE and Kuwait are shared joys," he said. Al-Neyadi concluded by thanking all attendees and reaffirming the embassy's commitment to strengthening a brotherly relationship "rooted by the founding fathers and nurtured today by the leaders of both countries with love, care, and fraternity."



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Mongolia, Kuwait relations: Past achievements point to promising future

In an exclusive interview with The Times Kuwait, Ambassador of Mongolia H.E. Sergelen Purev spoke about the strength of diplomatic ties over the past five decades, and how the two friendly states have collaborated across various fields, including political, developmental, and cultural domains, to further consolidate relations on the government and popular level.

By Reaven D'Souza
Executive Managing Editor

This year marks 50 years of diplomatic relations between Mongolia and Kuwait. How would you describe the journey of bilateral ties over these five decades?

Over the past fifty years, Mongolia and Kuwait have built a strong and mutually respectful partnership grounded in trust, shared interests, and a commitment to international cooperation. Since the establishment of diplomatic relations in 1975, our two countries have steadily expanded collaboration across political, economic, cultural, and humanitarian fields. Kuwait was the first GCC country to establish diplomatic relations with Mongolia, and this historic milestone set the foundation for a long-standing friendship.



Kuwait has played an important role in Mongolia's development efforts through the Kuwait Fund for Arab Economic Development by investing in health, infrastructure, renewable energy, road and transport, and environment sectors, and the Government and people of Mongolia highly value and appreciate this.

I specially would like to highlight that our cooperation is growing faster than before over the past few years. For instance, we have started meat export from Mongolia to the State of Kuwait in October 2025 and our two governments have signed an 'Air Service agreement' in January 2025, establishing legal frameworks to open direct flights between Mongolia and the State of Kuwait, and both sides are actively working to open direct flights. I am confident this development will increase our people-to-people ties as well as trade and economic cooperation.

I would also like to say that our cooperation in the fields of sports and education is growing rapidly. Kuwait University provides two scholarship quotas annually for Mongolian students to study Arabic language. Some of the graduates from this program are now serving as diplomats in our embassies in Middle Eastern countries, including Egypt. We see not only achievements of the past but also a very promising and bright future.

What moments or milestones stand out as the most significant in shaping Mongolia-Kuwait relations?

The biggest motive to further enhance and shape the relations and cooperation between our two countries has always been our people-to-people ties and high-level exchanges. For example, Mongolia was considered a second home to His Highness the Late Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, who visited Mongolia eleven times, which then set a strong

and heartfelt foundation for the friendship between our countries.

Kuwait was one of the earliest Middle Eastern countries to establish diplomatic relations with Mongolia, this motivated both countries to formalize ties in 1975?

Also, Mongolia and Kuwait both adhered to foreign policy principles based on peace, mutual respect, and non-interference. These shared values created a natural foundation for diplomatic relations.

During the 1970s Mongolia was actively engaging with countries in the Middle East, while Kuwait aimed to strengthen ties with Asian countries. Establishing relations served the strategic interest of diversifying international relations.

How strong is the current level of political engagement between the two countries?

Over the past 50 years, Mongolia and Kuwait have strengthened their relations at the political level, and are now working actively to expand cooperation in the fields of economy, trade, tourism, education, and culture.

Mongolia and Kuwait also enjoy strong cooperation within the United Nations and various multilateral platforms. Both countries share common views on many global and regional issues, which allows them to coordinate effectively on matters such as peace and security, sustainable development, climate change, and humanitarian assistance. A recent example is the election of both countries to the UNESCO World Heritage Committee, where Mongolia and Kuwait voted for each other.

What are some of the most promising sectors for Kuwait to invest in Mongolia?

Several sectors, including agriculture, mining, tourism, and infrastructure are open to investments from Kuwait. Firstly, Mongolia began exporting meat and meat products to the State of Kuwait in October 2024, and these products are now available in major supermarket chains across Kuwait. I believe that investing in the agricultural sector, especially in food production and meat processing will further elevate our trade cooperation to a new



opportunities to cooperate in this sector.

Are there ongoing discussions to encourage private sector partnerships or joint ventures?

In 2023, we organized the first-ever Mongolia-Kuwaiti joint business forum in Kuwait City in cooperation with the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Kuwait. During the business forum, 30 Mongolian businessmen from agriculture, meat export, tourism and cashmere sectors, and 20 Kuwaiti businessmen from agriculture, construction, investment sectors attended and established Memorandum of Understanding and some of the entities have already started their cooperation as a result of this forum.

The Embassy of Mongolia to the State of Kuwait is now planning to organize the second business forum in the beginning of next year.

How can Kuwaiti investors benefit from Mongolia's strategic location between China and Russia?

Mongolia is a landlocked country sandwiched between two great powers, China and Russia. Even though we are landlocked, we can serve as a bridge and gateway for Kuwaiti investors to access both the Russian and Chinese markets.

consumers of renewable energy. International partners, including Kuwaiti investors can invest in Mongolia's renewable energy projects and export it to China.

Kuwait Fund for Arab Economic Development has supported several projects in Mongolia. How important has this partnership been?

Kuwait Fund for Arab Economic Development has been one of the closest partners of Mongolia among the GCC development funds since the 1990s. As of today, the Kuwait Fund has invested around US\$80 million in renewable energy, infrastructure, road, environment, and provided grants worth \$18 million.

ly, we are in discussions with the Fund to cooperate on Mongolia's major development projects in the road and transport sectors in cooperation with other GCC development funds

Cultural ties between Mongolia and Kuwait are still growing. Are there plans for cultural weeks, exhibitions, or artistic exchanges?

The Embassy of Mongolia has prepared a year-long agenda to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between Mongolia and the State of Kuwait, organizing a series of events and initiatives to commemorate this historic milestone.

As part of these celebrations, the Embassy is planning a Grand Reception at the Waldorf Astoria Hotel on 7 December; a 'Taste of Mongolia' traditional food show on 8 December, at the Mughal Mahal Restaurant; and the 'Legend of Nomads', a Mongolian cultural concert, performed by the Mongolian Grand Theatre for National Arts, at the American University of Kuwait Theater on 8 December at 19:00. I kindly invite Kuwaiti citizens to attend our 'Legend of Nomads' cultural concert.

In addition to these events, we are in the process of making a documentary film that will showcase five decades of relations and cooperation between Mongolia and Kuwait, highlighting the milestones, achievements, and enduring friendship between our two countries.

Additionally, Kuwait University offers two scholarship quotas for Mongolian students annually to study Arabic language. Some of the graduates from this program are now serving as diplomats in our embassies in Middle Eastern countries, including Egypt. We are now in discussion with the Government of the State of Kuwait and Kuwait University to provide scholarships on bachelor and masters level.

Mongolia is becoming a unique tourism destination. What message would you send to Kuwaitis who may want to explore Mongolia, and what are some of the bilateral developments in this regard?

Mongolia is becoming a truly unique and unforgettable tourism destination, offering a blend of pristine landscapes, rich nomadic culture, and warm hospitality. For Kuwaitis who wish to explore Mongolia, I would say Mongolia is a place to connect with nature and history. I warmly invite Kuwaiti travelers to discover Mongolia's beauty, its people, and its unique way of life, which will surely leave lasting memories. Welcome to Mongolia. In January 2025, the Government of Mongolia and the Government of the State of Kuwait also signed an Air service agreement, which created the legal framework to open direct flights between the two countries. Currently, our two sides are studying the possibilities of opening direct flights.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 12



level. With approximately 80 million livestock, Mongolia has significant capacity and long-term potential to supply high-quality meat and meat products to the Kuwaiti market.

Also, Mongolia is the world's number one supplier of raw cashmere and cashmere products and is rich in copper, gold, coal, and rare earth elements. I believe that we have vast

With our strategic geographic location, open investment environment, and growing transport and logistics capabilities, Mongolia offers a unique platform for trade, re-export, and regional connectivity.

For example, Mongolia is rich in renewable energy resources. At the same time, China is one of the world's largest importers and

Collective GCC security, unified destiny ensures stability, regional peace

The Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) has relied on time and again on unity as a proven policy that deters challenges and achieves the mutual benefit of countries in the region, said His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah while addressing the 46th GCC Summit held in Manama, Bahrain on 3 December.

Reiterating that Gulf countries, through the awareness and vigilance of their people, had overcome highly

complicated regional and international challenges, His Highness added that stability, via collective security and unified destiny, will ensure peace in the region. He pointed out that the previous 45th session of the GCC, headed by Kuwait, had addressed challenges and also focused on ways to boost cooperation among the council's members as well as regional and international partners.

Regarding issues of regional and

international importance, His Highness the Amir condemned the Israeli occupation aggression against the State of Qatar, saying that the attack was considered an assault against the whole of the GCC. Condemning the Israeli occupation's aggression against the Palestinian people, he asserted that the occupation must end and the establishment of a Palestinian state within the 4 June 1967 borders and East Jerusalem as the capital must see light.

His Highness the Amir also vowed Kuwait's commitment to continue work with Iraq, based on understandings and mutual agreements, to complete marine boundary demarcation beyond mark 162 in accordance with international law and the 1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS).

His Highness the Amir congratulated the King of Bahrain Hamad bin Isa Al-Khalifa and his country on hosting the current session



of the GCC, asserting that the Kingdom would help further boost cooperation amongst the six member countries.

Congratulating Bahrain on becoming a non-permanent member at the UNSC for 2026-27, he said it reflected Bahrain's strong international

presence in global peace and security.

His Highness the Amir also expressed appreciation towards GCC Secretary General Jassem Al-Budaiwi for his and the staff's at the GCC Secretariat, thanking them for their dedication.



Canadian College of Kuwait and Vellore Institute of Technology sign strategic academic partnership

The Canadian College of Kuwait (CCK) has entered into a new academic partnership with India's Vellore Institute of Technology (VIT) through the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU). The agreement sets the stage for cooperation in key areas of teaching, research, and innovation, linking two institutions that share a common goal of preparing students for a rapidly changing world.



Under the MoU, CCK and VIT will:

- Advance academic exchange through student mobility initiatives, faculty development, and community engagement programs.
- Launch research and innovation-led activities, co-designed by both institutions to enhance practical learning and global competence.
- Create new opportunities for students to participate in global research, exchange programs, and innovation-driven learning experiences.

"Education should never be confined by borders," said Mr. Othman Ayman Boodai, Chairman of the Board of Trustees at the Canadian College of Kuwait.

"Our partnership with Vellore Institute of Technology offers students more than a qualification; it gives them an international mindset, real-world exposure, and the confidence to succeed globally. It reflects our guiding belief, 'Think Global, Study Local.'"

This alliance between the Canadian College of Kuwait and Vellore Institute of Technology was guided by the leadership and strategic support of Dr. R. Seenivasan, Director of International Relations, and Dr. J.N.V. Raghuram, Deputy Director of International Relations at VIT, a collaboration that transcends borders and inspires a new era of global learning.

Vellore Institute of Technology, recognized among the world's top universities, is ranked 142nd globally for Engineering & Technology and within the 551-600 band for Business & Management Studies, according to the QS World University Rankings 2025. As one of Kuwait's forward-looking higher education institutions, the Canadian College of Kuwait continues to build international bridges that empower students to achieve global success without leaving home.

Together, the two institutions are shaping a future where students gain world-class academic exposure, industry-ready skills, and global opportunities, all within Kuwait.




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GCC Summit 2025: Harvesting results, envisioning a shared future

Leaders reinforce indivisible Gulf security, drive forward economic integration, and open new horizons for regional cooperation.



By Shaikha Suhaila Al-Sabah
Managing Editor

The Bahraini capital, Manama, hosted the 46th Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) Summit at a critical juncture, as the region is undergoing rapid political and economic transformations. The leaders of the GCC member states emerged from their meeting with a set of practical decisions that solidify the path of Gulf integration and open up broad horizons for the citizens of the member states in the areas of economy, development, and security. They affirmed the Council's ability to overcome regional and international challenges through the wisdom of its leaders and the unity of its member states.

The summit's deliberations conveyed clear and direct messages: the security of the GCC states is indivisible, and any threat targeting one member state is a direct threat to all other member states. All official positions reiterated their condemnation of any aggression against Qatar, emphasizing that Gulf security is a single, indivisible entity. The strong commitment to completing the defense and security systems, unifying efforts and legislation, and setting binding timetables to implement King Salman's vision to enhance joint Gulf action was highlighted, in a step that reflects a serious political will to move from the stage of cooperation to a more advanced stage towards actual union.

This approach aligns with the leaders' commitment to consolidating the principles of joint deterrence and enhancing early response capabilities to any cross-border threats. This will be achieved through developing command and control centers, integrating early warning systems, improving military readiness, and expanding the scope of joint exercises. Member states also agreed to elevate the level of security information exchange, update operational procedures among relevant agencies, and unify policies for protecting borders, seaports, and airspace. This will ensure better protection of vital installations, secure energy and trade routes, and establish a stable environment that supports economic development and strengthens the confidence of Gulf citizens in the Council's ability



to safeguard their security and future.

The spirit of Gulf partnership was reflected in a package of economic decisions that directly impact citizens' lives. The launch of the customs data exchange platform was approved for the second half of 2026, along with directives to relevant authorities to finalize the requirements for the Customs Union and develop an urgent implementation plan.

Furthermore, unified rules for owners of jointly owned properties were adopted, facilitating investment and residential relocation for citizens within the GCC countries. The leaders also approved the activation of the general agreement for the Gulf Railway project, which will connect capitals and major cities, improve transport efficiency, reduce trade costs, and boost employment opportunities.

Further steps toward integration included the approval of the establishment of a Gulf Civil Aviation Authority, headquartered in the United Arab Emirates, and the launch of a unified industrial platform, paving the way for a new era of industrial competitiveness and shared supply chains. The summit welcomed the establishment of the 'Made in the Gulf' forum and exhibition in October 2026, to highlight national industrial capabilities, support existing industries, encourage joint industrial investments, and promote work on skills development and technology localization.



In the energy sector, the countries agreed to continue working under the umbrella of the 'Green Middle East' initiative, enhance the stability of global energy markets, and adopt a balanced approach that does not exclude any energy source. The leaders also affirmed their commitment to implementing the concept of a circular carbon economy, developing carbon capture technologies, clean hydrogen, and renewable energy, in a progressive Gulf direction towards a low-emission economy and long-term sustainable development.

The leaders emphasized the need to unify environmental and legislative standards within the GCC countries and facilitate the exchange of expertise and joint projects.

This would attract high-quality investments and bolster the global competitiveness of Gulf economies. With the expansion of regional and international cooperation, the GCC countries appear poised for a new phase where sustainability intersects with growth, and where the energy system is being reshaped to serve the interests of citizens and solidify the Gulf's position as a reliable global hub for energy and modern technologies.

The international dimension of the summit was highlighted by the welcoming of Italian Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni, who announced her country's intention to host a summit on 'GCC-MED', with the aim of launching a new

framework for dialogue between the Gulf States and the Mediterranean countries, in a move that reflects the expansion of the Council's global partnerships.

This international openness was in line with the Gulf's orientation towards building broader networks of economic and technical cooperation, as member states emphasized the importance of investing in partnerships with Europe and Asia to enhance energy transition and expand innovation capabilities, particularly in the areas of hydrogen, artificial intelligence and smart infrastructure.

The election of the Kingdom of Bahrain as a non-permanent member of the UN Security Council for the 2026-2027 term affirms the advanced international standing of the Gulf states and their ability to contribute to shaping influential international decisions. In the context of bilateral relations, the Kuwaiti delegation reiterated the country's commitment to continuing to work with Iraq to finalize the demarcation of maritime borders in accordance with international law, which enhances regional stability and contributes to protecting shared economic interests.

The summit also commended the successes achieved by ministerial and parliamentary councils, judicial and legal initiatives, efforts to combat corruption and human trafficking, and the strengthening of legislative cooperation in all GCC countries. Despite the complex international circumstances that the region has gone through in recent years, the Council has shown a clear ability to overcome challenges thanks to the awareness of its members and the cohesion of its political and economic entity, which has given the summit additional momentum to complete integration systems, unify positions, and build more comprehensive cooperation paths.

The final statement came to express a more mature stage in Gulf cooperation, combining the strengthening of common security, the expansion of economic activity, and raising the level of institutional cooperation between member states, leading to deeper integration and a more stable future.

The 46th Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) Summit concluded with tangible results, launching a new path for joint Gulf action based on the aspirations of citizens for a prosperous economic future, stable security, and effective institutional cooperation. Between decisions on economic integration, developing the legislative framework, strengthening collective security, and solidifying international relations, the Gulf states appear closer today to achieving a cohesive regional model that prioritizes the well-being of its citizens and shapes a more powerful and influential Gulf era on the international stage.

AWDK debuts in Kuwait with Inspiring Ceremony Celebrating the Continent's Heritage and Future



The Times Kuwait Report

In an atmosphere rich with cultural pride, diplomatic presence, and the vibrant spirit of Africa, Kuwait witnessed the official launch of the African Women Diplomats in Kuwait, an initiative that promises to bolster cooperation, amplify women's voices in diplomacy, and create new spaces for cross-cultural exchange between Kuwait and the African continent. The inaugural event, which gathered ambassadors, dignitaries, officials, and members of the diplomatic corps, marked a significant milestone in the long-standing relations between Kuwait and African nations.

The ceremony was filled with color, music, and reflections on African identity, not just as a geographical construct, but as a legacy shaped by history, heritage, diversity, and resilience. The evening served not only as a formal launch but as a celebration of a continent whose women have played pivotal roles as diplomats, leaders, peacebuilders, and storytellers.

Kuwait-Africa Relations: A Legacy of Six Decades: Delivering the keynote address, Kuwait's Assistant Foreign Minister for Legal Affairs Ambassador Tahani Al-Nasser, emphasized the deep historical bonds linking Kuwait with African nations. "Relations between Kuwait and Africa are rooted in more than sixty years of cooperation," she affirmed, highlighting political, humanitarian, and development partnerships that have continued to flourish over the decades.

Al-Nasser noted that the formation of the African Women Diplomats in Kuwait came at a time when Africa is increasingly dynamic on the international stage, and its women are taking central roles in diplomacy, governance, and social development. She described the initiative as a forward-looking step that strengthens dialogue, bridges understanding, and contributes to global peace-building efforts.

Women at the Heart of Diplomacy: Heading the newly formed group is Ambassador of Sierra Leone H.E. Haja Ishata Thomas, a respected



diplomat known for her proactive engagement in cultural and social diplomacy. In her address, she described the establishment of the group as a "new chapter in women-led African diplomatic cooperation in Kuwait", emphasizing its mission to build networks, nurture collaboration, and represent Africa's voice through cultural diplomacy and strategic partnerships.

"Our goal is to create a platform where female diplomats can share experiences, exchange ideas, and promote African heritage," said Ambassador Thomas. She added that the organization will work closely with government bodies, NGOs, cultural institutions, and international organizations to advance programs related to women's empowerment, education, leadership, and gender equality.

She expressed gratitude to His Highness the

Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, the government, and the people of Kuwait for their continued support. She noted that Kuwait has long provided fertile ground for initiatives that empower women regionally and internationally, making it a fitting host for the organization's launching point. The ambassador concluded with a promise that the group will "amplify Africa's voice and tell the stories of its women—their struggles, successes, and their role in shaping the continent's rising global presence."

Africa — A Spirit, a Memory, a Civilization: Adding a cultural and poetic dimension to the evening, Rasha Abu El-Enein, spouse of the Egyptian Ambassador to Kuwait, delivered a heartfelt reflection on Africa's timeless identity. "Africa is not merely a place," she said, adding "it is a civilization, a spirit, and a memory that stretches

across history." Her words resonated deeply with the audience, celebrating Africa's rich diversity, languages, traditions, and the creative renaissance that continues to emerge from its people.

Abu El-Enein highlighted the profound connection between Kuwait and African nations, shaped not only through diplomacy but also through development initiatives led by the Kuwait Fund for Arab Economic Development (KFAED). Through funding in education, healthcare, water, energy, agriculture, and infrastructure, Kuwait has supported growth in multiple African countries with partnerships built on respect, friendship, and shared aspirations. She added, "These ties are no longer limited to diplomacy; they have grown into human and cultural bonds that reflect our shared history, hopes, and future."

A Platform of Purpose: African Women Diplomats in Kuwait aim to serve as a networking platform for female diplomats and professionals; a cultural bridge showcasing Africa's heritage in Kuwait; a partner in development programs supporting women and youth; a voice to highlight African achievements and narratives; and a contributor to diplomacy, peacebuilding, and social cooperation.

The launch event concluded with raffle draws, cultural presentations, traditional attire displays, and exchange of reflections among diplomats, symbolizing unity and diversity under one African identity. A New Chapter Begins: As the lights dimmed and guests mingled, one sentiment prevailed—this launch was not the end of a ceremony but the beginning of a journey. A journey where women diplomats stood out as ambassadors of nations and as ambassadors of their continent's heritage, resilience, and future. A journey where Africa speaks through its women who are powerful, determined, and visionary.

The African Women Diplomats in Kuwait steps forward not only as an organization, but as a movement—one celebrating African identity, strengthening cooperation, and opening a promising chapter in Kuwait-Africa relations.

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‘Beyond Borders’ highlights Kuwait’s global soft power, digital outreach



The launch of ‘Beyond Borders’ at the Saud Al-Nasser Al-Sabah Diplomatic Institute highlighted Kuwait’s growing reliance on soft power, digital innovation, and cultural diplomacy to shape its global presence. Foreign Minister Abdullah Al-Yahya underscored Kuwait’s longstanding commitment to knowledge, cultural exchange, and international development, while officials from the Ministry of Information and Ooredoo emphasized the country’s push toward digital transformation, global communication, and AI-driven platforms. The event showcased Kuwait’s role as a trusted development partner and a rising force in digital diplomacy, blending heritage, modernity, and strategic partnerships to project a Kuwaiti influence that truly extends beyond borders.

The Times Kuwait Report

Saud Al-Nasser Al-Sabah Diplomatic Institute hosted last week the launch of ‘Beyond Borders’, a documentary presented by Ooredoo. The event was held under the patronage and in the presence of Foreign Minister Abdullah Ali Al-Yahya, alongside senior officials and members of the diplomatic corps.

In his opening remarks on the occasion Foreign Minister Al-Yahya underscored that soft power has long served as a defining pillar of Kuwait’s foreign policy. Indicating that Kuwait has shared its culture, arts, and media with the world since the early days of its modern renaissance, he pointed to platforms such as Al-Arabi magazine and Alam Al-Fikr, both of which played an instrumental role in presenting Kuwait’s intellectual and cultural contributions on the global stage.

Al-Yahya reaffirmed Kuwait’s belief in the value of knowledge and cultural exchange, stating that Kuwait remains a beacon for spreading knowledge and planting hope. He added that Kuwait’s commitment to investing in people remains unwavering. This year alone, more than 600 scholarships were offered, while the Ministry of Higher Education has supported the education of approximately 145,000 students abroad over the past decade.

Al-Yahya also drew attention to the significant contribution of national institutions such as the

Kuwait Fund for Development and the Kuwait Investment Authority. These entities have forged economic and development partnerships with 107 countries around the world.

He emphasized that these enduring partnerships have strengthened Kuwait’s reputation as a trusted and influential development partner on the international stage. Concluding his remarks, Al-Yahya observed that “Beyond Borders is not merely an event... it is the story of Kuwait as we know it and believe in.” For his part, Undersecretary of the Ministry of Information Dr. Nasser Muhaisen said that ‘Beyond Borders’ reflects Kuwait’s broader vision to enhance its standing as a center for regional and international communication. He affirmed that media and modern communication tools are essential to Kuwait’s ability to project its values and perspectives globally. Muhaisen highlighted the ministry’s efforts, including the ‘51 Platform’, which serves as a bridge connecting Kuwaiti content with global audiences, and the national tourism platform that supports Kuwait’s international visibility. He added that the ministry’s collaboration with Ooredoo demonstrates the strength of public-private partnerships and their role in advancing projects built on artificial intelligence and digital transformation.

For his part, Ooredoo Kuwait CEO Abdulaziz Al-Babtain in his address to the gathering noted that the global understanding of power is evolving, with digital infrastructure and data capabilities



emerging as central indicators of national strength. He affirmed Ooredoo’s commitment to contributing to Kuwait’s digital transformation, stating, “We are partners in shaping a Kuwaiti impact that goes beyond borders.”

Al-Babtain explained that the company continues to develop a comprehensive digital ecosystem that supports Kuwait’s regional competitiveness while enhancing the capabilities of both public and private institutions. He added that strengthening data centers and equipping them with artificial intelligence constitutes a strategic step toward enhancing Kuwait’s digital sovereignty. He also expressed pride in

Ooredoo’s role in the ‘51 Platform’, which enables Kuwaiti content to reach audiences worldwide.

Assistant Foreign Minister for Institute Affairs, Ambassador Nasser Subaih Al-Subaih, emphasized that hosting ‘Beyond Borders’ aligns with the Institute’s identity as a national hub for diplomatic training and international dialogue.

He stated that “crossing borders is not only geographical... it is human, developmental, and cultural,” reflecting Kuwait’s multidimensional approach to diplomacy.

Al-Subaih added that the event highlights Kuwait’s growing engagement in digital diplomacy and reaffirms the country’s commitment to advancing its message through strategic institutional partnerships. The evening featured the screening of the documentary ‘Beyond Borders’, showcasing examples of Kuwait’s digital diplomacy and its contributions to development initiatives around the world.

Additional documentary segments highlighted the work of the Abdulaziz Saud Al-Babtain Cultural Foundation and the Kuwait Fund for Development, illustrating the breadth of Kuwait’s cultural and humanitarian outreach. The event concluded with a musical performance by Maestro Ahmed Al-Oud, during which the ensemble presented traditional pieces inspired by Kuwaiti heritage. The performance offered a harmonious blend of past and present, reflecting Kuwait’s enduring commitment to preserving heritage while embracing modernity.





Coffee Diplomacy: Turkish Embassy celebrates World Turkish Coffee Day

One of the secrets of authentic Turkish coffee lies in using cold water and very slow heat, traditionally achieved by brewing over hot sand, while the copper cezve ensures equal heat distribution. Excessive boiling burns the foam and spoils the flavor - H.E. Tuba Sonmez

The Times Kuwait Report

The Turkish Embassy in Kuwait celebrated the World Turkish Coffee Day with a vibrant cultural gathering attended by ambassadors, members of the International Women's Group, prominent Kuwaiti women, and special guests including Shaikha Al-Anoud Al-Sabah and Shaikha Hessa Salem Al-Sabah.

The event featured live demonstrations of preparing Turkish coffee in the traditional style, offering guests a glimpse into the history and symbolism behind one of Turkey's most cherished cultural traditions.

Turkish Ambassador to Kuwait, H.E. Tuba Sonmez expressed her delight at hosting the annual celebration, noting that Turkish coffee has been inscribed on UNESCO's Intangible Cultural Heritage list since 2013.

She said Turkey is committed each year to promoting awareness of this heritage through its diplomatic missions and global cultural initiatives.

The Turkish envoy highlighted the deep and longstanding coffee culture in Kuwait — both Arabic and Kuwaiti varieties — while explaining

the main differences between Turkish and Arabic coffee. Turkish beans, she said, are roasted to a higher degree to produce a distinct smoky aroma, then ground to an extremely fine powder, even finer than espresso. She explained that one of the secrets of authentic Turkish coffee lies in using cold water and very slow heat, traditionally achieved by brewing over hot sand, while the copper cezve ensures even heat distribution. Excessive boiling, she cautioned, burns the foam and spoils the flavor. Traditionally, Turkish coffee is served without sugar, accompanied by Turkish delight, though in Kuwait it is often paired with dates or chocolate. The ambassador added that Turkish coffee is now part of daily life in many countries, including Kuwait, where it is offered in most restaurants and cafés. Typically enjoyed after breakfast, it contains a high caffeine content. She noted that the Turkish word for breakfast, 'kahvaltı', which literally means "before coffee," reflects the belief that drinking it on an empty stomach may cause discomfort.

Responding to a question on bilateral ties, Ambassador Sonmez affirmed that Kuwait-Turkey relations continue to advance "in an ex-



cellent direction," noting the recent regional tour by the Turkish President, which included Kuwait, Qatar, and Oman to reinforce cooperation in trade, economy, and security. She emphasized the deep cultural and historical bonds between the two nations, and Turkey's commitment to a comprehensive, 360-degree foreign policy focused on peace-building and conflict prevention. Collaboration with international missions in Kuwait — including the

EU, NATO, the Istanbul Cooperation Initiative, and UN agencies — adds further strength to the relationship.

On tourism, she reaffirmed that Turkey remains a preferred destination for Kuwaitis and residents alike, saying, "We welcome every visitor from Kuwait — the journey is just three hours away."

Marika Kochlamazashvili, spouse of the Georgian Ambassador and President of the International Women's Group, expressed her pleasure in participating in the celebration.

In her remarks, she thanked Ambassador Sonmez for the invitation, noting that Turkish coffee — recognized by UNESCO — stands out for its authentic flavor, distinctive aroma, and unique method of preparation rooted in Turkish tradition. "Turkish coffee is not merely a caffeine-rich drink," she said. "It is a cherished symbol of hospitality and friendship, deeply woven into Turkish culture." She added that sharing a cup of this aromatic brew creates unforgettable moments, bringing people closer and enriching conversations — echoing the well-known proverb: "A cup of coffee shared together is remembered for forty years."

New Anti-Narcotics law comes into force from 15 December

The Public Prosecution last week launched a series of awareness messages as part of the campaign initiated by the Attorney General to educate citizens and residents about the provisions of Amiri Decree Law No. 159 of 2025 on combating drugs and psychotropic substances and regulating their use and trade. The campaign aims to enhance public understanding of the rules and regulations in the new law.

Announcing the campaign in a televised interview, the Interior Ministry's official spokesperson and Director General of the Ministry's Public Relations and Security Media Department, Brigadier General Nasser Bouslaib, stated that the ministry launched the national campaign to raise awareness about the Anti-Narcotics and Psychotropic Substances Law under the slogan 'We Protect Our Nation'.

Pointing out that the campaign aims to increase public awareness of the dangers of narcotics and reduce their spread, Bouslaib explained that the campaign will be implemented in two phases. The first phase will last for two weeks and will focus on familiarizing the public with the provisions of the new law before its implementation on the 15th of December, the second phase will consist of a year-round awareness campaign to educate the public about the dangers of narcotics and psychotropic substances.

He noted that the campaign's objectives include outlining the new and stricter penalties for drug and psychotropic substance offenses and clarifying the legal opportunities available



for addiction treatment. The campaign mainly targets teenagers, youth, and parents, as well as the public, stressing that raising awareness is a key element in protecting society from the dangers of narcotics and psychotropic substances, in line with Kuwait's efforts to enhance community security and prevention.

Meanwhile, Head of the General Directorate for Drug Control at the Ministry of Interior, Brigadier General Mohammad Qabazard, confirmed that in a legislative step reflecting Kuwait's commitment to a more rigorous and comprehensive approach to combating drugs, Amiri Decree Law No. 159 of 2025 has been issued.

He added that the new law, which will come into effect on 15 December, constitutes a comprehensive legislative framework comprising 84 articles distributed across 13 chapters. These chapters cover all aspects related to narcotics,

including punitive, preventative, and therapeutic measures, in addition to regulating medical use and monitoring the distribution of these substances.

Qabazard pointed out that the law aims to ensure Kuwait's efforts to enhance community security and improve the effectiveness of prevention, treatment, and rehabilitation programs, given the global expansion of trafficking networks and the emergence of new types of narcotics and psychotropic substances.

He noted that the new drug law includes deterrent penalties, reaching the death penalty in some articles, and emphasized that this legislation comes within the framework of a more stringent approach to combating drug trafficking crimes and protecting society from their increasing dangers. Qabazard emphasized that addiction complaints are treated with complete

confidentiality, stating that anyone who discloses confidential information or data related to these complaints will be held legally accountable, which ensures the protection of applicants' privacy and encourages them to seek treatment without hesitation.

He stressed that pharmacists are not permitted to dispense any quantity of narcotic or psychotropic substances except with a prescription issued by the Health Ministry or a physician licensed to practice medicine in Kuwait, and only according to the patient's need.

Qabazard called on everyone to cooperate with the Interior Ministry and support their efforts in combating the scourge of drugs, affirming that protecting society is a shared responsibility that requires concerted official and community efforts. For his part, Assistant Director General of the General Directorate for Drug Control, Brigadier General Hamad Al-Sabah, stated that several unlicensed farms were raided during 2025, where quantities of various narcotic substances were seized. He emphasized that these measures are part of ongoing efforts to confront illegal activities and enhance community security.

Al-Sabah urged everyone to contact the department's hotline, 1884141, to report any suspicious activities, emphasizing that the process of receiving and handling reports is conducted with complete confidentiality, ensuring the protection of the informant's identity and supporting security efforts in combating the scourge of drugs.

Laos, Kuwait nurture close partnership based on mutual trust, shared aspirations

Embassy of Laos celebrated the 50th anniversary of the founding of the People's Democratic Republic of Laos with a colorful ceremony on 2 December. In a statement on the occasion, Ambassador of Laos H.E. Boun Inthabandith noted that 2 December 1975, remains a proud and historic milestone for the Lao people, as it was on this day that our nation achieved full independence, sovereignty, and territorial integrity after many decades of struggle for self-determination and freedom.

The Times Kuwait Report

Under the leadership of the Lao People's Revolutionary Party, the Lao people of all ethnicities gained true ownership of their nation and began a new chapter in building peace, unity, and prosperity. Over the past 50 years, under the Party's steadfast and visionary leadership, Laos has achieved remarkable progress in all fields. The country has undergone profound transformation politically, economically, and socially while maintaining stability, unity, and independence.

Laos is a landlocked country, located in Southeast Asia with a total area 236,800 Km² and a population of around 7.5 million with 49 ethnicities consisting of over 160 ethnic groups. Since the country is surrounded by five countries—China, Vietnam, Thailand, Cambodia, and Myanmar—we have a policy to move our nation from a land-locked nation into a land-linked country to develop the economy and society.

The express railway line that has been constructed is being used to transport goods and people across the country and it will soon be expanded to connect with railways in Vietnam and Thailand thereby enhancing trade and movement of people across borders, and strengthening the role of Laos as a trade and logistics hub in the region. Furthermore, Laos is an agriculture and livestock production country that offers immense potential for investors and businesses from Kuwait.

Over the past five decades Laos has witnessed a journey of perseverance and collective strength. The Lao PDR has consistently upheld its Comprehensive Transformation Policy, focusing on economic modernization, social equity, and sustainable development. Political stability and national security have been maintained, ensuring social safety and internal unity across the country. The Lao PDR has met criteria for graduation from Least Developed Country (LDC) status in 2018, 2021 and 2024, and is currently in the transition phase towards official graduation by 2026. Economic growth averaged approximately 5 percent per year, which is below the initial target of 7.5 percent. However, GDP per capita is projected to reach US\$2,200 by 2025, up from the \$1,700 in 2015, an increase of roughly 30 percent.

In addition, Lao PDR has successfully upgraded and developed several key

infrastructure systems, including national highways, expressways, railways, dry ports, and other facilities. These improvements have enhanced the country's connectivity with regional and global markets and contributed to economic expansion.

Notably, the Laos–China Railway has become a vital symbol of regional connectivity and prosperity, facilitating the transport of over 30 million tons of freight and enabling more than 260 million passenger journeys between Laos and China. The ongoing expressway expansion and Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) project in Vientiane further demonstrate Laos's commitment to modern, sustainable infrastructure development. Thanks to consistent efforts, the national poverty rate is expected to decline to 15 percent by 2025, down from 23 percent in 2013, and all districts are now accessible by road and connected through telecommunications networks. Access to education, healthcare, and clean water has expanded nationwide, contributing to higher living standards and life expectancy.

Lao PDR has also prioritized the development of tourism infrastructure, services and activities across high-potential provinces. These efforts included upgrading tourist sites, improving service quality and promoting private sector engagement in tourism development. From 2022 to 2024, the country welcomed approximately 8,832,826 international tourist visits, equivalent to 58.8 percent of the five-year target of 15 million visits, and generated \$2.64 billion in revenue, reaching 69 percent of the five-year target of \$3.81 billion. In terms of spatial planning, 22 tourism zones were surveyed, designated, certified and demarcated, achieving 73.33 percent of the five-year target (30 zones), with projections to complete two additional zones by 2025.

There are several interesting places in each province of Laos from North to South.

Laos also has three UNESCO World heritage sites namely: the former royal capital Luang Prabang, Wat Phou Champasack Temple, and the Mysterious Pain of Jars in Xiengkhuang Province. These sites are of significant archaeological, historical and natural values.

Additionally, Laos has many cultural, historical, and natural tourist sites such as natural waterfalls, caves, mountains, and forests. The Lao government prioritizes green tourism and local community involvement. We



also have many golf courses, rock climbing, and trekking, as well as the facility to spend a night or two in the houses of local ethnic people, to familiarize with the way of living of various ethnic groups. Lao food is also distinct in the sense that we eat a lot of vegetables, spicy food and sticky rice that Kuwait people, once they have tasted it, will want more.

In foreign affairs, the Lao PDR has established diplomatic relations with 151 countries in the world; has ties with 146 political parties from 82 countries, cooperates with three international and regional organizations of political parties in the world, has 20 friendship associations with foreign countries and 1 Lao Peace and Solidarity Committee with Foreign Countries. In today's changing and uncertain world, the Lao PDR continues to follow a foreign policy based on peace, friendship, cooperation and independence. Laos seeks to build good relations with all countries on the basis of mutual respect and benefit, and actively contributes to promoting peace, stability, and sustainable

development in the region and beyond. In this context, Laos highly values its warm and friendly relations with the State of Kuwait. Since the establishment of diplomatic ties in 2008, the two countries have nurtured a close and cooperative partnership grounded in mutual

trust and shared aspirations.

The Lao Government and people deeply appreciate the continued friendship, development cooperation, and humanitarian assistance extended by the State of Kuwait through the Kuwait Fund for Arab Economic Development and other channels. We are confident that in the years ahead, our two countries will continue to strengthen collaboration in areas such as trade, investment, tourism, education, and human resource development for the mutual benefit of our peoples and in the spirit of cooperation.

The year 2025 carries special significance for Laos. It marks the 50th Anniversary of the Founding of the Lao PDR, the 70th Anniversary of Laos's membership in the United Nations, and the final year of implementing the 9th Five-Year National Socio-Economic Development Plan. Moreover, it represents a decisive step toward our goal of graduating from the category of Least Developed Countries by 2026.

Laos continues to play an active and constructive role in regional and international affairs. The country reaffirms its strong commitment to promoting unity, resilience, and sustainable development within the ASEAN family and beyond. In this spirit, Laos also values the growing partnership between ASEAN and the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC), and stands ready to work closely with member states to further enhance cooperation in trade, investment, energy, and people-to-people exchanges for mutual benefit and shared prosperity.

With continued support from friendly nations and international organizations, together with the dedication and self-reliant spirit of the Lao people, I am confident that we will successfully realize these national aspirations and advance toward a future of lasting peace, prosperity, and sustainability. On this auspicious occasion, I wish to convey the Lao Government's and people's sincere appreciation to the Government and people of the State of Kuwait, as well as to all our friends around the world, for their continued support, goodwill, and cooperation with Laos.

Your friendship remains an invaluable contribution to our journey of national development and integration. As we look toward the future, may the bonds of friendship and cooperation between the Lao People's Democratic Republic and the State of Kuwait continue to flourish and bring prosperity to our two nations.

Task force formed to enhance efforts to fight human trafficking

Attorney General Saad Al-Safaran has issued a decision to establish a specialized task force within the Public Prosecution dedicated to combating human trafficking and migrant smuggling. The move comes as part of the implementation of the National Strategy for Combating Human Trafficking and Migrant Smuggling, and reflects Kuwait's commitment to meeting international and regional standards in this regard.

The newly formed task force has been assigned a wide range of responsibilities under Law No. 91 of 2013. Its mandate includes activating the national referral system for victims within the Public Prosecution and developing unified procedures for identifying and safeguarding potential victims. The team will also work on refining investigative methods, improving evidence-gathering techniques, and preparing technical guidelines for judicial



authorities on crime indicators. Additional duties involve creating standardized forms for documenting cases and judicial procedures, reviewing ongoing and new cases

to identify challenges, and submitting recommendations to address them. The task force will also develop a comprehensive database of human trafficking and migrant smuggling cases and produce periodic analytical reports for the Attorney General.

On the international front, the team will coordinate responses to observations raised in UN and regional reports and ensure the preparation of required information. It will also propose and implement specialized training programs for prosecutors and judicial staff, in cooperation with the Kuwait Institute for Judicial and Legal Studies.

The Public Prosecution affirmed that the establishment of this team reflects a broader commitment to strengthening the rule of law, enhancing victim protection mechanisms, and aligning national procedures with Kuwait's international obligations, particularly as crime patterns continue to evolve.

Thai Embassy marks National Day, lauds bilateral ties with Kuwait



A celebration of Thai heritage and six decades of enduring friendship between Thailand and Kuwait.

The Times Kuwait Report

Royal Thai Embassy hosted a reception to celebrate the country's National Day, which falls on 5 December in commemoration of the birth anniversary of the late Thai King Bhumibol Adulyadej the Great. The event is also observed as Father's Day in Thailand.

The reception, held at the The Regency Hotel on 2 December, was attended by Assistant Foreign Minister for Asian Affairs Ambassador Sami Essa Johar Hayat along with members of the diplomatic corps, other dignitaries, Thai nationals and friends of Thailand in Kuwait. In her address to the gathering, Chargée d'Affaires of the Royal Thai Embassy, Uraiwan Courtaud, highlighted the enduring friendship between Thailand and Kuwait.

She pointed out the strong people-to-people connections between Thailand and

Kuwait, noting how deeply Kuwaitis appreciate Thai culture and hospitality. She recalled the establishment of diplomatic relations in 1963, followed by the opening of the Thai Embassy in Kuwait in 1983 and Kuwait's Embassy in Thailand in 1997.

Courtaud indicated that this year's celebration of National Day carried a tone of reverence as Thailand continues to mourn the recent passing of Her Majesty Queen Sirikit, the Queen Mother. She highlighted the Queen Mother's lifelong dedication to the Thai people, noting her decades of work alongside King Bhumibol during his long and celebrated reign. She emphasized Her Majesty's contributions to rural development, the preservation of traditional arts and crafts, women's empowerment, environmental conservation, and social welfare. To honor the late Queen Mother's legacy, the Embassy invited guests to visit a cultural photobooth featuring eight

traditional Thai dress styles—known as Chut Thai Phra Rajaniyom—developed under Her Majesty's initiatives to preserve Thailand's national garments.

Returning to bilateral relations between Thailand and Kuwait, Courtaud noted that over the past six decades, cooperation between the two nations has expanded across trade, investment, tourism, education, and other sectors, fostering what she described as "mutual understanding, friendship, and goodwill."

Healthcare cooperation remains one of the most promising areas of partnership. Emphasizing Thailand's global reputation in medical and wellness services, Courtaud pointed to the Embassy's 'Rediscovering Health and Wellness Tourism in Thailand' event, held in September. She noted that the forum brought together executives from leading private hospitals in both countries to discuss collaboration opportunities aligned with Kuwait

Vision 2035, particularly in strengthening healthcare quality, empowering the private sector, and enhancing citizens' well-being.

She further noted that Thailand and Kuwait share a strong commitment to multilateralism, international law, and peaceful dialogue. As founding members of ASEAN and the GCC respectively, both countries have the potential to serve as bridges linking Southeast Asia with the Gulf region.

In closing, Courtaud extended best wishes to His Majesty King Maha Vajiralongkorn Phra Vajiraklaochaoyuhua of Thailand, His Highness Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, Amir of the State of Kuwait, and His Highness Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Mubarak Al-Sabah, Crown Prince of Kuwait.

The reception featured cultural displays and opportunities for guests to engage with Thailand's heritage, reflecting the enduring warmth of the Thai-Kuwaiti relationship.



ALSAYER Group Honors 18th Toyota Dream Car Art Winners

ALSAYER Group is proud to award and announce the conclusion of the 18th Toyota Dream Car Contest (TDCAC). Mohamed Naser Al Sayer & Sons Est. Co. W.L.L. (MNSS) and Group Corporate Excellence Department hosted an award ceremony at ALSAYER Multi-Purpose Hall in Ardiya in front of an audience consisting of ALSAYER management, winners, teachers, parents, and community members.

This year's drawing competition promoted the Go Digital initiative by incorporating QR Codes, allowing participants to conveniently download the TDCAC Application Forms, Terms & Conditions, and the best drawing Guidelines. Participants were encouraged to submit their artwork either in person at Toyota Showrooms or electronically to the CE-CSR email. This process supported children between the ages of 4 to 15 to submit around 378

wonderful drawings that showcased their dreams filled with imagination and creativity.

Their creative designs tackle social and emotional issues that are intertwined for the benefit of humans, animals, and the Earth. They generate unique and amazing scientific ideas to create sustainable vehicles that confront challenges such as zero carbon emissions, eliminate plastic pollution, and introduce innovation in space travel to connect with others who share a passion for imagination! Through these works, the children's art showcases the possibilities of combining their artistic talents with practical solutions that could realistically be achieved in the future to enhance our

communities and the planet.

ALSAYER Group management showed their appreciation to the winners by distributing rewards. They also thanked the teachers and parents for cultivating such an incredible pool of talent and instilling creativity as a core attribute in their minds. The ceremony was attended by Mr. Martin Aherne Senior Business Director Toyota Sales, Eng. Nehad Mohammad AlHaj Ali Group Manager of the Corporate Excellence Department and Shibu Mohamed CSR Manager from ALSAYER Group. Attendees from the jury council included Visual Artist Hanoof Al Marjan, Writer and Artist Mahmoud Shaker, and Art Educator, Amal Haider.



From electric cars to smokeless alternatives

The science behind reducing everyday risks

Throughout history, humans have been consistently creative and inventive. We've found ways to solve problems to make life easier and more enjoyable. While this is typically a positive, we also learn that creative inventions can also lead to unforeseen problems. Innovation never stops, and with the help of science, technology, and human creativity it allows us to create solutions.

Think about electric cars. The world has become increasingly aware of the harmful effect the combustion engine has on the environment.

For years, car companies have been experimenting and developing new technologies to enable fully electric engines. Thanks to years of research and development, electric cars are now a common sight to see on roads.

Increasingly, we're finding ways to power our lives which do less harm to the environment than traditional methods of power generation.

We still need to drive cars, but we had to develop a more sustainable way to do it. Energy-saving lightbulb which utilized lead was developed and were much more energy efficient than traditional filament bulbs. So, people still had access to electric light, but with reduced environmental impact.

This is an example of an idea known as harm-reduction. Rather than abandoning the technology because of the harm it causes, harm reduction accepts that innovation needs reviewing and improving, and that there are often better ways to do the same things, which keep the desired effects while minimizing the unintended negatives.

Harm reduction also applies to tobacco. It's obviously best that nobody smokes and that those who do smoke, quit. Nevertheless, huge numbers of people aren't doing so. Science and technology have provided a better alternative to continued smoking. Devices such



as e-cigarettes and tobacco heating systems are designed to deliver nicotine, but without the burning that takes place while smoking cigarettes.

How does this reduce harm?

It is the smoke produced from burning that contains the high levels of harmful and potentially harmful chemicals associated

with smoking related disease. By eliminating combustion, and therefore smoke, scientifically substantiated alternatives can significantly reduce the average levels of harmful chemicals compared to cigarettes.

This does not make them risk-free and they provide nicotine which is addictive. However, they offer the potential to be much better alternatives for adults who would otherwise

continue to smoke.

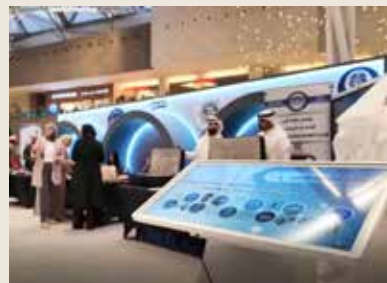
Harm reduction techniques are all around us in countless ways, and the drive to do better has served us well in the past. There's no reason we shouldn't keep trying to find better alternatives and embrace technologies that do less harm.

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Interior Ministry organizes first field exhibition to raise awareness of new anti-drug law

The Public Relations and Security Media Department of the General Department of Drug Control, Thursday, organized the first field exhibition for the awareness campaign on the anti-drug and psychotropic substances law, titled "We Protect Our Homeland," at The Avenues Mall.

The initiative aims to familiarize the public with the newly issued law, clarify the penalties it prescribes, and contribute to curbing the spread of drugs. In a press statement, the ministry said the exhibition comes within ongoing efforts to enhance community awareness and strengthen legal culture regarding the dangers of drugs and psychotropic substances.



According to the statement, the event was organized with the participation of the Kuwaiti Lawyers Association and the Ministry of Health (the Addiction Treatment Center with the objective to educate the public about the provisions of the new anti-drug law, explain its articles, and outline penalties related to consumption, promotion, and trafficking, while also presenting its therapeutic and legal dimensions. The exhibition features informational and interactive sections that highlight the most important updates to the law and its deterrent penalties. It also includes visual awareness materials and guidance brochures for visitors to the mall. The Ministry of Interior affirmed its commitment to continuing field activities and specialized awareness programs, and to strengthening coordination with health and legal entities to protect society, safeguard public security, and promote a

Mongolia, Kuwait relations: Past achievements point to promising future

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 4

In June 2024, we also organized the first ever Mongolia-Kuwaiti tourism forum in Kuwait City. During this forum, a number of Kuwaiti companies established Memorandum of Understanding with Mongolian tourism companies and agreed to implement tourism packages from Kuwait to Mongolia and vice versa. We are planning to organize the second forum in 2026.

As we look ahead to the next 50 years, what are your priority areas for deepening cooperation?

Looking ahead to the next 50 years, Mongolia and Kuwait aim to deepen cooperation in trade and investment, particularly in agriculture and renewable energy, AI, infrastructure and transport, education and cultural exchanges, innovation, and multilateral collaboration. By focusing on these areas, we hope to build a resilient and forward-looking partnership that benefits both our peoples and strengthens regional ties.

As Ambassador, what has been your most memorable experience in Kuwait so far?

Since I was appointed as Ambassador of Mongolia to the State of Kuwait in 2022, I have made it a priority to establish meat exports from Mongolia to Kuwait, a goal that required careful planning, persistent effort, and strong collaboration between government agencies, private sector partners, and Kuwaiti authorities.

Over the course of two years, we worked tirelessly to ensure that Mongolian meat products met all the quality, safety, and regulatory and halal standards required by the Kuwaiti market. This involved extensive coordination on logistics, certifications, and registration of halal certificates in Kuwait, as well as building trust with local distributors and retailers. In October 2024, after two years of dedicated work, we successfully achieved this goal, and Mongolian meat products are now available in major supermarket chains across Kuwait. This accomplishment is particularly meaningful because it not only strengthens bilateral trade but also showcases Mongolia's agricultural potential and high-quality food products to international markets.

What message would you like to convey to the Kuwaiti leadership, government, and people on this 50-year milestone?

On the occasion of the 50th anniversary of diplomatic relations between Mongolia and Kuwait, I would like to convey my heartfelt congratulations and deepest appreciation to the Kuwaiti leadership, government, and people. Over the past five decades, our two nations have built a relationship based on mutual respect, trust, and shared aspirations, spanning political dialogue, economic cooperation, cultural exchanges, and people-to-people ties. Mongolia is eager to take these historic relations into a new level and I am confident that the next 50 years will bring new milestones, strengthened bonds, and shared prosperity for both our countries.

Sheikha Shaikha Al-Sabah appointed as President of World Yoga Federation

President of the Kuwaiti Yoga Committee, Sheikha Shaikha Ali Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, has been appointed as the new president of the World Yoga Federation at the Federation's General Assembly meeting held last week.

The appointment of Sheikha Shaikha as president of the World Federation reflects Kuwait's leadership in supporting and developing yoga globally. Speaking about her long-standing passion for yoga and her efforts to expand awareness of its physical and emotional benefits in Kuwait, Sheikha Shaikha said that yoga has existed in Kuwait for many years, but its formal recognition by the Ministry of Commerce and Industry on 4 December 2014 marked a turning point in its development.

Speaking about her flagship initiative,

Dar Atma, Kuwait's first licensed yoga studio which was established in 2014, Shaikha explained that the center was founded as a welcoming space for learning. She described the name as a blend of Arabic and Sanskrit, meaning "home of the soul," and said her goal was to create opportunities for yoga practitioners across the region.

She acknowledged that the main hurdle in creating Dar Atma was bureaucracy, though she credited Kuwait's supportive systems for easing the entrepreneurial process. She also highlighted yoga's role in deepening Kuwait's 250-year relationship with India, adding a wellness dimension to longstanding cultural ties.

Reflecting on her personal journey, she noted that yoga helped her reconnect with her body and mind after becoming a mother.



She also emphasized yoga's adaptability, its ability to be gentle or intense, and its accessibility to anyone with a mat and willingness to practice.

Sheikha Shaikha pointed out that Kuwait formed its first official Yoga Committee under the Kuwait Olympic Committee on 28 April 2025, aligning with similar initiatives across the GCC.

She expressed gratitude to regional yoga leaders and encouraged newcomers to explore different styles of yoga, urging them not to judge the practice from just attending a single class.

She emphasized that Kuwaiti and Indian values share common ground rooted in community and goodness. On receiving India's prestigious Padma Shri award, she said the honor strengthened her commitment to promoting yoga. Her ongoing efforts continue to position her as a leading advocate for wellness and cross-cultural understanding.



Two additional holidays in January

In addition to the traditional break on 1 January to mark New Year Day, this year will also bring an additional holiday on 16 January in observance of Isra and Mi'raj. Together the

two occasions will provide citizens and residents with an additional four days of break in addition to the two public holidays.

To elaborate, as the New Year holiday falls on Thursday, work is slated to resume only on Sunday, 4 January with Friday and Saturday being weekly holidays. Similarly, Isra and Mi'raj this year occurs on Friday, 16 January, which results in work resuming only on Monday, 19 January, with Sunday, 18 being granted as a holiday in lieu of Friday, which is a public holiday. The holidays are divided as follows:

New Year Holidays: Three days, from Thursday, 1 January to Saturday 3 January, with work resuming on Sunday, 4 January.

Isra and Mi'raj Holidays: Three days, from Friday, 16 January 16 to Sunday, 18 January, commemorating the Prophet Muhammad's Night Journey and Ascension.

Work will resume on Monday, 19 January.

These holidays allow residents and citizens to observe religious and cultural occasions while enjoying extended breaks at the start of the year.



IWG organizes an exclusive VIP tour at Juliaia Bay

International Women's Group (IWG), together with distinguished women ambassadors and diplomatic representatives from countries whose plants are featured in the garden, had the honor of being the very first visitors welcomed this year into the private botanical sanctuary of Shaikha Sherifa Jaber A. Al-Sabah.

The exclusive VIP tour, organized on 29 November, offered guests a remarkable journey under the theme of 'Around the World in the Garden', an immersive experience that brought together plant species from across five continents. Many of which have successfully grown and thrived in Kuwait for the first time.

As the garden opens to visitors only once a year, Shaikha Sherifa's personal invitation was a rare and deeply appreciated honor for IWG members and the attending diplomatic community.

President of the International Women's Group, Marika Kochlamazashvili, expressed heartfelt appreciation to Shaikha Sherifa for granting the group the privilege of visiting this extraordinary sanctuary, a true paradise flourishing with precious plants from around the world.

She emphasized that Shaikha Sherifa's passion and dedication not only bring the wonders of nature closer to the community, but also inspire a deeper awareness and admiration for the immense beauty of our planet Earth.

Juliaia Bay is a private garden established in 2010, now recognized as one of Kuwait's most diverse and pioneering botanical environments. Many exotic plants showcased there have bloomed for the first time not only in Kuwait but in the entire Gulf region. Each walkway in the garden revealed rare species, botanical curiosities, and stories of seeds that crossed oceans before finding new life in Kuwait's soil.

Shaikha Sherifa personally guided the tour, generously sharing the history and scientific background behind each tree and plant. Guests learned about the environmental principles essential to sustaining the garden, such as the importance of water features, soil balance, and microclimates carefully cultivated within the space.

The day-long program blended nature, culture, and hospitality. Visitors enjoyed: live music throughout the pathways, a specialty ice-cream corner offering unique, garden-inspired flavors, a floral bouquet station where guests



could create personalized arrangements, a presentation from one of Kuwait's well-known organic farmers, showcasing fresh local produce. Each experience was thoughtfully curated to enrich the atmosphere and celebrate the diversity of nature.

The exotic garden is a clear example that greening the environment and caring for nature are among the most important responsibilities, ensuring a healthy and sustainable environment for future generations.

Al Muzaini Exchange opens New Branch at Omariya Co-operative Society



Al Muzaini Exchange Company, Kuwait's leading provider of money exchange and remittance services has opened a new branch at Omariya Co-operative Society. The branch was officially inaugurated on Thursday, November 27, 2025 at 3:30 pm in the presence of senior management, department heads, and team members.

The opening of this branch comes as part of the company's ongoing effort to expand its service network and provide customers with easier access to its financial services. The Omariya branch offers money transfers, foreign currency exchange, bill payments, and other essential services with convenience, security, and competitive pricing.

During the inauguration, the General Manager highlighted the company's continued commitment to customer accessibility, stating: "The opening the Omariya Co-op branch reflects our focus on reaching customers across Kuwait

and ensuring they receive a smooth and reliable financial service experience.

"We take great pride in strengthening our leading position in the local market and always place focus in ensuring that we provide the best financial services experience to our customers in order to meet all their money transfer needs. We always want to stay true to our mission; to always be near to our customers and to add to their convenience and the opening of our new branch is another step in that direction," he added.

In addition to its branch network, Al Muzaini continues to enhance its digital presence through the Al Muzaini mobile application, which enables customers to register, add beneficiaries, and complete secure transfers at any time, including services such as Western Union, Visa Direct and Foreign Currency Delivery. With the Omariya branch now open, Al Muzaini Exchange continues to strengthen its position as a trusted provider of financial services in Kuwait.

EXCLUSIVE TO THE TIMES KUWAIT

G20 Must Follow Through on Debt Relief


Olusegun Obasanjo
A former president of Nigeria, is a member of Club de Madrid.

As G20 leaders met in Johannesburg last month, they faced a grim reality: many developing-country governments are spending more than they can afford on debt service. To keep funds flowing to foreign creditors, policymakers have been forced to cut spending on education, health care, and infrastructure. These countries have so far avoided default, but at the expense of their own development.

The fact that governments across Africa, Asia, and Latin America must close hospitals and cancel school-lunch programs to service their debt is not only a moral failure; it is also a strategic one. A world where countries cannot invest in sustainable growth and development will struggle to achieve stability, prosperity, and climate resilience.

Five years ago, amid the COVID-19 pandemic, the G20 launched the Common Framework for Debt Treatment to help heavily indebted countries restructure their debts in an orderly, prompt, and equitable manner. But the promised relief has not materialized. According to the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank, 37 out of 67 low-income countries eligible for concessional funding are in or at high risk of debt distress, yet only four—Chad, Zambia, Ghana, and Ethiopia—have applied for restructuring under the mechanism. Their experiences have revealed the weaknesses of the Common Framework: it offers far too little relief, and too late.

In response, the G20 has outsourced the problem to technocratic bodies, tasking them with accelerating the process and increasing relief. While this technical work is important, it is not enough. Debtor countries still fear that the policy is half-hearted. Policymakers now talk



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G20 leaders must restore confidence in the Common Framework and act with a sense of urgency. That means reassuring debtor countries that applications for relief will be handled quickly, fairly, and generously.

”

less about a ‘debt crisis’ and more about a ‘debt morass’, a world where everyone is stuck, waiting for a change that never comes.

Meanwhile, foreign private creditors have been withdrawing their capital from developing economies since 2022. The message is clear: the risks are too high, and no meaningful solution is in sight. When investors leave, governments are left scrambling to borrow from other sources.

Multilateral development banks (MDBs) and the IMF have come to the rescue. As a result, their share of developing countries’ external debt has soared, exceeding 75 percent in around

20 countries. This creates a vicious cycle: when multilateral organizations that do not take a haircut in restructurings hold most of a country’s sovereign debt, private creditors become even more reluctant to invest.

To escape the debt morass, G20 leaders must restore confidence in the Common Framework and act with a sense of urgency. That means reassuring debtor countries that applications for relief will be handled quickly, fairly, and generously. The recent G20 leaders’ communiqué, and their finance ministers’ declaration on debt sustainability, merely reiterated the technical

work and thus fell short of what is needed. Stronger commitments must be backed by tangible action. First, G20 leaders must reduce the stigma of restructuring. When debt becomes a drag on growth, seeking relief and committing to reform should be seen as responsible economic governance.

Second, relief must be meaningful. A token reduction that leaves countries with still-limited fiscal space only prolongs the crisis. G20 leaders must proactively replenish debt-relief funds. While taxpayers in high-income countries, many with their own ballooning debts, may balk at these costs, continuing to bail out private creditors indirectly through MDBs is also expensive. The sooner debt relief is provided, the cheaper it will be.

Third, private creditors should be required to do their part. Based on the comparability-of-treatment principle, every dollar of debt relief from official creditors must be matched by private creditors. G20 leaders must support national legislation that enforces this policy. The self-regulatory approach taken over the past two decades by bondholders has not worked with other private creditors—and all it takes is a single holdout creditor to scupper a debt-restructuring process.

Some argue that debt relief will make borrowing more expensive for debtor countries in the future. The reality is their borrowing costs are already prohibitively high. Cleaning up their balance sheets would attract investors more quickly than implementing austerity measures. Investors, having incurred losses, will become more discerning and demand risk premiums from countries that fail to improve their debt management; a welcome incentive for good governance.

The G20 must contend with a confluence of geopolitical, climate, and economic shocks. But the developing world’s debt morass cuts across them all. Only by addressing this underlying challenge can we hope to overcome all the others. G20 leaders have already committed to debt relief. Now they need the courage to finish the job.

Eradicating Gender Violence, a Deep-Rooted Social Scourge

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

The recent reforms are part of a broader push by the government to strengthen gender equality in the country. While some of the personal status laws are based on religious laws and are socially contentious, it is laudatory that Kuwait remains committed to amending its laws to align them with international standards, and to conform to treaties and conventions the country has ratified on gender and human rights.

During this year’s International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women (IDEVAW), observed annually on 25 November, Kuwaiti Sociologists Association convened a forum titled ‘Faces of Silent Violence’, to highlight the invisible, yet deeply pervasive gender based violence that prevails, and its impact on women, families, and society. The forum emphasized that violence against women is not merely an individual act, but rather a deeply rooted social phenomenon, influenced by family, education, economic, cultural, and political factors.

Many of the speakers at the forum highlighted social pressures—fear of stigma, overbearing shame, or social diktats that maintain suffering in silence is a virtue, and that women are responsible for ensuring family cohesiveness—compel women victims to remain silent. But this silence comes at a significant cost to the mental and physical well-being and personal development of victims, and perpetuates generational patterns of suppression and silence.

Addressing the gathering, Fatima Al-

Ruwaieh, head of the Women and Children Committee at KSA, described silent violence against women as particularly cruel because it operates unseen, eroding women’s well-being while remaining hidden from public view. She explained that these suppressed emotions manifest as internalized stress and burnout, turning women into silent victims of psychological and emotional strain. She urged for actionable solutions to build a society where wisdom prevails over anger, and safety and stability are guaranteed for all.

On a related note, in early September this year, the United Nations Special Rapporteur on violence against women and girls, Reem Al-Salem, paid an official visit to Kuwait. Special Rapporteur is an independent human rights expert, appointed by the United Nations Human Rights Council to assess, lend support, and offer recommendations on specific human rights issues. In her end-of-mission statement, Al-Salem welcomed Kuwait’s legal and institutional frameworks for preventing and responding to violence against women and girls, and the recent reforms it has made, including adoption of the 2020 Domestic Violence Law and the reforms in 2025 of the Penal Code. She also expressed appreciation for changes to Personal Status Law on the minimum age of marriage.

However, she noted that despite important legal strides in these directions, the current institutional architecture for the prevention and response to discrimination and violence must be reviewed and adjusted in order to effectively address gaps in implementation and enforcement. She emphasized that the

priority must be to focus on survivors of violence by creating better conditions for them to come forward to report violence, and to pursue steps to obtain justice, protection, and support for them.

“Laws are only as good as they are implemented, so while it is great to see that progress is being made in designing new laws and amending existing ones, the critical thing is the progress being made in implementing these laws, and putting in place better mechanisms to implement them. I know that this will take a bit of time, but if the political will is there, then we are already halfway through,” said Al-Salem.

Offering her support and expertise in the field of human rights to enhance Kuwait’s efforts on safeguarding the rights of women and girls, the special rapporteur encouraged the government to build on progress achieved so far, by implementing further reforms aimed at combating all forms of violence against women and girls, including sexual harassment and digital violence.

Addressing violence in the digital realm is particularly significant, considering its growing threat to women and girls on online platforms. While official statistics on digital violence in Kuwait are lacking, a recent survey of Kuwaiti female journalists found that 54.2 percent reported receiving threats of humiliation, or being publicly humiliated. While under-reporting on this issue is to be expected, this figure is in alignment with a broader regional study, which showed that 60 percent of women internet users in Arab states experienced online violence in 2024. Aptly the theme for

this year’s IDEVAW, as well as the multi-year UNiTE campaign, ‘16 Days of Activism to End Gender-Based Violence’, centers around ending digital violence against women and girls. The campaign aims to mobilize all of society to urge governments to end impunity for GBV through laws that penalize it. The campaign also calls on technology companies to ensure the safety of their platforms, and for civil society organizations and individuals everywhere to raise their voices for legislative and institutional changes, and to support victims of GBV.

Reports by UN Women show that the impact of digital violence extends beyond the online world, causing real world harm, with devastating social, economic and psychological harm. Digital violence is not an inevitable price we pay for progress; it is a perversion of progress, a travesty of justice, a denial of gender equality, and an abuse of human ingenuity. It is nothing but a heinous form of violence, where perpetrators hide behind anonymity and act with impunity due to existing structural inequalities, and the deafening silence of society.

We need to turn data on digital violence into action, and advocacy into policy. We need punitive and preventive measures to weed out perpetrators and abusers, as well as steps to raise awareness, provide supportive and rehabilitative resources to victims. Together we need to call for an end to all forms of violence, especially those directed against women and girls online, so that everyone can freely and safely access the digital space and make it a tool of empowerment and equality.



Kenya, an immersion in wildlife and Spirit of Africa

By Nourah Khan
Special to The Times Kuwait

I never imagined that an eight-day safari in Kenya would transform my perception of travel so profoundly. What I expected to be a wildlife-only experience turned out to be a human, cultural, and natural journey—one that blended adventure, authenticity, and impeccable organization.

Before I take you through the details of the trip, I would like to clarify that obtaining entry clearance for Kenya is a simple and fully online process for Kuwaiti travelers. All you need to do is apply for the electronic travel authorization (eTA) before your trip. Approval usually arrives within a few days, making the entire procedure smooth and hassle-free.



From the moment I arrived in Kenya's capital, Nairobi until my final day in the Maasai Mara, every detail was expertly arranged by Magical Skies LTD, whose professionalism ensured a seamless and unforgettable experience.

Nairobi was a city beyond expectations. I arrived in Nairobi with modest expectations, yet the reality was a vibrant and surprisingly modern experience—a bustling city rich in culture, energy, and rapid urban development.

Although my original itinerary did not include visiting malls or exploring the city, my guide—familiar with what Gulf travelers enjoy—suggested incorporating a few quick urban stops. It turned out to be an excellent addition that enriched the beginning of my journey.

The first recommendation was the Giraffe Centre. The experience was simple yet memorable: feeding giraffes, capturing unique

photos, and learning about conservation efforts. A perfect family-friendly stop before diving into the deeper safari experience.

Out of curiosity, I asked my guide to take me to some of Nairobi's popular malls. His selections were excellent: The Hub Karen, a spacious, semi-open mall, was beautifully decorated with Christmas lights, offering numerous halal dining options suited for Gulf visitors.

The Village Market, an artistic open-air mall with festive décor, offered local craft shops, and an impressive range of halal and



vegetarian restaurants. Among the guide's recommendations was The Art Café, a stylish and popular café known for its modern ambiance and diverse menu. I would highly recommend this place to any visitor heading to Nairobi.

One of the journey's most meaningful surprises, however, was the Kenyan people themselves—warm, friendly, humorous, and genuinely helpful. Whether in the city, villages, or wildlife reserves, I was greeted with kindness and hospitality everywhere I went.

My safari experience included visits to Mount Kenya, the Maasai Mara, and Northern Mara. Each region offered a unique landscape

and wildlife experience, enriching the journey with extraordinary variety.

On our journey from Nairobi to Mount Kenya, we made a short stop in Nanyuki, a town located exactly on the Equator Line. Standing at the Equator 0.0 marker felt symbolic—a moment where I was literally positioned between the Northern and Southern hemispheres. It is a simple yet memorable stop that many travelers enjoy for photos and for the unique feeling of being at the world's midpoint.

After a day of urban exploration, I traveled toward Mount Kenya in a modern safari vehicle equipped with a pop-up photography roof, comfortable seating, full safety features, and air-conditioning. The drive itself was an experience, as we passed tea plantations, villages, forests, and beautifully shifting landscapes.

After two days near Mount Kenya, it was time to continue the journey to the Maasai Mara National Reserve, a vast area of preserved savannah. Despite the small aircraft size, the domestic flight was safe, punctual, and comfortable.

Maasai Marais where wildlife is at its finest and where the story truly unfolds. Offering breathtaking scenes of wildlife, the national reserve had freely roaming lions, cheetahs stalking prey, elephants crossing the vast plains, giraffes wandering gracefully, and thousands of wild animals in every direction. Here, the guide, skilled in reading animal behavior, tracking movements, and choosing ideal viewing moments, became key to making the most of the experience.

During my time in the Maasai Mara, my guide arranged a visit to a traditional Maasai village. It was a heartwarming cultural encounter, where I learned about their everyday lifestyle, saw their traditional mud-built homes, watched their famous jumping dance, listened to their

rhythmic chants, observed how they make fire using traditional methods, and met the women who craft the iconic Maasai beadwork. A short visit, yet rich with culture, authenticity, and human connection.

Safety was embedded into every aspect of the trip, starting with staying within designated routes, using fully equipped safari vehicles, following expert guidance, receiving clear instructions, and ensuring seamless coordination. Safety was not only a feeling, but a constant priority that allowed me to enjoy each moment with confidence and peace of mind.

From feeding giraffes and exploring Nairobi's urban gems, to the serenity of Mount Kenya and the unforgettable moments in the Maasai Mara, this journey was far more than a safari; it was a human, natural, and cultural story that will stay with me for years to come.

This entire journey was seamlessly arranged by Magical Skies LTD, whose meticulous planning, exceptional coordination, and deep local expertise ensured that every moment of my safari experience was smooth, safe, and remarkably enriching. From transportation logistics to curated wildlife encounters and cultural visits, their team demonstrated an impressive level of professionalism and genuine care that elevated my trip from a simple safari to a once-in-a-lifetime experience.

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





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