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International Labour Day

A renewed call for decent work

The Times Kuwait Report

Marked annually on May 1, International Labour Day, also known as May Day, stands as one of the most enduring symbols of workers' rights, social justice, and economic progress. Observed across more than 150 countries, the day traces its origins to the 19th-century labour movement and the struggle for an eight-hour workday.

Today, International Labour Day serves not only as a commemoration of past struggles, but also as a platform to assess the present



state of labour conditions and the evolving challenges facing workers in a rapidly changing global economy.

Enduring significance of Labour Day

At its core, Labour Day represents the recognition of workers as the backbone of economic and social development. It highlights key principles such as fair wages, safe working conditions, social protection, and the right to collective bargaining. Over the decades, the day has evolved from a protest-driven movement

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Govt agencies align efforts to modernize labor market

Kuwait is intensifying coordination among government entities to modernize the labor market and clearly define institutional responsibilities. The Public Authority for Manpower (PAM), along with other stakeholders, is working through a tripartite framework involving government, employers, and workers. The initiative focuses on improving labor regulations, enhancing transparency, supporting national workforce policies, and aligning the labor market with economic development goals.

The Times Kuwait Report

Kuwait is accelerating efforts to modernize its labor market through enhanced coordination among key government bodies, aimed at improving regulatory efficiency and clarifying institutional responsibilities.

The Public Authority for Manpower (PAM), in collaboration with relevant stakeholders, is advancing a tripartite approach that brings together government entities, employers, and worker representatives to strengthen labor governance and policy alignment.

Officials emphasized that the initiative seeks



to create a more transparent and balanced labor ecosystem by refining regulations, reducing administrative overlaps, and clearly defining the roles of various institutions involved in labor oversight. The coordinated strategy also supports Kuwait's broader economic vision by ensuring that labor policies remain responsive to evolving market needs, while reinforcing national workforce development and employment sustainability.

Authorities noted that continued dialogue and cooperation among all parties will be essential to building a resilient, well-regulated labor market capable of supporting long-term growth and competitiveness.

Kuwait presses ahead with infrastructure development plans



Kuwait is moving forward with its ambitious infrastructure development agenda, with ongoing projects progressing in line with approved plans and timelines, Minister of Public Works Dr. Noura Al-Mashaan has affirmed.

In a recent statement, Dr. Al-Mashaan highlighted that the ministry continues to implement a comprehensive strategy aimed at upgrading national infrastructure, with a particular focus on enhancing road networks, improving efficiency, and strengthening public safety standards.

She noted that development works across various regions are advancing steadily, supported by coordinated efforts and adherence to technical specifications

designed to ensure long-term durability and performance.

The minister emphasized that field teams are actively supervising projects on the ground, with priority given to maintaining high quality standards while minimizing disruption to daily traffic movement and public services.

Dr. Al-Mashaan underscored that these initiatives form part of a broader national vision to modernize infrastructure, boost service delivery, and elevate the overall quality of life for citizens and residents.

She added that continued commitment to timely execution and effective planning will remain key to achieving Kuwait's long-term development objectives and sustaining economic growth.

Kuwait's car imports hit KD 1.54bn in 2025, up nearly 16%

Kuwait's imports of passenger vehicles rose sharply in 2025, reaching KD 1.54 billion, marking an increase of nearly 16 percent compared to the previous year.

Official data from the Central Statistical Bureau indicated that the growth reflects sustained consumer demand and robust activity in the automotive sector, with the highest import volumes recorded toward the end of the year. The rise in vehicle imports formed part of a broader trend in Kuwait's import profile, which also saw strong gains in sectors such as gold, healthcare products, and energy-related equipment.



Analysts noted that the increase underscores continued domestic demand and economic momentum, despite mixed trends across other import categories, including declines in some electronics and apparel segments. The data highlights shifting consumption patterns in 2025, with vehicles remaining a key component of Kuwait's import basket and a significant contributor to overall trade growth.

Kuwait bank deposits rise to KD 61.26bln

Kuwait's banking sector recorded continued growth in the first quarter of 2026, with total bank deposits rising to KD 61.26 billion, reflecting stable financial conditions and sustained confidence in the sector.

Data released by the Central Bank of Kuwait showed that deposits increased by around 3.55 percent during the quarter, supported by gains across private and institutional segments. The expansion comes alongside steady credit growth, with lending rising on both a quarterly

and annual basis, highlighting ongoing economic activity and financing demand across key sectors. On an annual basis, credit growth exceeded 12 percent, underscoring the resilience of Kuwait's banking system and its role in supporting broader economic momentum.

Analysts noted that the parallel rise in deposits and lending reflects a balanced banking environment, with liquidity levels remaining strong despite evolving regional and global economic conditions.

The data reinforces the sector's stability, positioning Kuwaiti banks to continue supporting growth through sustained credit expansion and robust deposit inflows.

Kuwait promotes open diplomacy, seeks stronger Asian cooperation

The Times Kuwait Report

Kuwait has reaffirmed its position as an open and active diplomatic hub, with a strong commitment to enhancing cooperation among Asian nations, according to Secretary-General of the Asian Cooperation Dialogue, Nasser Al-Mutairi.



Al-Mutairi highlighted the country's inclusive diplomatic environment, which encourages dialogue, partnership, and multilateral engagement.

He stressed the importance of strengthening collaboration among Asian countries through frameworks such as the Asia Cooperation Dialogue, noting that deeper

Speaking during a gathering that brought together ASEAN ambassadors and newly appointed envoys in Kuwait,

coordination is essential to address shared challenges and advance sustainable development across the region.

Al-Mutairi also expressed optimism about expanding ties in economic, political, and cultural spheres, underscoring Kuwait's role as a bridge for dialogue and cooperation among Asian nations.

The engagement reflects Kuwait's broader diplomatic approach centered on openness, partnership, and the promotion of regional integration, while reinforcing its position as a key platform for international cooperation.



Kuwait unveils economic roadmap to boost private sector role



Kuwait has unveiled a comprehensive economic roadmap aimed at strengthening the role of the private sector as a key driver of sustainable growth and diversification.

The strategy focuses on enhancing the business environment, improving financial and regulatory frameworks, and expanding opportunities for private sector participation across major development projects. It aligns with the country's broader reform agenda to reduce reliance on oil revenues and build a more resilient, diversified economy.

Officials highlighted that the roadmap

prioritizes attracting investment, stimulating entrepreneurship, and enabling private enterprises to play a greater role in job creation and economic activity. The plan also underscores the importance of public-private partnerships, improved governance, and streamlined procedures to boost efficiency and competitiveness in the national economy.

Authorities noted that empowering the private sector is central to Kuwait's long-term development vision, as the country transitions toward a more balanced economic model driven by innovation, productivity, and sustainable growth.

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Ecumenical gathering for peace brings together Christian leaders in Kuwait



An ecumenical gathering for peace in Kuwait brought together Christian leaders from various denominations, alongside members of the diplomatic community, in a unified call for peace, dialogue, and coexistence.

The event, held in Kuwait City, highlighted

the spirit of unity among different Christian traditions, with participants offering prayers for peace in the region and for the continued stability and prosperity of Kuwait.

Religious leaders emphasized the importance of fostering understanding, compassion, and solidarity in the face of

regional challenges, underscoring the role of faith in promoting reconciliation and harmony.

The gathering also reflected Kuwait's longstanding commitment to tolerance and interfaith dialogue, with attendees noting the country's inclusive environment

that supports peaceful coexistence among diverse communities.

Participants reaffirmed their shared message of peace, calling for collective efforts to build bridges across cultures and strengthen unity at both national and regional levels.

Kuwait rules out immediate increase in oil output

Oil production to resume gradually as Strait of Hormuz stability remains key condition - Sheikh Nawaf Al-Saud

The Chief Executive Officer of the Kuwait Petroleum Corporation, Sheikh Nawaf Al-Saud, said no decision has been taken to increase oil production for export at this stage, stressing that this will be done gradually at a proper time.

He explained that the resumption of production will occur in phases, with limited volumes expected to restart within the first few days, followed by a return of most pre-halt production levels within a few weeks. The remaining output is projected to be restored over a period of three to four months. Al-Saud noted that the current production disruption is linked to security tensions in the region, particularly Iranian actions affecting safe maritime navigation in the Strait of Hormuz, a vital corridor for global energy shipments.

He emphasized that full restoration of production capacity and a return to pre-conflict levels remain depends on safe and stable passage through the strategic waterway, underscoring the sensitivity of regional energy logistics.



Kuwait moves to unify government data with secure digital linking initiative

In a strategic move to accelerate digital transformation and elevate government performance, the Council of Ministers has stressed on the activation of electronic linkage among government institutions to enable seamless data integration and improve service for citizens and residents.

According to informed sources, the initiative comes in line with directives from Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmed Abdullah Al-Ahmed Al-Sabah,



underscoring government commitment to strengthening institutional cohesion,

streamlining data exchange, and advancing public services through a secure and unified digital infrastructure.

The Cabinet has tasked ministers with coordinating closely with the Central Agency for Information Technology to implement electronic connectivity across government bodies via secure networks. This step aims to ensure robust data protection while enhancing the reliability and efficiency of digital systems.

Back to full capacity, MOH resumes surgical operations and staff leave

The Ministry of Health announced on Tuesday the full resumption of surgical operations across all healthcare facilities, effective Sunday, May 3, alongside the reinstatement of periodic leave for medical staff, signaling improved performance indicators and overall system stability.

Ministry spokesman Dr. Abdullah Al-Sanad stated that the decision follows precise technical evaluations confirming readiness levels and sustained operational stability. He emphasized that the move ensures a careful balance between delivering high-quality medical services

and maintaining workforce efficiency.

The return to normal operations includes restoring surgical schedules in

accordance with approved plans, while strictly adhering to medical requirements and professional standards to guarantee patient safety and the quality of care.

Al-Sanad added that the Ministry will continue monitoring operational indicators closely to ensure rapid response to any developments and to maintain full preparedness under various conditions. He also commended healthcare workers for their exceptional efforts during the previous period, noting that the current stability reflects their dedication and commitment to delivering the highest standards of healthcare services.



Charity without pause

Kuwait strengthens relief efforts at home and abroad

Kuwait continues to reinforce its longstanding humanitarian role through sustained charitable initiatives both domestically and



internationally, reflecting a consistent commitment to relief and social support.

Recent efforts have focused on expanding aid programs targeting vulnerable groups, including the distribution of meals, support for healthcare initiatives, and assistance to families in need, particularly during key periods such as Ramadan.

On the international front, Kuwait has intensified relief campaigns, mobilizing donations and resources to support communities affected by conflict and crises, with strong public participation contributing significantly to humanitarian drives. Officials emphasized that these

initiatives are part of a broader, continuous strategy to ensure that aid reaches those most in need, while maintaining transparency and efficiency in charitable operations.

The ongoing efforts highlight Kuwait's enduring legacy as a global humanitarian hub, with coordinated action between government

bodies, charitable organizations, and the public playing a central role in sustaining impactful relief work.

Authorities noted that maintaining momentum in charitable activities remains essential to addressing both local needs and international humanitarian challenges.



Kuwait strengthens pledge to climate action and clean energy partnership

Kuwait has reaffirmed its commitment to advancing climate action and strengthening international partnerships to accelerate the transition toward clean energy, underscoring its role in global sustainability efforts.

The renewed pledge was highlighted during an international forum focused on green and sustainable development, where Kuwait stressed the importance of coordinated global action to address climate challenges and support the shift to low-carbon energy systems.

Officials emphasised that Kuwait continues to prioritise clean energy development as part of its long-term national strategy, with Kuwait Vision 2035 serving as the guiding framework for economic diversification and sustainable growth. The vision focuses on reducing dependence on oil revenues while

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expanding investment in renewable energy and innovative technologies.

Kuwait also highlighted the importance of strengthening partnerships with key international stakeholders, including cooperation with China and other global partners, to advance sustainable energy solutions and share expertise in green technologies.

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Passenger rights take center stage as Kuwait cracks down on airlines, travel agencies

Kuwait has intensified regulatory action to safeguard passenger rights, with authorities stepping up oversight of airlines and travel agencies following a rise in consumer complaints and market violations.

The Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA), through its complaints and arbitration mechanisms, has reviewed multiple cases involving delays, cancellations, and non-compliance with ticketing and refund obligations.

Officials confirmed that strict penalties are being imposed on violators, alongside

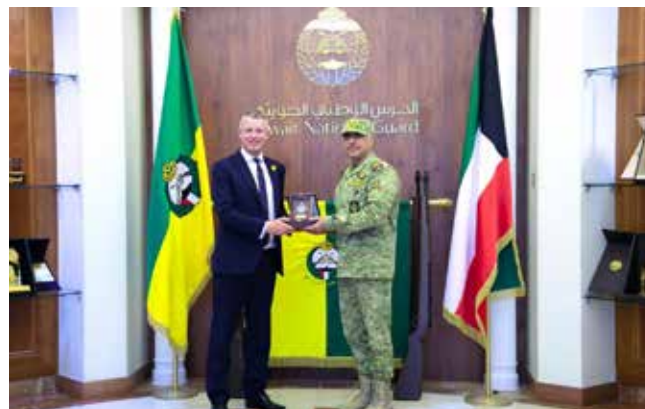


enhanced inspection campaigns to ensure adherence to aviation laws and regulatory guidelines.

The move underscores a broader effort to strengthen consumer protection in the travel sector, with particular emphasis on timely refunds, transparency in bookings, and accountability among service providers.

Authorities stressed that protecting passenger rights remains a top priority, noting that continued monitoring and enforcement will be key to maintaining trust and stability in Kuwait's aviation market.

UK defense minister reaffirms strong security ties with Kuwait



The United Kingdom has reaffirmed its strong security partnership with Kuwait, underscoring continued cooperation in defense and regional stability during high-level engagements between officials of both countries.

During the visit, the UK defense minister emphasized that Kuwait remains a trusted partner, highlighting the longstanding bilateral relationship built on shared strategic interests and

close military collaboration. Discussions focused on enhancing joint cooperation in defense capabilities, training, and emerging security challenges. Both sides reviewed regional and international developments, particularly in light of evolving security dynamics, and stressed the importance of coordinated efforts to maintain stability in the Gulf.

Officials reiterated their commitment to strengthening

defense ties through continued dialogue, joint initiatives, and the exchange of expertise, aimed at supporting Kuwait's security infrastructure and readiness.

The engagement reflects the enduring partnership between Kuwait and the United Kingdom, with both countries reaffirming their shared goal of promoting peace, security, and resilience in the region.

Unified national effort drives Kuwait's vision to advance human dignity

Kuwait is reinforcing a unified national approach to advancing human dignity, with coordinated efforts among government institutions and stakeholders aimed at strengthening the country's human rights framework.

Officials emphasized that institutional collaboration remains central to fulfilling Kuwait's international commitments, particularly through ongoing engagement with global human rights mechanisms and reporting obligations.

The initiative highlights the role of the National Standing Committee in aligning policies, monitoring progress, and ensuring implementation of recommendations related to human rights, in line with



Kuwait's broader development vision.

Authorities also underscored the importance of capacity building, academic cooperation, and continuous dialogue to enhance awareness and integrate international standards into national systems.

The coordinated effort reflects Kuwait's commitment to promoting equality, justice, and human dignity at all levels, while strengthening transparency and accountability in line with its global obligations.

Officials noted that sustained cooperation across institutions will remain key to advancing human rights and reinforcing Kuwait's position as an active partner in the international community.

Gold jewelry demand in Kuwait falls 5.2%

Gold jewelry demand in Kuwait declined by 5.2 percent in the first quarter of 2026, reflecting the impact of regional geopolitical tensions and disruptions to import channels.

According to recent data, the slowdown in demand has been largely attributed to supply constraints following a temporary halt in gold imports, as well as cautious consumer sentiment amid ongoing conflict-related uncertainties. Industry observers noted that reduced availability of gold products in the



local market has affected retail activity, while price volatility and external pressures have

further dampened purchasing trends.

Despite the decline, the broader gold

market continues to demonstrate resilience, with investment demand and long-term consumer interest remaining relatively stable.

Analysts indicated that a normalization of supply chains and easing of geopolitical tensions could support a gradual recovery in demand over the coming quarters.

Authorities and market participants continue to monitor developments closely, emphasizing the importance of stability in trade flows and market conditions to sustain growth in the sector.

A Day of Eating That Actually Keeps You Full

Ask Mira : Eating Right to Live Happy & Healthy

Feeling full isn't enough! It's about building your meals the right way so your body feels satisfied for hours, not minutes. Here's what that actually looks like in a real day:

Breakfast: Starting your day with just coffee or a piece of toast is a fast track to cravings. You need protein!

Think about eggs with bread, or yogurt with some nuts and fruit. When you add protein and a bit of fat, your energy stays stable and you don't crash mid-morning.



Lunch: This is where most people go wrong. A light salad alone won't keep you full. Add a solid protein (chicken, salmon, tuna, or even cheese), some carbs like rice or bread, and healthy fats like olive oil or avocado. This combo slows digestion and keeps you satisfied for hours.

Snack: If you're starving between meals, your main meals are probably too low in protein. But if you do snack, make it smart. Pair something like yogurt and nuts, or fruit with peanut butter. Carbs alone will make

you hungry again in just 30 minutes!

Dinner: Don't be scared of eating at night. A balanced dinner with protein, veggies, and some carbs actually helps prevent late-night cravings. When dinner is too light, you end up opening the fridge later. Yup!

So what's the secret?

Every meal should have:

- Protein (keeps you full)
- Fiber (slows digestion)
- Healthy fats (stabilize energy)

When one of these is missing, hunger shows up quickly.

Also, don't ignore the basics: poor sleep, stress, and even dehydration can make you feel hungrier than you actually are.

Bottom line: When feeling hungry, the main goal isn't about how much you're eating; it's building your meals properly to keep you full.

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High school in-person classes resume

Kuwait balances safety, education continuity

High schools in Kuwait will reopen on Sunday to receive students, marking the resumption of in-person learning in a step that reflects the country's firm approach to balancing educational field safety as a top priority with sustaining the learning process.

Since the onset of the exceptional circumstances caused by the Iranian aggression, the State demonstrated notable flexibility by swiftly transitioning to distance learning, relying on advanced digital infrastructure and continuously updated platforms to ensure smooth and uninterrupted education delivery.

On the organizational level, the Ministry of Education adopted a detailed plan via Microsoft Teams, setting five daily classes of 25 minutes for theoretical subjects, while kindergartens followed a non-synchronous system with four recorded sessions daily, and adult education centers maintained five classes. Technical support teams across educational districts were tasked with resolving platform issues, while the Information Systems Department ensured system efficiency and cybersecurity, addressing any technical challenges or threats to digital infrastructure promptly.

The Ministry also updated the "Salem and Abeer" application to align with kindergarten curricula, offering interactive content including questions, activities, and educational games tailored to young learners. In response to prevailing conditions, short exams were postponed on March 9 and again on March 24 to ease psychological pressure on students, before introducing an "achievement assessment"

mechanism on April 19 as an alternative evaluation method for core subjects.

Further adjustments included revising school hours for secondary students, with a schedule running from 9:00 a.m. to 1:15 p.m., comprising six 35-minute classes daily to enhance learning quality and content distribution.

Educational continuity was maintained through coordinated efforts among school administrations, technical supervision, and teaching staff, ensuring lessons and assessments proceeded smoothly via digital platforms.

To enrich learning resources, the Ministry launched a digital library with 1,417 digitized books and documents, while also executing a comprehensive plan to deliver school textbooks to students' homes through 500 service points using school buses and available logistical resources.

Parallel to crisis management, development efforts continued through initiatives such as the artificial intelligence project, specialized training workshops for outstanding students, and programs to identify and nurture talent.

The Ministry also began preparations for the 2026/2027 academic year by conducting detailed studies on staffing needs, organizing transfer requests, and carrying out field inspections to ensure school safety and maintenance through "Balligh" platform.

In promoting community partnership, the Ministry analyzed results of a public survey on curricula via the government "Sahel" application, aiming to incorporate feedback from educators and parents into continuous



improvement efforts. Psychological support was reinforced through activating "IstaShir" platform, providing confidential social and mental health consultations by qualified national professionals to support students and their families.

Minister of Education Jalal Al-Tabtabaei has chaired a series of meetings since February 28 to closely monitor the educational process and ensure continuity under the highest safety standards, stressing that student welfare remains the central pillar guiding all decisions.

The Ministry emphasized ongoing coordination with relevant state bodies to monitor developments and ensure that all measures prioritize safety while maintaining stability of the educational system.

The Cabinet had approved the return of in-person attendance for all secondary students and staff starting Sunday, with the Ministry affirming full readiness to implement the decision through a comprehensive and organized plan. It noted that all administrative and organizational details related to the return would be announced, alongside integrated plans for each educational stage to ensure efficiency, stability, and balance between the rights and duties of students and teachers.

Kuwait had shifted to distance learning across all stages on February 28 following more than 40 days of Iranian aggression, which resulted in casualties, including the martyrdom of members of the Kuwaiti armed forces and border security personnel, as well as injuries and damage to infrastructure.

Kuwait Food Authority affirms food supply stable, safe amid ongoing inspections

The Public Authority for Food and Nutrition has reassured the public that the country's food situation remains stable and safe, underscoring continued efforts to safeguard consumer health and maintain market confidence.

In a statement issued Friday, the Authority said it is carrying out intensive field inspections across markets as part of round-the-clock monitoring operations aimed at ensuring food quality and safety standards are consistently met.

Inspection teams are working continuously, supported by laboratory specialists who conduct detailed testing and analysis of food products. These measures, the Authority noted, serve as a frontline defence in maintaining strict safety compliance across the supply chain.

The Authority added that its integrated oversight efforts have led to noticeable improvements in the adherence of food establishments to health regulations,



strengthening consumer confidence in the local market.

Reaffirming its readiness, the Authority stressed its commitment to sustaining high food safety standards and ensuring the availability of safe, quality food products for all residents.

Kuwait Airways, Jazeera Airways ramp up operations as airport recovery gathers pace

The Times Kuwait Report

Kuwait's aviation sector is steadily regaining momentum, with both Kuwait Airways and Jazeera Airways announcing major operational expansions from Kuwait International Airport following weeks of disruption.

Kuwait Airways said it will expand its operations from Terminal 4 (T4), adding flights to 13 destinations starting Sunday, May 3, as part of a broader plan to restore connectivity and meet rising travel demand. The move builds on the airline's phased resumption of services after the reopening of Kuwait's airspace, with additional routes reinforcing links to key regional and international markets. In parallel, Jazeera Airways confirmed it will fully resume operations from its dedicated Terminal 5 (T5) on the same day, marking the end of a 57-day disruption that had forced the airline to temporarily operate via Saudi Arabia.

The airline said all flights will now operate directly from Kuwait between 6:00 a.m. and 6:00 p.m., restoring a streamlined passenger experience and reconnecting its network of 27 destinations across the region and beyond.

Jazeera Airways Chief Executive Officer Barathan Pasupathi described the full return to T5 as a significant milestone, highlighting



the coordinated efforts of government authorities and regional partners in ensuring continuity of operations during the disruption period.

During the suspension, the airline maintained services through a temporary dual-country setup, operating via Saudi airports and facilitating thousands of passenger transfers. Over the period, it operated more than 1,500 flights and transported nearly 200,000 passengers, underscoring the resilience of Kuwait's aviation sector.

With both national carriers expanding operations simultaneously, Kuwait International Airport is witnessing a coordinated recovery, as authorities continue a phased approach to restoring full capacity and strengthening the country's position as a regional travel hub.

Pope Leo XIV marks first year in office with focus on reform, unity, and global moral leadership

First American pontiff advances governance reforms, peace advocacy, and digital ethics agenda in milestone year

The Times Kuwait Report

One year after his historic election, Pope Leo XIV has emerged as a defining voice in a rapidly shifting global landscape, balancing institutional reform within the Church with an assertive moral presence on the world stage. Marking his first anniversary as head of the Catholic Church and sovereign of Vatican City, the pontiff's tenure has been shaped by efforts to strengthen governance, promote unity within the Church, and expand its engagement with global challenges.

In a series of recent addresses, Pope Leo XIV has reiterated strong calls for peace, warning against rising geopolitical fragmentation, armed conflict, and the resurgence of extreme nationalism. He has positioned the Vatican as an active moral interlocutor in international affairs,

urging dialogue and multilateral cooperation.

Over the past year, the Pope has undertaken multiple pastoral visits and high-level engagements across continents, reinforcing the Church's global presence and deepening diplomatic and interfaith dialogue at a time of heightened international instability. Born Robert Francis Prevost in Chicago in 1955, Pope Leo XIV is the first American-born pontiff, the first member of the Order of Saint Augustine to ascend to the papacy, and only the second pope from the Americas after Pope Francis. His election in May 2025 was widely viewed as unexpected, signaling a shift in the geographical and cultural profile of Church leadership.

Governance reforms and synodality

From the outset, Pope Leo XIV has



emphasized continuity with his predecessor while introducing a more structured approach to discipline, institutional cohesion, and governance reforms.

A key priority has been strengthening

episcopal oversight, improving accountability mechanisms, and refining the global process for the selection of bishops -- steps aimed at ensuring transparency and consistency in Church leadership.

He has also advanced the principle of synodality, expanding consultation and participation among bishops, clergy, and lay members. This reflects a governance model rooted in the legacy of the Second Vatican Council, promoting dialogue and shared responsibility within the Church.

Social justice, climate, and digital ethics

Social justice has remained central to his papacy, with continued emphasis on poverty alleviation, migrant protection, and support for marginalized communities -- priorities closely

International Labour Day: A renewed call for decent work

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into a broader global observance involving governments, trade unions, and civil society. It is now used to reflect on progress made in labour rights while identifying gaps that persist across industries and regions.

International Labour Day in Kuwait carries particular significance given the country's unique workforce composition. Expatriates account for nearly 70 percent of the population and an even higher share of the private-sector workforce, making labour policy a central pillar of economic stability and social balance. The day serves as a reminder of the essential role played by workers across sectors, from construction and domestic services to finance, healthcare, and energy, in supporting the country's development and infrastructure growth.

Labour reforms and policy direction

In recent years, authorities have intensified efforts to modernise the labour market through regulatory reforms led by the Public Authority for Manpower. These measures aim to enhance labour mobility, improve compliance, and address longstanding structural imbalances.

Recent initiatives include opening temporary transfer windows for workers in restricted sectors, strengthening inspection regimes, and expanding digital services to streamline employment procedures. These steps reflect a broader push toward flexibility while maintaining oversight of recruitment and employment practices. At the same time, Kuwait continues to advance its "Kuwaitisation" policy encouraging greater participation of nationals in the private sector while balancing the continued reliance on expatriate labour.

Worker welfare and protections

Authorities have stepped up inspections

and enforcement to ensure compliance with labour laws, particularly in sectors vulnerable to exploitation. Measures include monitoring working conditions, enforcing wage protection systems, and addressing violations related to housing and safety standards.

Domestic workers who form a significant segment of the labour force have also seen improved legal protections in recent years, though advocacy groups note that enforcement and awareness remain key challenges.

The path forward

International Labour Day in Kuwait underscores a dual reality: a labour market that is stable and functional, yet in transition. Policymakers are seeking to strike a balance between protecting workers' rights, sustaining economic growth, and adapting to a rapidly changing global environment.

The focus going forward is expected to centre on creating a more inclusive and efficient labour system, one that offers fair opportunities for nationals while safeguarding the rights and contributions of expatriate workers who remain integral to Kuwait's economy.

Global labour market: stability with underlying fragility

Recent data from the International Labour Organization (ILO) shows a mixed picture. On one hand, global unemployment remains relatively low at around 5 percent, one of the lowest levels recorded in decades.

However, this headline figure masks deeper structural issues:

- Youth unemployment remains significantly higher at approximately 12.6 percent globally.
- Job creation is slowing due to economic uncertainty, geopolitical tensions, and trade disruptions.
- Employment growth is projected at about 1.5

percent in 2025, below earlier expectations.

The global labour market is therefore characterised by what experts describe as "fragile stability" steady headline figures but persistent inequality and vulnerability beneath the surface. One of the defining challenges of today's labour landscape is inequality. While the global jobs gap has narrowed to around 9 percent, women continue to face disproportionately higher barriers to employment and income parity.

Informal employment remains widespread, particularly in developing economies, where it accounts for a majority of jobs. Workers in informal sectors often lack access to social protection, healthcare, and legal safeguards. In addition, working poverty and precarious employment have returned to pre-pandemic levels in many regions, highlighting the uneven nature of economic recovery.

Safety, health, and workplace risks

Workplace safety continues to be a major global concern. According to ILO estimates:

- Around 2.93 million workers die each year from work-related causes.
- Approximately 395 million workers suffer non-fatal workplace injuries annually.
- About 2.41 billion workers are exposed to excessive heat due to climate change.

Additionally, emerging risks such as long working hours, job insecurity, and workplace stress contribute to over 840,000 deaths annually linked to psychosocial factors.

These figures underscore the urgent need for stronger occupational safety standards and climate-resilient labour policies.

Child labour and global disparities

Despite progress, child labour remains a pressing issue. Latest estimates indicate that nearly 138 million children were engaged in child labour globally in 2024, with around 54

million involved in hazardous work. Low-income countries continue to face the greatest challenges in creating decent jobs, while advanced economies grapple with ageing workforces and skills shortages.

Looking ahead, the global labour market is undergoing rapid transformation driven by technology, digitalisation, and climate change. Nearly half of all workers are expected to see significant changes in their job roles by 2030, requiring large-scale reskilling and adaptation.

At the same time, artificial intelligence and automation present both opportunities for productivity gains and risks of job displacement, particularly in routine and low-skilled occupations.

A renewed call for "decent work"

International Labour Day 2026 comes at a time when the concept of "decent work for all" remains central to global policy debates. Experts stress that achieving this goal will require:

- Stronger labour institutions and enforcement
- Expanded social protection systems
- Investment in education and skills development
- Inclusive policies that address gender and income inequalities

As the global economy continues to evolve, the challenge is not only to create jobs but to ensure that those jobs are secure, fair, and sustainable.

More than a century after its origins, International Labour Day remains deeply relevant. While significant progress has been made in improving labour conditions worldwide, the persistence of inequality, unsafe work environments, and structural imbalances highlights the need for continued reform.

In an era defined by economic uncertainty and technological change, the message of Labour Day is clear: the future of work must be built on dignity, equity, and opportunity for all.

Mexico and its third time hosting the World Cup!



By Eduardo Peña Haller
 Mexican Ambassador to Kuwait
 Special to The Times Kuwait

On June 11, 2026, a new World Cup will kick off. This time, for the first time in history, three countries will serve as hosts. Mexico, Canada, and the United States will host the largest number of participating national teams, totaling 48 teams divided into twelve groups. As a result, the World Cup will run until July 19, 2026, when the final will be held at MetLife Stadium in East Rutherford, New Jersey.

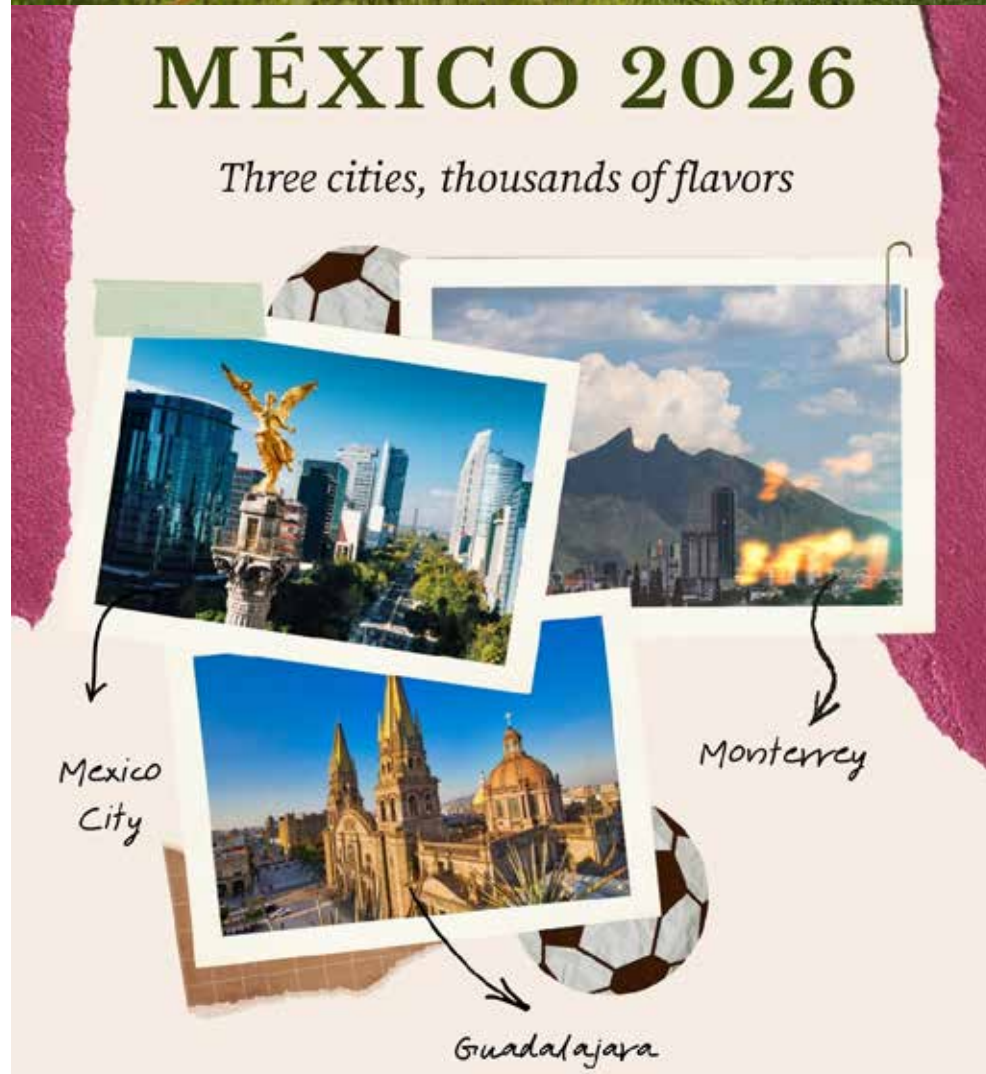
In the case of Mexico specifically, a total of 13 matches will be played across three cities: Mexico City, Guadalajara, Jalisco, and Monterrey, Nuevo León. The opening match at Azteca-Banorte Stadium in Mexico City will be a historic event virtually impossible to match, as it is the only venue in the world to have hosted three FIFA World Cup opening matches, as follows:

1. **May 31, 1970:** Mexico vs. Soviet Union (0-0). It was the first World Cup in Mexico.
2. **May 31, 1986:** Italy vs. Bulgaria (1-1). Mexico.
3. **June 11, 2026:** Mexico vs. South Africa will be the opening match of the Mexico-Canada-United States World Cup.

Additionally, the Azteca-Banorte Stadium is the only stadium to have hosted two World Cup finals (1970: Brazil 4-1 Italy; 1986: Argentina 3-2 West Germany). Pelé and Maradona lifted the trophy there, and it was also the venue for the so-called "Match of the Century" (Italy 4-3 Germany in the 1970 semifinals).

Also known as the "Colossus of Santa Úrsula," Azteca Stadium opened in May 1966. It once had a capacity to comfortably seat 110,000 fans, but due to subsequent renovations and modernization, its capacity was reduced to 83,300 to make room for restaurants and hospitality facilities inside. By 2026, it was renovated again to meet FIFA standards, while maintaining its iconic essence. It is a temple of soccer that unites generations and continues to make history.

In Mexico, soccer is the most popular sport. According to FIFA data, Mexico is one of the countries with the most professional soccer



players worldwide, with approximately 9,464 players distributed across 244 clubs in various divisions. If the amateur level is included, the

number of registered players rises to over 128,000.

Delving into the history of pre-Columbian

Mexico, we find that 3,500 years ago the ancient Mexicans (Olmecs, Mayans, Aztecs, Mixtecs-Zapotecs) were already playing a ball game for more than 3,500 years, known as tlachtli by the Aztecs and pitz or pok-ta-pok by the Mayans. Although it is not a direct ancestor of soccer (which has roots more in other ancient games such as the Chinese cuju), this pre-Hispanic game is considered an important precursor to team ball sports played in a competitive, community-oriented spirit that resonates strongly with modern soccer.

The Mesoamerican ball game was played by two teams competing by hitting a heavy rubber ball weighing up to 7 kg, primarily with their hips, elbows, or knees, aiming to pass it through stone rings on sloping walls, representing the movement of the sun and the cosmic struggle. The ball was made of natural rubber (latex) from the rubber tree, which allowed it to bounce—something unheard of in the Old World at that time. Sites such as Chichén Itzá, Tajín, Copán, Xochicalco, Monte Albán, and Tikal preserve some of the most impressive ball courts. In the following video, you can see how the ballgame is still played in Mexico:



The ancient Mayan sport making a comeback – BBC REEL

It's fascinating how team sports unite generations across continents and centuries!

Mexico is ready to participate in the best possible way in this major global competition and to welcome all visitors from around the world, dressed in their finest and with the warmth that distinguishes Mexicans.

Flavour First



Emerges as a Must-Visit Culinary Destination for GCC Travellers

The Times Kuwait Report

Global travel trends are undergoing a noticeable shift, with food taking centre stage in how people plan their journeys. Increasingly, travellers are prioritising culinary experiences as much as — if not more than — traditional sightseeing. Recent data highlights this transformation: nearly one in five leisure travellers actively seek out new restaurants or food adventures, while around 50 percent secure dining reservations even before booking their flights.

Against this backdrop, the Aegean city of Izmir is fast gaining recognition as a compelling destination for flavour-led travel, particularly among visitors from the GCC. Blending a rich culinary heritage with contemporary gastronomy, the city offers a diverse spectrum of experiences — from herb-based mezes and seafood to MICHELIN Guide-recognised fine dining and vibrant street food culture.

Aegean Herbs Take Centre Stage

A culinary journey through Izmir often begins

with its distinctive use of wild herbs and vegetables. Local specialties include wild asparagus, mallow, nettle, and cibez — typically sautéed in high-quality olive oil and served as mezes or fresh salads. These dishes are often paired with the Aegean's renowned seafood, offering a balanced and refreshing dining experience.

Seasonal highlights further enhance the region's appeal. Spring visitors can enjoy the Alaçatı Herb Festival and the Urla Artichoke Festival, where local produce, gastronomy, and cultural celebrations converge.

Fine Dining Meets Vineyard Culture in Urla

The coastal town of Urla has emerged as a gastronomic hotspot, reflecting the essence of the Aegean lifestyle. Known for its farm-to-table philosophy, Urla is home to a new generation of chefs who reinterpret traditional recipes using locally sourced ingredients.

Several restaurants in the area have earned recognition from the MICHELIN Guide, including coveted stars and sustainability-focused Green

Stars. Signature dishes such as mastic-infused artichokes highlight the region's innovation while staying rooted in local traditions.

Surrounded by olive groves, vineyards, and fertile farmland, Urla also offers immersive experiences for travellers — from exploring rural routes to engaging with local producers and tasting seasonal specialties.

A Street Food Scene Full of Character

Izmir's culinary appeal extends beyond fine dining to its lively street food culture. The city's streets are filled with flavours that reflect its everyday traditions and local identity.



A typical Izmir breakfast includes boyoz (a flaky pastry), gevrek (the local version of simit), and pişi (fried dough), often paired with the region's distinctive tulum cheese. For something more substantial, kumru — a sandwich made with a special bun and filled with cheese, tomatoes, and meats — is a popular choice.

Desserts also play a key role in the city's food culture. Şambali, a semolina-based sweet, and lokma — bite-sized fried dough soaked in syrup — are widely available and beloved by locals and visitors alike.

Where to Stay and What to Explore

Beyond its culinary attractions, Izmir offers a relaxed coastal lifestyle through boutique accommodations in destinations such as Çeşme, Alaçatı, and Urla. These properties provide an



authentic Aegean experience, often featuring garden breakfasts and tranquil surroundings.

The region is equally rich in history. Visitors can explore UNESCO-listed sites such as Ephesus and Pergamon, alongside landmarks like the Temple of Artemis — one of the Seven Wonders of the Ancient World — and the House of the Virgin Mary.

As global tourism continues to evolve, Izmir stands out as a destination where culture, history, and gastronomy intersect. For GCC travellers seeking immersive, flavour-driven experiences, the Aegean gem offers a journey that is as much about taste as it is about place.





A Sea of Opportunity

The Gulf's Love Affair with Seafood



By Hermoine Macura-Noble
Special to *The Times Kuwait*

Seafood cuisine has become one of the defining pillars of the Gulf region's culinary identity, evolving from a necessity of coastal living into a sophisticated and highly sought-after dining experience. Across the UAE, Kuwait, and the wider GCC, seafood is not only widely consumed but celebrated – driven by a combination of geography, heritage, and a growing appetite for premium, globally influenced cuisine.

The Gulf's natural setting plays a fundamental role in this popularity. With extensive coastlines along the Arabian Gulf, the region has long depended on the sea for sustenance. Fishing traditions date back generations, with species such as hammour, kingfish, and shrimp forming the backbone of local diets. This deep-rooted connection to the ocean continues to shape modern tastes, where seafood is both a nostalgic reminder of heritage and a canvas for culinary innovation.

Today, the Gulf's advantage lies not only in its local waters but also in its global connectivity. Cities like Dubai, Muscat and Kuwait City are major logistics hubs, enabling restaurants to also import high-quality seafood from around the world within hours. This ensures an unmatched level of freshness and variety, allowing diners to experience everything from Mediterranean seabass to Japanese bluefin tuna alongside locally sourced catch. The result is a seafood culture that is both diverse and consistently high in quality – something few regions can replicate.

Restaurants such as Bordomavi in Dubai highlight how international influences are



enriching the region's seafood scene. Rooted in Black Sea traditions, the restaurant brings a philosophy centered on authenticity and simplicity. "Our new menu is a direct extension of these roots," explains fishmonger and co-owner Erşan Yılmaz. "We set out to bring the simplicity, natural character, and authentic flavors of Black Sea cuisine to Dubai... presenting it in its purest and most honest form." This approach aligns perfectly with the evolving preferences of Gulf diners, who increasingly appreciate clean, ingredient-focused cooking.

The menu itself reflects a careful balance between tradition and creativity. Featuring species such as turbot, anchovy, red mullet, and whiting, Bordomavi showcases the essence of Black Sea cuisine while adapting to the expectations of a cosmopolitan audience. "In Dubai, diners are increasingly seeking more than just a meal, they are looking for authenticity, quality, and a story," Yılmaz shares. Signature dishes like sea bass pomodoro emphasize

simplicity and depth of flavor, while more contemporary offerings such as black seabass shashlik or scallops carpaccio introduce a modern, elevated twist. This combination of storytelling and technique is a major factor behind seafood's growing appeal in the region.

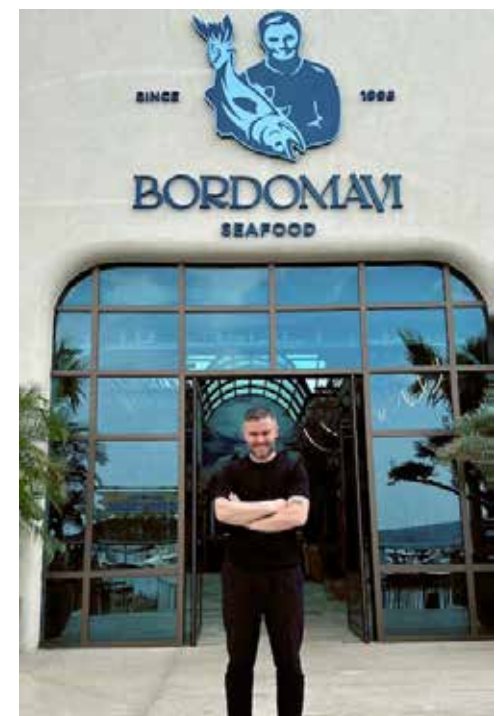
Equally important is the emphasis on freshness and sustainability, which has become a defining characteristic of top seafood establishments. Bordomavi exemplifies this commitment through its sourcing practices: "A significant portion of our seafood is sourced directly from Trabzon... Freshness is not a preference for us, it is a fundamental principle," adds Yılmaz. By maintaining strict cold-chain logistics and



focusing on seasonal, responsibly sourced products, restaurants are not only ensuring superior taste but also meeting the expectations of increasingly conscious consumers.

What truly sets the Gulf apart as an ideal location for seafood, however, is the combination of all these elements: rich local waters, world-class import capabilities, and a dining culture that values both authenticity and innovation. Restaurants are no longer just serving fish; they are curating experiences that connect diners to stories, origins, and traditions.

As Bordomavi expresses, the goal is to go



beyond the plate: "We want our guests to experience more than just dining. We want them to experience true seafood culture... Our goal is for guests to leave not only satisfied, but genuinely impressed, and eager to return," concludes Yılmaz. This sentiment captures the essence of the Gulf's seafood scene today – where quality, heritage, and experience come together to create something truly distinctive.

In this environment, seafood is not simply popular; it is thriving. The Gulf region has positioned itself as one of the world's most compelling destinations for seafood cuisine, offering an unparalleled blend of freshness, diversity, and cultural depth that continues to attract and inspire diners from around the globe.

Hermoine Macura-Noble

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

EXCLUSIVE to THE TIMES KUWAIT

Who Lost America's Universities?



Jan-Werner Mueller

Professor of Politics at Princeton University, is the author of the forthcoming *Street, Palace, Square: The Architecture of Democratic Spaces* (Penguin Books, 2026).



The public has lost trust in universities, and restoring it is an urgent task. That is the conclusion reached in a much-discussed new report by the Yale Committee on Trust in Higher Education. The report captures the conventional wisdom in the United States, including the often-heard complaint that universities have become ideologically one-sided, alienating conservatives.

But this narrative leaves out a crucial fact: it is the American right that has systematically undermined trust in higher education. For decades, conservatives have not sought to strengthen the pluralism of “viewpoints” within universities—a story that credulous liberals are all too willing to accept—but to increase their own power. That is why far-right parties in other democracies have tried to emulate the US example.

At first sight, the evidence for an ideological skew does appear both unambiguous and deeply alarming. In 2024, only 36% of US citizens expressed “a great deal” or “quite a lot” of confidence in higher education. In a September 2025 survey, seven in ten Americans believed that colleges and universities were heading in the wrong direction. Since the entire sector—including the wealthiest private institutions—depends on government funding and accreditation, higher education appears to be breaking the social contract.

But what does it mean for the public to have trust in these institutions? Many social scientists would answer that the concept matters only under conditions of uncertainty or outright ignorance; if a situation is fully transparent, there is no need for trust. If an authority or institution is believed to possess both competence and goodwill, one has good reasons to trust it.

In the US case, few question the competence of those active in higher education. Even on the

“ *In any case, the university’s core commitment is to academic freedom—the prerogative to teach and research within recognized disciplinary standards—not to the maximization of speech. The point is neither to mirror society, nor to present the largest number of perspectives possible, nor to encourage debate for its own sake. Scholarship, of course, thrives on intellectual contestation and revision, backed by evidence and original ideas; but the ideal for education is not simply to replicate the format of debating clubs.* ”

right, only 32% of respondents say that higher education is not doing a good job of advancing research and knowledge. The real concern, then, seems to be with “goodwill”: professors are said to be imposing their far-left views on unsuspecting, impressionable students, perhaps even rendering them unpatriotic. This has been a right-wing talking point at least since the 1950s, when the enormously influential conservative intellectual William F. Buckley, Jr., published his famous attack on his alma mater, *God and Man at Yale*. Similar claims were then recycled during subsequent waves of moral panic over “political correctness” and “wokeness.”

The evidence for ideological uniformity is that, among faculty, registered Democrats seem to outnumber Republicans by at least ten to

one. It is then simply assumed, without further evidence, that everyone teaches their political beliefs. But one should assume no such thing.

Moreover, the underlying imbalance must be understood in the context of how the Republican Party has changed in recent decades. Even compared to other far-right parties operating in democracies today, the GOP is an outlier when it comes to rejecting science—starting with the consensus about climate change. Should we be surprised that members of universities are less likely to affiliate with an anti-university party?

To be sure, plenty on the right would deny that they are anti-university (though some of the GOP’s Silicon Valley backers seem to have concluded that college merely hampers entrepreneurial talents). What they want, rather,

is more “debate” and “viewpoint diversity.” But one can push this argument in any number of directions. While it is true that some departments can exhibit a stifling conformity that is unwelcoming to conservative views, it is not as if it is easy to find many Marxists in economics departments.

In any case, the university’s core commitment is to academic freedom—the prerogative to teach and research within recognized disciplinary standards—not to the maximization of speech. The point is neither to mirror society, nor to present the largest number of perspectives possible, nor to encourage debate for its own sake. Scholarship, of course, thrives on intellectual contestation and revision, backed by evidence and original ideas; but the ideal for education is not simply to replicate the format of debating clubs.

The American right has succeeded in shifting the discussion from academic freedom to free speech, using the latter to undermine the former. Universities’ autonomy to choose their own personnel and institutional structures is now being threatened by state officials and donors who insist on “more viewpoint diversity (as defined by us), or else.”

Apparently, Harvard University is in the process of raising \$10 million to increase “viewpoint diversity”—an effort that is almost certainly designed to appease the Trump administration and its supporters.

No one is denying that universities should be self-critical or attentive to some of the reasons for the public’s loss of trust. Two obvious ones are ever-rising tuition costs and mysterious admission processes that seem rigged to favor the wealthy (how exactly did Jared Kushner get into Harvard?).

Where relevant intellectual traditions are at risk of being under-represented, faculty ought to do as much as possible to help students arrive at their own considered judgments. But university presidents should not concede to false narratives that the right has been peddling for its own self-serving reasons. If you have preemptively kowtowed to the Trumpists, you have already failed in your duties.

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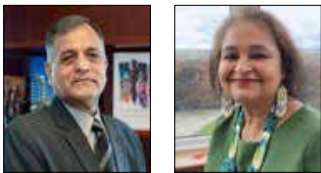
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EXCLUSIVE to THE TIMES KUWAIT

Asia's Economic Diplomacy for Tumultuous Times



By Ashok Lavasa, Roli Asthana

Ashok Lavasa, a former election commissioner and former finance secretary of India, is a former vice president of the Asian Development Bank. Roli Asthana is a senior adviser at ODI Global Advisory, a senior research associate at SAIIA, an associate research fellow at Chatham House, and an associate at LSE IDEAS.



“
Instead of allowing external powers to dictate their development, China, India, Japan, South Korea, and Vietnam have balanced strategic international engagement with domestic capacity-building and decision-making. This model has become newly relevant for Canada, the United Kingdom, and other middle powers.
 ”

For decades, global development efforts reflected the assumption that international cooperation, however imperfect, was ultimately guided by a shared commitment to helping poorer countries prosper. That era is over. We have entered a multipolar age, defined by strategic rivalry, contested norms, and a level of volatility that makes long-term planning extraordinarily challenging.

Against this backdrop, economies cannot wait around hoping for systemic reform or benevolent assistance. They must build their own capabilities and negotiate their place in this new world.

While today's naked power politics represent a shift from the recent past, global governance has never been a charitable enterprise. States have always acted in their own interests, even when they frame their actions as a show of goodwill. Now that the fig leaf is gone, operating in this new landscape means taking a clear-eyed approach to international engagement, recognizing the risks and opportunities.

India's development trajectory is revealing in this regard. The country has long been skeptical of the idea that global cooperation is motivated by benevolence. While it has drawn on external resources—absorbing foreign ideas and technologies and building global partnerships—it has done so on its own terms, with a focus on building domestic capabilities. And it is not alone: China, Japan, South Korea, and Vietnam have sought to strike a similar balance.

These economies have succeeded not because their interests align neatly with those of their foreign partners, but because they have learned how to find common ground, navigate differences, and devise workable solutions. This is economic diplomacy at its most effective: a blend of bargaining, institution-building, and strategic learning. This middle-powers playbook is evolving as the global context evolves.

While Asian economies sought to make the most of global engagement, they have not allowed external actors to dictate their development script. Japan's industrial policy, South Korea's export-oriented transformation, China's hybrid model of state-led capitalism, India's accelerating reforms, and Vietnam's gradualist approach all emerged from domestic debates and political bargains. Local institutions capable of learning under pressure have been the key drivers of progress.

India has been bringing this pragmatism to bear in its response to changing global economic and geopolitical conditions. It has worked with Southeast Asian countries to boost supply-chain resilience, negotiated energy partnerships with Middle Eastern countries and Russia, and expanded

technology cooperation with the United States. At the same time, it has positioned itself as a bridge between advanced economies and the Global South—an interlocutor capable of reconciling diverging interests.

India's experience offers lessons not only for developing economies, but also for other middle powers, such as Canada and the United Kingdom. These countries are now grappling with the same dilemma: how to continue to engage globally without compromising their autonomy. Intensifying domestic pressures, from inequality to technological disruption, compound the challenge. The only way to meet it is by strengthening their own ability to negotiate, regulate, innovate, and learn.

This requires a fundamental shift in mindset, with economic diplomacy understood not only as a tool for securing access to global supply chains and foreign technologies, but also as a means of forging mutually beneficial arrangements based on joint problem-solving.

Technical assistance should no longer be viewed as a one-way transfer of knowledge, with little regard for political realities. Instead, advisory models must be co-designed, embedding learning rather

than perpetuating dependency.

Countries must also update their approach to engaging with firms. Partnerships through which public and private actors share risks, pool capabilities, and unlock new markets are the goal. But many governments struggle to achieve it, lacking the institutional depth to negotiate on equal terms.

Asia's experience sends a clear message. Waiting around for benign cooperation will get countries nowhere. But strategic learning, capacity building, hard-nosed negotiation, creative compromises, and pragmatic competition—all anchored in a recognition of shared interests—can support progress even under difficult circumstances.

The task for policymakers today is not to choose between autonomy and cooperation, but to build the capacity for both. The countries that succeed will be those that invest in their own institutions, learn from others without imitating them, and engage internationally with confidence. Asia's development story shows that this is not only possible; it is the surest path to resilience in an uncertain world.

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EXCLUSIVE to THE TIMES KUWAIT

Redefining Energy Security



By Richard Haass, Carolyn Kissane

Richard Haass, President Emeritus of the Council on Foreign Relations, is a senior counselor at Centerview Partners, Distinguished University Scholar at New York University, and the author of the weekly Substack newsletter Home & Away. Carolyn Kissane is Associate Dean and Clinical Professor at the New York University School of Professional Studies Center for Global Affairs and Founding Director of NYU's Energy, Climate, and Sustainability Lab.



It is too soon to know when or how the war with Iran will end, or what its geopolitical or economic consequences will be. But one thing is already certain: What is meant by energy security must be rethought.

Roughly 20% of the world's traded oil and gas passes through the Strait of Hormuz. The recent crisis demonstrated how quickly that flow can be disrupted, placing immediate pressure on energy-importing countries and on the global economy.

The current crisis also highlights that oil and gas facilities cannot be assumed to be secure. On the contrary, they are highly vulnerable to war and terrorism.

Energy security is often defined as ensuring reliable and affordable access to supplies. That definition is no longer sufficient. What recent events have exposed is that energy security must now encompass the maintenance and resilience of the systems that produce, refine, transport, and deliver energy.

In a world of contested transit routes, intricate infrastructure, and sophisticated forms of disruption, energy security is no longer just about supply. It is about whether the system itself can function under stress.

Recent conflicts make this clear. The war with Iran, together with Russia's ongoing war in Ukraine, has shown that energy infrastructure is no longer collateral damage; it is a primary target. Refineries, pipelines, export terminals, and electricity grids are now central to wartime strategy designed to weaken the capabilities and will of adversaries.

The change reflects new technology and "military math." Relatively inexpensive drones, often costing less than \$50,000, can disrupt assets worth billions. Cyber operations can destabilize grids without physical strikes. The asymmetry is striking: low-cost attacks can generate system-wide consequences with far-reaching economic and societal implications.

Artificial intelligence is accelerating both

risk and resilience. The rapid expansion of data centers and AI-driven computing is driving a surge in electricity demand. Yet AI is also becoming central to energy security, enabling real-time monitoring, predictive maintenance, and faster responses to threats. As energy systems become more digital and more electrified, the intersection of AI and infrastructure will shape the next phase of security. What this moment demands is a redefinition of energy security, one that takes the form of a comprehensive framework, built around ten priorities.

First, diversify supply across regions. Dependence and concentration on any single region, particularly one exposed to geopolitical risk such as the Middle East, now

“Recent conflicts make this clear. The war with Iran, together with Russia's ongoing war in Ukraine, has shown that energy infrastructure is no longer collateral damage; it is a primary target. Refineries, pipelines, export terminals, and electricity grids are now central to wartime strategy designed to weaken the capabilities and will of adversaries.”

carries systemic consequences. This calls for expanding access to supply from the Americas, Africa, and other emerging producers.

Second, diversify routes as well as sources. Energy that cannot move is functionally unavailable. This will require expanded investment in alternative corridors, including pipelines that bypass maritime chokepoints.

Third, harden critical energy infrastructure. Refineries, pipelines, LNG terminals, and electricity grids must be designed and reinforced to withstand disruption.

Fourth, build active energy defense systems. Modern conflict has made energy infrastructure a primary target. Protecting it requires real-time defense—layered air and missile systems, counter-drone capabilities, and advanced cyber defense to detect, deter, and respond to attacks.

Fifth, design for resilience, not just efficiency. Systems optimized for cost and speed are inherently fragile. Energy systems require spare capacity, redundancy across critical components, and the ability to absorb and recover from disruption.

Sixth, expand and safeguard strategic reserves. Storage should not be viewed primarily as a tool to manage prices, but as insurance against disruption.

Seventh, ensure a diversified energy mix. Renewables (including solar, wind, hydro, tidal, and geothermal), nuclear power, and hydrocarbons each play a role in reducing exposure to shocks. In periods of acute disruption, countries may also need to turn to readily available fuels, including coal, to maintain power generation, industrial output, and economic stability. While this will complicate climate objectives, excluding such options altogether is inconsistent with the realities of energy security. The good news is

that the climate impact can be offset through the accelerated development of alternatives that energy security also requires.

Eighth, depoliticize energy strategy. Energy systems must be guided by the objectives of reliability, affordability, and security, not by short-term politics. Frequent shifts in policy direction—seen in the United States, Europe, Japan, and South Korea, among others—undermine investment, delay infrastructure development, and can introduce a de facto political risk premium into energy systems.

Ninth, wherever possible, manage demand as a form of risk reduction. Efficiency lowers exposure and strengthens resilience.

Lastly, recognize that no country is insulated. In the US, energy abundance is often equated with energy security. But oil is priced globally, and disruptions abroad translate directly into higher costs at home, affecting fuel prices, supply chains, and inflation. Energy independence does not mean immunity from energy crises.

The economic consequences of failing to adapt are significant. Countries most exposed to disruption face rising input costs, pressure across industries, and slower growth. Energy insecurity is economic insecurity, and maximizing both has become a defining feature of military strategy.

There is a clear parallel with global supply chains. In the aftermath of COVID-19, firms shifted from a “just in time” model to a “just in case” approach that sought to strengthen resilience. Energy systems must now undergo a similar transition. It is well worth paying an added premium; delay will only drive the cost of energy insecurity higher.

GCC projects slow in Q1 2026

Kuwait emerges as regional growth leader

A recent report by Kamco Invest highlighted a slowdown in project activity across the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) during the first quarter of 2026, driven by heightened regional uncertainty.

According to data published by MEED magazine, the total value of contracts awarded across GCC countries fell by 9.7% year-on-year to \$61.2 billion, compared with \$67.8 billion in the same period of 2025.

The decline was primarily attributed to weaker project awards in Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates, the region's two largest markets. In contrast, Kuwait, Oman, and Qatar recorded notable growth in project activity during the quarter, reports Al-Rai daily.

The report showed a sharp monthly fluctuation in contract awards, which dropped from 84 projects in January to 80 in February,

before falling significantly to 25 projects in March 2026. In value terms, awards declined from \$20.5 billion in January and \$26 billion in February to \$11.8 billion in March. Saudi Arabia saw a 51.1% annual decline in project awards, totaling \$11 billion compared to \$22.5 billion in 2025. The UAE also recorded an 18.5% drop to \$29.2 billion, down from \$35.8 billion.

In contrast, Kuwait delivered a standout performance, with the value of awarded projects increasing more than fivefold to \$8.1 billion, compared with \$1.5 billion in the same period last year. This marks the country's highest quarterly level in over five years.

The strong performance in Kuwait was driven by major projects aligned with national development goals under Kuwait Vision 2035, particularly in the energy, electricity, water, and transport sectors.



The water sector alone accounted for more than 45% of Kuwait's total project value at \$3.7 billion, followed by construction at \$2.6 billion. The oil sector also surged significantly, rising 36-fold year-on-year to \$1.5 billion.

Among key developments, the North Kabd wastewater treatment plant project, valued at \$3.2 billion, stands out as one of the largest infrastructure initiatives, with a capacity of

around one million cubic meters per day. The quarter also saw a \$320 million contract awarded for crude oil pipelines and associated works in southern Kuwait.

Despite pockets of growth, the broader outlook for GCC projects remains cautious. The report warned that ongoing regional conflict and geopolitical instability could weigh on future investments and project financing.

MEED estimates the total value of future GCC projects at approximately \$2 trillion, with Saudi Arabia accounting for around 50% and the UAE 27.5%. Construction remains the dominant sector, followed by transport and electricity.

In Kuwait, future project pipelines are strongly supported by government-backed infrastructure initiatives and economic diversification plans, reinforcing its emerging position as one of the fastest-growing project markets in the region.

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<p>3.600 KD 1.495 KD</p> <p>باونتي شوكولاتة ميني ٢٧٥ جم ٢ x Bounty Chocolate Minis 2x275gm</p>	<p>2.590 KD 1.890 KD</p> <p>بيست أوف مينيز ١٥-١٣ جم Best Of Minis 3x150gm</p>	<p>1.490 KD 1.390 KD</p> <p>نستلة نسكويك حبوب الإفطار 500 جم Nestle Nesquik Cereal 500gm</p>
<p>1.595 KD 0.990 KD</p> <p>كيتكو بسكويك متنوع ١٣٧٠ جم Kitco Asstd Biscuit 1.370Kg</p>	<p>3.150 KD 2.790 KD</p> <p>كاونلري أرز بسملي هندي ٥ كجم Country XL Indian Basmati Rice 5Kg</p>	<p>1.430 KD 1.350 KD</p> <p>سيارا دجاج كامل ١٤٠٠ جم Seara Frozen Chicken Grillers 1400gm</p>
<p>1.490 KD 0.900 KD</p> <p>هيد أند شولدرز شامبو ٤٠٠+٢٠٠ مل Head & Shoulders Shampoo 400ml+200ml</p>	<p>1.290 KD 0.900 KD</p> <p>بالموليف صابون متنوع ١٢٠ جم ٦ x Palmolive Soap 6 x 120gm</p>	<p>4.000 KD 2.500 KD</p> <p>اللوهم طعم عشاء بورسلين ١٢ قطعة (٤ أفراد) - متنوع Into home 12pcs Porcelain Dinner set 4 Person (Asstd)</p>

عروض سيتي الطازجة

City Fresh DROPS

Only 29th April to 5th May
من ٢٩ أبريل حتى ٥ مايو فقط

<p>0.595 KD 0.450 KD</p> <p>موز مصري كيلو Banana Egypt Kilo</p>	<p>1.590 KD 0.990 KD</p> <p>جبنة بيضاء متنوعة كيلو White Cheese Asstd Kilo</p>
<p>0.295 KD 0.175 KD</p> <p>بصل هندي كيلو Red Onion India Kilo</p>	<p>4.490 KD 3.990 KD</p> <p>سريرم تركيا كيلو Seabream Turkey Kilo</p>

متوفر في الصجيج الفحيحيل الأحمدي القرين العقيلة
Exclusive: Dajeej, Fahaheel, Al Ahmadi, Alqurain, Al Egaila