



As Kuwait marks the second anniversary of His Highness the Amir's accession, the occasion underscores the strong and enduring partnership between His Highness the Amir and His Highness the Crown Prince — a relationship rooted in trust, shared leadership, and a unified vision for a secure, stable, and prosperous Kuwait.

See Page 3

www.timeskuwait.com 250 Fils



Kuwait ranks 40th globally in migrant population density

5



This Summer Don't Just See the World. Feel It.

What if the destination isn't the most important part of the trip?

This summer, travellers are looking for something more than another city, another beach or another stamp in their passport. They're looking for experiences they'll remember long after they've unpacked. This summer deserves more than a checklist. Travel isn't just about where you go. It's about what stays



with you when you get back. The rush of arriving somewhere new. The cool mountain air that instantly makes you forget the heat you left behind. The sound of a city coming to life around you. The feeling of standing somewhere you've always wanted to be. After months of waiting, the bags are finally by the door, the passports are out, and Kuwait is ready to move. Capturing exactly that sentiment, Jazeera Airways has launched its summer campaign with a simple invitation: Don't Just See the World. Feel It. It's a reminder that the best journeys aren't measured by the number of destinations visited, but by the experiences



collected along the way. Why simply admire the beauty of Prague, Krakow or Budapest when you can immerse yourself in their history, culture and atmosphere? Why only take in the views of Trabzon, Sarajevo, Batumi or Sochi when you can experience the landscapes, the people and the moments

that make each destination unique? Jazeera's summer network offers something for every kind of traveller. For those seeking energy, culture and discovery, cities like London and Bergamo offer endless opportunities to explore. For those looking to escape the summer heat, the cooler



climates of Salalah and Abha provide a welcome change of pace. And for travellers drawn to the sea, destinations such as Hurghada, Sharm El Sheikh, Antalya, Larnaca and Tivat offer sun-soaked coastlines and unforgettable waterfront experiences. Because the most memorable journeys aren't about seeing more. They're about experiencing more. This summer, the fleet is ready, the map is open, and a world of experiences awaits. Don't just check another destination off your list. Don't Just See the World. Feel It.



Vietnamese General Secretary and President To Lam Addressed the Opening Session of the 23rd Shangri-La Dialogue



On the evening of 29 May, at the Shangri-La Hotel in Singapore, To Lam, General Secretary and President of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam, delivered the keynote address opening the 23rd Shangri-La Dialogue, one of the Asia-Pacific region's leading security and defence forums.

The speech, themed "Proactively Creating Peace, Stability and Development in a World of Volatility", was delivered at a time when the global security environment is simultaneously being affected by major-power competition, conflicts in several regions, disruptions to strategic maritime routes, the rapid development of new technologies and the risk of declining trust among nations.

Three fundamental crises facing the world today

One of the most notable points in the address was To Lam's characterisation of the current international situation through three simultaneous crises: a crisis of international order, a crisis of the development model and a crisis of strategic trust.

According to the Vietnamese leader, when the principles of international law are applied inconsistently, and when power is placed above commitments, countries - especially small and medium-sized states - will face pressure to choose sides, as well as economic, technological, financial and security coercion.

Six directions for a peaceful and resilient Asia-Pacific

Having identified the three current crises, To Lam proposed six directions for building a peaceful, stable and developing Asia-Pacific capable of reducing risks early and from afar: First, rules and dialogue must be made genuinely effective means of risk reduction. Second, an open and inclusive regional architecture centred on ASEAN must be built. Third, human security and social resilience must be placed



“ Vietnam respects the legitimate and lawful rights and interests of other countries; at the same time, it remains resolute and persistent in safeguarding its independence, sovereignty, sovereign rights and lawful jurisdiction under international law in the East Sea. ”

at the heart of sustainable security. Fourth, responsible standard for new technologies and the defence industry must be established. Fifth, social foundations and resilience must be strengthened, while the information space

must be protected and awareness enhanced. Sixth, the region's capacity for preventive diplomacy, reconciliation and mediation must be improved.

In his remarks, Vietnamese General

Secretary and President To Lam prominently addressed the issue of seas and oceans, affirming that seas and oceans are resources, shared spaces of connectivity, and lifelines for trade, energy, food and global supply chains. No country benefits if those connecting routes become arenas for displays of power, coercion or confrontation.

Vietnam supports the settlement of all disputes and differences by peaceful means, on the basis of international law, particularly the 1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea.

Vietnam respects the legitimate and lawful rights and interests of other countries; at the same time, it remains resolute and persistent in safeguarding its independence, sovereignty, sovereign rights and lawful jurisdiction under international law in the East Sea.

Vietnamese General Secretary and President To Lam's keynote address at the 23rd Shangri-La Dialogue carries notable significance for Vietnam's foreign policy standing. Vietnam not only reaffirmed its consistent principles, including respect for international law and the peaceful settlement of disputes, but also clearly expressed its readiness to work with countries within and beyond the region to strengthen rules, build trust, promote dialogue, enhance cooperation and reduce risks.

Full text of the keynote address by General Secretary and President To Lam at the 23rd Shangri-La Dialogue: <https://www.vietnam.vn/en/toan-van-bai-phat-bieu-dan-de-cua-tong-bi-thu-chu-tich-nuoc-to-lam-tai-doi-thoi-shangri-la-lan-thu-23>

Crown Prince H. H. Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled

Guardian of Continuity, Architect of Consensus and Statesman of Kuwait's Future



By Tareq Yousef Alshumaimry
Former Secretary-General of the Commercial Arbitration Centre of the Gulf Cooperation Council

In the history of nations, there emerge leaders whose influence extends far beyond the offices they hold. Their legacy is measured not merely by titles or years of service, but by the trust they inspire, the stability they preserve, and the vision they embody. His Highness Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Mubarak Al-Sabah stands among those distinguished figures whose public service has become inseparable from the modern story of Kuwait.

Today, as Crown Prince of the State of Kuwait, His Highness represents a rare combination of wisdom, experience, diplomacy, and steadfast devotion to the nation. His appointment by His Highness the Amir Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah marked a significant chapter in Kuwait's political history, reflecting confidence in a leader whose career has been defined by dedication to national interests and service to the Kuwaiti people.

For more than four decades, Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled has been at the forefront of Kuwait's diplomatic and political journey. From his early

years in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to his tenure as Ambassador to Saudi Arabia, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Prime Minister, and now Crown Prince, his path has been characterized by professionalism, prudence, and a deep understanding of regional and international affairs.

Among his most admired qualities is his unwavering belief in dialogue. Throughout his diplomatic career, Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled became known as a bridge-builder, a leader capable of fostering consensus during challenging times and strengthening Kuwait's reputation as a voice of moderation and diplomacy. His calm demeanor, thoughtful leadership, and commitment to constructive engagement earned him respect not only within Kuwait but across the Gulf region and the international community. As Foreign Minister, he played a pivotal role in advancing Kuwait's foreign policy and strengthening strategic partnerships around the world. Under his stewardship, Kuwait further solidified its position as a trusted mediator, humanitarian supporter, and responsible international partner. His contributions helped enhance the country's standing on the global stage and reinforced its image as a nation committed to peace, cooperation, and mutual respect.

His service as Prime Minister came during a period marked by regional uncertainty and global challenges. Yet even amid complex political and economic circumstances, Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled remained committed to safeguarding Kuwait's institutions and advancing national interests. His leadership



reflected patience, resilience, and an unwavering belief in constitutional governance and national unity.

Beyond public office, those who have worked alongside him often speak of a leader distinguished by humility, accessibility, and integrity. He has consistently placed the interests of Kuwait above personal ambition, approaching public service not as a privilege but as a responsibility entrusted to him by the nation.

The appointment of Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled as Crown Prince in 2024 carried significance beyond succession. It reflected the continuity of Kuwait's longstanding tradition of selecting leaders based on experience, competence, and commitment to the state. His elevation to this high office was widely viewed as recognition of decades of distinguished service and a testament to the confidence placed in his leadership.

As Kuwait advances toward a future defined by economic transformation, technological innovation, and regional cooperation, the presence of Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled at the heart of the nation's leadership provides reassurance and confidence. His extensive experience in diplomacy, governance, and statecraft positions him uniquely to support the vision of His Highness the Amir and contribute to the realization of Kuwait's aspirations.

In an era often marked by uncertainty, Kuwait is fortunate to be guided by leaders whose wisdom is grounded in experience and whose decisions are shaped by an enduring commitment to national progress. His Highness Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Mubarak Al-Sabah exemplifies those qualities.

He is a protector of continuity, a trusted adviser, a guardian of national interests, and a statesman whose legacy continues to inspire confidence in Kuwait's future. His journey is not merely the story of a public servant it is a reflection of the values that have long defined Kuwait: loyalty, moderation, service, and an unwavering commitment to the nation and its people.



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Georgia and Kuwait Poised to Elevate Partnership to New Heights

'Kuwait is a gem of the Gulf region and one of Georgia's most valued international partners'
- Ambassador H.E. Noshrevan Lomtadze

The Times Kuwait Report

As Georgia celebrates the 108th anniversary of the declaration of its First Democratic Republic and the 35th anniversary of the restoration of its independence, Georgian Ambassador to Kuwait, His Excellency Noshrevan Lomtadze, has reaffirmed the strength of bilateral relations between Georgia and Kuwait, describing the Gulf nation as one of Georgia's closest and most important international partners.

In an exclusive interview with The Times Kuwait, Ambassador Lomtadze praised Kuwait's leadership and resilience in navigating regional challenges, expressing confidence that the country will continue to serve as a beacon of stability, moderation, and constructive diplomacy in the region.

The ambassador highlighted the deepening political, economic, tourism, and cultural ties between the two countries, noting that relations have witnessed remarkable growth in recent years and are now poised to advance to a new strategic level.

"Kuwait has become a second home to me," Ambassador Lomtadze said. "I have been deeply touched by the warmth, generosity, and friendship of the Kuwaiti people. The relationship between Georgia and Kuwait is built on mutual respect, trust, and a shared commitment to prosperity and peace."

He expressed gratitude to His Highness the Amir Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Al-Khalid Al-Hamad Al-Sabah, His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, and Foreign Minister Sheikh Jarrah Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah for their continued support in strengthening bilateral cooperation.

Turning to Georgia's rich history, the ambassador noted that the country's statehood dates back more than 3,400 years, making it one of the world's oldest civilizations. He



"Georgia offers attractive opportunities in real estate, hospitality, construction, food security, logistics, and infrastructure," he said. "We encourage Kuwaiti investors to explore these opportunities and become part of Georgia's success story."

emphasized that Georgia's long-standing commitment to independence, cultural heritage, and nation-building continues to shape its modern identity.

Discussing tourism, Ambassador Lomtadze described Georgia as one of the most attractive destinations for Kuwaiti travelers, offering breathtaking mountain landscapes, UNESCO World Heritage sites, vibrant cities, world-

renowned cuisine, and a welcoming culture rooted in hospitality.

He noted that destinations such as Tbilisi, Batumi, Kutaisi, Svaneti, and Tusheti continue to attract increasing numbers of Kuwaiti visitors seeking family-friendly vacations, natural beauty, and unique cultural experiences.

The ambassador also highlighted Georgia's growing reputation as a hub for medical

tourism, wellness retreats, and health resorts, supported by more than 2,000 mineral springs and therapeutic natural resources.

On the economic front, Ambassador Lomtadze described Georgia as one of the region's most dynamic investment destinations, pointing to sustained economic growth, a business-friendly regulatory environment, and increasing interest from Gulf investors.

Ambassador highlighted that in recent years, Georgia has achieved remarkable economic performance, with real GDP growth reaching 7.5 percent in 2025. The average growth rate was approximately 9.3 percent between 2021 and 2025, the highest in Europe, the Middle East, and Asia. Preliminary estimates indicate that economic growth during the first three months of this year reached 9.1 percent.

He cited major investments by leading Gulf companies, including projects worth billions of dollars, as evidence of growing international confidence in Georgia's economy.

"Georgia offers attractive opportunities in real estate, hospitality, construction, food security, logistics, and infrastructure," he said. "We encourage Kuwaiti investors to explore these opportunities and become part of Georgia's success story."

The ambassador also underscored the ease of doing business in Georgia, noting that property ownership procedures are straightforward and transparent, while investment protection agreements provide strong guarantees for foreign investors. Concluding the interview, Ambassador Lomtadze invited Kuwaiti citizens and businesses to discover Georgia's tourism and investment potential, stressing that hospitality and openness remain at the heart of Georgian culture.

"At this important moment, Georgia stands with Kuwait and wishes peace, stability, and prosperity for the country and its people," he said. "We look forward to further strengthening our friendship and expanding cooperation across all sectors."

PAM Approves Over 11,600 Worker Transfers Under New Labor Reform Measures

PAM has approved 11,654 expatriate worker transfers from previously restricted sectors under Ministerial Resolution No. 2 of 2026, with the small projects sector accounting for more than 60 percent of approvals as Kuwait advances labor market reforms and workforce optimization efforts.

The Public Authority for Manpower (PAM) has approved 11,654 requests for the transfer of expatriate workers from previously restricted sectors to other sectors, as part of ongoing efforts to restructure Kuwait's labor market and optimize the use of available manpower across the country.

According to official figures released up to May 23, the transfers were approved under Ministerial Resolution No. 2 of 2026, which allows eligible workers in certain sectors to move to other areas of employment under specific regulations and conditions.

Data showed that the small projects sector accounted for the largest share of approved



transfers, with 7,016 workers moving to other sectors, representing more than 60 percent of the total approvals. The agricultural sector followed with 2,160 approved transfers, while industrial establishments recorded 1,293 approvals. The grazing sector accounted for 1,057 transfers, and the fishing sector registered the lowest number with 128 approved requests.

Officials said the initiative forms part of broader efforts to address structural imbalances in the labor market, support private sector activities, and ensure the efficient utilization of legally resident workers already present in the country. The move is also intended to help meet labor demands in key economic

sectors while maintaining regulatory oversight. PAM emphasized that all transfer requests must comply with the authority's approved conditions and procedures, with employer consent remaining a key requirement for processing applications. Authorities noted that the temporary transfer window is designed to provide greater flexibility for sectors facing labor shortages while preserving stability within the labor market. The authority expects the number of applications to continue rising as requests are processed through the end of the approved transfer period, reflecting strong demand from workers seeking opportunities across different sectors of the economy.

Kuwait ranks 40th globally in migrant population density

Kuwait has been ranked second in the Arab world and 40th globally in migrant population density, according to the Global Migration Index (GMI) 2026, reaffirming the country's position as one of the world's leading destinations for expatriate workers and foreign residents.

The report reveals that migrants constitute approximately 68.8 percent of Kuwait's total population, underscoring the vital role expatriates continue to play in supporting the country's economic growth, labor market, and development agenda. The ranking places Kuwait among a select group of nations where foreign residents make up a significant proportion of the population.

Across the Gulf region, migration remains a defining demographic and economic characteristic. Several GCC countries featured prominently in the index, reflecting their longstanding dependence on international talent and labor to drive development across sectors including construction, healthcare, education, finance, technology, and domestic services.

The report highlights that Gulf countries continue to attract migrants due to strong economic opportunities, high living standards, modern infrastructure, and sustained demand for skilled and semi-skilled workers. These factors have transformed the region into one of the world's most dynamic migration destinations.

Globally, the United Arab Emirates topped the rankings with



migrants accounting for nearly 88 percent of its population, while Qatar ranked among the highest internationally with expatriates making up the overwhelming majority of residents. Kuwait followed closely behind its Gulf neighbors, maintaining its position as one of the region's most internationally diverse societies.

The findings also emphasize the growing importance of migration as a driver of economic development. Migrant communities contribute significantly to labor force participation, entrepreneurship, knowledge transfer, and consumer spending,

while helping countries address workforce shortages and sustain economic competitiveness.

For Kuwait, the report reflects decades of openness to international labor and expertise that have contributed to the country's modernization and development. Expatriates remain an integral part of Kuwait's social and economic fabric, supporting both public and private sector activities and helping meet the demands of a rapidly evolving economy.

At the same time, the report notes that many countries, including Kuwait, continue to pursue labor market reforms aimed at balancing national workforce participation with the need to attract international talent. These efforts seek to ensure sustainable economic growth while enhancing opportunities for citizens and residents alike.

The Global Migration Index serves as a key benchmark for understanding demographic trends, migration patterns, and labor mobility worldwide. Its latest findings reaffirm the Gulf region's central role in global migration flows and highlight Kuwait's continued attractiveness as a destination for workers and professionals from around the world.

As global competition for talent intensifies, Kuwait's ability to attract and retain skilled expatriates is expected to remain an important factor in supporting national development objectives and advancing the goals outlined in the country's long-term economic vision.



Jazeera Airways launches direct Kuwait–London Luton flights

Jazeera Airways has announced the launch of its first direct commercial flights between Kuwait and London Luton Airport, marking a significant milestone in the airline's continued expansion across Europe and reinforcing air links between Kuwait and the United Kingdom. The new service is scheduled to commence on 8 July 2026 with four weekly flights, increasing to daily operations from 1 August in response to anticipated demand.

Operating from Jazeera Terminal 5 (T5) at Kuwait International Airport, the new route further strengthens the airline's growing European network following the recent launch of flights to Milan Bergamo. The service is designed to cater to a diverse range of travelers, including tourists, students, business executives, and families seeking convenient travel between the two countries.

Speaking at the announcement, Jazeera Airways Chief Executive Officer Barathan Pasupathi described the launch as an important step in the airline's strategic growth plans. He noted that London remains one of the most sought-after destinations for travelers from Kuwait and the wider region, adding that the new service reflects the airline's commitment to enhancing connectivity while expanding its footprint in key international markets. Pasupathi highlighted that the London Luton route will be the airline's longest direct service to date, with flight times of up to seven hours operated by Airbus A320neo aircraft. The new connection also demonstrates the capability of Jazeera Airways' modern fleet to serve longer-haul destinations while maintaining its low-cost operating model.

The route is expected to enhance travel options for passengers flying between Kuwait and the United Kingdom while providing seamless access through Kuwait to more than 60 onward destinations across the Gulf region, South and Central Asia, and Europe. The airline said the service will strengthen Kuwait's role as a regional aviation hub and support growing business, tourism, and educational exchanges.

Welcoming the new partnership, London Luton Airport Chief Executive Officer Alberto Martin said the arrival of Jazeera Airways represents an important addition to the airport's route network, offering passengers greater choice and improved connectivity to the Middle East and beyond. He noted that the service will create new opportunities for both leisure and business travelers while supporting the airport's ambitions to expand international connections.

The British Embassy in Kuwait also welcomed the launch, describing the route as an important development that will further strengthen economic, tourism, educational, and people-to-people ties between Kuwait and the United Kingdom.

Round-trip fares on the new service will start from KD239, with bookings available through the airline's website, mobile application, and customer service channels. The addition of London Luton reflects Jazeera Airways' broader strategy of expanding its international network and offering passengers greater travel choice, convenience, and affordability while strengthening Kuwait's connectivity with major global destinations.

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Italy Reaffirms Long-Term Commitment to Gulf Security, Stability and Strategic Partnership

Italy remains firmly committed to strengthening its strategic partnership with Kuwait and the Gulf region, with Ambassador Lorenzo Morini highlighting deeper cooperation in defense, energy, trade and regional security as essential to promoting stability, economic growth and shared prosperity

By Reaven D'Souza
Executive Managing Editor

Italian Ambassador to Kuwait H.E. Lorenzo Morini has underscored Italy's enduring commitment to the Gulf region, describing the GCC countries as strategic partners linked to Italy through longstanding political, economic and cultural ties built on dialogue, stability, prosperity and mutual respect.

In an interview with The Times Kuwait, Ambassador Morini said that Italy views the Gulf as a region of vital strategic importance and remains committed to further strengthening cooperation with GCC countries across all sectors, including trade, investment, security, culture and people-to-people exchanges.

Addressing Italy's response during the recent regional crisis, the ambassador noted that Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni was among the first G7 leaders to engage directly with Gulf leaders. He said her visit to the region, coupled with regular consultations with GCC leaders, demonstrated Italy's solidarity and support during a challenging period.

"The visit reinforced the special attention Italy attaches to cooperation with Gulf countries and helped identify practical areas of collaboration in both security and economic sectors," Ambassador Morini said.

On defense cooperation, the ambassador revealed that Italy has provided technical assistance and support to Gulf partners, including Kuwait, to help address emerging regional security challenges. He stressed that Italy's commitment extends beyond the current crisis, reflecting its long-term interest in preserving regional stability.

Ambassador Morini highlighted the role of Italian defense companies, particularly Leonardo S.p.A., in strengthening Gulf security capabilities. He noted that during the height of the recent crisis, Leonardo personnel remained in Kuwait and played a crucial role in supporting the operational readiness of Kuwait's Eurofighter fleet while also ensuring the continued functionality of airport radar systems affected by drone attacks.

"The professionalism and dedication shown by Italian personnel on the ground helped ensure that Kuwait was able to respond effectively to evolving security threats," he said.

Commenting on Kuwait's recent ratification of the defense cooperation agreement with Italy under Law No. 60 of 2026,



“Commenting on Kuwait's recent ratification of the defense cooperation agreement with Italy under Law No. 60 of 2026, Ambassador Morini described the agreement as an important legal framework for expanding bilateral cooperation in defense and security.”

Ambassador Morini described the agreement as an important legal framework for expanding bilateral cooperation in defense and security.

He explained that the agreement will facilitate closer collaboration in key areas including air defense, advanced detection technologies, cybersecurity and anti-drone systems, while also enabling direct communication channels between the security and military institutions of both countries.

Looking ahead, Ambassador Morini welcomed Italy's proposal for a G7-GCC Summit, describing it as a significant initiative aimed at strengthening dialogue between major industrialized nations and Gulf countries.

He emphasized that greater coordination between G7 and GCC leaders is essential for addressing regional security challenges, maintaining economic stability and safeguarding global supply chains, particularly in light of recent disruptions affecting the Strait of Hormuz.

"Italy believes that direct engagement between G7 and GCC leaders can contribute to market stability, energy security and broader international cooperation," he said.

The ambassador also highlighted Italy's longstanding role within both the G7 and the European Union in promoting stronger engagement with Gulf countries. He noted that Italy has consistently advocated for deeper economic integration and institutional cooperation between the European Union and the GCC.

On energy cooperation, Ambassador Morini described Gulf countries as indispensable partners in Italy's energy strategy. While Italy has diversified its energy sources and increased investments in renewable energy, he said the Gulf remains a key supplier of oil and natural gas.

He pointed to the strong energy partnership between Italy and Kuwait, citing the cooperation between ENI and Q8 at the Milazzo refinery, as well as Kuwait Petroleum Corporation's investments in Italy's gas distribution network and biofuel production sector.

Ambassador Morini concluded by reaffirming Italy's commitment to enhancing its strategic partnership with Kuwait and the wider Gulf region, stressing that stronger cooperation remains essential for regional security, economic growth and shared prosperity.

Kuwait Moves to Restructure Oil Sector as KIPIC Set to Merge Fully with KNPC

Kuwait is set to undertake a major restructuring of its oil sector following plans to dissolve the Kuwait Integrated Petroleum Industries Company (KIPIC) and fully merge its operations into the Kuwait National Petroleum Company (KNPC), in a move aimed at enhancing efficiency, reduc-

ing administrative overlap, and strengthening operational integration across the country's downstream energy sector.

in line with evolving industry requirements and long-term strategic objectives. Under the plan, KIPIC's assets, projects, employees, and operational responsibilities will be transferred to KNPC, creating a more unified structure for managing refining, petrochemical integration, and fuel distribution activities. The move is expected to consolidate expertise, improve decision-making processes, and generate greater operational synergies.

KIPIC was established in 2016 to oversee some of Kuwait's most significant energy projects, including the Al-Zour Refinery, one of the largest refining projects in the region, as well as integrated petrochemical and liquefied natural gas (LNG) import facilities. Since its establishment, the company has played a central role in advancing Kuwait's downstream expansion strategy.

Industry sources indicated that the merger aims to eliminate duplication of functions between the two entities while strengthening coordination across refining and related operations. Officials believe that bringing major downstream assets under a single management framework will support greater efficiency and enhance the sector's competitiveness.

The restructuring is also expected to contribute to cost optimization, improve institutional performance, and align operational structures with international best practices adopted by leading energy companies worldwide.



ing administrative overlap, and strengthening operational integration across the country's downstream energy sector.

The proposed restructuring comes as part of broader efforts by Kuwait Petroleum Corporation (KPC) to streamline operations among its subsidiaries and optimize resource management

Volunteers Step In to Support Filipino Workers Facing Salary Delays

By Ricky Laxa
Staff Writer

A group of dedicated volunteers has extended humanitarian assistance to Filipino workers in Kuwait who have reportedly been facing prolonged salary delays and financial hardship, providing essential support as efforts continue to address their situation.

The initiative focused on delivering food supplies, daily necessities, and welfare assistance to affected workers, many of whom have struggled to meet basic living expenses after going months without receiving their salaries. Volunteers coordinated relief efforts to ensure workers received immediate support while awaiting resolution of their employment issues. Community members, charitable groups, and Filipino volunteers worked together to organize aid distributions, reflecting strong solidarity and compassion toward workers facing difficult circumstances. The assistance aimed to ease financial pressures and provide temporary relief to those impacted.

Officials and community representatives emphasized the importance of safeguarding

workers' rights and ensuring that labor-related grievances are addressed through the appropriate legal and regulatory channels. They also highlighted the role of volunteer initiatives in supporting vulnerable groups during times of hardship.

The humanitarian effort has drawn appreciation from beneficiaries, with volunteers reaffirming their commitment to



assisting affected workers and promoting community support until long-term solutions are achieved.

The initiative underscores the spirit of cooperation and social responsibility within Kuwait's diverse community, as volunteers continue to play an important role in providing assistance to those in need.

Hungarian Ambassador Visits The Times Kuwait, Discusses Regional Developments and Bilateral Relations



The Times Kuwait welcomed the Ambassador of Hungary to the State of Kuwait, H.E. András Szabó, for a cordial and insightful visit to its offices, where he met with Editor-in-Chief Tareq Yusuf Alshumaimry and Executive Managing Editor Reaven D'Souza.

The meeting provided an opportunity for a constructive exchange of views on regional and international

developments, as well as the evolving political, economic, and cultural landscape of the Middle East. Discussions also focused on the importance of responsible journalism in promoting informed dialogue and enhancing understanding among nations.



ment of both countries to strengthening cooperation across a wide range of sectors, including trade, education, technology, innovation, and cultural exchange. Kuwait was the first country in the Gulf region to establish diplomatic relations with Hungary, and bilateral ties continue to expand through growing economic and people-to-people engagement.

The discussions also touched upon opportunities for enhancing cooperation between media institutions and fostering greater awareness of Hungary's achievements in innovation, higher education, tourism, and investment. Ambassador Szabó reiterated Hungary's interest in deepening its partnership with Kuwait and encouraging greater exchanges between the peoples of the two friendly nations.

For their part, Alshumaimry and D'Souza welcomed the ambassador and reaffirmed The Times Kuwait's commitment to promoting constructive dialogue, cultural understanding, and international cooperation through responsible and balanced journalism.

The visit concluded with a mutual appreciation for the role of the media and diplomacy in building bridges between nations and fostering stronger international relations.

KDIPA Suspends Foreign Company Over Workforce Violations

The Kuwait Direct Investment Promotion Authority (KDIPA) has suspended the operations of a foreign-invested company after identifying violations related to workforce requirements, underscoring the authority's commitment to ensuring compliance with national labor regulations.

The action follows a series of inspections and reviews conducted as part of KDIPA's ongoing monitoring program for companies operating under Kuwait's direct investment framework. Authorities found that the company had failed to meet workforce-related obligations stipulated under its licensing and operational requirements.

KDIPA stated that maintaining compliance with employment regulations is a fundamental condition for companies benefiting from investment incentives and operating privileges in Kuwait. The authority emphasized that all licensed entities are required to adhere to approved workforce structures and labor market regulations.

Officials noted that the suspension forms part of broader efforts to enhance transparency, strengthen governance, and ensure that foreign investors contribute effectively to Kuwait's economic development objectives. The move also reflects increasing oversight of companies operating within the direct investment sector. KDIPA reiterated that while Kuwait remains committed to attracting quality foreign investment, it will continue to enforce regulations designed to protect the integrity of the labor market and ensure a fair and sustainable business environment.

The authority urged all companies operating under its umbrella to review their compliance status and take necessary corrective measures to avoid potential penalties or regulatory action.

The latest measure highlights Kuwait's continued focus on balancing investment promotion with strict regulatory oversight, ensuring that economic growth objectives are aligned with labor market policies and national development priorities.

Kuwait Airport Introduces 90-Minute Check-In Cut-Off for Departing Passengers

The Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) has announced the implementation of new check-in closure times for passengers departing from Kuwait International Airport, effective June 1, 2026.

Under the revised procedures, airline check-in counters will close 90 minutes before the scheduled departure time of flights. The measure has been introduced to enhance operational efficiency, facilitate smoother passenger processing, and support on-time flight departures.

Airport authorities stressed that passengers must arrive at the airport well in advance to complete all travel formalities, including check-in, baggage drop-off, security screening, and immigration procedures before the designated cut-off time.

The DGCA noted that the new policy forms part of ongoing efforts to improve airport operations and accommodate increasing passenger traffic, particularly during peak travel periods. Officials emphasized that travelers arriving after the check-in deadline may be denied boarding, even if they possess a valid ticket and travel documents.

Airlines operating from Kuwait International Airport have been instructed to ensure passengers are informed of the new requirements through their



booking systems and customer communication channels. Authorities urged all travelers to verify flight details and check-in requirements with their respective airlines and to allow sufficient time for airport procedures to avoid disruptions to their travel plans.

The introduction of the 90-minute check-in cut-off reflects Kuwait's continued efforts to enhance the efficiency, safety, and overall passenger experience at the country's primary aviation gateway.

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Tajikistan marks historic milestone with foundation of new embassy in Kuwait

The Times Kuwait Report

In a significant milestone reflecting the growing strength of Tajik-Kuwaiti relations, the Republic of Tajikistan has symbolically laid the foundation for its future embassy premises in Mishref, marking a new chapter in the longstanding partnership between the two friendly nations.

The occasion was commemorated through a unique and meaningful ceremony that replaced the traditional cornerstone-laying with the planting of the first trees at the embassy site. The initiative underscored values of sustainability, growth, and resilience, while symbolizing the deep-rooted friendship and cooperation that continue to flourish between Kuwait and Tajikistan.

The ceremony was attended by His Excellency Dr. Zubaydullo Zubaydzoda, Ambassador of the Republic of Tajikistan to the State of Kuwait, and Dr. Ameera Al-Hassan, Head of Mission of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat) for Kuwait and the GCC, together with diplomats, officials, and distinguished guests.

Addressing the gathering, Ambassador Zubaydzoda described the event as a particularly meaningful moment as he nears the conclusion of his diplomatic mission in Kuwait after 13 years of service. He noted that



witnessing the establishment of Tajikistan's future embassy premises ranks among the most significant achievements of his tenure, reflecting the remarkable progress made in bilateral relations over the years.

He emphasized that relations between the Republic of Tajikistan and the State of Kuwait have been built on mutual respect, constructive cooperation, and a shared commitment to prosperity and development. The ambassador added that the new embassy project represents Tajikistan's long-term commitment to strengthening its diplomatic presence in Kuwait and expanding collaboration across diverse sectors.

The embassy highlighted that the decision to mark the occasion through tree planting carries a powerful message. The trees symbolize roots firmly planted in friendship, branches extending toward future opportunities, and a vision of sustainable growth that benefits both nations for generations to come.

The participation of UN-Habitat further reinforced the environmental dimension of the initiative. The event aligned with global efforts to promote urban greening, support carbon neutrality, and advance the Sustainable Development Goals through practical and symbolic actions that encourage environmental stewardship.



Dr. Ameera Al-Hassan praised the initiative, describing it as an innovative diplomatic gesture that carries important humanitarian and environmental messages. She noted that choosing trees instead of stone as the symbol of a foundation reflects a commitment to sustainability, climate action, and collective responsibility toward future generations.

The ceremony served not only as the beginning of a new diplomatic landmark but also as a powerful affirmation of the enduring partnership between Kuwait and Tajikistan. Like the trees planted on the day, the relationship between the two nations continues to grow stronger, deeper, and more resilient with time.



JACC Reopens Iconic Musical Fountain with Enhanced Performances



The Sheikh Jaber Al-Ahmad Cultural Centre (JACC) has officially reopened its renowned musical fountain, welcoming visitors once again to one of Kuwait's most popular public attractions following extensive maintenance and technical upgrades.

The reopening marks the return of a landmark feature that has long captivated audiences with its synchronized displays of water, light, and music, creating a unique visual and cultural experience for families, residents, and tourists alike.

According to JACC, the fountain has undergone comprehensive refurbishment works aimed at enhancing performance quality, improving operational efficiency, and ensuring a more immersive visitor experience. The upgraded system now delivers more dynamic water choreography, advanced lighting effects, and improved synchronization with musical performances.

The cultural centre noted that the musical fountain forms an integral part of its broader vision to combine arts, culture, entertainment, and public engagement within one vibrant destination. The attraction is expected

to further enrich the visitor experience at the centre, particularly during evenings and weekends.

Visitors gathered to witness the reopening performances, which featured a series of carefully choreographed displays designed to showcase the fountain's renewed capabilities. The spectacle highlighted the fusion of technology, creativity, and artistic expression that has made the fountain a signature attraction within the cultural complex.

Since its inauguration, the Sheikh Jaber Al-Ahmad Cultural Centre has established itself as one of Kuwait's premier cultural landmarks, hosting world-class performances, exhibitions, educational initiatives, and community events. The return of the musical fountain adds another dimension to the centre's offerings, reinforcing its role as a hub for cultural and recreational activities.

Officials encouraged the public to visit and enjoy the revitalized attraction, emphasizing that the reopening reflects ongoing efforts to maintain high standards across the centre's facilities while providing memorable experiences for visitors of all ages.

Visitors to Kuwait Spend KD 204.6 Million in 2026

Visitors to Kuwait spent approximately KD 204.6 million during the first four months of 2026, underscoring the country's growing appeal as a regional tourism and business destination while boosting economic activity across hospitality, retail, transport, and leisure sectors.



Kuwait recorded strong tourism-related spending during the first four months of 2026, with visitors spending approximately KD 204.6 million, reflecting continued growth in travel activity and the country's expanding appeal as a regional destination.

According to official data, visitor expenditures covered a range of sectors including hospitality, retail, transportation, entertainment, and tourism services, contributing positively to economic activity across the country.

The figures indicate increasing visitor confidence and growing demand for tourism, business travel, and leisure-related services in Kuwait. Officials noted that ongoing development projects, improved infrastructure, and expanded tourism initiatives continue to support the sector's performance.

Industry observers highlighted that visitor spending plays an important role in stimulating local businesses, supporting employment opportunities, and strengthening non-oil economic activity in line with Kuwait's broader diversification objectives.

The latest data also reflects the gradual recovery and expansion of the tourism and hospitality sectors, supported by a rise in regional travel, major events, exhibitions, and increased visitor movement through Kuwait's ports and airport.

Authorities expect tourism-related revenues to continue growing throughout the year as Kuwait advances efforts to enhance visitor experiences, attract investment in tourism infrastructure, and promote the country as a destination for business, culture, and leisure travel.

Turkish Embassy Celebrates Fifth Turkish Cuisine Week with a Taste of Heritage and Culture



The Times Kuwait Report

The Embassy of the Republic of Türkiye in Kuwait hosted a vibrant cultural and culinary celebration at the Crowne Plaza Hotel to mark the fifth edition of Turkish Cuisine Week, an annual initiative organized under the auspices of the First Lady of Türkiye, Emine Erdoğan.

The event brought together senior Kuwaiti officials, representatives of the National Council for Culture, Arts and Letters (NCCAL), members of the diplomatic corps, chefs, food industry representatives, social media influencers, business leaders, and members of civil society to experience the rich traditions and flavors of Turkish gastronomy. Opening the evening, Turkish Ambassador to Kuwait Tuba Nur Sönmez welcomed guests and expressed her delight at launching this year's celebrations, which carry the theme "The Heritage Table" (Bir Sofrada Miras). "The table is the oldest language of togetherness," Ambassador Sönmez said. "Food connects people across time, carrying memories, traditions, and values from one generation to the next."

She emphasized that in Turkish culture, food is far more than sustenance. The preparation and sharing of meals, she noted, represents a profound

Ambassador Tuba Nur Sönmez "The table is the oldest language of togetherness; food connects people across time."

cultural language through which traditions, hospitality, and social bonds are preserved and passed on. Turkish cuisine, she explained, is among the most eloquent expressions of this cultural heritage, reflecting centuries of accumulated knowledge, craftsmanship, and communal values.

The Ambassador also highlighted the significance of the event taking place on the eve of Eid Al-Adha, a period that celebrates family, generosity, and togetherness across cultures. She noted that the occasion offered an ideal opportunity to reflect on the common values shared by Türkiye and Kuwait.

Underscoring the close cultural ties between the two nations, Ambassador Sönmez said that hospitality and generosity occupy a central place in both Turkish and Kuwaiti societies. She described Turkish Cuisine Week as a bridge between cultures and an invitation for Kuwaiti friends to discover not only the flavors of Türkiye but also the stories, emotions, and traditions behind every dish.

"In both our countries, tables are prepared

with quiet generosity and hearts are kept open," she remarked. "What is shared among people never diminishes; rather, it grows in meaning through togetherness." Adding a colorful cultural dimension to the celebration, students from the Turkish School in Kuwait performed traditional folkloric dances that showcased Türkiye's rich



cultural heritage and delighted attendees with vibrant displays of music and movement.

Guests were then treated to an extensive array of authentic Turkish specialties presented through an elegant buffet and a series of live cooking stations. The interactive culinary experience allowed visitors to witness the artistry and craftsmanship behind some of Türkiye's most beloved traditional dishes.

Among the highlights were freshly prepared mantı, the famous Turkish dumplings served with yogurt and savory sauces, and çiğ köfte, skillfully hand-shaped and seasoned before guests. Traditional pastries, including Çarşaf Böreği and Paçanga Böreği, were prepared on-site using delicate hand-rolled layers of dough, demonstrating the meticulous techniques that have been preserved through generations.

Visitors also enjoyed authentic Turkish coffee and tea prepared according to traditional methods, offering a fitting conclusion to an evening dedicated to celebrating the enduring heritage, hospitality, and culinary excellence of Türkiye. The event once again demonstrated how cuisine can serve as a powerful tool of cultural diplomacy, bringing people together through shared experiences and strengthening the bonds of friendship between Türkiye and Kuwait.

Dhofar Khareef 2026 Poised to Attract More Than 40,000 Kuwaiti Visitors

Record tourist arrivals and major infrastructure upgrades set the stage for another successful season

The Sultanate of Oman is gearing up for an expanded and vibrant Dhofar Khareef 2026 season, with authorities expecting more than 40,000 visitors from Kuwait as the renowned annual tourism event continues to strengthen its appeal across the Gulf region.

The announcement was made during a press conference organized by the Embassy of Oman in Kuwait in collaboration with Oman's Ministry of Heritage and Tourism. The event highlighted the Sultanate's ambitious plans to enhance the visitor experience through new tourism projects, upgraded infrastructure, and an extensive calendar of cultural, heritage, and entertainment activities.

Speaking at the event, Oman's Ambassador to Kuwait, H.E. Dr. Saleh bin Amer Al Kharousi, underscored the growing tourism ties between the two countries, noting that Kuwaiti arrivals to Oman increased by 17.2 percent between 2024 and 2025. He attributed the growth to the strong fraternal relations between Kuwait and Oman, coupled with the increasing popularity of Oman as a preferred travel destination among Kuwaiti families. The ambassador emphasized that Dhofar has firmly established itself as one of the Gulf's premier summer destinations, offering a unique combination of mild temperatures, lush green landscapes, mist-covered mountains, seasonal waterfalls, and rich cultural experiences.

Running annually from June 21 until the end of September, the Khareef season transforms the Dhofar Governorate into a verdant oasis, attracting visitors from across the GCC and beyond. The region's distinctive climate and natural beauty continue to make it a favored



escape from the summer heat experienced elsewhere in the region. Officials from the Ministry of Heritage and Tourism revealed a comprehensive program of events for the 2026 season. Among the key attractions are the popular Atin Square entertainment zone, the immersive "Return to the Past" heritage experience, the Frankincense Market celebrating Dhofar's historic trading traditions, and the "Children's Time" Festival at Awqad Park. Additional activities and events are expected to be announced in the lead-up to the season.

Tourism authorities also showcased several major development projects aimed at enhancing visitor facilities and supporting sustainable tourism growth. These include upgrades to the Aftalqut Viewpoint in Salalah, the Deem Viewpoint in Dhalkut, and the second phase of the Shaat Viewpoint project in Rakhuyat. The developments feature new pedestrian walkways, rest areas, and integrated visitor amenities designed to improve accessibility and overall

visitor comfort. The conference highlighted the remarkable growth in visitor arrivals to Dhofar over recent years. Tourist numbers increased from 962,196 in 2023 to 1,047,751 in 2024, before reaching a record 1,070,738 visitors in 2025. Officials noted that GCC visitors accounted for nearly 30 percent of total arrivals, with Kuwaiti tourists among the fastest-growing segments.

The event also featured presentations by Kuwaiti writer Anwar Al Rasheed, author of the "Atlas of Tourist Destinations in Oman," and travel explorer Salem Al Ajmi, both of whom shared personal experiences highlighting Oman's hospitality, safety, cultural richness, and natural beauty.

Officials expressed confidence that ongoing investments, strategic marketing initiatives, and expanded tourism offerings will continue to drive growth, further reinforcing Dhofar's reputation as one of the Middle East's leading summer tourism destinations while deepening cultural and tourism ties between Oman and Kuwait.

Kuwait Ratifies Financial Cooperation Agreement with UAE

Kuwait has issued a decree ratifying a financial cooperation agreement with the United Arab Emirates, marking another step toward strengthening economic relations and expanding strategic cooperation between the two Gulf nations.

The decree formalizes the agreement within Kuwait's legal framework and reflects the shared commitment of both countries to enhancing financial collaboration, supporting sustainable development initiatives, and promoting greater economic integration across the Gulf region. The agreement is expected to provide a structured framework for cooperation in various financial and economic fields, facilitating the exchange of expertise, coordination of policies, and the implementation of joint initiatives aimed at advancing mutual interests.

Officials noted that the move aligns with the broader vision of both countries to deepen bilateral relations and reinforce partnerships that contribute to economic growth, investment opportunities, and financial stability. The ratification also highlights the strong and longstanding ties between Kuwait and the UAE, which continue to expand across multiple sectors, including trade, investment, infrastructure, energy, and development cooperation.

Observers view the agreement as part of ongoing efforts by Gulf states to enhance regional economic cooperation and strengthen collective capabilities in addressing emerging financial and developmental challenges.

Azerbaijan, Kuwait enjoy expanding partnership across diverse sectors



The Times Kuwait Report

The Ambassador of the Republic of Azerbaijan to Kuwait, H.E. Emil Karimov, has praised the strong and steadily growing relations between Azerbaijan and Kuwait, describing the partnership as one built on friendship, mutual respect, and a shared vision for broader cooperation across multiple sectors.

Speaking at a reception hosted by the Azerbaijani Embassy to commemorate the 108th anniversary of Azerbaijan's National Independence Day, Ambassador Karimov underscored the vast potential for enhancing bilateral collaboration in trade, investment, tourism, agriculture, education, and cultural exchange. The event was attended by Kuwait's Deputy Foreign Minister, Ambassador

Hamad Al-Mashaan, along with ambassadors, diplomats, and distinguished guests.

Reflecting on the historical foundations of the relationship, Ambassador Karimov noted that diplomatic ties between the two countries were established following the landmark meeting between Azerbaijan's late national leader, Heydar Aliyev, and Kuwait's late Amir, Sheikh Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, during the Organization of Islamic Cooperation Summit in Casablanca in 1994. He added that bilateral relations entered a new phase of development following the official visit of President Ilham Aliyev to Kuwait in 2009.

The ambassador highlighted the growing momentum generated by high-level exchanges between the two countries, including the participation of His Highness the Crown Prince,

Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah, in the COP29 Leaders' Summit held in Azerbaijan in 2024. He described the visit as a significant milestone that opened new avenues for cooperation and further strengthened diplomatic relations.)

Karimov also commended the efforts of Kuwait's Ministry of Foreign Affairs in supporting political consultations, joint committee meetings, business forums, and tourism promotion initiatives, all of which have contributed to expanding cooperation and strengthening people-to-people ties.

Tourism continues to serve as one of the strongest pillars of bilateral engagement, with the ambassador revealing that more than 32,000 Kuwaiti tourists visited Azerbaijan in 2025. He attributed the increase to Azerbaijan's growing appeal as a tourist destination, combined with

the convenience of direct flights operated by Kuwait Airways and Jazeera Airways, connecting the two countries in less than two hours.

Looking ahead, Ambassador Karimov called for greater efforts to expand trade exchanges, particularly in the food, agricultural, and light industrial sectors, emphasizing that both countries possess significant untapped opportunities for economic partnership and investment. Concluding his remarks, the ambassador reaffirmed Azerbaijan's commitment to deepening cooperation with Kuwait and building on the strong foundations established over the past three decades.

He expressed confidence that the friendship between the two nations will continue to grow, delivering mutual benefits and opening new horizons for future collaboration.

Al-Ojairi Scientific Center Highlights Spectacular June 2026 Celestial Events Over Kuwait

The Al-Ojairi Scientific Center has announced a series of remarkable astronomical events set to illuminate Kuwait's skies throughout June 2026, offering astronomy enthusiasts and skywatchers an opportunity to witness a variety of rare and captivating celestial phenomena.

According to the center, the month will feature several significant astronomical alignments, planetary observations, and moon-related events that can be viewed from Kuwait under suitable weather

Astronomers explained that June's night skies will showcase a combination of bright planets, seasonal constellations, and deep-sky objects, making it one of the more active months for astronomical observation this year. Observers are encouraged to use binoculars or telescopes for enhanced viewing, although some events will remain visible to the naked eye.

The Al-Ojairi Scientific Center emphasized the importance of following updated observation schedules and weather forecasts to ensure optimal viewing conditions. It also encouraged the public to engage with astronomy-related activities and educational programs that help promote scientific awareness and understanding of space phenomena.

The center continues to play a leading role in spreading astronomical knowledge in Kuwait through scientific outreach initiatives, educational programs,



conditions. The center noted that June will provide excellent opportunities for observing planets, star clusters, and other celestial objects visible across the night sky.

Among the highlights are conjunctions involving the Moon and several planets, creating striking visual displays that are expected to attract both amateur and professional observers. The center also indicated that certain planetary formations will be visible before sunrise and after sunset, offering favorable viewing opportunities throughout different periods of the month.

and regular updates on celestial events visible across the region.

Officials noted that such astronomical events not only offer stunning visual experiences but also provide valuable opportunities to increase public interest in science, space exploration, and the study of the universe. With clear desert skies and favorable seasonal conditions, June 2026 is expected to offer residents and visitors in Kuwait an exceptional chance to observe some of the month's most fascinating celestial spectacles.

Kuwait Launches Tough New Crackdown on Reckless Drivers with Jail, Vehicle Seizure, and Deportation

Kuwait has intensified its campaign against reckless driving and dangerous road behavior, introducing some of the toughest traffic penalties in recent years, including vehicle impoundment, imprisonment, substantial fines, and deportation for expatriate offenders.

The move comes as part of the implementation of the amended Traffic Law, which aims to improve road safety, reduce accidents, and curb behaviors that pose a serious threat to motorists, pedestrians, and public property.

Authorities have made it clear that reckless driving, illegal racing, excessive speeding, drifting, and deliberate traffic violations will be treated as criminal offenses rather than routine traffic infractions. Offenders found engaging in such activities could face immediate arrest, referral to the courts, and severe legal consequences.

Under the new measures, vehicles involved in dangerous driving incidents may be seized and impounded for extended periods. In serious cases, motorists may face imprisonment and substantial financial penalties, particularly if their actions result in injuries, fatalities, or damage to public infrastructure.

The Ministry of Interior has also confirmed that expatriates convicted of major traffic offenses could face deportation after serving any judicial penalties imposed by the courts. Officials stressed that deportation will be considered in cases involving repeated violations, dangerous conduct, or behavior deemed to threaten public safety.

Traffic authorities noted that the tougher penalties are intended to address a persistent problem of reckless driving that has contributed to numerous accidents across the country. The ministry said irresponsible driving not only endangers the lives of motorists and pedestrians but also places additional pressure on emergency services and public resources.

To support enforcement efforts, the General Traffic Department has increased patrol deployments across major roads, highways, and residential areas. Advanced surveillance systems, smart cameras, and electronic monitoring



technologies are also being used to identify violators and document offenses with greater accuracy. Officials emphasized that enforcement campaigns will continue around the clock, particularly during weekends, holidays, and periods traditionally associated with increased incidents of dangerous driving and illegal street racing.

The ministry has urged motorists to respect traffic regulations, avoid risky behavior, and cooperate with law enforcement authorities. It reiterated that the objective of the new measures is not merely punitive but preventive, aimed at fostering a culture of responsible driving and protecting lives on Kuwait's roads.

Road safety advocates have welcomed the tougher approach, noting that stronger enforcement and stricter penalties are essential to reducing accidents and improving public safety. They argue that the new regulations send a clear message that dangerous driving will no longer be tolerated and that those who put lives at risk will face serious consequences.

The latest crackdown forms part of Kuwait's broader efforts to modernize its traffic system, strengthen public safety measures, and create safer roads for citizens, residents, and visitors alike. Authorities expressed confidence that the combination of enhanced enforcement, legal deterrence, and public awareness campaigns will contribute to a significant reduction in traffic violations and road accidents in the years ahead.

Connecting the future: Leadership evolution in Kuwait's oil and gas sector



By Dr. Pujana Kole
Organizational Leadership Researcher
Oil and Gas Sector
Special to The Times Kuwait

In Kuwait and the broader Gulf region, where oil and gas continue to underpin national economies, sectoral leadership has historically been characterized by technical mastery.

For many years, the most esteemed leaders were those with a deep understanding of complex drilling systems, the ability to manage large-scale operations, and the capacity to make decisive decisions under operational pressure.

However, the definition of leadership within the sector is undergoing significant transformation.

Across Kuwait and the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC), oil and gas organizations increasingly recognize that technical expertise alone is insufficient for effective leadership in modern workplaces.

While engineering competence and operational knowledge remain essential, effective leadership now demands a broader set of capabilities. High-pressure environments are influenced not only by machinery and processes but also by interpersonal dynamics, communication, and team cohesion. In these contexts, leaders' behavior under stress is as critical as their technical expertise.

Recent research on organizational psychology in GCC workplaces underscores the growing importance of emotional intelligence in leadership roles. Competencies such as self-awareness, empathy, and emotional regulation are now closely associated with enhanced employee engagement and more stable team performance.

Among these, self-regulation is particularly vital in high-pressure operational settings, where calm and composed leadership sustains confidence during periods of disruption and uncertainty.

However, emotional intelligence alone does not provide a comprehensive solution. Its effectiveness depends on consistent integration into daily leadership practices, including feedback, delegation, recognition, and substantive support for employee

development. Without practical application, emotional intelligence may remain a theoretical construct rather than a catalyst for improved performance.

A persistent challenge within the sector is the transition from technical expert to effective leader. Professionals who excel in engineering or operations often struggle when promoted to managerial roles that require communication, conflict management, and team motivation. This results in a widening leadership gap that cannot be addressed solely through technical training. These findings may reflect leadership characteristics specific to high-pressure operational environments such as Kuwait's oil and gas sector.

Although contemporary leadership literature increasingly supports participative and employee-centered approaches, elements traditionally associated with autocratic leadership, such as decisiveness, rapid decision-making, and operational control, may still provide advantages in contexts where safety, time sensitivity, and procedural compliance are critical.

Elevated levels of self-regulation among respondents suggest that emotionally controlled leadership enables managers to maintain authority and stability under pressure without causing negative interpersonal outcomes. In this context, self-regulation functions as a balancing mechanism, allowing directive leadership behaviors to coexist with emotional awareness and workplace stability.

At the same time, workforce expectations are changing. Younger employees entering the oil and gas sector increasingly value transparency, supportive leadership, and opportunities for professional growth.

Traditional hierarchical models based primarily on authority are becoming less effective at sustaining long-term engagement.

For Kuwait's oil and gas industry, which is navigating digital transformation, workforce diversification, and regional competition, this shift has significant implications. Leadership development is transitioning from a traditional human resources function to a strategic organizational priority.

Organizations that focus solely on technical excellence risk neglecting a critical performance factor: human capital. Investing in leadership that integrates technical expertise with emotional intelligence and adaptability is more likely to produce resilient, motivated, and high-performing teams.

In conclusion, the future of leadership in the oil and gas sector will be defined not only by technical authority but also by the ability to guide teams through pressure, complexity, and change while sustaining performance, trust, and engagement.



El Salvador Ambassador Visits The Times Kuwait, Highlights Bilateral Relations

H.E. Juan Carlos Staben Boillat, Ambassador of the Republic of El Salvador to the State of Kuwait, paid a courtesy visit to The Times Kuwait offices, where he met with Editor-in-Chief Tareq Yusuf Alshumaimry and Executive Managing Editor Reaven D'Souza.

During the meeting, Ambassador Staben Boillat provided an overview of El Salvador's recent economic, social, and developmental achievements, highlighting the country's growing role in Central America and its efforts to attract investment, promote tourism, and strengthen international partnerships.

Discussions also focused on the friendly relations between El Salvador and Kuwait and opportunities to enhance cooperation in areas of mutual interest. The ambassador underscored the importance of fostering greater understanding and people-to-people exchanges between the two nations, while emphasizing the role of diplomacy and media in building stronger international connections.

For their part, Alshumaimry and D'Souza



welcomed the ambassador and expressed appreciation for the insights shared on El Salvador's progress and the potential for expanding bilateral engagement. They also reaffirmed The Times Kuwait's commitment to promoting dialogue, cultural understanding, and international cooperation through responsible journalism.

The meeting concluded with an exchange of views on regional and global developments and a shared commitment to strengthening ties between the peoples of El Salvador and Kuwait.

Embassy of Türkiye Participates in Recycling Initiative

The Embassy of the Republic of Türkiye in Kuwait participated in a recycling event organized on 1 June under the Healthy City Project, in cooperation with the Asimah Governorate and Dahiyat Abdullah Al Salem, reaffirming its commitment to environmental sustainability and community engagement.

The initiative focused on the collection and recycling of used household oil, glass bottles, cardboard, paper, plastic waste, used clothing, and electronic waste. Embassy personnel joined Kuwaiti volunteers in supporting the campaign, which aimed to raise environmental awareness and encourage sustainable living practices among residents. Participants demonstrated strong community spirit by delivering recyclable materials to designated collection points, highlighting growing public awareness of environmental responsibility and the importance of waste reduction.

Speaking during the event, Tuba Nur Sönmez briefed participants on Türkiye's Zero Waste Project, launched under the patronage of First Lady Emine Erdoğan. She outlined Türkiye's broader environmental policies and emphasized that the embassy has adopted practices aligned with the initiative, reflecting its institutional commitment to sustainability and responsible waste management.

The embassy's environmental efforts have also received recognition, having been awarded a certificate of achievement for collecting 1.1 tonnes of recyclable paper in 2025. The distinction underscores the mission's ongoing dedication to promoting environmental awareness both within the diplomatic community and the wider society. The participation of the Embassy of Türkiye in the recycling campaign reflects the growing importance of international cooperation in



advancing environmental sustainability and fostering a culture of responsible consumption and waste management in Kuwait.

IWG President Marika Visits The Times Kuwait to Express Appreciation for Media Support



Mrs. Marika Kochlamazashvili, President of the International Women's Group (IWG) in Kuwait, paid a courtesy visit to The Times Kuwait offices to express her gratitude for the publication's continued support of the organization's activities and its efforts in highlighting initiatives that promote cultural understanding, humanitarian values, and women's leadership in Kuwait.

During her visit, Marika met with Tareq Yusuf Alshumaimry, Editor-in-Chief of The Times Kuwait, and Reaven D'Souza, Executive Managing Editor. She thanked the newspaper for its professional coverage of the International Women's Group and for providing a platform that showcases the contributions of women from diverse backgrounds who are actively engaged in community service and cultural exchange.

The meeting reflected on the longstanding relationship between The Times Kuwait and the International Women's Group, whose members represent numerous nationalities and work collectively to strengthen bonds of friendship and understanding

among Kuwait's multicultural community.

She commended The Times Kuwait for its commitment to covering diplomatic, cultural, and humanitarian initiatives that contribute to strengthening relations between communities and nations, while showcasing Kuwait's role as a center for coexistence and cross-cultural engagement.

For his part, Mr. Alshumaimry welcomed the visit and reaffirmed The Times Kuwait's dedication to supporting organizations and individuals whose work advances social development, cultural diplomacy, and community service. He praised the International Women's Group for its activities and its ongoing efforts to foster friendship and cooperation among women from different cultures and backgrounds.

The meeting concluded with both sides expressing their desire to continue working together to promote initiatives that encourage dialogue, mutual respect, and stronger people-to-people connections, further enriching Kuwait's vibrant multicultural society.



Jazeera Airways launches 'Buy Now, Fly Now' campaign with up to 20% off across all destinations

Jazeera Airways announced the launch of its "Buy Now, Fly Now" campaign, offering customers up to 20% off on fares across all destinations in its network. This special campaign provides travelers with an excellent opportunity to plan their summer holidays and upcoming trips at exceptional value.

The limited-time promotion is available for booking from 2 June to 6 June 2026, with travel valid from 2 June until 30 June 2026.

Passengers can enjoy convenient direct connectivity from Jazeera Terminal 5 (T5) at Kuwait International Airport to a wide range of leisure, family, and business destinations across the Middle East, Europe, Central and South Asia, and beyond, including Jazeera Airways' newest destinations of Bergamo (Milan), London Luton, and Budapest.

Paul Carroll, Chief Commercial Officer, Jazeera Airways, said, "At Jazeera Airways, we are committed to providing our customers with affordable and convenient travel options throughout the year.

"Our 'Buy Now, Fly Now' campaign gives travelers the opportunity to enjoy significant savings this summer while exploring our growing network of destinations during the busy summer travel season. We encourage customers to book early and take advantage of this limited-time offer," he said.

Customers are encouraged to book through Jazeera Airways' official website, mobile application, or by calling 177 to secure the best fares during the promotional period.

Embassy of India to Host Three-Day Yoga Festival to Mark International Day of Yoga



The Embassy of India in Kuwait has announced a three-day Yoga Festival from 19 to 21 June 2026 to commemorate the 12th International Day of Yoga (IDY-2026), with the main celebration scheduled for 20 June at the Boulevard Cricket Stadium in Salmiya.

The Yoga Festival aims to promote the practice of yoga and its benefits for physical, mental and emotional well-being, while encouraging broader community participation in wellness-focused activities.

The IDY-2026 celebrations in Kuwait were officially launched on 29 May with a women-led wellness session held at the lawns of India House. The event was inaugurated by the Ambassador of India to Kuwait, H.E. Mrs. Paramita Tripathi, and H.E. Sheikha Shaikha Al Sabah, Padma Shri awardee, Founder of Dar Atma and President

of the Kuwait Yoga Committee. The launch event was attended by members of the diplomatic corps, wellness practitioners and guests from across Kuwait.

As part of the lead-up to International Day of Yoga, the Embassy has organized a series of curtain-raiser events across the country to increase awareness about yoga and encourage participation from diverse segments of society. These activities are designed to highlight yoga's universal appeal and its role in promoting a healthy and balanced lifestyle.

On 30 May, the Embassy, in collaboration with the Indian Dentists' Alliance in Kuwait (IDAK) and the Kerala Ayurvedic Health Institute, conducted a yoga workshop at the Embassy premises. Additional yoga sessions have also been held at several Indian schools

throughout Kuwait, while numerous community organizations, yoga institutes and Kuwaiti partners are expected to host related activities in the coming weeks.

The International Day of Yoga originated from a proposal made by Indian Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi during his address to the United Nations General Assembly in September 2014. The proposal received overwhelming international support, with 177 countries co-sponsoring the resolution that designated 21 June as the International Day of Yoga. Since its first observance in 2015, the annual event has grown into a global movement promoting wellness, harmony and sustainable living.

This year's theme, "Yoga for Healthy Ageing," underscores the importance of yoga in supporting physical fitness, mental wellness and emotional resilience throughout life. The theme highlights the growing need for healthy lifestyles amid evolving global health challenges and ageing populations, while emphasizing yoga's role as an accessible and holistic approach to preventive healthcare.

In addition to the annual celebrations, the Embassy of India continues to promote wellness through regular yoga workshops conducted every Friday and Saturday, encouraging community members to incorporate yoga into their daily routines.

The Embassy has invited residents of Kuwait to actively participate in the forthcoming International Day of Yoga activities and join the global movement promoting holistic health, well-being and a balanced way of life.

Further details regarding registration, venue arrangements and event timings will be announced through the Embassy's official communication channels and social media platforms.





EXCLUSIVE TO THE TIMES KUWAIT

The Real Choice Confronting Developing Countries



By Ravi Venkatesan
Chairman of the Global Energy Alliance for People and Planet, serves on the boards of Hitachi and ServiceNow.

In a recent commentary, Dani Rodrik, one of the world's leading experts on the economics of trade and development, explains why he became a "manufacturing skeptic" after decades of seeing industrial production as the key to unlocking economic growth. Since traditional manufacturing cannot absorb the 1.5 billion workers "in occupations that neither require university education nor are exposed to the international economy through trade or offshoring," services-led growth models must take center stage. Expand the opportunities in retail, hospitality, and food service, and middle-class consumption will drive productivity gains.

But largely missing from this analysis is the potential for AI-augmented gains in human productivity. Look around the world and you will find AI already quietly increasing productivity in labor-absorbing services in ways that neither require nor assume university education. This trend is especially apparent in India, which offers a path toward reconciling "manufacturing skepticism" with African and South/Southeast Asian policymakers' persistent desire to industrialize.

India's services-driven growth reflects more than an expansion of its retail and hospitality sectors. Algorithmic tools have fundamentally reshaped operations through inventory optimization, dynamic pricing, demand forecasting, and supply-chain coordination. As a result, a formal retail operation in Bangalore or Mumbai today is fundamentally different from a 1990s shop, not because the employees are more educated, but because algorithms have made them more productive.

The same dynamic can be found even at the level of street vendors and other micro-enterprises. With platforms like Flipkart B2B and JioMart offering informal merchants AI-powered demand forecasting and procurement optimization tools, a small vegetable vendor

with only a mobile device can anticipate what customers will want, stock accordingly, and capture margins that were unavailable just five years ago.

Consider a parallel to another moment in industrial history. In the 1960s, a textile worker in South Korea produced probably 50 times more cloth than his Indian counterpart, not because he was any more capable, but because the loom was better. Now, AI does the same for street vendors, retail workers, and smallholder farmers. The big difference is that such tools can be made far more accessible. They are much easier to deploy than factories, and they work with existing informal structures, rather than requiring a wholesale industrial reorganization.

One implication of this difference is that it may not matter that 1.5 billion workers will remain in non-traded, low-skill occupations. Even if broad occupational patterns persist, productivity can grow. We already know that a smallholder farmer equipped with a digital

use predatory fees to extract the surplus value generated by inventory optimization, the street vendor's hard-won margins will simply shift to corporate balance sheets. Checking all these boxes may not be easy, but it is feasible.

Similar findings apply to manufacturing. Although competing for a spot in modern global manufacturing value chains requires sophisticated skills, AI is fundamentally altering the equation. A garment factory no longer needs 500 multi-skilled workers; it needs 50 workers augmented by computer-vision quality control, demand-driven production planning, and logistics-optimization systems. One can already find such operations in Bangladesh and Vietnam.

To be sure, skeptics will point to the immediate displacement of the remaining 450 workers. But one must not overlook the broader economic transformation that will have been set in motion. As hyper-productive factories expand their output and lower unit costs, they catalyze a vast ecosystem of non-factory jobs—from upstream

factories expanded, but without the right tools and platform technologies, workers remained trapped doing low-margin assembly.

The same technologies can lower the human-capital requirements in many other sectors. While it is true that India owes much of its success in services-led growth to its large English-speaking population and early IT infrastructure investments, similar models can be replicated elsewhere. Thanks to advances in AI translation, you do not need English-speaking engineers to deploy digital agriculture tools where people speak Amharic, Swahili, or Telugu.

Thus, whether services-led growth is more feasible than industrialization in poor countries is beside the point. Feasibility depends only on the availability of productivity-enhancing mechanisms. In the 20th century, that meant access to industrial machinery. But today, it means access to AI tools that operate in local languages, work offline, and cost pennies per transaction.

Widespread use of such tools will not happen automatically, of course. Most AI investment today is concentrated in high-skill, high-wage economies. But this reflects policy choices, not some economic law. The question for policymakers is whether they will treat localized, affordable AI for informal workers as infrastructure—like rural electrification or highway systems—or as a luxury good for the wealthy.

If developing countries invest in making AI and related digital tools as widely available as possible, manufacturing- and services-led growth can coexist. A farmer using AI to improve yields can achieve a middle-class income without leaving agriculture, and a street vendor can do the same without joining a large, organized firm.

Manufacturing need not be the growth engine; it simply needs to coexist with AI-augmented formal and informal services. This vision may be less romantic than the East Asian industrialization narrative, but it has the advantage of being achievable right now. The main challenge is to implement a deliberate, inclusive AI-enabling strategy of infrastructure investment. The best way to lift up those 1.5 billion people is to meet them where they are.

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“Lost in the debate about whether developing countries should pursue manufacturing- or services-led growth is the potential for new AI tools to make even informal workers far more productive. If governments can broaden access to such technologies, they no longer need to choose between strategies.”

agronomic adviser in East Africa or South Asia can realize average productivity gains of 30% without additional land or formal education. A vegetable vendor using simple AI tools for inventory and price optimization can double her earnings in 18 months.

The main constraint on productivity growth is not technological but institutional. Getting new tools into workers' hands requires localization in native languages, accessibility without advanced digital literacy, business models that can be sustained with micro-margins, and integration with informal financial systems.

Crucially, policymakers must also ensure that these systems are built on inclusive open-access architecture. If dominant e-commerce platforms

supply-chain coordination to downstream distribution—that can re-absorb labor at scale.

The productivity paradox that Rodrik identifies—the fact that expanded manufacturing employment no longer goes hand in hand with productivity growth—is real but not insoluble. When small-scale, informal manufacturers gain access to AI-enabled quality control, supply-chain coordination, and just-in-time planning, they can reach productivity levels formerly available only to large integrated factories.

Mexico's weak economic performance under NAFTA supports this argument. The problem is not that Mexican manufacturers could not compete, but that technological diffusion failed to reach small-scale and informal operations.



Thought[“] for the week

It always seems
impossible until its done.

- Nelson Mandela

Why Gut Health Deserves More Attention



.....
It's winter time and Christmas time!
.....

Gut health is one of the most important parts of overall wellness, yet many people only focus on digestion when they experience bloating or stomach discomfort. As a dietitian, I always explain that the gut affects much more than digestion. It also influences immunity, energy, mood, skin health, and even cravings.

One of the best ways to support gut health is eating a variety of foods from different food groups. Diversity in nutrition helps feed the beneficial bacteria in the gut microbiome.



Fiber-rich foods are essential because they act as fuel for healthy gut bacteria. Vegetables, fruits, oats, lentils, beans, chia seeds, flaxseeds, and whole grains all support digestion and bowel regularity. Colorful vegetables are especially important because each color provides different antioxidants and nutrients.

Don't forget that we need prebiotics and probiotics. Protein also matters for gut health. Eggs, fish, chicken, yogurt, and legumes help support tissue repair and

overall body function. Bone broth has also become popular for a reason. It contains collagen, gelatin, and amino acids that may help support the gut lining and digestion, especially during recovery or periods of stress.

Healthy fats are another important part of digestive wellness. Olive oil, avocado, nuts, tahini, and fatty fish provide anti-inflammatory benefits and help the body absorb vitamins properly.

Drinks can either support or irritate the gut. Water remains the most important choice, while herbal teas like ginger, mint, chamomile, and fennel may help reduce bloating and improve digestion. Fermented drinks such as kefir can also provide natural probiotics that support beneficial bacteria.

Stress management is equally important because the gut and brain are closely connected. Chronic stress may affect digestion, appetite, and gut balance. Simple habits like eating slowly, sleeping well, walking daily, and reducing screen time during meals can make a noticeable difference.

A healthy gut often leads to better energy, stronger immunity, and overall better well-being.

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

RECIPE

Christmas Almond Truffles infused with Gulkand



The year-end holiday season is a time when we tend to forget diets, counting calories, or worrying about increasing weight and waistlines. Christmas and the holiday festivities bring along a rich array of decadent delicacies that are simply irresistible. Christmas truffles with their rich, smooth, creamy texture is one such enticing dessert that few people can say no to. And, preparing this drool-worthy treat is relatively easy and a quick way to wow guests after dinner. The best part is that you can make them a month prior to the holidays and freeze them ready for serving as a Christmas dessert, or for gifting to friends and relatives.

Total time: 45 minutes, plus up to 2 hours for chilling
Serving: 30 truffles

Ingredients:

- 300g white chocolate chips
- ½ cup heavy cream/Heavy Cream
- 1 tbsp candied rose petals (gulkand)
- 1 tsp saffron strands
- 15-20 almond (blanched and peeled)
- Finely Chopped Almonds

Instructions:

- Roughly chop the chocolate and place in a glass mixing bowl
- Heat the cream in a nonstick pan, stir well and bring to boil
- Transfer the hot cream into the bowl of chocolate chips
- Set aside for 3-5 minutes, before slowly stirring together the chocolate and cream until all of the chocolate is melted
- Add candied rose petals and mix well
- Cover the top of the bowl with cling film and refrigerate for about 1 to 2 hours
- Heat crushed saffron along with a little water in a microwave for 30 seconds.
- Add the saffron infused liquid to chopped almonds and mix well
- Transfer almonds to a plate
- Gently scoop-out a ball of chilled chocolate
- Shape them into a smooth ball and roll them over the chopped almonds
- Continue coating the rest of choco-balls with the almonds
- Serve your yummy Christmas truffle creation with pride.



Chef Chhaya Thakker



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

Less Sugar, Same Sweetness?

The Growing Demand for Healthier Desserts



By Hermoine Macura-Noble
Special to The Times Kuwait

When most of us sit down at a restaurant and order our dessert, we are not thinking about insulin levels. We are thinking about chocolate. Possibly lots of it. And yet, somewhere between the green juice revolution and the collagen supplement craze something shifted in the dessert world too. Suddenly, dessert menus across the Gulf started looking suspiciously restrained. Fermented this. Roasted that. A suspicious absence of the word “caramel” in places where caramel used to live rent-free.

Welcome to the age of intelligent indulgence - where your dessert is engineered to make you feel good about eating it, even if you're not entirely sure why.



Carmen Rueda Hernandez
Brix café Chef

At the forefront of this quiet revolution - is BRIX Cafe, where the philosophy reads less like a menu and more like a manifesto. The team there will tell you, with complete sincerity, that sugar is not the enemy - excess is. “Sugar should support flavor, texture, and emotion but not dominate the experience,” explains Brix café Chef, Carmen Rueda Hernandez.

What's particularly interesting about the BRIX approach is that they are not removing sugar so much as outsmarting it. Instead of reaching for the sugar jar, their kitchen reaches for fermentation, spices, herbs, bitterness, smoke, salinity, and citrus. “Many of our desserts are designed almost like savory dishes in their structure,” says Hernandez. “We play with bitterness, salinity, umami, smoke, citrus, or floral notes to create complexity and emotion. When a dessert has multiple dimensions, you simply do not need as much sugar for it to feel complete.” The result is something guests consistently describe as “cleaner” and “lighter” - and, crucially, they finish their desserts without immediately needing a lie-down. “They often leave saying they feel satisfied without feeling heavy afterwards,” Hernandez notes, “which for us is very important.”

The signature dish, African Power House, has become something of a cult item. “It contains all the elements we constantly search



for in a plated dessert: contrast, texture, temperature, depth, freshness, and harmony,” Says Hernandez. Built around a deep, intense chocolate profile, it somehow manages to feel elegant rather than overwhelming. The Basque cheesecake, meanwhile, continues to earn its place on the menu through sheer honesty of flavor. “I believe the desserts that resonate the most are always the ones that feel honest - where flavor, technique, and emotion exist in harmony rather than excess,” shares Hernandez. There are no tricks. It simply tastes like what it is, which in an era of maximum embellishment is almost radical.

This movement toward balance over excess is not unique to fine dining. Froyo has been doing the lighter dessert thing since 2010. Their signature product is a fresh, non-fat, with no

added sugar or preservatives frozen yoghurt. It continues to attract a loyal following across seven branches in Kuwait. Froyo's approach is less about fine-dining philosophy and more about straightforward pleasure: fresh ingredients, honest flavors, desserts made daily from scratch in their own kitchen. Pâte à choux, Frobités, mini crepes, and waffles round out a menu that proves you don't need a gram of unnecessary sugar to keep people coming back.

What both BRIX Café and Froyo understand - and what the wider dessert industry is slowly catching up to - is that today's diner in the Gulf is not asking to be punished. They are not ordering a salad when they want a chocolate dessert. They are simply asking that the chocolate dessert not make them feel like

they've done something wrong. “Guests come to BRIX for pleasure, emotion, and discovery,” the team says plainly. “The experience must still feel luxurious and satisfying.” That's the shift - not deprivation, but a growing sophistication about what pleasure actually means.

The coffee pairing conversation has evolved accordingly. Where once a strong espresso was plonked next to whatever came out of the kitchen, there is now a genuine conversation happening between the cup and the plate. “Guests now appreciate lighter roasts, floral notes, citrus profiles, and more delicate coffee experiences that complement desserts rather than overpower them,” Hernandez observes. Non-alcoholic pairings - infusions, teas, fermented drinks, spiced concoctions - are treated almost as part of the dish itself.

Is this a trend? A phase? Almost certainly not. “I believe it is absolutely a long-term evolution and not just a temporary trend,” Hernandez says with conviction. “The future of pastry in the region will be about intelligent indulgence - desserts that are emotionally satisfying, technically refined, visually beautiful, but also lighter, cleaner, and more ingredient-focused.” The region's dining culture is developing fast, and guests are not going back.



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

Central Banking in an Age of Global Supply Shocks

 EXCLUSIVE to
 THE TIMES KUWAIT

By Şebnem Kalemli-Özcan

Professor of Economics at Brown University and Director of the Global Linkages Lab, is a former senior policy adviser at the International Monetary Fund and former lead economist for the Middle East and North Africa at the World Bank.

As G7 finance ministers were meeting in Paris this month, the bond market was telling us what their official communiqués would not. The 30-year US Treasury yield touched 5.2% on May 19—the highest rate since 2007—while Germany's 10-year Bund hit a 15-year high and the 30-year Japanese government bond set a fresh record of its own.

These movements came after the US Federal Reserve decided, in April, to hold rates at 3.5–3.75%, with the Federal Open Market Committee more divided than it has been in three decades. Across the Atlantic, markets put the odds of a European Central Bank rate hike by December at 85%. After five years of being told that inflation was transitory, then conquered, then transitory again, investors have concluded otherwise.

Monetary policy is operating in a new environment, under conditions that are fundamentally different from those in which modern inflation targeting was designed. The orthodox framework was built for a world in which most macroeconomic shocks affected demand, aggregate or sectoral supply disruptions were small enough to “look through,” and central banks could rely on a stable Phillips curve linking aggregate labor-market slack to weaker inflation. Unfortunately, none of those assumptions are fit for a geopolitically fragmented world

characterized by frequent supply shocks.

Consider the COVID-19 experience. In a June 2022 presentation for the ECB Forum on Central Banking, my co-authors and I examined inflation in terms of aggregate demand, sectoral demand, and sectoral supply shocks. The result that surprised most readers—though it should not have—was that over two-thirds of eurozone inflation between late 2019 and late 2021 originated outside the eurozone, having been transmitted through global production networks.

Supply-side disruptions in foreign sectors, propagated by input-output linkages and amplified by the consumption shift from services to goods, accounted for the bulk of the price pressure. Domestic aggregate demand mattered, but not nearly as much as the policy debate assumed. The interaction between aggregate demand and sectoral supply shocks was more relevant.

In a scenario where supply is constrained, the global production network is granular (meaning it comprises many firms of different sizes spread across many sectors and locations), and demand is elevated via fiscal or monetary stimulus or booming stock markets, more inflation is produced than in a non-supply-constrained economy. Policies to manage aggregate demand cannot eliminate distortions in global networks, because monetary policy is a national instrument. As the inflation-output trade-off worsens, achieving disinflation becomes more expensive.

During the 2022–24 disinflation episode, the Fed hiked the benchmark federal funds rate 525 basis points in 16 months, going faster and further than any G7 peer, and US inflation duly fell from a peak of 9.1% in June 2022 to roughly 3% by mid-2023. Because the ECB was slower to start tightening and constrained by a weaker recovery and an energy shock (linked to the Russian invasion of Ukraine) it could not



control, eurozone disinflation took longer. And in the United Kingdom, which faced the greatest energy-pass-through pressure, the process took longer still.

Conventional narratives credit these differences in the speed of disinflation to differences in the underlying inflation mix. But that is not the whole story. The more important factor was central-bank credibility. Long-run inflation expectations in the US barely moved off 2% because the Fed convinced markets that it would do whatever was necessary.

Credibility, in other words, did most of the heavy lifting. The actual rate hikes mattered less than the market's belief that more would come if needed. There is only one mechanism whereby monetary policy can stabilize supply-side inflation cheaply: by ensuring that no one will bother to price in a wage-price spiral, because everyone knows that the central bank would never tolerate one.

That is why the current configuration is so much more difficult than the last one. In 2022, central banks faced two supply shocks—the

pandemic and Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine. In 2026, they face a sequence that came on top of these previous shocks: tariffs followed by the Iran war. The US government's attacks on central-bank independence thus could not have come at a worse time. Some 62% of fund managers now expect the 30-year Treasury yield to reach 6%, not because they are forecasting Fed incompetence, but because they can see the constraints the Fed is operating under.

We have seen this movie before in emerging markets. In Turkey, sustained political interference in monetary policy pushed inflation from under 20% in 2021 to above 80% in 2022, unleashing a cycle that could be reversed only with extreme measures and significant pain. And Argentina, of course, has been pressing repeat for decades.

The mechanics are always the same. The central bank loses the freedom to react ahead of inflation expectations; it remains behind the curve, and the cost of disinflation rises by an order of magnitude. The point of ensuring that you have a credible central bank is precisely that you do not have to find out how much credibility you have when it really counts.

Bond markets are telling us three things. First, inflation is no longer a discrete problem to be solved at the national level; it is global in nature, reflecting frequent supply shocks in an economically fragmented world. Second, fiscal stimulus in the face of today's supply shocks is the worst possible response, and one that monetary policy alone cannot offset. And third, central-bank independence is less costly to defend when it is not yet under threat, and more expensive to rebuild after it has been lost.

Markets have seen the writing on the walls. Governments must open their eyes, too.

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