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Telling Kuwait's Story Through the Lives of Its People

Why community journalism matters in a diverse and changing Kuwait

The Times Kuwait Report

In Kuwait, almost every government decision, regulatory change or public-service announcement has a human story behind it. A change in residency procedures can affect a family; a new education regulation can reshape decisions for parents and students; a labour policy can influence workers and employers; and a change in commercial rules can alter the prospects of businesses and entrepreneurs. This is where community journalism finds its purpose not simply reporting what happened, but helping people understand what it means for their lives.

In a country as diverse and rapidly changing as Kuwait, journalism has an important responsibility beyond delivering announcements. It must connect information with the people affected by it.

Kuwaiti citizens and expatriates may have different experiences and concerns, but they share the same roads, schools, hospitals, workplaces, businesses and public services.



Every day, ministries, government agencies, schools, hospitals and businesses issue decisions and announcements that can have consequences far beyond the official statement. For readers, the questions are often straightforward: What has changed? Who is

affected? And what does it mean for me?

Answering those questions is at the heart of meaningful community journalism.

More than reporting the announcement

Simply reproducing an official statement is rarely enough. A useful community story takes the information contained in an announcement and places it in a practical context.

When education rules change, parents want to know what is different, who is covered and when the new provisions take effect. When healthcare procedures are modified, patients need clear and reliable information. When labour or residency regulations are amended, workers and employers need to understand how the changes may affect them. The journalist's role is therefore not merely to relay information, but to explain it accurately and responsibly.

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UK stands with Kuwait as regional threats reshape security partnership

Ambassador Qudsi Rasheed says Britain's support is becoming more practical, with cooperation expanding across defence, trade, education and technology

The Times Kuwait Report

Britain's relationship with Kuwait has taken on a new urgency amid the changing regional security environment, with the UK stepping up practical cooperation with Kuwait on missile and drone threats while continuing to deepen ties in education, trade, healthcare and technology.

British Ambassador to Kuwait H.E. Qudsi Rasheed said Britain's commitment to Kuwait had become one of the defining priorities of his first year in the country, following the outbreak of the regional conflict and attacks that affected Kuwait. Rasheed, who arrived in Kuwait on October 1 last year, said he had not expected the country to come under attack.

The experience, he added, brought back memories of Kuwait's 1990 invasion and changed the priorities of his mission. His focus shifted towards demonstrating Britain's political, diplomatic and military support for Kuwait, including through visits by British ministers and senior military officials and the deployment of British personnel and equipment. "Today, we're here as an ally and partner of Kuwait that will stand with Kuwait to help Kuwait and its military protect itself," Rasheed said.

He described the deployment of a British counter-drone system and its first successful interception of a drone as one of the most significant moments of his first year as ambassador. The UK is now discussing with Kuwait how their joint defence capabilities can be strengthened over the next three to five years. Rasheed said British companies are in discussions with the Kuwaiti military over modern defence and counter-drone technologies. Britain has also deployed a counter-drone capability in Kuwait combining radar, cameras, detection equipment and interception technology.

The ambassador explained that the system is part of a wider network rather than a single nationwide shield, with different systems operated by Kuwait, the United States, Britain and Jordan covering different areas of Kuwaiti airspace. He said cooperation also extends to satellite imagery, although radar remains particularly important for detecting incoming missiles and drones.

Rasheed noted that ballistic missiles and drones present different challenges. While missiles can be detected and tracked by radar, the time between launch and impact can be measured in minutes. Drones, meanwhile, can be deployed in large numbers and are often more difficult to detect and intercept.

Beyond airspace security, Britain is also closely watching developments around the Strait of Hormuz, a vital waterway for regional trade and energy flows. Rasheed said Britain continues to call for freedom of navigation and has urged Iran to reopen the waterway. At the same time, he stressed that the wider regional crisis cannot be resolved through military action alone.

"There has to be a diplomatic solution," he said, calling on all sides to return to negotiations. The ambassador acknowledged that disruption to shipping through the Strait was creating economic difficulties for both Kuwait and the UK, underlining the importance of keeping international waterways open.

From agreements to business opportunities

The security relationship is only one part of a broader UK-Kuwait partnership. Rasheed said the eventual conclusion and implementation of a UK-GCC free trade agreement could further strengthen economic relations between Britain, Kuwait and the wider Gulf by reducing trade barriers, removing tariffs and facilitating the movement of goods and services.

He identified financial services, education, healthcare, advanced manufacturing, technology and



Beyond airspace security, Britain is also closely watching developments around the Strait of Hormuz, a vital waterway for regional trade and energy flows.

data as areas with significant potential for increased trade and investment. Importantly, he urged British and Kuwaiti businesses not to wait for the agreement to come into force before exploring opportunities. Instead, companies should already be identifying areas where the two markets can work together.

Education connects the two countries

Education remains another major bridge between Kuwait and Britain. Rasheed estimated that between 12,000 and 14,000 Kuwaiti students are currently studying in the UK, although he stressed that the figure was approximate. Britain, he said, remains a major destination for Kuwaiti students, while there is scope to expand university partnerships and scholarship opportunities.

Engineering, data, artificial intelligence and

technology could receive greater attention as Kuwait seeks to align education and scholarship programmes with its future economic requirements. He also pointed to existing partnerships, including cooperation involving King's College London and a Kuwaiti institution on medical training. Many of these relationships, he noted, develop directly between educational institutions rather than being driven solely by governments.

'Not new agreements, but implementation'

For Rasheed, however, the immediate priority in the UK-Kuwait relationship is not producing more agreements, but making existing cooperation deliver results. "My priority, to be honest, is not new agreements. It's to implement what we're doing already, to continue it and to deepen it," he said.

He identified education, healthcare, security, cybersecurity and investment as areas where existing cooperation could be strengthened, adding that new agreements should be pursued where they provide genuine added value. That approach reflects the changing nature of the UK-Kuwait relationship one increasingly defined not simply by diplomatic commitments, but by what the two countries can deliver together on the ground.

From protecting Kuwait against emerging drone and missile threats to supporting Kuwaiti students in British universities, opening new avenues for trade and investment and working together on regional diplomacy, Rasheed's message was that the partnership is entering a more practical phase. For Kuwait, a country once again confronting an uncertain regional security environment, the significance of that partnership is perhaps best captured in the ambassador's own description: Britain is here not simply as a friend, but as an ally and partner prepared to stand with Kuwait.

Britain changes its approach to Israel and Palestine

Against the backdrop of the wider regional crisis, Rasheed also outlined a significant change in Britain's approach to Israel and the Palestinian issue. He said the UK government had changed its policy, tone and actions, particularly in response to the threat that Israeli settlement expansion poses to the viability of a two-state solution.

Rasheed said Britain's position had moved beyond its previous focus on the illegality of Israeli settlements to also recognise the Israeli occupation of the West Bank as unlawful under international law. He said Britain was publicly criticising what Foreign Secretary Ed Miliband has described as ethnic cleansing and settler violence in the West Bank, while supporting independent investigations into allegations of war crimes in Gaza.

Britain has also expanded sanctions and other restrictions relating to Israeli settlements, including restrictions on trade involving illegal settlements and measures aimed at preventing British companies from providing services supporting settlement activity.

Rasheed cited advertising property in Israeli settlements as an example of activity that could be affected, while stressing that Britain continues to support trade with Israel within its internationally recognised borders. He also said restrictions on British arms exports had been extended to cover equipment that could contribute to furthering the occupation in the West Bank.

At the same time, Rasheed stressed that the policy change should not be interpreted as opposition to Israel or the Israeli people. Britain continues to recognise Israel and support its right to self-defence, while maintaining that the October 7, 2023 attacks were unacceptable and that Hamas could have no future in Gaza. The UK continues to support a negotiated two-state solution as the route to lasting peace and security for both Israelis and Palestinians.

Can a Lender Become a Beneficial Owner?

Kuwait's New Guidance Looks Beyond Shareholding



By Legal Counsel Suha Alsahli
Emtithal Law Firm
Special to The Times Kuwait

Kuwait's new guidance on beneficial ownership is placing greater emphasis on a question that companies may easily overlook: who actually controls the business?

Beneficial ownership is commonly associated with shareholding. A person owns a significant percentage of a company and is therefore identified as its beneficial owner. Kuwait's August 2026 guidance makes clear that the analysis can extend considerably further.

Under Kuwait's AML/CFT framework, a beneficial owner must ultimately be a natural person. The first test looks at individuals who own or control 25 percent or more of a company's capital or voting rights. Where no such person can be identified, or where there is doubt that the person identified through ownership is the true beneficial owner, the analysis moves to individuals exercising control "through other means."

This distinction can have important consequences for companies whose ownership appears straightforward on paper.

A shareholder may hold less than 25 percent of a company and still exercise sufficient control to qualify as a beneficial owner. Equally, someone with no shares at all may potentially fall within the definition if that person exercises ultimate control over the company's decision-making. Kuwait's guidance defines control in this context as the ability to make relevant decisions within



A person owns a significant percentage of a company and is therefore identified as its beneficial owner. Kuwait's August 2026 guidance makes clear that the analysis can extend considerably further.

a legal person or legal arrangement and to impose those decisions. The focus therefore shifts from the percentage appearing on a shareholder register to the practical governance of the company.

Control through loan covenants

One of the more notable examples identified in the new guidance concerns loan covenants.

Financing agreements commonly contain conditions designed to protect a lender. In ordinary circumstances, such protections form part of the commercial relationship between lender and borrower. However, the guidance specifically identifies situations where loan covenants restrict management's financial and operational decision-making to such an extent that substantial decision-making authority is effectively transferred to the lender.

In those circumstances, the financing relationship may become relevant to the beneficial ownership analysis.

Consider a company in which no shareholder owns 25 percent or more. The company obtains substantial

financing from a lender, and the financing terms give that lender extensive authority over important financial and operational decisions. If management cannot effectively make significant decisions without the lender's approval, the latter may be considered to have the ultimate control over the company, and therefore, the beneficial owner according to the August 2026 Guide.

The existence of a loan does not itself make a lender a beneficial owner. The decisive issue is the degree of actual control exercised. There is also an important distinction where the lender is itself a company, bank or other legal entity. Kuwait's definition ultimately requires the beneficial owner to be a natural person. Accordingly, the analysis cannot simply end by recording a corporate lender as the beneficial owner; the relevant inquiry remains whether a natural person ultimately exercises the required level of control.

Loan covenants are only one example. Kuwait's new guidance also identifies minority shareholders acting through agreements or informal arrangements, contractual relationships, individuals capable of appointing or removing management, strategic advisers influencing decision-making and senior executives exercising effective control as circumstances that may require closer examination.

For businesses and compliance teams, the practical implication is significant. A beneficial ownership review cannot always be completed by requesting the commercial licence, incorporation documents and shareholder register and checking whether someone crosses the 25 percent threshold.

Where the ownership test does not reveal the person exercising ultimate control, companies and regulated businesses conducting customer due diligence may need to examine financing arrangements, governance rights, contractual relationships and the actual manner in which important decisions are made.

Kuwait's 2026 guidance therefore reinforces a broader approach to beneficial ownership: ownership is only one route to control, but it is not the only one.

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3.470 KD 1.790 KD ليبون شاي العلامة الصفراء 2x100's Lipton Yellow Label Tea Bag 2x100's	1.620 KD 0.990 KD زينة سكر 5 كجم Zeina Sugar 5Kg	1.030 KD 0.790 KD أمريكا لايت تونا صلب في زيت خضروات 3x160 جم Americana Light Tuna Solid In Vegetable Oil 3x160gm	2.425 KD 1.750 KD كيت كات ميني 405 جم Kit Kat Mini Bag 405gm	2.590 KD 1.850 KD بورى مصري كيلو Mullet Egypt Kilo	1.890 KD 0.990 KD شاهينا صدر ديك زمني محشو كيلو Shahina Beef Mortadella Olives/Pepper/Plain Kilo
2.470 KD 2.190 KD نور زيت دوار الشمس 1.5 لتر x 2 Noor Sunflower Oil 2x1.5Ltr	6.050 KD 4.690 KD صنوايت أرز 10 كجم Sunwhite Calrose Rice 10Kg	1.025 KD 0.850 KD سبارا دجاج كامل 1 كجم Seara Whole Chicken 1Kg	1.570 KD 1.190 KD الرفاعي مكسرات مخلوطة 180 جم/ 200 جم Al-Rifai Asstd Nuts 180gm/ 200gm	2.535 KD 2.100 KD كرافت جبنة شيدر 3x250 جم Kraft Cheddar Cheese Packet 3x250gm	1.295 KD 1.190 KD كلوجز كوكو بوبس / شوكو 330 جم Kellogg's Coco Pops/ Choco Pops 330gm
3.250 KD 2.290 KD برسيل مسحوق غسيل 5 كجم Persil Detergent Powder 5Kg	2.250 KD 1.290 KD كريم ترطيب يومي 2x250 مل Creme-21 All Day Cream 2x250ml	4.695 KD 3.900 KD بيجون وعاء ضغط للطهي 3 لتر Pigeon Aluminum Pressure Cooker 3Ltr	Scan to explore our latest offers and widest selection امسح الرمز واكتشف عروضنا المميزة وتشكيلتنا الواسعة		

Armenia looks to Kuwait as partner for peace and wider cooperation

The Times Kuwait Report

Armenia views Kuwait as an important partner in efforts to promote peace and stability in the South Caucasus, while seeking to build a broader and more dynamic relationship spanning trade, investment, tourism, education and advanced technology.

Armenian Ambassador to Kuwait H.E. Dr. Arsen Arakelyan highlighted the expanding relationship between the two countries while addressing a reception hosted by the Embassy of Armenia to mark his country's National Day.

The reception was attended by Deputy Foreign Minister Ambassador Hamad Al-Mashaan, senior officials, heads of diplomatic missions, members of the Armenian community and representatives of the business and cultural sectors.

Ambassador Arakelyan expressed appreciation for Kuwait's role in promoting dialogue and peaceful solutions to regional conflicts, as well as its humanitarian contributions to communities affected by conflicts and natural disasters.

He said Armenia particularly values Kuwait's support for efforts to advance peace and stability in the South Caucasus. Armenia, he added, remains committed to resolving disputes through political and diplomatic means and in accordance with international law.

Three decades of diplomatic relations

Kuwait and Armenia established diplomatic relations in 1994, with Armenia opening its embassy in Kuwait in 2010 and Kuwait establishing its embassy in Armenia in 2011. Over the past three decades, bilateral cooperation has expanded through agreements and memoranda covering areas including the economy, investment, agriculture, tourism, culture, education and air transport.

The relationship has also benefited from educational and cultural exchanges. Ambassador Arakelyan noted that Kuwait University has provided around 70 scholarships to Yerevan State University in recent years.

He also highlighted the contribution of Kuwait's Al-Babtain Foundation, whose support has helped the Centre for Arabic Literature at Yerevan State University continue its work and contributed to a significant increase in the number of students studying Arabic in Armenia.



Ambassador Arakelyan highlights opportunities in trade, investment, tourism, education and technology

Economic cooperation is emerging as another important area of the bilateral relationship. The Ambassador referred to the first Armenia-Kuwait Business Forum, held in January at the Kuwait Chamber of Commerce and Industry, which brought together representatives of government institutions, businesses and investment organisations from both countries.

Discussions are also underway on the possibility of reconvening the Armenian-Kuwaiti Joint Governmental Committee, while Armenia has welcomed the prospect of greater participation by Kuwaiti businesses in the next bilateral business forum. Armenia is particularly keen to attract Kuwaiti investment into sectors where it sees strong growth potential.

Technology and AI offer new opportunities

Information technology and software have become among Armenia's fastest-growing sectors, with the number of technology companies in the country increasing more than 12-fold since 2018, according to Ambassador Arakelyan.

He also highlighted Armenia's growing investment in artificial intelligence infrastructure and data centres based on NVIDIA Blackwell technology, with estimated investments reaching around \$7 billion, and invited interested Kuwaiti institutions to explore opportunities for cooperation and investment.

The Ambassador said Armenia and Kuwait have considerable scope to expand cooperation in trade, tourism, science, education, advanced technologies, student exchanges, sports and culture.

He stressed the importance of strengthening high-level exchanges, business delegations and coordination between government and private-sector institutions to translate the existing relationship into concrete partnerships.

Building on people-to-people ties

Beyond government-to-government relations, the Armenian Embassy has also highlighted the contribution of the Armenian community in Kuwait. Ambassador Arakelyan praised Armenian charitable, cultural and sporting organisations for preserving their heritage while actively contributing to Kuwait's wider social and cultural life. He noted that many members of the Armenian community regard Kuwait as a second home and have developed close bonds with Kuwaiti society. Looking ahead, Armenia expects further engagement with Kuwait through bilateral and multilateral platforms. A high-level Kuwaiti delegation is also expected to participate in the 17th Conference of the Parties (COP17), scheduled to be held in Armenia.

The expanding areas of cooperation underline the broader direction of Kuwait-Armenia relations from a longstanding diplomatic friendship toward deeper economic, educational, technological and people-to-people connections.

PM calls for faster implementation of major development projects

His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah has directed government authorities to intensify efforts and streamline procedures to accelerate the implementation of major development projects across Kuwait.

Chairing a meeting of the Ministerial Committee for Monitoring Major Development Projects, His Highness stressed the need to maintain momentum in completing strategic projects and to remove procedural obstacles that could delay implementation.

The Prime Minister called for greater coordination among government agencies responsible for development projects, emphasizing the importance of advancing work in accordance with the directives of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah.

The meeting reviewed the progress of major development projects and discussed measures to overcome administrative and procedural challenges affecting their implementation.

His Highness emphasized the importance of accelerating project completion while ensuring that implementation proceeds efficiently and in line with approved plans and timelines.

The government has placed the acceleration of development projects among its key priorities, with major initiatives intended to strengthen infrastructure, improve public services and support Kuwait's broader development objectives under Kuwait Vision 2035.

The committee meeting was attended by a number of ministers, senior government officials and representatives of the authorities concerned with the implementation and follow-up of major projects.

Interior Ministry warns against abandoning pets in public places

The Ministry of Interior has warned pet owners against abandoning animals or leaving them in public places, stressing that owners who are no longer able to care for their animals should contact the authorities through the emergency number 112.

The ministry urged animal owners to comply with laws and regulations governing the possession and care of pets and

emphasized that abandoning animals in public areas is prohibited.

Owners who can no longer care for their animals have been advised to contact 112 and coordinate with the relevant authorities to arrange for the animals to be handled or received through the appropriate official channels.

The ministry also issued a safety advisory to citizens and residents who encounter stray dogs, urging them to keep a safe distance and avoid approaching the animals. Members of the public who spot stray dogs have been asked to report their precise location by calling 112, allowing the authorities to take the necessary measures in coordination with the competent agencies.

PACI launches 'Building Cancellation' service through Sahel

The Public Authority for Civil Information (PACI) has launched a new electronic service, "Building Cancellation," through Kuwait's unified government application, Sahel, allowing building owners to cancel registered building data and associated units without visiting PACI offices.

The new service forms part of PACI's ongoing efforts to expand digital government services, simplify administrative procedures and make transactions more accessible to beneficiaries.

Through the service, building owners can electronically submit a request to cancel the data of an existing building registered with PACI. The process also includes the cancellation of all residential and other units registered under the building. The move is expected to facilitate the updating of building-related records while reducing the need for paperwork and in-person visits to PACI offices. PACI has been steadily expanding its electronic services through Sahel, enabling citizens and residents to complete a growing range of civil information and property-related transactions digitally.

N. K. Ramachandran Menon

The Man Who Turned a Dream into a Legacy

The Times Kuwait Report

Some people build businesses. Some build institutions. And a rare few build something that continues to live through generations. N. K. Ramachandran Menon belonged to that rare category.

ssing marks the end of a remarkable journey that began in banking and eventually transformed the educational landscape of the Indian community in Kuwait and across the Gulf. As the Founder and Chairman of Bhavans Middle East, Menon did not simply establish schools; he built an educational philosophy around the belief that every child deserved an opportunity to grow with knowledge, values, confidence and character.

For thousands of families in Kuwait, the name Bhavans became synonymous with education. Behind that institution stood a man whose personal conviction was simple but profound: education should prepare children not merely to pass examinations, but to face life.

Menon began his professional career in banking, working with institutions including National Bank of Kuwait and Gulf Bank. Yet the path that eventually defined his life was education. He moved from finance into schooling with a vision shaped by his own understanding of what a good school should be.

Menon spoke about wanting to create a school that reflected his idea of quality education one that combined academic standards with Indian values and gave children a strong foundation for the future.

That vision took shape in Kuwait. Bhavans Middle East began its journey in Kuwait in 2000, responding to the educational aspirations of the Indian community.

The opening of Indian Educational School in 2006 marked a defining milestone. From that beginning, the Bhavans network expanded across the GCC, eventually developing schools in Kuwait, Abu Dhabi, Al Ain, Bahrain, Dubai and Sharjah. The organisation today serves more than 12,000 students across its institutions in the region.

But numbers alone cannot measure Menon's contribution. His real legacy lies in the lives behind those numbers the students who walked through Bhavans classrooms, the teachers who found an institution that valued their contribution, the parents who entrusted their children to its care, and the families who saw education as a pathway to a better future.

Menon was closely involved in the development of Bhavans and remained a visible presence within its schools. Founder's Day celebrations over the years repeatedly became occasions for students, teachers and parents to express their gratitude to the man who had given the institution its direction. At the 10th Founder's Day celebration in 2016, the Bhavans fraternity gave him a standing ovation and honoured him for his contribution to the institution.

A decade later, the same sense of affection and respect remained evident. At Bhavans Kuwait's 20th Founder's Day celebration in September 2025, Menon was again at the centre of an event celebrating the institution's journey and the thousands of lives touched by its educational mission.

His philosophy was perhaps best captured in his own words: "I see a spark in every child. My



mission is to ignite every Bhavanite to become enlightened citizens." That sentence explains much of the man behind the institution.

For Menon, education was not simply about producing high achievers. It was about creating individuals capable of standing on their own feet. Discipline, hard work, good teachers, values and all-round development were central to his approach. He believed children needed confidence and a strong sense of identity to navigate an increasingly complex world.

His contribution was also recognised beyond the Bhavans fraternity. In 2019, Menon received the Janam Global Excellence Award for his contribution to bringing education to the Indian diaspora in the Middle East through Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan.

Yet perhaps the most meaningful measure of his legacy will never appear on an award citation. It will be found in former students who remember a teacher who inspired them, in parents who recall the confidence they placed in Bhavans, and in generations of young people who carried their education from Kuwait into universities, professions and communities around the world.

Menon's journey also reflected something much larger about the Indian expatriate experience in the Gulf. For decades, Indian families in Kuwait have worked to create stable and meaningful lives for their children while remaining connected to their cultural and educational roots. Building a strong school system was therefore not merely an institutional exercise. It was part of building a community.

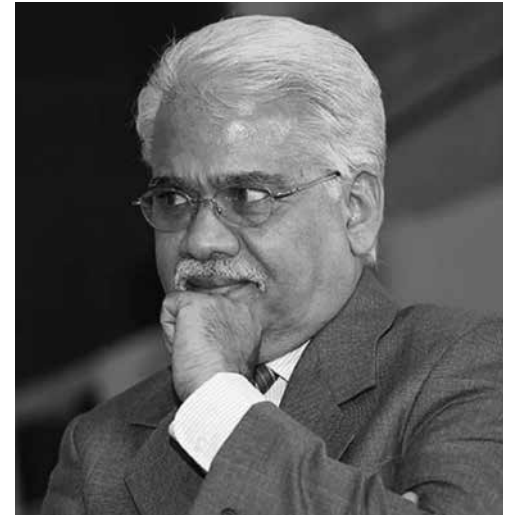
Menon understood that need. He recognised that families wanted their children to receive a modern education without losing their connection to language, culture, values and identity. Bhavans became one of the institutions through which that balance was pursued.

His legacy, therefore, belongs not only to Bhavans. It belongs to Kuwait's Indian community. It belongs to the teachers and administrators who helped turn his vision into an enduring institution. It belongs to the parents who placed their trust in that institution. And most importantly, it belongs to the generations of students whose lives were shaped by the educational ecosystem he helped create.

The man may have passed away, but the work continues every morning when thousands of students enter Bhavans classrooms. That is perhaps the most fitting tribute to N. K. Ramachandran Menon. A school bell rings. A classroom fills. A teacher begins a lesson. A young student discovers a new possibility.

And somewhere within that continuing

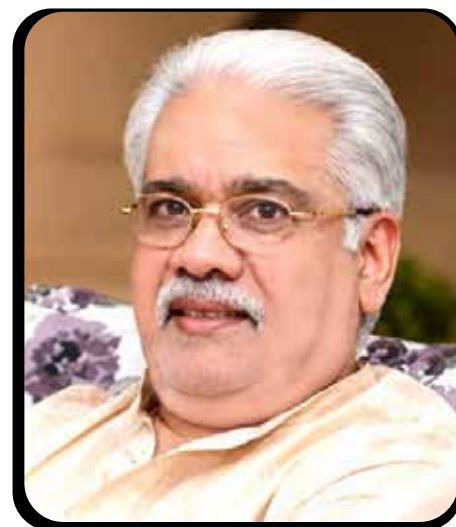
journey lives the dream of the man who believed that education could change lives. N. K. Ramachandran Menon may no longer be there



to witness it, but the legacy he built will continue to speak for him one student, one teacher and one generation at a time.

IN MEMORIAM

With deep sorrow,
we mourn the passing of
our beloved Ramu Chettan,



N. K. Ramachandran Menon

Chairman of Bhavans Schools
in the Middle East.

A cherished brother, cousin and mentor, he
will always be remembered for his warmth,
wisdom and the lasting legacy he created in
the field of education.

His cousins and relatives in Kuwait mourn
his loss and extend their heartfelt
condolences to the bereaved family.

May his soul rest in eternal peace

India-Kuwait Media Connect launched to deepen media partnership and people-to-people ties

The Times Kuwait Report

India and Kuwait are set to deepen engagement between their media communities with the launch of "India-Kuwait Media Connect – Partnership, Perspectives and Possibilities," an initiative aimed at creating a sustained platform for dialogue, exchange and greater understanding between the two countries.

Launching the initiative, Ambassador of India to Kuwait H.E. Paramita Tripathi said the India-Kuwait relationship is deeply rooted in history and enriched by strong people-to-people ties, with the media in both countries having played an important role in bringing the two societies closer.

"Over the decades, the media in both our countries have played an important role in bringing our societies closer and telling the many stories that connect us," Ambassador Tripathi said. She noted that the media landscape is undergoing rapid transformation, with news travelling across borders within seconds. This, she said, makes credible journalism, context and meaningful engagement more important than ever.

For India and Kuwait, the changing media environment presents an opportunity to further strengthen understanding of a relationship built over generations, she said. "There are many stories that connect our two countries and deserve to be better known stories of business, innovation, culture, education, tourism, technology and, of course, the people who bring our relationship to life," the Ambassador said. She emphasized that these stories go beyond daily headlines and can contribute to a deeper understanding of the longstanding relationship between India and Kuwait.

Monthly interaction with media

As part of the initiative, the Indian Embassy plans to host an informal monthly interaction with members of the media fraternity, with the meetings expected to be held around the last working day of every month.

According to Ambassador Tripathi, the interactions will provide an opportunity for the Embassy to share updates on its activities and initiatives, while also



The Ambassador also announced that the Embassy will issue a digital monthly "India-Kuwait Media Connect" newsletter. The newsletter will provide a consolidated monthly update on India's growth and development, key economic and business developments, and the country's diplomatic and international engagements during the month.



facilitating discussions on developments in India and India-Kuwait relations.

The meetings will also cover India's diplomatic engagements, major policy initiatives and significant regional and global developments. At the same time, the platform will provide media professionals with an informal space to share their views, perspectives and ideas with the Embassy.

Monthly digital newsletter

The Ambassador also announced that the Embassy will issue a digital monthly "India-Kuwait Media Connect" newsletter. The newsletter will provide a consolidated monthly update on India's growth and development, key economic and business developments, and the country's diplomatic and international engagements during the month.

It will also highlight the activities and engagements of the Indian Embassy in Kuwait, including its cultural, community, educational and outreach programmes. The publication will additionally provide a look ahead at upcoming Embassy events and initiatives, as well as important events taking place in India.

Ambassador Tripathi said the initiative is intended to provide the media with a useful window into India, India-Kuwait relations and the work of the Embassy,

while helping identify stories and opportunities for engagement throughout the year.

Continuing conversation

Describing the launch as more than the creation of another media platform, Ambassador Tripathi said it represents the institutionalization of a continuing and constructive conversation between the Embassy and the media fraternity. "Today, therefore, is not simply the launch of another platform. It is the institutionalization of a continuing conversation, which is constructive and positive," she said. The Ambassador invited members of the media to make India-Kuwait Media Connect their own platform a space to connect, exchange ideas, collaborate and tell stories that bring India and Kuwait and their peoples closer.

She also encouraged media representatives to share their views and suggestions, both during the monthly interactions and at any time in the future. Concluding her remarks, Ambassador Tripathi formally launched India-Kuwait Media Connect – Partnership, Perspectives and Possibilities, expressing hope that the initiative would serve as a useful resource for the media fraternity and provide a continuing window into India's transformation, its relationship with Kuwait and its engagement with the wider world.

A morning of fitness, unity and service as 1,600 turn out for Viksit Bharat Run



The Times Kuwait Report

It was more than a run. It was a morning that brought together families, young people, community leaders and members of the Indian diaspora in Kuwait around a shared message of fitness, unity and service.

More than 1,600 participants gathered at Boulevard Park in Salmiya on Friday for the Viksit Bharat Run 2026, organised by the Embassy of India in Kuwait as part of Seva Pakhwada (Seva Pakhwada is an annual, fortnight-long nationwide service and social welfare campaign observed in India from September 17 to October 2 and held on the occasion of Mahatma Gandhi birthday)

Indian Ambassador to Kuwait H.E. Paramita Tripathi flagged off the event, joining participants as they set out on the 2-kilometre and 4-kilometre routes. The atmosphere was distinctly community-oriented, with participants of different ages and backgrounds taking part some running, others walking, and many simply



If you can run, run. If you cannot run, walk. Get your steps in, enjoy the morning, and most importantly, have fun and enjoy the outdoor.

enjoying a morning outdoors with friends and family.

Carrying the message "Run for Fitness, Run for Unity, Run for Viksit Bharat," the event connected the simple act of staying active with the larger themes of community participation and nation-building.

More than a race

For many participants, the morning was less about finishing first and more about being part of something together. The event reflected the strong community networks that have developed among Indians living in Kuwait, while also providing an opportunity to promote healthy lifestyles and social responsibility.

Addressing participants, Ambassador Tripathi encouraged everyone to make physical activity part of everyday life. "If you can run, run. If you cannot run, walk. Get your steps in, enjoy the morning, and most importantly, have fun and enjoy the outdoors," she said. The event also carried an important environmental message. After completing the run, participants

took part in a cleanup activity under the "Leave No Trace" initiative, reinforcing the idea that community celebrations can also be occasions for giving back to the environment.

Linking fitness with service

The Viksit Bharat Run also highlighted the Embassy's efforts to engage the Indian community in Kuwait through activities that go beyond traditional cultural programmes, creating opportunities for people to come together around shared social and civic values.

For the thousands who gathered at Boulevard Park, the morning ended not simply with a finish line, but with a collective reminder that the journey towards a healthier and more engaged community begins with small individual steps.

And on Gandhi Jayanti, those steps carried a message that reached well beyond the running track: fitness, unity and service can all begin with the decision to take the first step.

Ayacucho retablos bring Peru's Andean stories to life in Kuwait

The Times Kuwait Report

Peru's rich Andean heritage has come alive in Kuwait through the intricate colours, miniature figures and stories of Ayacucho retablos, traditional handcrafted artworks that offer a glimpse into the everyday life and cultural memory of the Peruvian people.

The Embassy of the Republic of Peru in Kuwait hosted a reception to mark the opening of "Ayacucho Retablos: A Living Tradition of the Peruvian Andes" at the Contemporary Art Platform (CAP Kuwait), bringing together members of the diplomatic community, cultural figures, artists and art enthusiasts.

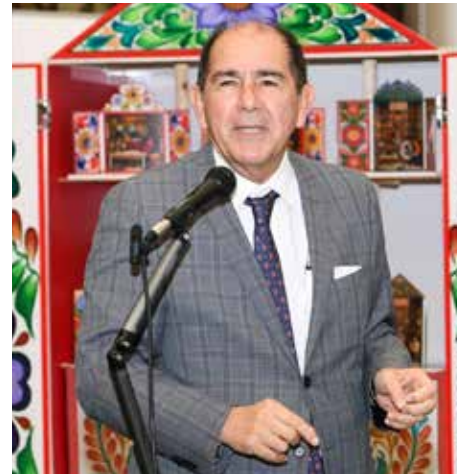
Peruvian Ambassador to Kuwait H.E. Carlos Jiménez said the exhibition provides visitors with an opportunity to discover a distinctive part of Peru's cultural heritage through the colours and stories contained in the retablos.

Originating in the Ayacucho region of the Andes, retablos are brightly painted wooden boxes containing miniature scenes. Their compositions depict everyday life, festivals, music, dance, traditional occupations and customs, transforming ordinary moments into detailed works of art.

Every retablo tells a story

What makes the tradition particularly distinctive is the storytelling woven into each piece. Handcrafted and painted by skilled artisans, the retablos preserve scenes and traditions that have been passed from one generation to another. Their vibrant colours and intricate figures offer visitors a visual journey into the culture and popular memory of the Andean region.

The Peruvian Ministry of Culture has recognised the knowledge, techniques and iconography associated



Kuwait-Peru relations are strong, and we are proud of what has been achieved over nearly 50 years — H.E. Carlos Jiménez

with the production of Ayacucho retablos as part of Peru's national cultural heritage, highlighting the art form's historical continuity and importance to Ayacucho's identity.

The exhibition therefore presents the retablo not simply as a decorative handicraft, but as a living form of cultural expression one that continues to evolve while preserving the stories and traditions of the communities from which it emerged.

Under the message "Discover Peru through the colours and stories of Ayacucho," the exhibition invites visitors to look beyond the craftsmanship and explore the people, traditions and cultural narratives represented within each miniature scene.

Culture as a bridge between Peru and Kuwait

Ambassador Jiménez also highlighted the longstanding relationship between Peru and Kuwait,

noting that the two countries are approaching 50 years of diplomatic relations. He described the bilateral relationship as strong and emphasised the importance of continuing to expand contacts and cooperation between the two peoples.

Cultural diplomacy, he noted, provides an important avenue for bringing societies closer together. Exhibitions such as the Ayacucho retablos showcase allow people to discover another country's history and identity while creating opportunities for greater understanding and dialogue. The exhibition features a collection of colourful retablos depicting Andean celebrations, music, dance, traditional occupations and scenes from daily life. For visitors in Kuwait, each small wooden box opens a window into a much larger world one where art becomes a way of preserving memory, telling stories and keeping cultural traditions alive.

The exhibition will continue at CAP Kuwait until October 6.



Kuwait establishes Digital Network Company with KD33.19 million capital

50% of shares allocated to Kuwaiti citizens, 40% to strategic investor

Kuwait has established the Kuwait Digital Network Company as a Kuwaiti public shareholding company, marking a new institutional step in the development of the country's fixed telecommunications infrastructure under a public-private partnership framework.

The company has an authorised and issued capital of KD33.191 million, while its paid-up capital has been set at approximately KD8.298 million, according to Ministerial Resolution No. 185 of 2026, published in the official gazette Kuwait Al-Yaum.

Under the approved ownership structure, 50 percent of the company's shares will be allocated to Kuwaiti citizens through the Public-Private Partnership Authority (KAPP), while 40 percent will

be held by Batelco Kuwait Fiber Holding Company, representing the private-sector investor. The remaining 10 percent will be allocated to KAPP on behalf of public entities.

The company's authorised and issued capital is divided into 331.9095 million shares, with a nominal value of 100 fils per share. The paid-up capital amounts to KD8.3 million. The ownership structure gives Kuwaiti citizens the largest shareholding, while combining government participation with a strategic private-sector investor. The company's establishment follows the completion of the legal framework required for the project and provides a formal corporate structure for implementing and managing the digital network initiative. The establishment of Kuwait Digital Network

comes under Kuwait's broader use of public-private partnerships (PPPs) to develop strategic infrastructure and expand private-sector participation.

The resolution requires the company to complete its establishment procedures in accordance with the Companies Law No. 1 of 2016, the Capital Markets Authority Law No. 7 of 2010, and the Public-Private Partnership Law No. 116 of 2014, together with their respective executive regulations.

The structure is intended to provide a clear framework for participation by citizens, government entities and the private sector while ensuring that the company operates within Kuwait's established corporate and regulatory framework.

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Al-Shaheed Park Phase III opens a new chapter for Kuwait's culture, recreation and community life

New cultural, sporting and entertainment facilities expand one of Kuwait's most prominent public destinations

The Times Kuwait Report

Al-Shaheed Park has entered a new chapter in its development with the inauguration of its third phase, transforming the landmark urban park into an even broader destination for culture, heritage, entertainment, sport and family recreation.

Under the patronage of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, representing the Amir, inaugurated Phase III of Al-Shaheed Park at Al-Soor Theatre on Wednesday evening. The ceremony brought together senior state officials, members of the project's supervisory committee and representatives from the cultural and creative sectors.

The Prime Minister unveiled a commemorative monument marking the official opening before touring the new phase and its indoor and outdoor cultural, tourism, recreational and logistical facilities.

The inauguration represents more than the completion of another section of the park. Phase III significantly expands the range of experiences available to visitors and reinforces Al-Shaheed Park's role as a public space where Kuwait's history and identity meet contemporary culture, recreation and community life.

Speaking at the inauguration, Minister of Amiri Diwan Affairs Sheikh Hamad Jaber Al-Ali Al-Sabah expressed appreciation for the Amir's patronage, describing the project as part of Kuwait's continuing national development efforts.

He said Phase III represents a significant extension of the park and strengthens its role as a vibrant destination for culture, entertainment and community interaction.

The project forms part of a wider portfolio of major developments associated with the Amiri Diwan, including the Sheikh Jaber Al-Ahmad Cultural Centre, Sheikh Abdullah Al-Salem Cultural Centre, Al-Salam Palace Museum and Kuwait Motor Town. These projects, while covering different areas, share a broader objective of creating facilities that serve society, improve quality of life and provide modern spaces for citizens and residents.

The minister also highlighted the importance attached to Kuwaiti youth and their participation in the country's cultural and creative future, noting the importance of encouraging young people to take initiative, develop their talents and assume responsibility.

Phase III considerably broadens the recreational character of Al-Shaheed Park. The development includes an Olympic-sized ice-skating rink, an indoor snow-games facility known as Snow World, and an indoor electric-car racing circuit. Visitors will also have access to a 2.4-kilometre running and walking track, providing additional opportunities for outdoor exercise and leisure.

The electric karting circuit, extending approximately 650 metres, adds another contemporary entertainment component to the park. Family-oriented facilities include shaded climbing areas, a maze garden and interactive visitor



Phase III considerably broadens the recreational character of Al-Shaheed Park. The development includes an Olympic-sized ice-skating rink, an indoor snow-games facility known as Snow World, and an indoor electric-car racing circuit. Visitors will also have access to a 2.4-kilometre running and walking track, providing additional opportunities for outdoor exercise and leisure.

maps designed to make exploration of the expanded park easier and more engaging.

Together, these facilities broaden the traditional concept of a public park. Rather than being centred solely on green spaces and outdoor recreation, the new phase brings together cultural venues, sporting activities, entertainment attractions, family experiences and public gathering spaces within a single destination.

A carnival built around peace, harmony and hope

The opening of Phase III was accompanied by a two-day carnival held on October 1 and 2, designed around the themes of peace, harmony and hope. The celebrations transformed different parts of the park into an immersive visual and cultural experience, using light, colour, music, performance and interactive entertainment.

The colours of the Kuwaiti national flag – green, white, red and black – were incorporated into the visual identity of the carnival, reinforcing the connection between the new development and Kuwait's national identity. The celebrations culminated in a ceremonial parade around the park featuring costumed characters, music and colourful performances.

Heritage and national performances were incorporated into the programme, allowing traditional Kuwaiti culture to become part of a contemporary public celebration. The carnival programme was designed for different age groups and included puppet and bubble shows, performances by Ashman Al-Ilmi, Qarqasha and Bardib, Vanzo and KidZania, along with sporting and physical activities at the Extreme Sports Arena.

Skating demonstrations added another dynamic element to the celebrations. The opening programme also featured artistic installations, visual displays, festive parades and light shows illuminating the dome of Al-Soor Theatre, creating a distinctive visual identity for the new development.

One of the defining features of Phase III is its attempt to combine contemporary facilities with



Kuwait's cultural memory. During the inauguration ceremony, guests viewed a documentary highlighting cultural centres affiliated with the Amiri Diwan and their contribution to preserving Kuwait's heritage and enriching the country's cultural landscape.

The film highlighted programmes and activities aimed at strengthening national identity, presenting Kuwait's history and heritage and showcasing achievements in the cultural and artistic fields. (Kuwait Times) The approach reflects a wider evolution in Kuwait's cultural infrastructure, where modern architectural and entertainment facilities are increasingly being used alongside heritage, museums, theatres and public spaces to create destinations that appeal to both local communities and visitors.

Al-Shaheed Park, in this sense, is developing beyond its identity as a landscaped urban park. It is becoming a place where recreation and cultural expression coexist.

A destination for citizens, residents and visitors

The significance of Phase III ultimately lies in its potential to bring different aspects of public life together. A visitor can attend a theatrical production, watch a film outdoors, participate in sporting activities, explore family attractions, enjoy heritage performances or simply use the park's walking and recreational spaces.

For families in particular, the combination of indoor and outdoor facilities provides a broader range of activities within one location. For Kuwait's cultural and creative community, Al-Soor Theatre creates an additional platform for artists, performers and organisers.

For young people, the sporting and entertainment facilities offer new forms of recreation, while the park's cultural programming creates opportunities to engage with Kuwait's history and national identity. And for residents and visitors from different backgrounds, the park offers a public setting in which Kuwait's culture can be experienced alongside contemporary entertainment.

Uzbekistan celebrates 35 years of independence, looks to deepen economic partnership with Kuwait

The Times Kuwait Report

Uzbekistan marked the 35th anniversary of its independence with a diplomatic reception in Kuwait, bringing together senior government officials, ambassadors, members of the diplomatic corps and representatives of the business community to celebrate the country's journey since independence and highlight the growing friendship between Tashkent and Kuwait City.

The occasion was not only a celebration of Uzbekistan's national milestone but also an opportunity to underline the country's interest in taking its relationship with Kuwait into a broader economic and investment dimension.

The reception highlighted a bilateral relationship that has steadily evolved from diplomatic ties into cooperation covering trade, investment, development, tourism, agriculture, infrastructure, healthcare, culture and other sectors.

The event was attended by Kuwait's Minister of State for Economic Affairs and Acting Minister of Commerce, senior officials, ambassadors and members of the diplomatic community. For Uzbekistan, the anniversary comes at a time when the country is seeking to deepen engagement with Gulf economies and attract greater foreign investment as part of its wider economic transformation.

A friendship built over more than three decades

Kuwait was among the first countries to recognize Uzbekistan's independence, formally doing so on 30 December 1991. The two countries established diplomatic relations in July 1994. Since then, both sides have maintained friendly political relations, supported by a shared emphasis on peace, development and mutually beneficial cooperation.

Uzbekistan's Ambassador to Kuwait, H.E. Ayub Khan Yunusov, has described Kuwait as a "reliable friend and trusted partner" of Uzbekistan in the Middle East, noting that the relationship is rooted not only in political and economic interests but also in shared cultural, historical and religious values.

Kuwait established its embassy in Tashkent in 2001, while Uzbekistan opened its embassy in Kuwait in 2004. The two countries have also exchanged high-level visits, helping strengthen the political foundation of bilateral relations.

Today, the relationship is entering a new phase, with both governments placing greater emphasis on translating political goodwill into trade, investment and development projects.

From friendship to business opportunities

The next stage of the relationship is increasingly centred on the private sector. Uzbekistan is seeking to encourage Kuwaiti companies and investors to explore opportunities in its rapidly developing economy, particularly in sectors where the two countries have complementary strengths.

Agriculture and food security are among the areas offering immediate potential. Uzbekistan has a substantial agricultural base and produces a wide range of fruits, vegetables and other food products. Kuwait, meanwhile, depends heavily on imports to meet domestic food requirements.

Greater cooperation could therefore extend beyond conventional exports to include food processing, agricultural technology, storage, logistics and joint ventures. These areas broadly complement Uzbekistan's ongoing economic reforms and Kuwait's own efforts to expand international investment and diversify its economy.

The two countries have also discussed establishing mechanisms that can make it easier for businesses to identify projects, establish partnerships and move from preliminary discussions to actual investment.

Tourism opens another window

Tourism is another sector with considerable potential. Uzbekistan offers Gulf visitors a combination of historic Islamic heritage, Silk Road cities, architecture,



Uzbek Ambassador to Kuwait H.E. Ayub Khan Yunusov said Uzbekistan is seeking to broaden bilateral cooperation in economic and investment activities, tourism and technology, building on the longstanding relationship between the two countries.

traditional culture and natural landscapes.

Cities such as Samarkand, Bukhara and Khiva have become increasingly prominent on the international tourism map, while Uzbekistan is also seeking to develop new tourism products and infrastructure.

For Kuwait and other Gulf countries, stronger tourism links with Uzbekistan could create opportunities for airlines, travel companies, hotels and hospitality businesses. The two governments have already identified tourism and cultural exchanges as areas for greater cooperation.

Culture and people-to-people relations

Economic cooperation is being accompanied by stronger cultural and humanitarian exchanges. Both countries have emphasised cooperation in education, culture, healthcare and tourism, reflecting the broader nature of their relationship.

People-to-people contacts are particularly important in building familiarity between the two societies and creating a foundation for longer-term commercial and cultural engagement.

Uzbekistan's growing presence in Kuwait through its diplomatic, cultural and business activities is helping introduce the country to a wider Kuwaiti audience.



The 35th anniversary of Uzbekistan's independence thus comes at an important point in Kuwait-Uzbekistan relations. Three decades after establishing diplomatic ties, the two countries are looking to broaden the relationship beyond political friendship and development assistance toward a more commercially driven partnership. The foundations are already in place: strong political relations, a history of development cooperation, growing business contacts and a series of agreements covering multiple sectors.

The next challenge is implementation turning agreements and expressions of interest into investments, joint ventures, higher trade volumes and stronger business-to-business relationships.

For Uzbekistan, deeper engagement with Kuwait can provide access to Gulf capital, expertise and markets. For Kuwait, Uzbekistan offers opportunities in a rapidly developing Central Asian economy with significant potential in agriculture, tourism, infrastructure, logistics, industry and emerging technologies.

As both countries look toward the future, the relationship appears increasingly defined not only by the friendship established over the past three decades, but by the economic opportunities that can shape the next chapter of Kuwait-Uzbekistan cooperation.



Kuwait summer travel spending nears KD1 billion despite regional challenges

Summer travel spending by Kuwaitis and residents remained strong despite regional security and travel disruptions, with spending abroad approaching KD1 billion during the peak summer months, reflecting continued demand for overseas holidays and travel. The spending trend comes amid a challenging regional environment that disrupted flights and affected travel plans earlier in the year. Despite these disruptions, overseas spending through cards issued by Kuwaiti banks increased significantly as the summer travel season progressed.

According to Central Bank of Kuwait payment data, card spending abroad reached KD391.8 million in August 2026, up 23.1 percent from KD318.3 million in July. The increase covered purchases at overseas points of sale, online transactions and cash withdrawals.

The August figures underline the scale of outbound spending during the summer, with overseas point-of-sale transactions rising 37.9 percent to KD219.6 million, while cash withdrawals abroad increased 26.1 percent to KD30.9 million. Online payments through overseas

payment gateways also rose during the month. The continued rise in overseas spending suggests that regional challenges did not eliminate the strong appetite for international travel among residents of Kuwait. Travel-related promotions launched by major Kuwaiti banks during the summer also reflected expectations of sustained demand. National Bank of Kuwait, for example, ran a summer travel campaign from July through September offering cashback on international airline bookings, including flights operated by Kuwait Airways, Emirates, Qatar Airways, Turkish Airlines and Jazeera Airways. Kuwait Finance House similarly introduced summer travel offers covering flights, hotels and international card spending, highlighting the importance of the travel season for both consumers and financial institutions.

Cards dominate overseas spending

The Central Bank data show that overseas spending is increasingly being conducted through electronic payment channels. In August, payments made through points-of-sale terminals abroad reached KD219.6 million, while overseas online payments amounted to KD141.3 million. The number of overseas transactions rose 21.8 percent during the month to around 17.1 million transactions.

Credit-card spending at overseas points of sale recorded particularly strong growth, rising 51.5 percent to KD103 million, while debit-card spending increased to KD116.7 million. The figures point to the growing role of digital payments in international travel, allowing consumers to rely less on cash while making purchases, hotel payments, restaurant transactions and other expenses abroad.

The strong spending comes despite a difficult year for regional aviation. The conflict that began in late February disrupted air travel and temporarily affected Kuwait International Airport operations. Airlines subsequently worked to restore services and gradually rebuild their schedules as regional conditions changed. Travelers also faced higher fares and fewer direct options on some international routes, adding to the cost of overseas holidays. Reduced airline competition and increased demand have contributed to higher ticket prices for some destinations. Nevertheless, demand for international travel remained evident throughout the summer, with banks and airlines continuing to offer travel-related promotions and expanded booking options.

August's strong increase in overseas card spending came toward the end of the traditional summer travel season. September data will provide a clearer indication of whether the increase was primarily seasonal or represents a broader change in overseas spending patterns.

Why Gandhi's legacy remains a moral compass



By Shakeel Ahmad Khan
Special to The Times Kuwait

As India marks the 157th birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi on October 2, the occasion offers more than an opportunity to remember one of the country's most influential leaders. It is also a moment to reflect on the enduring relevance of his message of truth, nonviolence, compassion and moral courage.

Observed in India as Gandhi Jayanti, October 2 is also recognized by the United Nations as the International Day of Non-Violence, giving Gandhi's philosophy a significance that extends far beyond India.

Gandhi demonstrated that courage does not always come through force and that powerful change does not necessarily require weapons. His struggle against British colonial rule was built around Satyagraha, or the pursuit and insistence on truth, and Ahimsa, the principle of nonviolence.

These were not merely political strategies for Gandhi. They were principles that shaped his life and his approach to social and political change. Through civil disobedience, boycotts, marches, personal sacrifice and peaceful resistance, Gandhi transformed nonviolent action into a powerful instrument against injustice. He showed that refusing to cooperate with oppression could itself become an act of extraordinary courage.

The title 'Mahatma', meaning 'great-souled', came to be associated with Gandhi during his years in South Africa, while millions of Indians affectionately called him Bapu, meaning 'father'. Together, the two names reflect different aspects of a man who became an international symbol of peaceful resistance while remaining deeply connected to ordinary people.



What makes Gandhi's philosophy relevant today is its emphasis not only on the goals of a struggle, but also on the means used to achieve them. It raises a difficult but important question: Can we pursue justice without surrendering our humanity?

Gandhi's influence did not end with India's independence in 1947. His ideas crossed borders and generations, influencing civil rights and freedom movements around the world.

Dr Martin Luther King Jr. drew inspiration from Gandhi's methods of nonviolent resistance during the American civil rights movement. Other prominent figures, including Nelson Mandela, the Dalai Lama and Archbishop Desmond Tutu, have also acknowledged the influence of Gandhi's philosophy. In different ways, figures such as César Chávez, Joan Baez and Thich Nhat Hanh also reflected elements of the relationship between nonviolence, justice and ethical action in their work.

What makes Gandhi's philosophy relevant today is its emphasis not only on the goals of a struggle, but also on the means used to achieve them. It raises a difficult but important question: Can we pursue justice without surrendering our humanity?

That question remains relevant in a world facing political polarization, social divisions, conflict and growing public distrust. For contemporary India, Gandhi's legacy also carries a broader message about public life and social responsibility. His vision placed service above personal ambition and the welfare of society above narrow interests. In a democracy, that principle remains significant for leaders, institutions

and citizens alike.

Democracy, after all, depends not only on elections and political debate but also on responsibility, restraint, dialogue and respect for others. Remembering Gandhi, therefore, should mean more than placing his image on posters or repeating familiar quotations. Satyagraha, Ahimsa and his commitment to communal harmony and secular values can remain meaningful only when they are reflected in everyday conduct.

Gandhi never suggested that nonviolence was an easy path. On the contrary, he regarded it as demanding courage, discipline and conviction. For him, choosing peace in the face of hostility was not an act of weakness but a demonstration of strength.

His philosophy also placed considerable faith in ordinary people. Gandhi believed that collective action by common citizens could challenge powerful institutions and bring about meaningful change.

That idea remains particularly relevant in the 21st century, when individuals and communities can mobilize rapidly and influence public discourse in ways that were unimaginable during Gandhi's lifetime.

His approach was not about avoiding conflict. It was about choosing how to respond to conflict without allowing anger, hatred or violence to define the struggle.

Albert Einstein famously reflected on Gandhi's extraordinary life, observing that future generations might find it difficult to believe that such a person had actually walked the earth.

On Gandhi's 157th birth anniversary, perhaps the most meaningful tribute is not simply to remember the man, but to consider what his principles ask of us.

Can we remain honest when dishonesty appears easier? Can we choose compassion over anger? Can we oppose injustice without becoming consumed by hatred? Can we place the common good above personal gain?

These questions are not meant only for governments and political leaders. They are questions for every individual.

Gandhi's legacy ultimately challenges us to make choices in our own lives peace instead of hostility, simplicity instead of excess, honesty instead of shortcuts, compassion instead of indifference, and courage instead of fear.

That is perhaps how a legacy truly remains alive.

Why community journalism matters in a diverse and changing Kuwait

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Kuwait is home to people from many nationalities, languages and cultural backgrounds. Kuwaiti citizens and expatriates may have different experiences and concerns, but they share the same roads, schools, hospitals, workplaces, businesses and public services.

Community journalism should reflect this diversity without creating separate information worlds. Indian, Filipino, Egyptian, Pakistani, Bangladeshi, Sri Lankan, Nepali and other expatriate communities may have particular concerns that deserve attention. Yet those concerns are also part of the broader story of Kuwait.

A traffic regulation does not belong to one nationality. A healthcare development can affect families across society. A business decision can have implications for employees from different backgrounds. A new government service can be relevant to citizens and residents alike. Community journalism is therefore ultimately Kuwait journalism, journalism that recognises the country's diversity while keeping Kuwait and its people at the centre of the story.

Listening is only the beginning

Some of the most important community stories do not begin with a press release. They can

emerge from a reader's question, a concern raised by residents, an experience with a government service, or an issue developing in a neighbourhood, school, workplace or business.

But listening alone is not journalism. A complaint is not automatically a fact. A social-media post is not automatically a news report. And the experience of one individual cannot automatically be presented as representative of an entire community. This is where journalistic discipline becomes essential. Claims must be checked. Relevant authorities and organisations should be given an opportunity to respond. Available evidence must be examined, and the distinction between allegation, experience and established fact must remain clear.

That discipline is particularly important in community journalism because readers may rely on the information when making decisions that affect their families, employment, businesses and daily lives.

In the age of WhatsApp, speed is not enough

Information now travels faster than ever. A message shared on WhatsApp, Instagram, TikTok or another social-media platform can reach thousands of people within minutes often before its accuracy has been established.

But being widely shared does not make information true. For professional journalism, the responsibility is therefore not simply to be

first. It is to be accurate, clear and useful.

When a regulation changes, the original announcement should be verified. When a government decision is issued, its practical details need to be explained. When a claim is circulating online, readers need to know what has been confirmed, what remains unclear and what has not been independently verified.

In an environment where speed can easily overtake verification, that distinction has never been more important.

Community journalism is also about recognising the positive contributions made by Kuwait's diverse population. Cultural programmes, educational achievements, professional successes, charitable initiatives, community activities and social projects are all part of Kuwait's wider story.

Bringing these stories into the public conversation can help communities understand one another better and strengthen the sense of connection that exists across society.

But there is an important editorial distinction between community journalism and publicity. Not everything a community, organisation or institution wants published is necessarily news. The journalist's responsibility is to identify genuine public interest and report it with the same accuracy, context and editorial discipline applied to every other story.

The future of community journalism is not simply about producing more stories for

more groups. It is about understanding the connections between them. A worker's experience can reveal a broader economic issue. A family's struggle with a public service can highlight a policy concern. A neighbourhood complaint can point to a wider infrastructure or municipal problem. A community achievement can become part of Kuwait's national story.

That is what makes community journalism valuable. It connects government decisions with the people they affect. It places business and employment developments in an everyday context. It gives communities a voice while maintaining the standards expected of professional journalism. Most importantly, it helps people understand not only what is happening in Kuwait, but why it matters to their lives.

Kuwait comes first

In a multicultural country, strong community journalism should not divide society into separate communities. Instead, it should show how those communities are connected.

The principle is simple: Kuwait comes first in the story its people, institutions, businesses, communities and everyday concerns forming part of one wider national picture.

That is the real value of community journalism: not merely telling people what happened, but helping them understand why it matters.

ALSAYER Unveils the All-New TOYOTA HILUX

- **Enhanced ride comfort, responsive handling, and greater stability deliver a more confident driving experience on- and off-road**
- **Based on the "Tough and Agile" concept, the significantly redesigned interior combines intuitive controls and advanced displays with enhanced comfort and usability**
- **Upgraded Toyota Safety Sense, including Pre-Collision System and Adaptive Cruise Control, together with Panoramic View Monitor and other advanced technologies, enhances driver confidence and peace of mind**
- **While retaining its traditional rugged character, the exterior design evolves into a more agile and striking expression**

Mohamed Naser Al Sayer & Sons Est. Co. W.L.L and Toyota are pleased to announce the launch of the all-new Hilux, introducing the ninth generation of a pickup that has earned the trust of customers around the world through its renowned Quality, Durability, and Reliability. Building on a heritage that began in 1968, the new Hilux evolves its legendary toughness with enhanced comfort, responsive handling, advanced safety technologies, and a bold new design, reinforcing its position as a trusted lifetime partner across every stage of a customer's life.

The public unveil held at the Grand Avenue at Avenues Mall was a remarkable event witnessed by hundreds of visitors, in the presence of top social media influencers in Kuwait and attended by Mr. Martin Aherne Senior Business Director Toyota Group Sales, Mr. Ian Tuttiett General Manager Toyota Retail, Mr. Hamad Al-Fouzan Deputy General Manager Product Planning and Sales Administration along with Senior Management team from ALSAYER.

The Hilux name combines the words "high" and "luxury," reflecting the ambition behind the original model to deliver a pickup of exceptional quality and capability. Across successive generations, the Hilux has developed a strong reputation among commercial, mixed-use, and private customers for its ability to perform reliably in demanding conditions while offering an optimum cost of ownership. Its proven "Can-go-anywhere" character has helped make it a dependable companion for customers across a broad range of professions, communities, lifestyles, and environments.

With the new generation, Toyota has remained true to what it describes as the Hilux's "Original Spirit": earning customers' trust through continuous improvement while preserving the identity and core qualities that have defined the vehicle for more than five decades. At the same time, the model introduces a "New Evolution" through greater sophistication, ease of use, and advanced features developed to meet the increasingly diverse expectations of modern pickup customers.

Commenting on the all-new Hilux, Satoki Oya, Chief Engineer, Toyota Motor Corporation, said: "Built on a legacy of trust, Hilux continues to evolve while staying true to its core DNA: Quality, Durability, and Reliability. Designed to meet the diverse needs of today's customers, it combines legendary toughness with greater comfort, convenience, and peace of mind for everyday life."

Oya added: "Developed to conquer the world's toughest environments, the latest Hilux enhances both on- and off-road drivability and daily usability without compromising the powerful performance it is known for. Engineers have also further advanced its safety technologies, delivering greater confidence behind the wheel. More than just a vehicle, Hilux is designed to support lifestyles, connect with communities, and accompany customers throughout their journeys. This commitment to continuously pushing boundaries and shaping the future is the driving force behind the latest Hilux."

Anarat Sutthibenjakul, Regional Chief Engineer, Toyota Motor Asia, commented: "The Innovative International Multi-purpose Vehicle (IMV) story proves that global success comes from respecting each region's tastes. This new Hilux represents years of listening, learning, and developing vehicles that truly serve real-world



needs."

Both the diesel and petrol models continue to offer customers options aligned with the demanding commercial, mixed-use, private, and recreational applications for which the Hilux is widely trusted. The availability of both powertrains enables customers to select the solution most appropriate to their operating requirements, driving patterns, and local conditions.

The all-new Hilux delivers a more stable and composed ride across everyday urban journeys and off-road adventures. Enhanced body rigidity provides a stronger foundation for the vehicle, while refinements to the engine and cabin mounts help reduce unwanted movement and further improve ride comfort during both everyday urban journeys as well as off-road adventures.

Drivers also benefit from more responsive handling, confident control, and reduced steering effort through the adoption of Electric Power Steering. Working together with the strengthened body and refined mounts, the system contributes to improved straight-line stability and a smoother, more natural driving feel.

The exterior and interior have been developed under the "Tough and Agile" design concept, evolving the Hilux while preserving the rugged character that has defined the model across generations. The exterior combines this

traditional toughness with a more agile and striking look, expressed through a powerful horizontal stance, boldly sculpted surfaces, and dynamic proportions that reinforce its commanding road presence.

The distinctive new front design provides a modern interpretation of the Hilux's traditional rugged character. Its horizontal composition emphasizes width and stability, while boldly sculpted surfaces give the pickup an agile and more contemporary presence without losing the strength expected of a Hilux. Eighteen-inch alloy wheels further enhance the Hilux's confident appearance, complementing its strong proportions and updated exterior character. Customers can also choose from an expanded color range that includes two new finishes, Ash and Sulfur Metallic, offering additional opportunities to personalize the vehicle according to individual preferences and lifestyles.

For customers seeking a more adventurous and rugged expression, Toyota is also offering an Overland Package. The package provides a distinctive design option that broadens the choices available to customers who want their pickup to reflect a more active approach to leisure and exploration.

Inside, the all-new Hilux combines durability and everyday functionality with advanced technologies intended to improve convenience, visibility, and driver awareness. Also based

on the "Tough and Agile" concept, the cabin has been significantly redesigned to combine advanced information displays and controls with an environment that remains intuitive to operate even in demanding conditions. The result enhances both comfort and usability while retaining the robust, functional character expected of the Hilux.

Key driving and multimedia information is presented clearly and within easy reach through a new 12.3-inch Display Audio system and 12.3-inch Multi-Information Display. The large central interface provides accessible multimedia functions, while the driver display communicates relevant vehicle and driving information within the natural field of vision, helping reduce unnecessary distraction.

Greater visibility in challenging conditions is supported by the Multi-Terrain Monitor, which provides additional views of the vehicle's surroundings to help the driver better understand the terrain around the Hilux. Everyday convenience is further enhanced by the Electric Parking Brake, simplifying operation during frequent stops and parking situations.

Greater driver confidence and peace of mind are supported by an upgraded Toyota Safety Sense (TSS), bringing enhanced safety and driver-assistance technologies to the all-new Hilux. The suite includes the Pre-Collision System (PCS) and Adaptive Cruise Control, helping support the driver across a broad range of everyday driving situations. Additional technologies further enhance awareness around the vehicle. The Panoramic View Monitor provides a broader view of the vehicle's surroundings when maneuvering, while Blind Spot Monitor (BSM) supports awareness of vehicles in areas that may be difficult for the driver to see directly. Parking Support Brake (PKSB) provides additional support during low-speed parking maneuvers, further enhancing confidence in confined spaces. Simon Humphries, Chief Branding Officer, Toyota Motor Corporation, said: "Hilux has always been made by the people, for the people. It's a vehicle shaped by real voices, cultures, and communities, and one that truly represents Toyota's belief in Mobility for All."

This relationship with people and communities has remained at the center of the Hilux story since the model was first introduced. Through farms, construction sites, cities, highways, and family journeys, it has connected customers with work, opportunity, and each other. Its evolution has been shaped by the voices of those who rely on it, including professionals who need durability, families who value safety and comfort, and customers looking for design and technology suited to their lifestyles.

With every generation, the Hilux has evolved in response to changing customer expectations, yet its fundamental promise remains unchanged. It continues to be designed as a partner for life: tough enough to meet demanding professional requirements, comfortable enough for everyday journeys, and versatile enough to support leisure and adventure.

The launch of the all-new Hilux marks the next chapter in that enduring story. By building on its proven Quality, Durability, and Reliability with greater ride comfort, responsive handling, advanced technologies, enhanced safety, and an agile new design, Toyota has ensured that the Hilux remains a trusted lifetime partner, ready to support customers through work, family life, leisure, and every adventure.

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'Our Goal Is to Make Smoke-Free Alternatives a Choice, Not a Compromise'

PMI Kuwait General Manager Steven outlines his priorities, consumer expectations, innovation and the company's smoke-free ambitions

The Times Kuwait Report

When Steven took on the role of General Manager of Philip Morris International (PMI) Kuwait, he arrived with a clear set of priorities shaped by 16 years of experience across different markets.

Assigned to Kuwait in April and officially arriving in July, Steven says his focus is built around three key pillars: people, consumers and business stability.

In an exclusive conversation with The Times Kuwait, Steven discussed PMI Kuwait's strategy, the company's smoke-free vision, the introduction of BONDS by IQOS, evolving consumer preferences and the importance of science, technology and informed choice.

Building the right team

"I have had the opportunity to work in several countries during my career with Philip Morris International," Steven said, describing his journey to Kuwait. "Wherever I have worked, the first and foremost priority has always been people. You need to build and develop a strong team, with the right capabilities, a positive culture and the right mindset."

His second priority, he said, is the consumer. "Consumers today have evolving needs and expectations, and their preferences continue to change. Understanding and responding to them is therefore extremely important." The third pillar is stability, building a sustainable business and creating an environment capable of supporting long-term growth.

A smoke-free future

PMI has placed its smoke-free vision at the centre of its global strategy, with the company seeking to move adult smokers who would otherwise continue smoking away from cigarettes and towards smoke-free alternatives.

Steven stressed that the best option remains not to smoke or use nicotine products. "The vision is quite simple. There are millions of adult smokers around the world, including in Kuwait. The best choice for anyone is not to smoke or use nicotine products at all," he said.

"However, we also recognise that some adults will continue to smoke. For those adult smokers who do not quit, our responsibility is to provide better alternatives to continued cigarette smoking." He said PMI's objective is to help more adult smokers transition away from cigarettes through smoke-free products.

Responding to different consumer preferences

With IQOS ILUMA already available in Kuwait, PMI has also introduced BONDS by IQOS, reflecting what Steven describes as the diversity of consumer preferences. "Consumers have different preferences," he said.

Drawing a comparison with coffee, Steven noted that consumers have different tastes and expectations. "The same applies to tobacco products. Adult smokers have different expectations when it comes to taste, intensity and satisfaction. We therefore have to listen carefully to consumers and understand what they want."

According to Steven, feedback from adult smokers, including in Kuwait, indicated demand for a fuller and richer taste experience. "BONDS by IQOS was developed with the consumer at the centre. The feedback we have received is that there is demand for a product that can deliver a full, rich and satisfying taste experience."



'Choice rather than a compromise'

Steven said the distinction between BONDS by IQOS and other products is primarily about meeting different consumer needs. "BONDS by IQOS has been developed by listening to consumers who are looking for a fuller and richer tobacco taste, including a particular level of intensity. When we can meet those expectations, switching to a smoke-free

alternative becomes a choice rather than a compromise," he added. At the same time, he acknowledged that some adult smokers may not yet have found an alternative that meets their expectations. "This is not simply about asking consumers to move from one product to another. It is about giving adult smokers more choices, so that switching becomes possible for more people."

As preferences evolve, PMI will continue investing in innovation and combining



At the end of the day, consumers are at the centre of everything we do. We listen to them, understand their expectations and then combine those insights with technology and science.



alternative becomes a choice rather than a compromise," he added.

Asked about PMI's ambitions for IQOS and BONDS by IQOS in Kuwait, Steven said the broader objective remains helping adult smokers move away from cigarettes. "We have already seen very promising progress with IQOS ILUMA. We began this journey several years ago, and the progress has been encouraging."

technology and science to address consumer needs, he said.

Steven identified consumer behaviour and the pace of adoption as among the challenges involved in transitioning away from traditional cigarettes. "Change always takes time," he said.

"Every country is different. Markets have different cultures, consumer behaviours and rates of adoption. What works at one speed in

one country may take longer somewhere else. Every market has its own journey. Our approach in Kuwait is therefore to remain committed, continue listening to consumers and keep moving forward."

A broader shift away from cigarettes

Steven also pointed to what he described as a broader movement away from conventional cigarettes, with adult smokers considering a range of alternatives, including vaping and smoke-free products.

"When an adult smoker decides to stop smoking cigarettes and considers alternatives whether IQOS, other smoke-free products or vaping I see that as an important first step. Our objective is then to encourage that adult smoker to move towards a smoke-free alternative." He said the decision to move away from cigarettes represents an important point in the consumer journey. "The fact that someone has already decided to move away from cigarettes is significant. It means they have already taken the first step."

Taste and intensity matter

Taste and satisfaction remain important considerations for adult smokers considering a switch, Steven said. "It is extremely important," he said when asked about the role of flavour and intensity.

"BONDS by IQOS is designed to provide an intense and rich tobacco taste, with different levels of intensity to meet different consumer preferences." He stressed that technology plays a central role in delivering the intended experience.

"For many adult smokers, including those we have spoken to in Kuwait, taste and satisfaction are important considerations when deciding whether to switch."

The importance of accurate information

Steven also highlighted the importance of responsible consumer communication and access to accurate information. "One of the challenges we see in the market is access to the right information. Consumers need to be able to understand the differences between products and make informed decisions."

He said PMI has a responsibility to communicate about smoke-free alternatives accurately and responsibly and to ensure that adult smokers have access to relevant information. "At the end of the day, consumers are at the centre of everything we do. We listen to them, understand their expectations and then combine those insights with technology and science."

'The journey is not finished'

Looking ahead, Steven said he remains proud of the progress PMI has made but believes there is still considerable work to be done. "When I look at the progress we have made, I am proud of where we are today. But am I satisfied? No."

"As long as there are adult smokers who continue to smoke, there is more work to do." His motivation, he said, is to continue expanding access to smoke-free alternatives for adult smokers who would otherwise continue smoking.

"We will continue listening to consumers, investing in innovation and bringing technology and science together. For me, the journey is not finished. The goal is to keep moving forward and make smoke-free alternatives a genuine choice, not a compromise."





RECIPE

Stuffed Capsicum Rings

A colourful vegetarian starter featuring juicy green capsicum rings filled with a flavourful potato and paneer mixture, then pan-grilled until crisp and golden. Served with a refreshing garlic-curd drizzle, these stuffed rings make an elegant twist on the traditional stuffed capsicum.

Preparation time: 20 minutes

Cooking time: 15 minutes

Serves: 4

Ingredients:

- 2 large green capsicums
- 2 medium potatoes, boiled and mashed
- 150 g paneer, crumbled
- 1 small onion, finely chopped
- 1 tsp ginger-garlic paste
- 1-2 green chillies, finely chopped
- ½ tsp cumin seeds
- ½ tsp turmeric powder
- ½ tsp red chilli powder
- 1 tsp coriander powder
- ½ tsp garam masala
- ½ tsp chaat masala
- 1 tbsp fresh coriander, chopped
- 1 tsp lemon juice
- Salt, to taste
- 2-3 tbsp oil, for cooking
- *For the Garlic-Curd Sauce:
- ½ cup thick curd
- 1 small garlic clove, finely grated
- ¼ tsp roasted cumin powder
- Salt, to taste
- 1 tsp lemon juice



Chef Chhaya Thakker

Method:

*Prepare the filling:

- Heat 1 tsp oil and crackle the cumin seeds.
- Add onion, ginger-garlic paste and green chilli; sauté until the onion softens.
- Add mashed potatoes, crumbled paneer, turmeric, chilli powder, coriander powder, garam masala, chaat masala and salt.
- Mix well and cook for 2-3 minutes.
- Turn off the heat. Add coriander and lemon juice.
- Allow the mixture to cool slightly.
- Cut the capsicums into thick rings, removing the seeds and inner membrane.
- Place each ring on a lightly oiled pan and carefully fill it with the potato-paneer mixture.
- Press gently so the filling holds its shape.
- Cook on a medium-low flame with a little oil until the bottom turns golden and crisp.
- Carefully flip and cook the other side until the capsicum is tender and the stuffing is beautifully browned.

*For the sauce:

- Whisk together curd, garlic, roasted cumin, salt and lemon juice until smooth.
- Arrange the stuffed capsicum rings on a serving platter and drizzle lightly with the garlic-curd sauce.
- Garnish with fresh coriander and a pinch of chilli flakes, if desired.

Tips: Use firm, broad capsicums so the rings hold their shape while cooking. Keep the stuffing slightly dry and well-cooled before filling for neat, crisp rings.

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

Food Authority urges greater awareness to reduce food waste



The Public Authority for Food and Nutrition (PAFN) has called for greater public awareness and more responsible consumption to reduce food loss and waste, stressing that preserving food is a shared responsibility.

Acting Director General Abeer Al-Ramah made the remarks during an awareness event held at The Avenues Mall to mark the International Day of Awareness of Food Loss and Waste, observed annually on September 29.

Al-Ramah said reducing food waste can begin with simple everyday practices, including purchasing appropriate quantities, storing food properly and making better use of leftovers instead of discarding them.

She noted that food passes through several stages and requires considerable effort and resources before reaching consumers. Preserving food, therefore, is an

important part of responsible consumption and resource conservation.

Al-Ramah urged citizens and residents to contribute to building a culture that discourages food waste, emphasizing that reducing unnecessary consumption also supports the protection of national resources and promotes sustainability.

The awareness campaign highlights the importance of individual responsibility in addressing food waste and encouraging more sustainable consumption habits across society.

The International Day of Awareness of Food Loss and Waste provides an opportunity each year to highlight the environmental, economic and social impact of food waste and encourage practical measures to prevent it.



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EXCLUSIVE to THE TIMES KUWAIT

**Nouriel Roubini**

senior economic strategist at Hudson Bay Capital Management, is Professor Emeritus at New York University's Stern School of Business and the author, most recently, of *Megathreats: Ten Dangerous Trends That Imperil Our Future, and How to Survive Them* (Little, Brown and Company, 2022).

Why Is the Global Economy So Resilient?

Despite the rising risks, uncertainties, and large negative supply shocks of the last two years, stock markets and the overall global economy have held up quite well. Following the shock of US President Donald Trump's "Liberation Day" (April 2) tariffs in 2025 came this year's Iran War, which caused the largest energy shock since the oil crises of the 1970s.

Yet, according to International Monetary Fund data, global growth was as high in 2025 as it was in 2024 (3.5%), and global inflation was lower in 2025 than in 2024. And while global growth is expected to slow to 3% this year, it is projected to recover (to 3.4%) in 2027, with inflation returning toward its 2025 level in 2027 after rising in 2026.

What explains the global economy's apparent resilience, and what are the biggest downside risks to the relatively benign outlook for 2027?

Four major factors have prevented a downturn. First, market discipline forced the Trump administration to shelve its most stagflationary policies. Average US tariff rates spiked from 2.1% in January 2025 to 21.5% on April 2, 2025, but that triggered a market reaction that forced Trump to blink and negotiate tariff reductions. The average tariff rate is now 9.6%. Likewise, Trump's decision to go to war against Iran caused an oil-price shock, rising bond yields, and a stock-market correction, leading him to negotiate a fragile ceasefire that partly reversed some of the damage.

Second, the tariff and oil shocks were mitigated by adjustments in trade patterns, global supply chains, and other production factors. With many new producers and sources of energy, the world today depends less on oil than in the past. A drawdown in strategic oil reserves (especially in China) and some demand destruction dampened the impact of the shock substantially.

Third, policy responses also helped absorb some of the impact. There was fiscal and monetary easing in many advanced economies in 2025, when growth

seemed to be at risk, followed by monetary tightening this year to keep inflation expectations anchored.

Fourth, and most importantly, the world is in the middle of a massive, positive long-term aggregate supply shock, owing to the AI investment boom. The United States and China are the clear leaders, but many other countries in Asia and Europe are also benefiting from this capital expenditures (capex) cycle, which also increasingly includes higher defense spending.

Still, there are tail risks to consider. For starters, geopolitical tensions are high, shipping through the Strait of Hormuz remains constrained and uncertain, and recent Houthi attacks on shipping chokepoints and a Saudi pipeline may further restrict oil and gas supplies. Oil prices have already spiked above \$100 per barrel again, and the longer that energy prices remain elevated, the greater the stagflationary pressure.

Moreover, the recent extension of the Sino-American truce may not last if China—and its de facto allies, Russia, Iran, and North Korea—feels emboldened by US geostrategic missteps. Tensions over Taiwan could rise after the island's elections in 2028, and the Russia-Ukraine conflict is already expanding to a wider theater—with Ukraine striking deep inside Russia, and Russia pursuing hybrid warfare against Europe. Given Ukraine's targeting of Russian energy facilities, the failure to secure a ceasefire will put additional upward pressure on hydrocarbon prices.

At the same time, liberal democracies are increasingly showing signs of political dysfunction, and upcoming elections in the US, France, Germany, Italy, and Spain could lead to more populist economic policies that would damage growth and introduce greater fiscal risks. Indeed, large fiscal deficits and high debt-to-GDP ratios in many advanced economies and some emerging markets are driving up sovereign bond yields, threatening to crowd out private-sector production, capex, and consumption, and raising the risk of credit crises.

The AI boom is another source of risk—and is showing signs of frothiness. If it proves to be a bubble

that must eventually pop or deflate, the result could be negative wealth effects (lower consumption), credit problems, and a loss of animal spirits among investors and households.

On the policy front, stagflationary shocks that reduce growth and increase inflation tend to create a dilemma for central banks with a dual mandate to maintain both price stability and full employment. If they conclude that additional rate hikes are warranted to fight inflation, that may weaken growth and raise financial-stability concerns, given high levels of private and public debt and the risk of debt monetization ("printing money").

In the baseline scenario, these negative risks remain contained, global economic growth improves in 2027, and inflation falls as productivity-enhancing technological innovations provide a strong tailwind for the global economy. In this case, high bond yields will be driven more by the AI boom than by concerns about inflation or fiscal deficits and debt. Moreover, an easing of geopolitical tensions is certainly possible and would reduce energy prices, creating the conditions for the positive—even double-digit—equity returns of recent years to continue.

But if the big risks do materialize, energy and commodity prices may remain high or rise further, and trade and supply chains could be more severely disrupted. That would significantly raise the risk of a serious market correction, with both higher bond yields and lower equity prices.

The more positive scenario is still the more likely one. Tech tailwinds remain strong, market discipline will still contain the worst policies, and the US and China both seem committed to de-escalating their rivalry. Given the scope of the potential risks, one must hold out hope that the current resilience will continue. Much will depend on political leaders avoiding extremes and not derailing one of the most important technological innovations in human history.

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With the global economy having weathered major trade and energy shocks over the past two years, growth should improve in 2027, and inflation should fall. Although various political and policy-driven risks could change the outlook, they remain less likely than the relatively benign baseline scenario.



CAPELLA SINGAPORE

By Noura Khan
Special to The Times Kuwait

In a city that rarely slows down, where glass towers, shopping malls and busy streets shape the rhythm of everyday life, Capella Singapore revealed an entirely different side of the Lion City to me — quieter, greener and far more intimate.

Hidden among tropical trees on a hillside on Sentosa Island, the resort feels like a world of its own, despite being only a short distance from the heart of Singapore.



Set across approximately 30 acres of lush tropical grounds, Capella Singapore features 113 rooms, suites, villas and manors, bringing together heritage architecture, contemporary design and nature in a remarkably harmonious setting.

A Story More Than a Century Old

At the heart of the resort stand two beautifully restored colonial buildings known as Tanah Merah, dating back to the 1880s. Once associated with officers of the British Royal Artillery, they have been carefully preserved and incorporated into the modern resort.

This meeting of old and new gives Capella an atmosphere that is difficult to recreate in a newly built hotel. Here, history is not simply decoration; it is part of the experience.

The property also entered modern history on 12 June 2018, when it hosted the first summit between US President Donald Trump and North Korean leader Kim Jong Un — the first-ever meeting between the sitting leaders of the two countries.

Knowing this while walking through the resort adds another dimension to the experience: Capella is not simply beautiful, but a place carrying stories from very different chapters of Singapore's past and present.

Quiet, Understated Luxury

What impressed me most during my stay was Capella's understated approach to luxury.

Rather than relying on excessive decoration, luxury here is expressed through space, privacy, nature and highly personalised service. Rooms and suites sit among the greenery, while the villas offer an even greater sense of seclusion.

The resort has 38 villas, each with an outdoor terrace and private plunge pool. Its spacious one-bedroom villas measure approximately 166 square metres, creating the feeling of a private tropical retreat only minutes from one of Asia's busiest cities.

Another distinctive feature is the Capella Culturist. More than traditional concierges, the Culturists act as cultural ambassadors and storytellers, helping guests discover the history, traditions and character of Sentosa and Singapore.

Experiences can range from Peranakan culture and Mahjong to traditional crafts, art tours and culinary

A Hidden World on Sentosa



activities. It is a thoughtful approach that encourages guests not only to stay in Singapore, but to understand something of the destination itself.

Few spaces capture Capella's character better than The Living Room.

Located within one of the historic colonial buildings, the intimate lounge is reserved exclusively for hotel guests, with refreshments, drinks and afternoon tea served throughout the day. The resort's cultural activities and workshops are typically held in The Pineapple

Room, which offers more space.

There is something memorable about sitting down for tea in surroundings that have witnessed more than a century of history — a sense of depth that a newly built hotel could rarely reproduce.

Among Capella Singapore's most recognisable features are its three cascading swimming pools surrounded by dense tropical greenery.

Relaxing beside them feels more like being on a secluded island retreat than staying close to one of Asia's most energetic cities.

That contrast became one of my favourite aspects of the stay: you can spend part of the day exploring Singapore, then return to Capella and almost instantly feel as though you have left the city behind.

Dining at Capella

Dining is an important part of the experience. At Cassia, traditional Cantonese cuisine is presented through a contemporary lens, in interiors designed by André Fu and inspired by the historic spice routes of southern and western China. In 2026, Cassia received a One Diamond rating in the Black Pearl Restaurant Guide.



At the heart of the resort stand two beautifully restored colonial buildings known as Tanah Merah, dating back to the 1880s. Once associated with officers of the British Royal Artillery, they have been carefully preserved and incorporated into the modern resort.



Fiamma, meanwhile, offers a more relaxed interpretation of Italian dining, centred around warmth, family and dishes designed for sharing.

The Pineapple Room celebrates Singaporean flavours through drinks incorporating local fruits and botanicals and, in 2026, also became home to Creative Encounters, a series of intimate conversations exploring art, design, gastronomy, literature and culture.

One of the easiest mistakes to make at Capella is to treat it simply as a place to sleep before heading out to explore Singapore.

Part of its appeal is allowing yourself time to remain within the resort.

Guests can enjoy the landscaped grounds, pools and wellness facilities, or take part in yoga, Pilates, sound-bath sessions, cooking classes and cultural experiences arranged by the Capella Culturists.

The hotel also offers activities including Peranakan tile painting, dim sum classes and Mahjong, while its Little Stars programme introduces younger guests to experiences centred around creativity, culture and discovery.

For guests wishing to explore further, shuttle services connect the hotel with VivoCity and Universal Studios Singapore.

Even the Art Tells a Story

Capella Singapore is home to more than 900 works of art, many integrated into the property as part of its original design concept.

Walking through its corridors, public spaces and gardens can sometimes feel like moving through an open gallery.

Perhaps that is why the hotel feels so cohesive. Its identity does not depend on conventional displays of luxury; instead, architecture, history, landscaping, art and service work together naturally.

For me, Capella Singapore stood apart because it introduced me to another version of the city.

Away from the skyscrapers, bright lights and shopping districts, I found a green island retreat filled with history, art and a remarkable sense of calm.

Capella seems to understand that true luxury does not always come from adding more.

Sometimes, luxury is simply about creating more space — for privacy, for nature, for stillness and for time. And that is what stayed with me long after I left.

Noura Khan a travel influencer and content creator, is a Kuwaiti national, holds a degree in law from Kuwait University and has worked as a journalist prior to taking up a position in the government. In 2018 she started blogging on travel and visited more than 57 countries since. She has more than 125k followers on her blog post @nourajtraveller is well appreciated for content and travel information. Noura writes exclusively for The Times Kuwait on her travel visits.

Finland and Kuwait explore wider cooperation in education and advanced technologies

Finnish Ambassador highlights opportunities in teacher training, higher education, environment, technology and investment

The Times Kuwait Report

Finland and Kuwait are exploring new avenues of cooperation in education, environmental technologies, advanced technology, investment and other areas, following a two-day visit to Kuwait by Finnish Under-Secretary of State for International Trade Jarno Syrjälä.

Finnish Ambassador to Kuwait H.E. Juha Mustonen, who accompanied Syrjälä during the visit, said discussions with Kuwait's Minister of Education and other officials were "very friendly" and "very fruitful", with education emerging as one of the most promising areas for expanded cooperation.

Teacher training at the heart of education reform

Mustonen said Finland could share its experience with Kuwait not only in curriculum development but, more importantly, in teacher education and professional development. He noted that Kuwait has already taken important steps to modernize its education system, particularly at the primary level, but said greater attention could now be given to how subjects are taught and how teachers are prepared to engage future generations.

Finnish education places strong emphasis on teacher preparation, pedagogy and student-centred learning. Teachers in Finland undergo extensive academic and pedagogical training, with all teachers holding master's degrees.



"The way of teaching is pupil-centred, student-centred," Mustonen said, highlighting the importance of creating learning environments that encourage student participation and motivation.

The discussions could pave the way for a high-level Kuwaiti delegation to visit Finland to study its education system and explore areas where the two countries can exchange expertise.

Opportunities in higher education

Higher education is another area where Finland is seeking stronger engagement with Kuwait. Mustonen invited Kuwaiti students to consider Finnish universities, which offer an increasing number of English-language master's programmes, particularly in engineering and the sciences, as well as programmes in business and the humanities.

He said international education can also strengthen people-to-people relations, with students returning home with academic, professional and personal connections that can develop into future cooperation in research, business and other fields.

Cooperation beyond education

The Finnish offer extends beyond education to circular economy, recycling, waste management, soil remediation, environmental technologies, nuclear and radiation safety, advanced technology, investment and tourism. Mustonen highlighted Finland's experience in dealing with contaminated soil, including work connected with the restoration of areas affected by the oil spills following Iraq's 1990 invasion of Kuwait. The experience, he said, provides a practical example of how Finnish expertise can

contribute to Kuwait's environmental priorities and sustainability efforts.

The Ambassador said the discussions reflected a mutual willingness to deepen dialogue between Finland and Kuwait. The proposed areas of

cooperation extend from classrooms and universities to environmental solutions, technology and investment, providing opportunities for greater institutional and people-to-people links between the two countries.





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