

German Ambassador H. E. Karlfried Bergner leaves Kuwait after completion of a very successful tenure in Kuwait. The popular, friendly and charming diplomat will be missed for his unassuming personality and sense of humor.

... See page 5 for full interview



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Number of citizens in public sector payroll increases

4

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LOCAL

Maternity Hospital – next on list for 'Kuwaiti only' reservation

9

LOCAL

Arabs becoming less religious more tolerant



www.timeskuwait.com

Billions worth of investment expected after Boursa upgrade

The upgrade by Morgan and Stanley Capital International (MSCI) is expected to result in billions of dollars of investor inflows into the Boursa. In addition to boosting liquidity, corporate governance and earnings growth, the reclassification is expected to result in the country's stock market attracting an additional \$2.8 billion in passive investment flows, according to market analysts.



THE TIMES REPORT

Leading global stock market indices provider, Morgan and Stanley Capital International (MSCI), said last week that it would upgrade Boursa Kuwait in its main Emerging Markets index effective May

will see nine of Kuwait's blue chip companies being included in MSCI's emerging markets benchmark from May next year, with an index weighting of 0.5 percent. MSCI's emerging markets index is currently tracked by about \$1.9 trillion in investment funds globally.

Kuwait Boursa has been one of the better performing stock exchanges in

Since 2016 when Boursa Kuwait took over management of the former Kuwait Stock Exchange, investment activity has spiked and the Boursa is proving attractive not only to investors in Kuwait, but also regionally and on the international level.

A major reason for the renewed interest and confidence in the Boursa was the takeover and makeover of the erstwhile stock exchange by the new management, under the overarching aegis of the Capital Markets Authority (CMA).

The need for a securities regulatory entity was discussed as early as the early 1980s, in the aftermath of the infamous Souk Al-Manakh crisis that devastated Kuwait's financial securities market. However, as with all things in Kuwait, the CMA was finally launched only in 2010, nearly three decades after the debacle of Souk Al-Manakh.

In 2010, the then prevailing fragmented nature of supervision over securities trading led to the establishment of the CMA. The Authority was given the broad mandate to regulate and supervise all activities related to securities trading, implement corporate governance regulations, ensure transparency in operations and protect investors from unfair practices.

...CONTINUED ON PAGE 11



2020. Boursa Kuwait, referred to by local investors as the Boursa is valued at around \$98 billion and is currently the biggest member of the MSCI's main Frontier index.

The reclassification from a Frontier Market to Emerging Market status

the region in recent financial quarters. In the year through to May 31, stocks on the exchange returned 22 percent, versus 4 percent for emerging markets overall. The Boursa's biggest names include National Bank of Kuwait (NBK) and Agility, a global logistics business.



Kuwait to modernize aging fighter-fleet



THE TIMES REPORT

The last time Kuwait revamped its fighter-fleet was in early 1992, following the country's liberation from the seven-month Iraqi occupation that had left the country's air defense in tatters. More than a quarter-century of relying on the same hardware in an industry such as defense, known for rapid technological advances, has meant Kuwait is far behind other countries in the region with regard to its air defenses.

The Kuwait Air Force (KAF) continues to rely on its aging fleet of

31 single-seat F/A-18C Hornets and the 8 dual-seat F/A-18D Hornets that began service in 1992, to support the country's strategic and tactical air maneuvers. Incidentally, even though the Hornets have been modernized in recent years to keep them relevant, these aircraft are among the oldest legacy Hornets flying anywhere. The government's decision to modernize the air force and acquire 56 new fighter jets — equally divided between the European Eurofighter Typhoons and the United States' Boeing F/A-18E/F Super Hornets — was never too soon for the air force.

...CONTINUED ON PAGE 11

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Number of citizens in public sector payroll increases

Contrary to what is often depicted by lawmakers the number of citizens employed in the public sector has been steadily increasing over the past 20 years.

New data shows that since 1999, over 81,000 Kuwaitis were added to the payroll in the government sector, which works out to an average of more than 4,000 nationals each year over the last two decades. In the same time period, the number of expatriates increased by 18,000, for an average increase of 900 a year, while the number of workers from the other five Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) states rose by about 84 a year.

Earlier report from the government's Civil

Service Commission showed that until July 2018 there were a total of 352,169 people employed in the public sector. Citizens made up around 76 percent of the employees (268,100), followed by expatriates who accounted for a little over 22 percent of staff (79,548), and GCC citizens who were roughly 2 percent of public sector workforce (4,521).

The report added that the implementation of the policy to replace expatriates by citizens does not necessarily mean the cessation of recruitment of expatriates in some rare specialties, which currently cannot be filled by the citizens because of insufficiency in academic and scientific qualifications

covering some areas, such as teaching, medicine or nursing staff.

Over the past years, the employment rate in government agencies has increased for several reasons, most notably the creation of new government bodies and institutions, and tightening screws on fictitious employment in the private sector, prompting citizens to apply for government jobs.

However, the new report is unlikely to soothe the ruffles of lawmakers looking for 100 percent Kuwaitization of jobs in public sector, or to appease public sentiment worried about growing unemployment among young nationals.



PACI stops name corrections on Civil ID

Public Authority for Civil Information (PACI) has announced that it will no longer correct discrepancies arising from a mismatch in names between the old residence visa in an individual's passport and their newly issued civil ID card.

According to the ministry of interior, all such name corrections will now be done by the computer section at the immigration department in each governorate, following huge rush at PACI headquarters. It is estimated that more than 250,000 people have so far approached PACI to rectify name mismatches.

To recall, the ministry of interior began implementing the government's decision to stop stamping a residence visa in the passports of expatriates from 10 March of this year. Instead, it was decided that a new civil ID card with all relevant residence details would

be issued to expatriates, as and when their residences were renewed or if they needed to transfer residences to a new passport.

Chaos ensued following the implementation of this decision. Many people receiving new civil ID cards and wishing to travel abroad were turned back by immigration authorities at the airport, as their names in the new civil ID and the old residence stamp in their passport did not match.

Meanwhile, officials at PACI have clarified that people could still use the e-services to verify their names before the new civil ID was issued, or if there was an error in the ID card after cross-checking with the documents issued by the ministry of interior.

For other corrections on your civil ID please visit: <https://e-envelope.paci.gov.kw/Eservices.aspx>

Large participation at ICAI's Blood Donation camp



Institute of Chartered Accountants of India (ICAI) - Kuwait chapter organized a Blood Donation Camp 2019 that saw participation from ICAI members, family and friends at Kuwait Central Blood Bank on 30 May. Aside from helping to replenish blood supplies at the blood bank to save a life, this blood drive also marked ICAI Foundation Day or Chartered Accountants Day celebrated every 1 July.



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Kuwait and Germany united by a close friendship

Farewell Ambassador Karlfried Bergner

BY REAVEN D'SOUZA
MANAGING EDITOR

Having completed a very successful tenure in Kuwait, German Ambassador H.E. Karlfried Bergner will be returning back home in July with lots of fond memories and accomplishments to his credit. The ever smiling and affable ambassador has since his arrival to Kuwait in 2016, not only further strengthened the excellent bilateral relations between the two countries but also built remarkable bonds of friendship between the two peoples.

Speaking to members of the media during a farewell luncheon hosted by the embassy, Ambassador Bergner spoke on wide ranging issues and touched upon some of his accomplishments.

and many high level exchanges between the two countries. Describing the relations between Germany and Kuwait as very good and very strong, he praised Kuwait's policies and humanitarian efforts and said Germany supports Kuwait's mediation in the Gulf crises.

"Kuwait plays a very constructive and positive role in the region and that is why we are intensifying cooperation," the ambassador stated, and added that Kuwait is a stabilizing factor in the region; it has always tried to mediate and de-escalate and continues to do so. For example, with regards to the ongoing rift within the GCC, Kuwait pursues a value-based foreign policy and supports multilateral approaches within the framework of the UN.

"Similar to Germany, Kuwait is also heavily engaged in

an important diplomatic partner in the region," he further added.

Germany and Kuwait are both elected non-permanent members in the Security Council and have very close cooperation and coordination on several issues from international disputes to humanitarian and development issues.

"We are in the process of setting up an office for the German Association for International Cooperation that will enhance issues of humanitarian and international cooperation, both issues dear to Kuwaiti government," the ambassador disclosed.

The close friendship between the two countries is also reflected in the growing trade relationship. Ambassador Bergner revealed that in the coming months a delegate from the German Chamber of Commerce was going to be stationed in Kuwait and that this would further help trade between the two countries. Germany exports approximately \$1.6 billion worth of goods and services to Kuwait and investment from Kuwait exceed \$40 billion from both KIA and private investors.

"Germany is the largest European exporter of goods to Kuwait and the process to further enhance and increase these numbers would continue," the ambassador stated, adding that efforts to organize investment seminars and to showcase investment opportunities in Germany will certainly continue so as to promote Kuwait as a stable and wealthy market to German companies.

The ambassador also pointed out that Germany has been a preferred destination for Kuwaiti travellers and the embassy issues almost 60,000 visas annually mostly for tourism purposes. The embassy has also changed the outsourcing visa service provider to further enhance the services. During the peak summer rush the demand escalates and though the embassy tries its best to keep up, limitations of space and resource means that we are unable to drastically increase the processing during this period.

On tasks that he would like to see taken forward, Ambassador Bergner noted that he would like to increase the number of Kuwaiti students in Germany. "It is a strategic advantage to have a certain number of Kuwaitis who studied in Germany, hopefully learnt the language, and know the German culture," he said, adding that such a pool of Kuwaitis would be instrumental in strengthening bilateral relations.

Recognising the challenges to this path, in particular the language, the embassy has started an initiative that will hopefully create a German ecosystem in Kuwait at various levels. These include strengthening language training not only in schools but also in institutions



“Germany and Kuwait are tied by close and friendly relations. The Embassy plays a uniting role in this — bringing the governments and civil societies of both countries together.”



During Germany's National Day celebrations, German Ambassador and spouse celebrate the occasion with special guest.

"Kuwait has been a very rewarding experience as one meets Kuwaitis and foreigners from all walks of life, and the Kuwaiti hospitality has been remarkable in every way," Ambassador Bergner pointed out.

During his tenure there have also been three ministerial visits

humanitarian assistance within the region and beyond, a fact that has been recognized through the nomination of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah as 'Humanitarian Leader' by the UN. Kuwait also has a soft power that goes far beyond its size or population and this makes it



Visiting the Diwaniya of Editor-in-chief of The Times, Kuwait Tareq Yousuf Al-Shumaimry during Ramadan



Ambassador Karlfried Bergner, Managing Editor of The Times, Kuwait Reaven D'Souza and Deputy chief of Mission Rudiger Zettel

of higher education. In addition, there are plans to increase the post graduate and doctoral students in Germany because many of these programmes can be done in English and this will help to develop new academic ties between Germany and Kuwait, besides, high quality education in German is free of charge, the ambassador pointed out.

In the three years in Kuwait Ambassador Bergner has endeared himself to a wide cross section of

people from government officials to diplomats to the business community, members of the media and his colleagues. In conclusion ambassador praised the diversity, open mindedness, the accessibility to the authorities, the very warm friendship of people of Kuwait and the great variety of food! "My wife and I leave behind some fondest memories and we thank everyone for the excellent treatment meted out to us during our tenure here," ambassador remarked.

Dining IN KUWAIT

For a complete list of featured restaurants, visit
http://www.timeskuwait.com/News_Dining_In_Kuwait

Al Roushena



A great café for taking a relaxing break while you partake in dishes from its delicious multi-cuisine menu that includes pizza, hamsat, grills, appetizers, pies, chabati yadoo, sandwiches and croissants. Breakfast can be a great treat with flavorful eggs including shakshouka alroushena and massala, or the Rugag in the flavors of nutella, lotus and mortadella and cheese. There is also Saj with filling options encompassing Nutella, eggplant and potatoes and rahash. However, the most filling option is the Luluah breakfast.

Currying your favor is the delicious appetizers with options such as mutabbal and potato with halabino cheese. Another successful aspect of the café is the range of pizzas including mushroom pizza, margherita pizza, and the specialty- Alroushena pizza.

The more straightforward plates include shish tawouk with rice, shish tawouk with rice, kebab with rice and shish tawouk, all reasonably priced.

Given an emphasis is the selection of pies including Halloum Fattair, Kraft Fattier, Zattar Fattier or a delicious mix of all the options. A classic burger sandwich or a chicken fillet sandwich makes a great lunch option.

Enhancing the simple potato with choices such as grilled potato, corn and cream, grilled potato vegetables and the classic grilled potato that will make a wonderful accompaniment to any meal. Leave us not forget the range of refreshing drinks such as hot drinks, Frappuccino, milk shakes, and the traditional Karak. Sweeten your palate with desserts including the scrumptious Choco Fondue.

Popular dish: Alroushena Pizza

At Discovery Mall, Kuwait City. Call: 97770589

Mana



A café devoted to homey Mexican favorites in their rich menu filled with a variety of appetizers, soups, salads and main dishes. Inspired by the golden age of exploration, Mana presents a polished nostalgic dining experience to the local food scene in Kuwait. Fresh appetizer ideas feature tasty dishes like the Bungao, Beetroot Hummus and Huracán. You would like to try the Soul Nacho, which is crispy nachos topped with cream cheese, minced beef, and jalapeños. Another palatable option is the nutritious Soup & Salads, where you have the choice of earthy beets, pumpkin squash or lemongrass soup. Inspired by the renowned Tom Yum, the soup is particularly filling with fragrant

lemongrass soup flavored with red chili, fresh shrimp, mushroom, and mixed vegetables.

The main dishes serves up choices that mix traditional dishes with a touch of modern such as Churras, Rosemary Chicken, Mana-Bu, Ginger Salmon and Beef Gnocchi. Savor a bit of Argentinean cuisine with the Ricotta Cannelloni, Argentinean lasagna rolls filled with spinach and ricotta. Taste a sweet dessert to balance out the savory such as Ghazal, Piñacoco and High Andes. Receiving high praise is the High Andes, which is delicious molten chocolate cake, topped with soft serve swirl, and garnished with crushed peanut pretzels.

Popular dish: Beef Gnocchi

At Qibla, Kuwait City. Call: 965 22263163

Every week, our 'Dining in Kuwait' section features selected restaurants in the country that provide sumptuous cuisines from around the world. Want to feature your restaurant in our 'Dining in Kuwait' section and reach out to our wide reader base? Email us at editor@timeskuwait.com with a brief about your restaurant along with images in high resolution.

Thought for the week

“Escalation of the tensions between the world's two largest economies could well produce a global recession and subsequent financial crisis by 2020.

— Nouriel Roubini, Economist

Greek Yogurt

Ask Mira: Eating Right to Live Happy & Healthy



Greek yogurt is the hottest type of yogurt right now. It is made by removing most of the excess liquid from the yogurt that results in a richer and creamier product. Removing all the excess liquid doubles the protein content found in regular yogurt and increases the nutritional value of the yogurt. It also helps to keep your appetite satisfied until the next meal, so it is perfect for those who want to build muscles.

Greek yogurt is still very high in calcium (20 percent of your daily recommended amount) and often lower in carbohydrates compared to regular yogurt.

Greek yogurt is also an excellent source of probiotics (good bacteria), which is needed to prevent bloating and gas problems, hence it is very important for a normal digestion process. Plain nonfat yogurt has only 60 calories. You can also find the fruit flavored ones for those who enjoy the taste of fruit.



Smart tips for adding Greek yogurt to your meal:

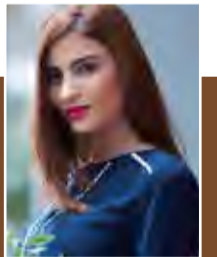
- Greek yogurt can work as a natural substitute to many higher-fat ingredients. For example, use it as the base dressing for your favorite salad.

Instead of using the high fat and calorie sour cream and mayonnaise, try the plain and non-fat Greek yogurt instead.

- You can also use it as a dip for your fresh fruits and makes a great lower-calorie tasty snack.
- Another way to infuse fruity flavor into plain fat-free Greek yogurt is to add a tablespoon of sweeteners, try apricots or pomegranate for a higher taste.

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

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



Summer heat prompts 15-minute time limit on religious sermons

Religious authorities have issued an instruction for mosques in Kuwait that the duration of the Friday sermon must not exceed 15 minutes due to the summer heat.

The Ministry of Awqaf made these instructions because worshippers sometimes have to perform the prayers in the open space due to overcrowding inside the mosque, mainly in residential areas.

The ministry also ordered the sermon run for a maximum of 10 minutes in mosques located in border areas where temperatures are usually higher.

Kuwait has been sweltering in a heat wave that is expected to continue through the summer months.

The country recorded this month the world's highest temperature with 52.2 degrees Celsius, according to local media. In another attempt to mitigate the effects of the intense heat on residents in Kuwait, the government is

enforcing a seasonal midday ban on outdoor work in the summer heat that is in effect from June until the end of August, peak months of the summer in Kuwait.



Somalia embassy celebrates 59th Independence Day

The Embassy of Somalia held a reception to commemorate the country's 59th Independence and Unification Days. Members of the diplomatic corps, government officials, members of the Somali community in Kuwait and media personnel attended the event.

In his address to the gathering, the Somali Ambassador to Kuwait H.E. Abdullahi Mohammed Odowa revealed some historical background on the Somalia Independence Day celebrations. He said, "Every year, the people of Somalia hold a week-long Independence Day Festival, as three significant events took place in the last week of colonial rule in the Somali territories in the Horn of Africa."

He elaborated by saying, "First, on 26 June 1960, former British Somaliland got its independence from Great Britain. Four days later, on 1 July 1960, the former Italian Somaliland got its independence from Italy. And, finally, again on 1



July 1960, the British and Italian Somali colonies united to form the Republic of Somalia."

"After 59 years of Independence, the Somali experience shows mixed results of success and challenges concerning state-building endeavors," the Somali ambassador noted, "In the first nine years following independence, Somalia was one of the first countries in Africa to successfully establish a vibrant multi-party democracy and the rule of law. Unfortunately, the military coup in October 1969 and subsequent years of military rule and dictatorship resulted in a civil war and state collapse in the country. However, after years of national reconciliation efforts, and to address the grievances of

different regions and districts across the country, the Somali people have opted to adopt a federal system of government, and as a result, the country was renamed as Federal Government of Somalia."

Speaking about the advantages that his country and people present, Ambassador Odowa said, "Somalia is endowed with enormous economic potential of untapped natural resources and an essentially strategic geopolitical location on the Gulf of Aden, which includes one of the longest coastlines of mainland Africa. In addition, there is a large population of the Somali diaspora in almost all parts of the world, including North America, Europe, Australia, New Zealand, Middle East and Africa.

The future of Somalia is one full of hope and brightness." Expressing praise for his countrymen and their contributions to the development of Kuwait, their second-home, the ambassador said, "The Somali community in Kuwait is one of the oldest communities in the country with the first members of the community arriving here in the late 1940 and 1950. However, the majority of Somali families and experts arrived here in the late 20th century."

"Since then, the Somali community has been part of the magnificent transformation and development that has taken place in Kuwait under the leadership of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmed Al-Jaber Al-Sabah."

"It is important to note that two brotherly communities of Kuwait and Somalia share many cultural and traditional norms in common, which is why Kuwait has become home far from home for many Somalis who are born and educated in Kuwait," he stressed.



Maternity Hospital – next on list for 'Kuwaiti only' reservation



Outspoken lawmaker Safaa Al-Hashim continued her racially-tinted comments against expatriates by saying that many expatriate women come to Kuwait on visit visas "with a 10-meter belly just 10 days ahead of giving birth" to avail of the country's maternity services.

The parliamentarian was responding to Health Minister Sheikh Dr. Basel Al-Sabah's statement about overcrowding at

maternity hospitals in Kuwait, and the need to raise maternity fees and birth charges at public hospitals. Blaming the congestion in Maternity Hospital on expatriate women, Al-Hashim added that "many expatriate women come to Kuwait just to deliver babies, as the fee for this service is only KD3 here."

She called on the health minister to ensure that these women are not admitted at the Maternity Hospital and instead sent to Farwaniya and Jleeb Al-Shuyoukh Hospitals. The lawmaker also blamed expatriates for the poor state of most health facilities in the country and accused them of overwhelming medical services.

She urged the health minister to reserve the Amiri and Sabah Hospitals only for Kuwaitis, as was done with the Jaber Hospital in Surrah, which is designated a 'Kuwaiti only' hospital.

Luckily, the lawmaker did not call for the 'Kuwaiti only' facilities to be manned exclusively by Kuwaiti medical personnel.

ABCK celebrates Fourth of July



The American Business Council of Kuwait (ABCK) organized a Fourth of July celebration this year at the Jumeirah Messilah Beach Resort & Spa. The Fourth of July or Independence Day is regarded as an important national holiday in the US as it marks the anniversary of the signing of the US Declaration of Independence in 1776.

The event kicked off with opening remarks delivered by ABCK's Chairman Oswaldo Rueda followed by ABCK's Vice Chairman Frank Belonus, who gave a brief introduction about ABCK's operations and the event. Following the speech, the event's activities commenced with a BBQ and live music performed by the band. In attendance were over

300 guests made up of ABCK Board members, ABCK members, US service members and Kuwaiti citizens.

Following a beautiful day of activities by the beach, the attendees gathered for the singing of the US national anthem and a recognition ceremony. During his speech, the US Ambassador Lawrence Silverman expressed his gratitude for the American service men and the brave sacrifices they make for their country. The cake cutting ceremony was carried out by Brigadier General Staundenraus, and the youngest soldier in the troop. Per tradition, the oldest and youngest soldiers present join hands in cutting the cake, symbolizing the generations that have served in the army.

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Mandatory tests for expatriates seeking profession changes

In a bid to regulate the labor market and end, or at least limit, trade in visas, the Public Authority for Manpower (PAM) is understood to have taken a number of steps aimed at streamlining the process of recruiting expatriates in many professions, especially in the technical and allied fields.

Determined to stamp out the phenomena of trafficking in residence permits, PAM will begin going after the people who take advantage of loopholes in residence law. Knowledgeable sources revealed that many visa traders or their recruiting agents technical and allied fields, in exchange for amounts that

range from KD1,500 and above depending on the profession and nationality of the visa applicant.

State Minister for Economic Affairs Mariam Al- Aqeel earlier revealed that PAM had already put in place controls over people wanting to change their professions so as to eventually end the trade in residence permits. Elaborating on this, she said that PAM is preparing mandatory tests that people will have to pass if they desire to change their residences and take up new jobs in any of over 20 professions.

The professions that people will have to take tests include

accountants, librarians, legal counsels, legal clerks, advertising agents, sales representatives, purchasing officers, security and safety supervisors, technical surveyors, aluminum technicians, asphalt laboratory technician, car mechanics, carpenters, construction carpenters, electricians, welders, lathe technicians, irrigation technicians, steel fixers, and sanitary workers.

The minister added that if a worker wished to change his academic qualifications, he would have to leave the country and return with a new work permit in accordance with the technical qualifications he wished to work under.



Porsche Centre welcomes the new 911

Faster, more powerful and, more efficient than ever before, the eighth generation of the Porsche 911 has arrived in Kuwait. Revealed at a special event held by Porsche Centre Kuwait, Behbehani Motors Company, at the showroom, two variants, the rear-wheel drive 911 Carrera S and the all-wheel drive 911 Carrera 4S, highlighted the design and performance evolution of the brand's most iconic sports car.

The rear-engine model range has been redesigned and now showcases a more muscular look that pays tribute to its past, while also embracing the future with technology woven into its DNA.

Speaking during the launch event, Callum Bottomley, General Manager of Porsche Centre Kuwait, said: "Just like the first generation, the latest 911 is a sports car for the new era. Our icon has once again evolved and is now more powerful, more emotional, and more efficient than its predecessors.

It is the best 911 Porsche has ever produced and this eighth generation maintains the 911's status as a pure driver's car that also offers everyday usability and unique design. As such, I am delighted to announce that the 911 Carrera

S and the 911 Carrera 4S are now available here in Kuwait." The new 911's silhouette remains iconic with an exterior design is more assertive, with significantly wider wheel housings arch



over the 20-inch front wheels and 21-inch rear wheels. The turbocharged flat-six engine of both models now produces 450 hp. The new optional LED matrix headlights with PDLS Plus are an eye-catching development. As can be expected from Porsche, further models, including the new 911 Carrera S and 4S Cabriolet will arrive in due course.

Ethiopian Airlines takes delivery of new Boeing 777 Freighter



Ethiopian Cargo & Logistics Services, Africa's largest cargo operator, has taken delivery of its tenth B777F, on 22 June at its home base of Bole International Airport in Addis Ababa. The new aircraft takes the total number of Ethiopian's freighter fleet to 12 and helps the airline maintain its trajectory of growth and expansion in the global cargo industry.

Africa's largest cargo service provider and one of the major global cargo network operators, Ethiopian Cargo & Logistics Services, plays a critical role in providing global connectivity by flying across the five continents.

The new aircraft will help Ethiopian strengthen its leading role in cargo operation across Africa and beyond by facilitating the export of perishable farm products, garments, mining products and other

goods, as well as the import of high value industrial products and inputs, pharmaceuticals and others, thereby expanding the airline's commendable contribution in boosting the continent's airfreight.

Currently, Ethiopian Cargo & Logistics Services serves over 55 international dedicated freighter destinations in Africa, the Gulf, Middle East, Asia, the Americas and Europe. With more freighters on order, Ethiopian is set to consolidate its role in availing much needed airfreight service within Africa and beyond, further catalyzing the continent's economic growth. According to the airline's 15-year growth road map, Vision 2025, Ethiopian Cargo & Logistics Services envisions generating two billion dollars of revenue annually with 19 dedicated freighters transporting 820,000 tons of cargo annually.

FWU organizes 'Sunrise Yogathon' to mark 5th International Yoga Day



Popular women's fitness group, Fitness with Urvi (FWU), celebrated the 5th International Yoga Day, which is held annually on 21 June, with an invigorating sunrise yoga session at the Goal Salmiya Ground, in Salmiya. This year's theme was 'Sunrise Yogathon 2019 for a Healthy Heart' in line with the global theme of 'Yoga for Heart'. Over 70 attendees participated in the event, which was led by FWU's Yoga Blend instructor, Dr. Prabha Krishna. A Naturopathic doctor, and professional yoga instructor with over 15 years of experience, Dr. Prabha joined hands with FWU three years ago to add the ancient practice of yoga to its existing diverse fitness activities.

During the session, yoga enthusiasts of various nationalities and age groups performed 100 Yoga postures with emphasis on the importance on mindful breathing and its role on heart health. Dr. Prabha led the group through the various postures and explained the health-benefiting techniques.

The idea to dedicate a day for Yoga was proposed by Indian Prime Minister, Narendra Modi, at the United Nations in 2014 and was later declared unanimously by the United Nations General

Assembly in December of the same year to be observed on 21 June annually.

The program was organized by FWU Founder, Urvi Trehan and her team, to support the movement and spread awareness of holistic mind and body practice of Yoga. FWU is a women-only fitness group, hugely popular amongst expat residents in Kuwait, with regular classes and activities held around Salmiya and Mangaf. They recently celebrated their 8 years anniversary.



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Arabs becoming less religious more tolerant

One of the largest and most in-depth survey undertaken of the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region, on how Arabs feel about a wide range of issues from religion and migration to women's rights, sexuality and security, is proving an eye-opener for both the public and the authorities.

The survey was commissioned by the BBC News Arabic and undertaken on their behalf by the Arab Barometer research network. The poll, which covered over 25,000 people across 10 countries and the Palestinian territories between late 2018 and early-half of 2019, did not include the six nations that form the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) states.

In addition to the Palestinian territories, other countries involved in the BBC survey were Algeria, Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, Sudan, Tunisia and Yemen.

Some of the highlights from the survey include:

Over the past five years the number of people across the region identifying as 'not religious' has risen from 8 percent in 2013

to 13 percent in 2018. The rise is greatest in the under 30s age-group, among whom 18 percent identify as not religious, according to the research. Only Yemen saw a fall in the category.

Largest number of people identifying themselves as 'non-religious' were in North Africa, with Tunisia and Algeria leading the list followed by Morocco and Egypt, and in Lebanon. From 2013 to 2018, Yemen is the only country to buck the trend and become more increasingly religious, perhaps on account of the ongoing war in the country.

Most people across the region supported the right of a woman to become prime minister or president. The exception was Algeria where less than 50 percent of respondents found a woman head of state as acceptable.

But when it comes to domestic life, most, including a majority of women, believe that husbands should always have the final say on family decisions. Only in Morocco did fewer than half the population think a husband should always be the ultimate decision-maker. Acceptance of homosexuality varies but

is low or extremely low across the region. In Lebanon, despite having a reputation for being more socially liberal than its neighbors, the figure is 6 percent. More accommodating were Morocco and Algeria where 26 percent and 21 percent respectively were willing to accept homosexuality.

Interestingly, when it came to honor killings — where relatives kill a family member, usually a woman, for allegedly bringing dishonor onto the family — the rate of acceptance and rejection were similar to that for homosexuality. While the link, if any, between these two social phenomena were not clear, it appears that honor killings were equally, if not more, acceptable to homosexuality in the region.

Security remains a concern for many in the Middle East and North Africa region. When asked which countries posed the biggest threat to their stability and national security, after Israel, the US was identified as the second biggest threat in the region as a whole, and Iran was third.

Despite America being identified as a major



threat to the region, the number of people considering migrating to North America has risen, and while Europe is less popular than it was, it remains the top choice for those people thinking of leaving the region.

In every place questioned, research suggested at least one in five people were considering emigrating. In Sudan, this accounted for half the population. Economic reasons were overwhelmingly cited as the driving factor.

Adeeb Ahamed honored as NRI Businessman of the Year



Adeeb Ahamed, MD, LuLu Financial Group and Twenty14 Holdings accepting the NRI Businessman of the Year 2018 award from Tom Jose IAS, Chief Secretary, Government of Kerala during the Dhanam Business Summit & Award Nite 2019 at Le Meridien in Kochi

The 13th edition of Dhanam Awards was held at Le Meridien Hotel, Kochi on Friday, 28 June with awards presented to leading business leaders. The award recognizes key icons who have achieved outstanding results and that have set them apart as leaders in their own spheres.

In recognition of their contribution towards the growth of business across various sectors around the world, Adeeb Ahamed was honored with Dhanam NRI Businessman of the Year 2018 title.

Adeeb Ahamed spearheads Lulu Financial Group that runs 180 branches worldwide; Twenty14 Holdings, the hospitality investment firm that owns London's Great Scotland Yard Hotel

among others; and Tablez, a fast-growing retail chain in UAE and India.

"I am truly honored to accept the award for NRI Businessman of the Year. And in doing so, I am humbled to represent the NRI community, who are a crucial cog in the wheel of India's development. I would also like to congratulate my fellow awardees who have carved a niche of their own in their fields of expertise," said Adeeb Ahamed.

He further added, "I would like to thank the Dhanam group for this recognition and dedicate it to all my associates at my organization. This is a truly wonderful initiative to recognize such enterprising people, and this will go a long way in inspiring the business community."

Exchange companies express difficulty in complying with Kuwaitization

Central Bank of Kuwait has clarified that it has no role in monitoring compliance with the Kuwaitization plan, or in imposing it on money-exchange companies in the country. The explanation came after the bank had earlier sent a circular to all the exchange houses that they needed to comply with the government's Kuwaitization plan, which calls for reserving up to 15 percent of jobs in exchange firms for Kuwaiti nationals by 20 July.

In a recent meeting with representatives of the Federation of Exchange Companies in Kuwait, the Central Bank explained that its role was limited to only sending the circular to all the exchange houses in the country. The bank added that the directive on Kuwaitization had come from the Public Authority of Manpower (PAM) and that exchange companies need to raise any issues pertaining to the plan with PAM.

In the meeting with the Chairman of the Kuwaiti Federation of Exchange Companies, Abdullah Al Mulla, and



his deputy Talal Bahman, Central Bank officials pointed out that PAM was the only entity assigned to impose and monitor compliance with the Kuwaitization plan. The authority was also responsible for taking any punitive measures against companies, including levying fines of up to KD300 per employee hired by companies in violation of the set manpower ratios.

On the possibility of allowing exchange companies to extend the

deadline for the completion of the national employment rate by an additional six months so that they could modify their status or provide proof of plans to recruit more national manpower, the bank explained that it was also not interested in considering the application of the Federation, as that too was within the authority of PAM.

The Federation of Exchange Companies is now expected to approach PAM through an official letter explaining the challenges they face in meeting the specified employment ratios. The Federation will reportedly clarify to PAM that the low salaries and work shifts of exchange companies will not be attractive to Kuwaiti nationals. Moreover, increasing salaries or reducing work shifts to accommodate citizens is not a viable option for exchange companies, as it could threaten their ability to continue operations and would also reflect poorly on Kuwait's business and investment environment.

Lack of recreational facilities lead many youth to delinquency

The country lacks adequate good quality recreational facilities and domestic tourism has remained stagnant due to lack of coherent plans for development of the sector laments the country's travel industry.

There is growing deterioration in local recreational facilities and spending on domestic tourism in Kuwait is negligible relative to other countries in the region, said the General Manager of Leaders Group, Nabila Al-Anjari. She added that the absence of proper recreational activities in the country is a cause for increasing delinquency among youth, especially those who cannot afford to travel to other leisure venues during the long summer vacation and during extended national holidays. "This makes them an easy prey for drug dealers or for committing violence or any other negative practices that they might resort to let off steam," she warned.

According to studies, it costs a



Kuwaiti family of four an average of KD1,500 to travel to Dubai and Turkey for four days during popular holidays. In comparison, it costs about the same amount for the same family to spend four days in a chalet in Kuwait. "This calls for building more resorts and recreation facilities that families can use for reasonable prices," Anjari added, noting that three-quarter of Kuwaitis remained in Kuwait during the recent Eid holidays.

Anjari argued that due to the number

of people who remained in Kuwait, all parks and beaches were heavily crowded despite the heat, which she said confirms the need for more recreational facilities. "The deteriorating infrastructure deprives those remaining in Kuwait from decent recreational options compared to other GCC states," she said.

New entertainment projects are rare and existing venues such as the Entertainment City in Doha have been closed for renovation since 2016. The Amiri Diwan has now taken up the restoration of Entertainment City as a priority project and one hopes the work will be completed in the next couple of years, said Anjari. She also noted that bad planning on improving domestic tourism is as depressing as the sluggishness of many other projects related to the New Kuwait 2035 Vision, such as the railway project and many others. "These situations result from defective planning, bad programs, delayed schedules and lack of supervision," she concluded.

Kuwait to play Qatar in cricket T-20 Internationals bilateral series

Kuwait Cricket is set to play its first-ever T-20 Internationals Bilateral Series with Qatar Cricket Association at the Asian Town international cricket stadium in Doha, Qatar.

The best of three T-20 Internationals will be played from 4th to 6th July with all matches being played at night under floodlights considering the extreme hot conditions in the region.

The International Cricket Council (ICC), which has approved the T-20 Internationals bilateral series between Kuwait and Qatar, will be extending all the technical support required to conduct the tournament successfully.

A win against Qatar will not only give Kuwait a boost in its rankings but will also help the team prepare for the ICC T-20 World Cup Qualifiers scheduled to take place in Singapore from the 20th to 29th of July, where Qatar is also participating along with host nations Singapore Cricket Association, Malaysian Cricket Association and 11th ranked Nepal national cricket team.

Kuwait National team will be led by Kashif Shareef, who as captain was responsible for getting Kuwait through to the upcoming Asia finals of ICC T-20 World Cup Qualifiers. The team will be under the able coaching of Herschelle Gibbs.



Australia

- A land of thrilling adventure

The energy of its contemporary culture is in contrast to a landscape that is ancient and often looks it: much of central and western Australia – the bulk of the country – is overwhelmingly arid and flat. In contrast, its cities, most founded as recently as the mid-nineteenth century, bursts with a vibrant, youthful energy.

The most iconic scenery is the Outback, the vast fabled desert that spreads west of the Great Dividing Range into the country's epic interior. Here, vivid blue skies, cinnamon-red earth, deserted gorges and geological features as bizarre as the wildlife. Here are the best places to visit in Australia.



Sydney: The capital of New South Wales plays host to the photogenic Sydney Harbor (the world's largest natural harbor), the one-of-a-kind Sydney Opera House, a lively entertainment scene and some of the best restaurants in the world. Bondi Beach offers incredible surfing opportunities, fantastic cafes and restaurants, designer shops and plenty to keep you busy. Take a casual stroll along the Bondi to Coogee Coastal Walk - one of Sydney's most scenic treks. Aside from treks, relax at Sydney's sought-after eastern beaches, including Bronte Beach and Clovelly.

There is also Taronga Zoo which houses more than 4,000 animals from various exotic and native species, including gorillas, tigers, leopards, chimpanzees, giraffes, Australian sea lions, kangaroos and koalas. Once you have been up close with the animals, experience the wildlife from a new perspective by tackling the treetop Wild Ropes – more than 60 high rope challenges over four courses, including zip-lines, rope climbs and suspended bridges.



Melbourne: The second-largest city in Australia is overflowing with first-rate attractions, from cultural and architectural highlights to amazing outdoor locations. The center of Melbourne is threaded with cobbled laneways,

which have become a mecca for coffee shops, cafés and unique shopping boutiques. There are also top-rate museums such as the National Gallery of Victoria to stunning nearby getaways such as Port Campbell National Park. The National Gallery of Victoria (NGV) is Australia's oldest gallery and hosts an exciting range of exhibitions and events, and a collection of more than 70,000 works. Also, the Heide Museum of Modern Art at Bulleen provides an insight into Australian artists. In the evening, catch a performance at one of Melbourne's many theatres, which host everything from musicals to comedy. Discover Aboriginal culture at the Melbourne Museum's Bunjilaka Aboriginal Culture Centre and the Aboriginal-owned Koorie Heritage Trust.

Cairns: Set along the Pacific, Cairns is the jumping-off point for the Great Barrier Reef and the UNESCO World Heritage-listed Daintree Rainforest, among other natural wonders. The city of about 150,000 has a growing cafe scene,



swimming lagoon and a relaxed vibe. The only living thing on Earth visible from space, the Great Barrier Reef was born 25 million years ago.

The world's largest reef system stretches for 3,000 kilometers (1,865 miles) off the Queensland coast and has 400 types of coral and 1,500 species of tropical fish. Along with diving and snorkeling, you can also fish and island hop.



Perth: Australia's sunniest capital city, Perth effortlessly blends urban cool with raw natural beauty. Its heart is bustling with new bars, restaurants, shopping and cultural spaces, and is also home to Kings Park - one of the world's largest inner city parks. Also worth mentioning is Swan Valley and a string of stunning beaches.

Blue Mountains: Famous for its rock formation known as the Three Sisters – along with quaint hotels and charming townships. Here you can discover one million hectares (2.5

million acres) of tall forests, sandstone cliffs, waterfalls and bushland, either mountain biking, abseiling or on foot. They contain some of the world's oldest species of plants including Wollemi pines, which are the botanical equivalent of dinosaurs.

Soaring forests, canyons, sandstone cliffs and waterfalls are some of the major draws for outdoor enthusiasts. The eucalyptus oil from gum trees gives the vistas in the Blue Mountains their namesake haze.



Rottne Island: With 63 beaches, Rottne Island is a great destination for water sports, including swimming, diving, surfing, fishing and snorkeling. It is also the perfect location to see humpback and southern right whales as they make their annual migration along Western Australia's coastline. Aside from mammals, the island is home to the quokka, as well as the world's most critically endangered mammals, Gilbert's potoroo.



Atherton Tablelands: Climbing back from the coast between Innisfail and Cairns is the fertile food bowl of the far north, the Atherton Tablelands. Quaint country towns, eco-wilderness lodges and luxurious B&Bs dot greener-than-green hills between patchwork fields, pockets of rainforest, spectacular lakes, waterfalls and Queensland's highest mountains, Bartle Frere (1622m) and Bellenden Ker (1593m).

The Tablelands is the traditional home of the Djirrbal and Ngadjonji tribes of the Djirrbal language group, while the area around Kuranda and Yungaburra is the land of the Djabugay (Tjapukai) and Yidinji peoples. The Atherton Tablelands is included in the 1988 World Heritage Listing because of its natural beauty and fragile ecosystem.



Kangaroo Island: Several conservation parks provide the local wildlife with welcome sanctuary. Kangaroos and tamar wallabies are relatively common in several of the island's reserves, including Black Swamp in Flinders Chase National Park and Latham Conservation Park. Several species of rare birds live in Latham Conservation Park and Baudin Conservation Park, including the critically endangered glossy black cockatoo. On the western side of Kangaroo Island, Flinders Chase National Park is a large natural sanctuary for many species of native Australian animals, like rare tamar wallabies and the elusive platypus. A major attraction here is Remarkable Rocks, a seaside collection of enormous orange-lichen-covered granite boulders carved into strange shapes by millions of years of rain, wind and waves. Another highlight is Admirals Arch, a distinctive stalactite-covered eroded rock bridge smashed by waves that sometimes plays host to basking New Zealand fur seals.

Facebook's Libra Must Be Stopped



KATHARINA PISTOR

Professor of Comparative Law at Columbia Law School. She is the author of The Code of Capital: How the Law Creates Wealth and Inequality.

Facebook has just unveiled its latest bid for world domination: Libra, a cryptocurrency designed to function as private money anywhere on the planet. In preparing the venture, Facebook CEO Mark Zuckerberg has been in negotiations with central banks, regulators, and 27 partner companies, each of which will contribute at least \$10 million. For fear of raising safety concerns, Facebook has avoided working directly with any commercial banks.

Zuckerberg seems to understand that technological innovation alone will not ensure Libra's success. He also needs a commitment from governments to enforce the web of contractual relations underpinning the currency, and to endorse the use of their own currencies as collateral. Should Libra ever face a run, central banks would be obliged to provide liquidity.

The question is whether governments understand the risks to financial stability that such a system would entail. The idea of a private, frictionless payment system with 2.6 billion active users may sound attractive. But as every banker and monetary policymaker knows, payment systems require a level of liquidity backstopping that no private entity can provide.

Unlike states, private parties must operate within their means, and cannot unilaterally impose financial obligations on others as needed. That means they cannot rescue



themselves; they must be bailed out by states, or be permitted to fail. Moreover, even when it comes to states, currency pegs offer only an illusion of safety. Plenty of countries have had to break such pegs, always while insisting that "this time is different."

What sets Facebook apart from other issuers of 'private money' is its size, global reach, and willingness to 'move fast and break things'. It is easy to imagine a scenario in which rescuing Libra could require more liquidity than any one state could provide. Recall Ireland after the 2008 financial crisis. When the government announced that it would assume the private banking sector's liabilities, the country plunged into a sovereign debt crisis. Next to a behemoth like Facebook, many nation-states could end up looking a lot like Ireland.

Facebook is barreling ahead as if Libra was just another private enterprise. But like many other financial intermediaries before

it, the company is promising something that it cannot possibly deliver on its own: the protection of the currency's value. Libra, we are told, will be pegged to a basket of currencies (fiat money issued by governments), and convertible on demand and at any cost. But this guarantee rests on an illusion, because neither Facebook nor any other private party involved will have access to unlimited stores of the pegged currencies.

To understand what happens when regulators sit on their hands while financial innovators create put options, consider the debacle with money market funds in September 2008. Investors in MMFs were promised that they could treat their holdings like a bank account, meaning they could withdraw as much money as they put in whenever they wanted. But when Lehman Brothers collapsed, MMF investors all tried to cash out at the same time, whereupon it became clear that many funds could not

deliver. To forestall a widespread run on all MMFs and the banks that backed them, the US Federal Reserve stepped in to offer liquidity support. A run on Libra would require support on a much larger scale, as well as close coordination among all central banks affected by it.

Given these massive risks, governments must step in and stop Libra before it launches next year. Otherwise, as Maxine Waters, the Chairwoman of the US House Committee on Financial Services, has warned, governments may as well start drafting their own living wills. In the parlance of finance and banking, a "living will" is a written plan that banks provide to regulators describing how they will unwind themselves in the event of insolvency. In the case of a government, a living will would have to explain how the relevant authorities would respond to Libra breaking its peg and triggering a global run.

Obviously, this raises a number of pertinent questions. Would governments vow, like former Fed chairman Ben Bernanke in September 2008, followed by European Central Bank President Mario Draghi in July 2012, to do "whatever it takes" to ensure the currency's survival? Would they even have the capacity to do so, let alone coordinate their actions, and share losses, with all the other countries involved? Would governments be able to seize control of the system if it proves incapable of sustaining itself?

Silence in response to Facebook's announcement this week is tantamount to endorsing its dangerous new venture. Governments must not allow private, profit-seeking parties to put the entire global financial system at risk. If banks are 'too big to fail', then states definitely are. If governments fail to protect us from Facebook's latest act of hubris, we will all pay the price for it.

Billions worth of investment expected...

...CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3

Since its inception, the CMA, working in tandem with Boursa Kuwait, has initiated and implemented a series of ambitious reforms and revamps aimed at raising standard of the Boursa to international levels, and increasing efficiency and efficacy of operations in order to eventually lift the Boursa from its Frontier market status to that of an Emerging market. These efforts began to bear fruit as early as September 2017 when Boursa Kuwait was given an upgrade to Emerging Market status in the FTSE Russell Emerging Markets Index. This was followed, in December 2018, by the S&P raising Boursa Kuwait to Emerging Market status in the Dow Jones Indices' Global Equity Indices. Now the third upgrade by MSCI is a further validation that the reforms undertaken by CMA and Boursa Kuwait are in the right direction.

Despite the long and chequered history of financial trading in Kuwait, which can be traced back more than half-a-century to the 1970s and the oil boom era, the Boursa Kuwait remains a market focused on a single product — equities. The Boursa has yet to develop a debt platform or venture into the more complicated derivatives market, but playing it relatively safe and remaining focused on the equities market has had its plus points.

Today, the Boursa's equity instruments cover a wide range of economic activity in the country and list over 200 firms that include many of Kuwait's leading companies. With 44 percent of total traded value coming from individuals, and local companies being responsible for 37 percent of trading activities the high reliance on local investors is a cause for concern to the Boursa.

Before the 2008 global financial crisis many citizens directed their disposable income to the equities market and realized double-digit returns. But market reversals during the financially tumultuous years following 2008, as well as in the wake of the oil price slump in mid 2014, left many people in financial loss. Capital flew from equities on both occasions and left the market stagnant for the next several years. The exodus of retail investors at the slightest pretext highlights the volatility risk to the Boursa in having a large component of small, individual investors. The exchange is aware that its long-term sustainability depends on attracting large institutional investors, both local and international.

As part of its market development plans and attract institutional investors, Boursa Kuwait has launched several reforms in recent years, including a new rule-book, which specify

a three-tiered market segmentation, consisting of the premier market, the main market, and the auction market.

In addition, the Boursa has introduced over-the-counter trading platform to enable investors to trade unlisted securities with greater transparency. It also recently launched part one of its phase three market development plans, which includes the launch of real estate investment trusts (REITs), tender offers, trade at last and stock swaps, with plans to introduce further services and tools over the coming months.

Being upgraded to Emerging Market status provides a fillip to the CMA and Boursa to continue their ongoing reforms. Congratulating CMA and Boursa on the upgrading, the Minister of Commerce and Industry and Minister of State for Services Affairs Khaled Al-Roudhan, said it would further promote His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad al-Jaber Al-Sabah's vision of transforming the country into a financial, commercial and cultural center in the region. He pointed out that since its inception, the CMA has sought to regulate the stocks and develop the financial market according to the best international criteria. "This upgrade is the result of great efforts and diligent work by the CMA, the Kuwaiti Clearing Company and the Boursa Kuwait, and is complementary to efforts by the government at various levels to overhaul businesses and enhance the environment to attract more foreign investments to the country."

The Head of the CMA Commissioners, Othman Al-Issa, said MSCI's reclassification of Kuwait to Emerging Markets represents a recognition of the instrumental role Boursa Kuwait played in improving market access and efficiency, enhancing transparency and governance, increasing liquidity and strengthening investor confidence over the last two years. For his part the Chairman of Boursa Kuwait, Hamad Al-Humaidhi, described MSCI's decision to add Kuwait to its main index tracking stocks in Emerging Markets next year as a "game changer". He said the reclassification was an "important milestone" and "will bolster the country's standing on the global investment map".

He added, "This development will not only provide a boost to our economy but also propel the transformation of the country into a regional and global center of commerce and finance as envisaged by the Kuwait Vision 2035. Moreover, it will be a gamechanger for the domestic capital markets as it will lead to substantial inflows of foreign investment, improved liquidity, and a significant enhancement in the investing environment in the country."

Kuwait to modernize aging fighter-fleet

...CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3

In April 2016, Italian defense manufacturer Leonardo (then Finmeccanica) signed a deal with the KAF, worth nearly US\$9 billion, for 28 Eurofighters. The contract includes 22 single-seater and 6 twin-seater tranche 3s aircraft, that will be optimized to the latest technological standards. They will also be the first to be equipped with the Leonardo Air and Space Systems Captor-E air radar, known as Captor-E. Deliveries of the fully equipped aircraft are expected to take place between 2020 and 2023.

Kuwait is also understood to have purchased the Raytheon AIM-120C7 advanced medium-range air-to-air missiles (AMRAAMs), and 14 Lockheed Martin Sniper ATP targeting pods, following approval from the US Congress for the sale in January 2017. Lockheed Martin was awarded a direct commercial sale (DCS) contract in September 2016 to provide KAF with 18 Sniper advanced targeting pods (ATPs), as well as logistics support. The Sniper ATP detects, identifies, automatically tracks and laser-designates small tactical targets at long ranges. It also supports employment of all laser- and GPS-guided weapons against multiple fixed and moving targets.

Both these cutting-edge weapons will be initially used in the existing Hornets before being transferred to the Typhoons and Super Hornet. Armed with these latest planes and armaments the KAF is expected to have an impressive capability to match that of its regional partners in both defense and attack situations.

The lack of training aircraft is another obstacle that has challenged the KAF since the Hawk Mk64 and Tucano Mk52 training craft were grounded several years ago. For the moment, the country's pilots are trained overseas, but this is not a long-term solution and the KAF is aware that it needs its own training aircraft. Leonardo is offering its T-345 turboprop trainer and T-346 transonic trainer, while Boeing is already promoting its new T-X jet trainer, which was recently selected by the US Air Force (USAF).

Eight Kuwait Air Force instructor pilots are thought to have joined the Italian Air Force's Typhoon operational conversion unit (4 Stormo) at Grosseto to learn to fly the Typhoon before heading back to Kuwait to instruct new pilots. Meanwhile, Boeing instructors are currently embedded with the KAF's F/A-18C/D operational conversion unit, 61 Squadron, which is carrying out the initial flying training on the classic Hornets at Ahmed Al Jaber Air Base. It is likely a similar arrangement will continue when the new Super Hornets arrive at Ali Al Salem, and the same, too, with a Eurofighter operational conversion unit being set up.

EXCLUSIVE to THE TIMES KUWAIT

Saving the Internet



SHAMEL AZMEH

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In a scene in the US sitcom Silicon Valley, digital startups compete for funding by presenting their ideas. In each presentation, company founders repeat the Silicon Valley mantra of “making the world a better place.” One founder pledges to make the world a better place through “software-defined data centers for cloud computing,” and another via “scalable, fault-tolerant distributed databases with asset transactions.”

Although the idea of the Internet ‘making the world a better place’ is often ridiculed today, it is easy to forget that this decade began amid optimism that new technologies would connect people, broaden access to information, and generate abundant new economic opportunities.

Coming from Syria, I experienced some of these potential benefits. In a country with limited space for debate, the Internet provided citizens with a forum to learn and discuss. And, following the 2011 Arab Spring protests, it played an important role in documenting events and sharing information. As millions of Syrians subsequently fled the country, the Internet became the only means of connecting

“Many governments will come under increasing pressure to protect national economies through policies that could disrupt the global nature of the Internet. China’s success in creating homegrown digital firms will be seen as a model to follow.”

them. A Syrian comedian joked that “Syrian society exists only on Facebook,” illustrating how the Internet became the only tool for people scattered around the world to maintain a sense of solidarity.

Today, however, governments around the world are considering policies that would undermine the Internet’s openness and global reach. And they have many tools at their disposal. The Chinese authorities, for example, use a range of measures often



collectively referred to as the ‘Great Firewall of China’. Other countries, such as Indonesia, Brazil, Russia, India, Turkey, and Nigeria, have considered – and some have implemented – similar measures in recent years. Russia’s ‘sovereign Internet law’ is just one recent example of this trend.

These policies take different forms. Some states are implementing ‘data localization’ policies, which require data to be hosted in a particular jurisdiction. Other states are adopting tools and regulations that provide them with greater control over different aspects of the Internet. A recent debate triggered by the European Union’s new copyright directive prompted the establishment of a ‘Save Your Internet’ movement to lobby against some of its more controversial provisions. This growing divergence of policies and regulatory frameworks threatens to create an increasingly balkanized digital world.

While this threat is real, it would be wrong to dismiss every policy that interferes with the Internet as an authoritarian attempt to undermine democracy. The increase in Internet policies is also a response to two other major changes in recent years.

First, the Internet’s economic importance has grown exponentially, driven by a higher number of users and the growing adoption of digital tools. E-commerce, cloud computing, online advertising, digital payments, Internet infrastructure, and the number and range of connected devices

have all grown rapidly in recent years. These trends are likely to continue with the expansion of technologies such as artificial intelligence (AI) and the emergence of the Internet of Things. This means that a growing share of economic transactions will either take place or be mediated via the internet, placing the network at the heart of our economies.

Second, the Internet is no longer an open arena where startups compete to introduce ideas and create new businesses. Companies such as Google, Amazon, Facebook, and Alibaba have become huge, market-dominant businesses, and are globalizing their activities by expanding – and acquiring firms – worldwide. As Shoshana Zuboff argues in her new book, *The Age of Surveillance Capitalism*, these platforms are building a technological and organizational architecture that aims to lock in far-reaching control over the digital economy.

As this economy continues to expand, the global tech giants’ dominance threatens to aggravate existing economic and technological inequalities. An example is the extraction of value by digital platforms through their intermediary roles, whether in transportation, accommodation, retail, or media. More generally, the technology gap – a key factor driving global inequality – could widen as digital giants in advanced economies move further into new areas such as AI and seek to occupy an infrastructural position in and

across economies. The very low level of tax revenues that digital firms often generate in the countries where they operate further exacerbates the problem.

Many governments will therefore come under increasing pressure to protect national economies, including through policies that disrupt the global nature of the Internet. Far from being an exception, China’s success in creating homegrown digital firms such as Alibaba and Baidu will be seen by other countries as a model to follow. Authoritarian governments will find it easier to justify measures that allow them greater control over the internet.

So far, efforts to fight Internet fragmentation have focused on pushing for international trade rules that would limit governments’ ability to intervene in the digital economy. But some emerging and developing countries rightly fear that such measures will entrench the technology gap by making digital giants even more powerful. And even if such rules are enacted, it is not clear how effective they will be in limiting the trend of digital fragmentation. Rather than simply criticizing every interventionist Internet policy, therefore, those wishing to save the Internet should focus on countering the underlying trends that are prompting many of these measures (or that could be used as justifications for them). Saving the global Internet requires limiting the growing concentration of power in the digital economy and preventing the Internet from becoming another engine of inequality.

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Protein with potential to prevent, reverse, diabetes



Targeting a specific protein within the fat cells of mice was found to prevent the onset of type 2 diabetes and even reverse the disease.

Diabetes, especially the predisposition towards type 2 diabetes (T2D), has increased rapidly around the world. Sedentary lifestyles and obesity, both of which have increased in recent years, are among the risk factors for T2D.

Insulin is a hormone that regulates the levels of sugar in the blood. In T2D, the body either does not respond to the hormone, or it does not produce enough of it. Although medications and lifestyle changes can help to manage insulin levels and control diabetes, there is no cure, and researchers are keen to find better interventions.

Recently, a group of researchers at the University of British Columbia, in Canada, and the Karolinska Institute, in Sweden, examined the role of a specific protein in fat cells of mice. When we eat more calories than our body needs, a type of fat called white adipose tissue (WAT) expands to store the excess energy as fat. However, if we take on more energy than we need for more extended periods, this system cannot cope, eventually leading to insulin resistance.

In particular, the researchers were interested in how a glycoprotein called CD248 might influence WAT and the eventual development of T2D. Researchers have previously associated CD248 with tumor growth and inflammation, but no one had investigated its role in T2D. First, the researchers analyzed the gene expression in WAT from humans who were thin, obese, had T2D, or did not

have T2D. In those who had obesity or were insulin resistant, they found that the CD248 gene was upregulated; in other words, the body was making more of the protein.

This observation led the scientists to conclude that CD248 might work as a marker of insulin sensitivity that is more sensitive than current methods.

Next, the researchers artificially reduced the activity of CD248 in human WAT cells in the laboratory. From these experiments, they concluded that CD248 in WAT plays a role in the cellular processes that lead to insulin resistance caused by long-term overconsumption of energy. Specifically, they found that CD248 is involved in how cells respond to hypoxia, which is a hallmark of obesity.

Then, the scientists moved to a mouse model. They used mice that lacked the gene that codes for CD248 in their WAT (although other cell types were still producing CD248). In these experiments, the researchers found that the mice were protected from developing insulin resistance and T2D.

The mice did not develop diabetes, even when they were fed a high-fat diet and became obese. Importantly, the mice with reduced CD248 in their fat cells did not appear to experience any adverse events, suggesting that targeting this protein might be a useful therapy in the future. Aside from the protective effects of reducing CD248, the scientists also demonstrated its potential as a therapy for those already having T2D.

Although these findings are fascinating and add to our understanding of how T2D develops, researchers will need to conduct a great deal of work before the results can make their way to the pharmacy. The journey from research in cells and mice to treating human patients is a long, expensive, and often unsuccessful one.

The study suggests a new way to assess insulin resistance, prevent its progression, and even reverse T2D. Because diabetes is advancing at a worrying rate, chasing up these leads is now urgent.

Vegan burgers not a healthy option

Vegan is in vogue, and fast-food chains are attempting to cash in on this latest fad.

Burger King has launched its 'Impossible Burger' in select outlets, while McDonald's has come out with its Big Vegan TS burger in Germany. KFC, known for its fried chickens, is now offering 'Imposter burger', a sandwich that contains no meat. Add to this the wide range of similar ready-to-cook offerings on supermarket shelves and you will find there is no shortage of vegan products that replicate the taste and texture of meat.

Often referred to in the food industry as 'beyond meat' products, it is burgeoning field of plant-based meat alternatives that are trying to latch on to the health aspects of a vegan diet. Most nutritionists agree that people should wean themselves off meat products and opt for a diet rich in foods of plant origin.

So, how healthy are these new 'beyond meat' products? While most of these products are indeed vegan-friendly, experts say they are high in fat and overly processed to truly be considered a healthy alternative to meat.

Plant-based proteins are definitely more environmentally friendly than farming meat, and admittedly they are tasty, but they are also high in fat and saturated fat containing coconut oil. One analysis showed that the nutritional difference between KFC's Imposter Burger and their regular chicken sandwich were minor. The meatless burger was found to be similar in terms of fat and caloric content, with less protein, more carbohydrates, and more salt.

Despite increasing evidence of their unhealthy credentials, meatless offerings have been growing in popularity, probably due to advertisements that have created the perception of them being a healthier option.

It is important to remember that the basis of cardiovascular health, and human health in general when it comes to nutrition, is a predominantly plant-based and whole-food, unprocessed type of diet. The



vegan burger is hardly the ideal way to move to a healthier diet.

For those who would like to move to a plant-based diet start with beans and legumes as a protein source rather than meat, and add plenty of fruits, vegetables, nuts, seeds, and whole grains.

Vitamin D deficiency in region despite sunshine

Vitamin D, often dubbed the 'sunshine vitamin', is produced in the body when the skin is exposed to direct sunlight.

Ironically, despite the abundance of sunshine, vitamin D deficiency is widespread in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region, reaching over 80 percent among various age groups and sections of the population.

Low levels of vitamin D have been linked to several illnesses, including rickets and osteomalacia, which weaken bone tissue. Severe cases of rickets may result in stunted growth and skeletal deformities in children. Recent studies also link vitamin D deficiency to various types of cancer, some coronary heart



diseases, and type 1 and 2 diabetes. It is also correlated to ailments such as multiple sclerosis, rheumatoid arthritis, hypertension and Alzheimer's disease. Research has also suggested a link between vitamin D deficiency and some mental health problems, including

depression. Several reasons have been alluded to for widespread vitamin D deficiency in the region, including cultural norms that require head to foot covering for women, and high temperatures that preclude staying outdoors in the sun for long. Studies have also shown that darker skinned people require two hours to produce the same amount of vitamin D that lighter skinned people produce in around 12 minutes. Moreover, a genetic predisposition to vitamin D deficiency is witnessed among many sections of the MENA population.

Most doctors recommend vitamin D supplements since exposure to sunlight and food intake may not always be sufficient to meet the required dose.

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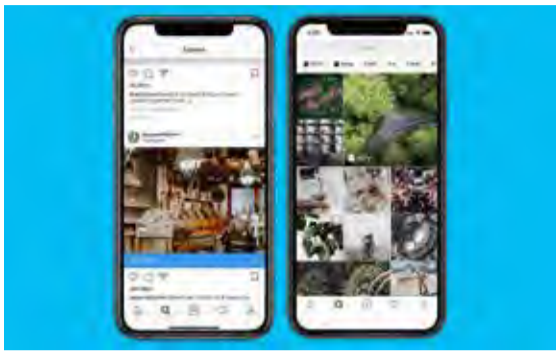
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Instagram to place ads on Explore page



Instagram will soon begin placing more ads on its platform. The popular social media site announced last week that it would soon begin placing ads on its Explore page in addition to the other locations it already inserts ads. The Explore page is where users go to discover new content in line with their preferences.

The ads will not be present directly on the Explore grid, but will appear once a user taps on an Explore post and begins scrolling through that new discovery feed. The ads will be photos and videos, and the first ad — for IGTV — went live last week. Instagram said it would begin working with select partners over the next few weeks with the goal of opening Explore ads to everyone over the next few months.

"Explore is where people are really open to discovery, and that's why we're really excited about this," said Susan Buckner Rose, director of business product marketing. She added that the Explore page made for an obvious fit because it is where "people come to discover new accounts or people or brands that they don't already follow."

She also stressed that there was "nothing particular" about the Explore grid that prevented the team from starting ad placement there, so it is still unclear why the grid is being left untouched, at least at this moment.

While it might be true that people are open to finding new brands in explore, they may not love seeing more ads in their various feeds. Instagram already allows ads in Stories and the regular feed, so bringing them to yet another place could crush the idea of an authentic Instagram experience. But Instagram is an ad-run business that needs to meet brands' expectations. As more advertisers come to Instagram and Facebook, it only makes sense that Instagram would look for more untouched digital real estate. Plus, users do not pay to use Instagram, so they are paying in the form of their attention to brands' content.

Samsung announces Kuwait's first QLED 8K TV



Samsung Gulf Electronics in collaboration with Andalus Trading Establishment Company, announced on 24 June the launch of the first QLED 8K television in Kuwait during a launch event held in JW Marriott, Kuwait City. The introduction of QLED 8K breaks new ground for Samsung's ultra-premium TV and home entertainment offering, delivering beautiful design and supported with the most advanced picture quality in its portfolio.

The QLED 8K TV will be offered in 98-inch, 82-inch, 75-inch and 65-inch screen sizes, designed to meet Kuwait's demand for larger screen formats that also provide the incredible performance customers have come to expect from Samsung. To achieve 8K resolution, the Samsung 8K QLED produces four times more pixels than a 4K UHD TV and 16 times more pixels than a full HD TV.

"With Real 8K Resolution features embedded with Samsung's proprietary 8K AI Upscaling technology, Samsung is pushing the boundaries of TV technology for consumers around the world," said Mustafa Sadick, Head of Visual Display Division at Samsung Gulf Electronics. "We are excited to bring our first QLED 8K TV lineup to Kuwait with stunning

8K resolution for a new level of immersion, demonstrated in an interactive manner at today's event."

Ismail Horani, CEO of Andalus Trading Establishment Company stated: "We are excited to showcase and provide to our esteemed channel partners, the latest



innovation in QLED TVs from Samsung. With the breathtaking QLED 8K TVs, consumers will experience exceptional depth and detail, transporting them into a new dimension of groundbreaking picture quality."

India to build its own messaging app for secure communications

Reliable sources have revealed that India plans to emulate France in building a secure chat app and mandate that government employees use it for official communications.

France launched an encrypted chat app — called Tchap — for use in government offices earlier this year. Only those employed by the French government offices can sign up to use the service, though the nation has open sourced the app's code for the world to see and audit.

New Delhi is understood to be pondering launching a secure email and chat apps so as to cut dependence on foreign entities such as Gmail or Whatsapp for such communications. The rationale for a homegrown version, especially for internal communications among government officials, came to the fore following recent revelations of the extent to which foreign entities and governments



can hold sway over popular chat and messaging platforms.

The United States set alarm bells ringing in India and elsewhere over its allegation of spying by Chinese electronics firm Huawei. "We need to make our communication insular," an unnamed top government official was quoted as saying. Moreover, trade tensions or geopolitical considerations could disrupt or

infringe the security of communications on social media platforms based outside our borders, said the official.

Security of communications is a challenge for New Delhi whether on international or homegrown networks. But it will not be an unprecedented step for India, which has already explored the possibilities of building a Linux-based desktop operating system call BOSS, but most government agencies continue to use Microsoft's Windows operating system.

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