

Negotiators committed to Yemen peace talks



The UN Secretary General's Special Envoy for Yemen Ismail Ould Cheikh Ahmed said last week that he received assurances from the participants in the Yemeni peace talks taking place in Kuwait that they will continue working for a peaceful durable solution to the conflict in their country during the holy month of Ramadan.

"Despite the differences in their viewpoints, the stakeholders are unanimous on some key issues on the agenda of the talks," he said in a statement to the press.

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Consumers urged to cut electricity consumption

Undersecretary of the Ministry of Electricity and Water Mohammad Bushehri urged consumers in Kuwait to rationalize the consumption of electricity; he said this could save 20 - 30 percent of the production costs. "The Ministry's rationalization program targets saving from KD500 million to KD600 million annually of the water and electricity costs annually," he said.

Eng. Bushehri was speaking on the sidelines of the inauguration

of the Ministry's pavilion at a shopping mall themed 'Imagine your life without it'.

"The power generating process consumes about 340,000 barrels of oil per day," he said, noting that the government seeks to promote the culture of rationalized consumption for economic and environment considerations.

Noting that visitors to the pavilion found it very appealing and innovative, he pointed out that

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Saudi economic diversification plan gets cabinet nod

Saudi Arabia's National Transformation Programme (NTP) 2020, a five-year roadmap that plans to diversify the national economy away from oil and generate more than 450,000 jobs by 2020, received endorsement from the country's cabinet last week. The plan also seeks to cut public expenditures by 40 percent over the next five years and boost private sector contribution to the economy.

NTP is one of several programs designed to achieve the goals of



the Saudi Vision 2030, released in April by Deputy Crown Prince

Mohammad Bin Salman, who will spearhead the reform charge.

At the heart of Vision 2030 is a plan to float less than five percent of state oil firm Saudi Aramco on the stock market and form the world's largest state investment fund, worth over \$2 trillion, from proceeds of the sale. Profits from the investment fund are planned to help economic diversification and provide an alternative to oil revenues that have fallen by about

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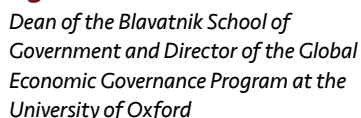
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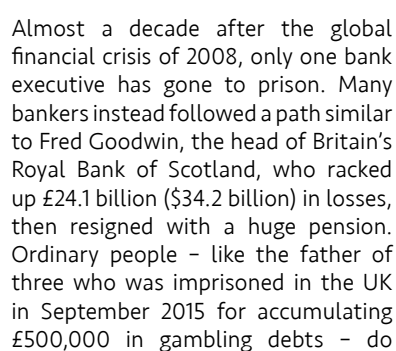


Confronting the Global Threat to Democracy



In the United Kingdom, the Office for National Statistics reports that

But, despite the negative publicity generated by such cases, the public has seen virtually no one held to account.



Governments have permitted globalization - and peripatetic wealth-holders - to outpace them. Globalization requires regulation and management. It requires responsible business leaders. And it requires deep

Finally, global cooperation will be crucial. Globalization cannot be undone. But with a strong, shared commitment, it can be managed.

not enjoy such impunity. All of this helps explain why anti-establishment movements are gaining momentum around the world. These movements share a sense of disenfranchisement – a sense that the “establishment” is failing to give ordinary citizens a “fair shake.” They point to election results “bought” by special interests,

It took a series of careful, highly managed efforts after World War II to open up the world economy and permit globalization to take off again. Still, while many countries liberalized

The one bright side is that both parties have now begun direct negotiations. Earlier talks were confined to discussions between rival delegations and the UN Special Envoy. Both sides have presented their evaluations on the work of specialized committees tasked with solving key issues

The UN resolution demands rebels to withdraw their troops from areas under their control, including the capital Sanaa, release political prisoners and hand over state institutions to the Hadi government, which was forced out by the rebels. Both sides accuse each other of ceasefire violations. The main sticking point remains that the rebels want to discuss a political settlement before surrendering arms while the government delegation insists that implementing the UN resolution is a priority. Meanwhile, following a vehement protest from Saudi Arabia, Secretary-

The Saudi-led, US-backed coalition supporting Yemen's internationally recognized government is battling the Iranian-backed Al Houthis and their allies. Al Houthis have held Yemen's capital, Sana'a, since September 2014, and their advance across the Arab world's poorest country brought the Saudi-led coalition into the war in March 2015. The UN says more than 6,000 people have been killed in the conflict so far.

Meanwhile, Eng. Zainab Al-Qarashi, general coordinator of the Ministry's efficacies department, said the function was conceived by a group of youth workers at the Ministry. "A visitor is supposed to spend a few minutes inside the pavilion without electricity in order to realize the importance of using power as economically as possible, she added.

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Plain packing

The fight against big tobacco continues

One of the biggest threats to public life comes not from wars, disease or natural catastrophes, but from the tobacco epidemic that claims more than six million lives each year.

To put this figure in perspective: The Vietnam War (1955 - 1975), believed to have cost the highest casualties in recent years, claimed 3.5 million lives. The 2004 tsunami, which wreaked havoc across landmasses bordering the Indian Ocean, claimed nearly 250,000 lives; the 2014 Ebola outbreak in West Africa ended with a death toll of around 12,000. While all these deaths were no doubt regrettable, the fact remains that even as we read this, tobacco blatantly continues to kill at the rate of over 16,000 people every day.

If the tobacco industry were individuals, they would have been hauled before the International Criminal Court for crimes against



humanity; if it were a country, it would at least be subject to international sanctions. But by operating as a business venture from different countries and with support from powerful political lobbies, the



global tobacco industry has remained invulnerable to legal actions.

The tobacco industry likes to portray itself as the supplier of a legal consumer product used for a widely-enjoyed social habit by adults who are fully aware of the risks and choose to take them to experience the pleasures. However, this whole picture of a benign tobacco industry falls flat when one realizes that without nicotine addiction to keep smokers hooked for life, and without glamorous advertisements to lure in young smokers to replace dead smokers, there would be no tobacco industry. The truth is the tobacco industry is in the business of selling a drug that kills.

Repeated reports by the World Health Organization (WHO), scientific institutions and the medical fraternity have failed to deter the tobacco industry from irresponsibly plying its deadly products. Numerous studies on the deleterious effects of tobacco have shown that:

There are more than 4000 chemicals in tobacco smoke, of which at least 250 are known to be harmful and more than 50 are known to cause cancer. Half of all tobacco users are killed by illnesses related to the usage.

Over 6 million deaths from tobacco use are reported each year. This figure is expected to increase to 10 million by 2020.

Of the 6 million deaths, 5 million are a result of direct tobacco usage, while nearly 750,000 deaths (a quarter of them children) are caused by inhaling second-hand smoke.

Nearly 80 percent of the world's smokers now live in low- and middle-income countries, where the burden of tobacco-related illnesses and death is heaviest on families.

Tobacco users who die prematurely deprive their families of income, raise the cost of health care and hinder economic development.

Despite these staggering statistics, the tobacco industry callously spends over US\$9 billion on advertising their deadly product. To put it in context, this figure is more than the combined GDP of many of the poorest countries in the world and works out to more than \$1 million being spent every hour of the day on glamorizing



and promoting a product that kills people.

It is against this background that the World Health Organization's Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (FCTC), which came into force in 2005 and reaffirmed the right of all people to the highest standard of health, recommended pictorial warnings on cigarette packs. But more than a decade later, multinational tobacco companies, led by those based in the United States have successfully thwarted attempts to implement pictorial warnings in many countries.

Under pressure from the powerful tobacco lobby, the United States, one of the largest manufacturers and exporters of tobacco, has not even been able to ratify the FCTC, let alone introduce any meaningful tobacco usage prevention measures. Though the US introduced warnings on cigarette packs way back in 1966, the tobacco industry has tenaciously fought any attempt to regulate it. Most recently, the industry managed to get a court ruling in its favor against attempts by the Federal Drug Administration to impose pictorial warnings on cigarette packs.

Despite strong objections and obfuscations from the tobacco industry, the World Health Organization is determined to fully implement the FCTC, especially Article 13 of the Framework, which provides guidelines on the advertising, promotion and sponsorship of tobacco products. The Article states that cigarettes and other tobacco products should be sold only in plain packaging; meaning that there should be no advertising or promotion inside or attached to the package or on individual cigarettes or other tobacco products. The Article specifically prohibits the use of logos, colors, brand images or promotional information on packaging other than brand names and product names displayed in a standard two color format and prescribed font style.

Australia became the first country to fully implement plain packaging in December 2012. Ireland, France and the United Kingdom have passed laws to begin implementing plain packaging from May 2016. Australia's post-implementation review found

that introduction of plain packaging together with introduction of larger health warnings and new warnings had reduced smoking prevalence in Australia beyond the pre-existing downward trend. Specifically, the report estimated that between December 2012 and September 2015, the packaging changes reduced average smoking prevalence among Australians aged 14 years.

Aware of the impact that 'plain packaging' could have on their business, the tobacco industry has resorted to its time-tested ploy of alleging that it would affect their sales and increase illicit trade in tobacco products, the same argument they have used in the past to block the implementation of other tobacco control measures, such as tax increases and pictorial health warnings on cigarette packs. However there is no rational evidence to support this argument as cigarette sales and profits have consistently gone up and nothing in 'plain packaging' format stops tobacco companies from using anti-counterfeiting devices on their products.

While eliminating illicit trade in tobacco is desirable from the health aspect, as it will reduce the harmful consumption of tobacco by restricting availability of cheap and unregulated alternatives, this needs international collaboration. Ironically, the tobacco industry has never signed up to the WHO sponsored FCTC Protocol to Eliminate Illicit Trade in Tobacco Products.

But this is not surprising. While publicly decrying illicit trade, the tobacco industry's internal documents, released as a result of court cases, clearly show that the industry has worked behind-the-scenes to actively foster the illicit trade globally. The industry needs the illicit trade to bypass taxes and to use it as a bogey to misleadingly argue and block implementation of tobacco control measures.

On World No Tobacco Day 2016, (May 31), UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon called on Governments around the world to implement one simple measure with proven effectiveness in tobacco control: the plain packaging of tobacco products.

"It can reduce demand for these deadly products and, in turn, save lives," said the Secretary-General. "Plain packaging reduces the attractiveness of tobacco products. It kills the glamour, which is appropriate for a product that kills people," added WHO Director-General Dr. Margaret Chan.

Plain packaging is meant to be a demand reduction measure that serves several purposes, including reducing the attractiveness of tobacco products, eliminating the effects of tobacco packaging as a form of advertising and promotion, and increasing the noticeability and effectiveness of health warnings.

Escaping the clutches of Big Tobacco



The tobacco industry is predatory by nature; it thrives and survives by targeting and luring

young people through glamorous, aspirational advertisements. Once the young are ensnared, then nicotine addiction takes over and ensures the smoker is held captive on the product until smoking-related illness eventually takes its toll. With the smoker's death, the industry seeks a replacement and once again the cycle of enticing the young begins.

Research has shown that few people, especially among the poor in many developing countries, fully understand the specific health risks of tobacco use. For example, a recent survey in China revealed that only 38 percent of smokers knew that smoking causes coronary heart disease and only 27 percent knew that it causes stroke.

One of the best ways of increasing awareness of the deleterious effects of tobacco is through pictorial warnings. Getting more people aware of the industry's vicious cycle of advertisement, addiction and sowing death, is a crucial step in helping smokers and potential young smokers from avoiding the clutches of Big Tobacco.

Studies carried out after the implementation of pictorial package warnings, in Brazil, Canada, Singapore and Thailand, consistently show that such warnings significantly increase people's awareness of the harms of tobacco use. Hard-hitting anti-tobacco advertisements and graphic pack warnings — especially those that include pictures — are effective in increasing awareness and getting more smokers to quit, in addition to reducing the number of young children

who begin smoking. Graphic warnings also persuades smokers to protect the health of non-smokers by smoking less inside the home and avoiding smoking near children.

So far only 29 countries have implemented a comprehensive ban on all tobacco advertising, promotion and sponsorship. But in these countries, tobacco consumption decreased by an average of about 7 percent, with some countries experiencing a decline in consumption of up to 16 percent. Plain packaging is the first step in helping more governments to look at a total ban on tobacco advertisements.

Six companies lead the world's tobacco business, along with at least 40 other smaller businesses or state-owned monopolies, which together manufacture more than six trillion cigarettes each year. In 2012, the six top tobacco companies had a combined revenue of over \$340 billion, which is higher than the GDP of many developed nations.

China leads the world in the growing, manufacturing and smoking of tobacco; in 2012 the China National Tobacco Corporation (CNTC) reported revenues of over \$95 billion. But earnings of the US-based Philip Morris was even higher at \$102 billion.

Ever since Canada first implemented the use of graphic warnings on cigarette packs in 2001, they have been shown to be an effective tool in reducing tobacco use in more than 45 countries. But the tobacco industry shamelessly argues that pictorial warnings infringe on their right to advertise and market a perfectly legal product. They even got a US Court to rule that pictorial warnings violated the First Amendment of the US Constitution by stifling free speech.



From War to Work



Frances Stewart
Emeritus Professor of Development
Economics at the University of Oxford

There is no denying that conflict has far-reaching negative effects, including on employment. But the prevailing understanding of the relationship between conflict and employment does not fully recognize the complexity of this relationship – a shortcoming that undermines effective employment policies in fragile states.

The conventional wisdom is that conflict destroys jobs. Moreover, because unemployment can spur more conflict, as unemployed young people find validation and economic rewards in violent movements, job creation should be a central part of post-conflict policy. But, while this certainly sounds logical, these assumptions, as I detailed in a 2015 paper, are not necessarily entirely accurate.

The first assumption – that violent conflicts destroy jobs – ignores the fact that every conflict is unique. Some, like the 2008-2009 Sri Lankan civil war, are concentrated in a relatively small area, leaving much of the country – and thus the economy – unaffected.

Even endemic conflicts, like the recurrent conflicts in the Congo, might not have a major impact on net employment. After all, the jobs that are lost in, say, the public sector or among commodity exporters may be largely offset by new jobs in government and rebel armed forces, informal production substituting for imports, and illegal activities like drug production and smuggling.

Likewise, the second assumption – that unemployment is a major cause of violent conflict – misses crucial nuances. For starters, the formal sector accounts for just a fraction of total employment in most conflict-affected countries. The majority of working people are in the informal sector, often engaged in low-status, low-productivity, and low-incomes activities that can, just like unemployment, generate dissatisfaction and potentially motivate young people to join violent movements. Given this, simply



expanding formal-sector employment is not enough, unless it also improves the situation of young people in low-income informal-sector jobs. Yet post-conflict employment policies almost invariably neglect the informal sector. Worse, new regulations – such as the ban on commercial biking in Freetown, Sierra Leone – sometimes block productive informal activities undertaken by youth.

But even a focus on the informal sector is insufficient, as research has shown that poverty and marginalization are not, on their own, enough to cause conflict. If they were, most poor countries would be in conflict most of the time. And that is not even remotely the case.

Violent conflict occurs when leaders are motivated to mobilize their followers for it. That motivation can stem from a variety of sources, among the most common being exclusion from power. In that case, leaders will appeal to a common identity – for example, religion in the case of contemporary conflicts in the Middle East, or ethnicity in many African conflicts – to mobilize followers.

Of course, more than a shared identity alone is needed for mobilization to occur. People will generally respond only if they already have grievances – in particular, if they feel that their group faces discrimination in access to resources and jobs. In this sense, employment is relevant, but what matters is not the absolute level of employment so much as the distribution of good jobs among religious or ethnic groups.

In other words, simply creating

more jobs, without regard to their allocation, may not ease tensions; if imbalances persist, job creation may even make things worse. Yet post-conflict employment policies almost always neglect so-called “horizontal inequalities.” For example, employment policies did little to reduce the strong regional imbalances and discrimination within regions that persisted in Bosnia and Herzegovina after the war there in the 1990s. Given these failings, it is not surprising that employment policies’ net effects are often very small relative to the size of the problem. In both Kosovo and Bosnia and Herzegovina, job creation was thought to be central to post-conflict peacekeeping efforts. Yet, in Kosovo, unemployment stood at 45 percent six years after its war ended.

In Bosnia, new programs generated just 8,300 jobs, while 450,000 people were demobilized; 20 years after the end of the conflict, the unemployment rate stood at 44 percent.

There is one example of a successful post-crisis employment policy. Nepal’s government sought to expand opportunities in the informal sector after the country’s civil war, implementing programs focused on building infrastructure, issuing micro-credit, and providing technology assistance, targeting the most deprived regions and castes.

Recognizing the role that caste and ethnic tensions and discrimination played in fueling the conflict, the government designed employment schemes specifically for rural areas,

along the same lines as India’s employment scheme, with 100 days of work per household guaranteed. The programs were supported by the Nepalese government and external donors, and focused on poorer regions and villages (and, within them, on the poorest castes).

The period immediately following a conflict is a delicate one. Leaders must make the most of that time, ensuring that every policy they pursue is as effective as possible. When it comes to employment, this means designing programs that reflect how people actually spend their working lives, as well as addressing the real grievances generating tensions. Otherwise, they risk allowing, if not encouraging, a relapse into organized violence.

Kuwait joins international Patent Cooperation Treaty

Kuwait has officially joined the Patent Cooperation Treaty (PCT), the country’s Permanent Representative to UN and International Organizations in Geneva Ambassador Jamal Al-Ghunaim announced last week.

Ambassador Al-Ghunaim was speaking after he handed over Kuwait’s PCT instrument to the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) Director General, Francis Gurry. The contracting states, the states which are parties to the PCT, constitute the International Patent

Cooperation Union.

The Patent Cooperation Treaty (PCT) is an international patent law treaty, concluded in 1970.

It provides a unified procedure for filing patent applications to protect inventions in each of its contracting states. A patent application filed under the PCT is called an international application, or PCT application.

By joining the PCT, Kuwait has thus made much headway in organizing intellectual and industrial property, patents in particular, he noted. It needs to be added that a

PCT application does not itself result in the grant of a patent, since there is no such thing as an ‘international patent’, and the grant of patent is a prerogative of each national or regional authority.

In other words, a PCT application, which establishes a filing date in all contracting states, must be followed up with the step of entering into national or regional phases to proceed towards grant of one or more patents.

This is part of a series of agreements Kuwait has joined over the past two years, Al-Ghunaim said.

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Energizing Africa – a new investment opportunity

Affordable and reliable energy supply is crucial to social and economic development. Without universal access to energy services of adequate quality and quantity, countries cannot sustain dynamic growth, build more inclusive societies and accelerate progress towards eradicating poverty, says a new report by the Africa Progress Panel.

The report shows that Africa's energy system is standing at a crossroad. For countries across the region, this is a moment of great opportunity. Two-thirds of the energy infrastructure that should be in place by 2030 has yet to be built. Demand for energy is set to surge, fuelled by economic growth, demographic change and urbanization. As innovation drives down costs for low-carbon energy, Africa could seize the opportunity to leapfrog into a new era of power generation.

Energy planning in Africa has suffered from a backward-looking conservatism that could leave the region on the sidelines of the global low-carbon energy revolution, warns



the Panel report. Perpetuating the limited and unequal access to small amounts of power that characterizes much of Africa today is a prescription for inequality and restricted opportunity. When health systems are unable to provide preventive and curative services due to energy crunch, people who are already vulnerable face heightened risks. And when shortages

of electricity hamper schooling, children lose a chance to escape poverty and build secure livelihoods.

Another area of energy challenge where insufficient attention has been paid to is the use of biofuels by households. Increasing demand for clean, efficient cooking-stoves, would save lives, liberate millions of women and girls from the drudgery of

collecting firewood and generate wide-ranging environmental benefits.

Viewed from an investment perspective, replacing existing fuels with modern energy represents a widely neglected market opportunity. Access to modern energy systems could cut household costs, with benefits for expenditure and investment in other areas. Just halving costs would save US\$5 billion for people living below \$2.50, or \$36 per household. Plausible price reductions of 80 percent would raise these figures to US\$8 billion overall, \$58 per household. An estimated \$55 billion a year investment gap would need to be closed if Africa is to transform its energy system.

However, after decades of neglect, energy policy is starting to move center-stage in Africa. Governments are adopting more ambitious targets for power generation, backed in some cases by far-reaching reforms of their energy sectors. Part of the impetus towards change can be traced to financing. Several governments have stepped up public spending

commitments. Energy-sector reforms have unleashed a new wave of private investment. Development finance institutions are playing an expanded role, and international cooperation has moved into a higher gear.

Renewable energy is at the forefront of the changes sweeping Africa. Many governments have recognized the potential benefits of non-hydro renewable energy. The region is registering some of the most remarkable advances in solar, geothermal and wind power. And, African governments are increasingly recognizing the benefits of developing larger regional markets by establishing shared power pools and developing regional grids.

Utility reform, new technologies and new business models could be as transformative in energy as the mobile phone was in telecommunications, but to do so African countries need to move away from anachronistic, centralized, grid-based energy models and embrace innovative renewable and sustainable systems.

Economic growth in Sub-Saharan Africa to slow in 2016



Decline in commodity prices are taking a toll on the economies of countries in Sub-Saharan Africa. In its most recent assessment of the region, the World Bank noted that economic growth in the region will slow to 2.5 percent in 2016 from the earlier estimate of 3.0 percent in 2015.

In its latest Global Economic Prospects report, the bank said that commodity exporters and developing economies have struggled to adapt to low oil and other commodity prices. "Economic growth remains the most important driver of poverty reduction, and that's why we're very concerned that growth is slowing sharply in commodity-exporting developing countries due to depressed commodity prices," World Bank Group president Jim Yong Kim said in a statement.

He added that it is critical for countries to pursue policies that will boost economic growth and improve the lives of those living in extreme poverty. The bank cautioned that oil exporters are a not likely to experience any significant pickup in consumption growth, while lower inflation in oil importers will support consumer spending.

However, on a positive tone, the bank noted that commodity importing emerging markets and developing economies have been more resilient than the exporters. These economies are set to expand at 5.8 percent in 2016, down modestly from an earlier forecast of 5.9 percent in 2015.

The World Bank has lowered its global economic growth forecast to 2.4 percent from 2.9 percent at the beginning of this year, citing persistently low commodity prices, weak global trade, diminishing capital inflows and slow growth in advanced economies. Subsequently, growth in these economies will advance at a meager 0.4 percent in 2016, a downward revision of 1.2 percentage points from the bank's outlook in January.

The bank highlighted that the BRICS economies will have varied growth patterns. While China is expected to grow at 6.7 percent this year, Russia and Brazil will remain in deeper recession. India will hold steady at 7.6 percent and South Africa will grow at 0.6 percent this year, 0.8 of a percentage point more slowly than the January forecast.

African Union commits to combating illicit small arms trade

The African Union (AU) has called for a concerted effort to combat trade in illicit small arms and light weapons which continue to cause untold suffering and pain, threatening the peace and security of the region.

This was disclosed during the 6th Biennial Meeting of States to Consider the Implementation of the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapon. Speaking at the meeting, the AU's head of Defense and Security Division, Dr. Tarek A. Sharif said, "Africa is among the regions most affected by the illicit proliferation, circulation and trafficking of small arms and light weapons. These weapons have caused unspeakable death and suffering over the decades and remain a serious impediment to peace, security, stability, and development on the continent and globally." The AU called on its international partners to also boost their support to the fight. While commending the



support provided through the UN Disarmament Trust Fund and UNSCAR, the AU noted that these funds do not match the existing and growing needs and gaps.

According to the United Nations Office on Disarmament Affairs (UNODA), "Illicit flows of

small arms and light weapons undermine security and the rule of law. They are often a factor behind the forced displacement of civilians and massive human rights violations."

Africa has been prone to small arms proliferation which has

in turn resulted in political and social unrests in most parts of the continent. Reinforcing existing small arms treaties at the national, sub-regional and the continental levels are seen as important to maintain stability and peace in Africa.

Africa backs Ethiopian to head WHO

Ethiopian Foreign Minister Dr. Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus formally launched his campaign to head the World Health Organization (WHO) at a press conference in Geneva on the sidelines of the World Health Assembly, the decision-making body for WHO which includes delegations from all the 194-member states.

The Ethiopian minister of foreign affairs, who previously served as his country's health minister from 2005 to 2012, was designated at the January meeting of the African Union summit as the continent's sole candidate to become the next WHO director general.

Flanked by Dr. Nkosazana Dlamini Zuma, who chairs the African Union Commission,

and Algerian Health Minister Abdelmalek Boudiaf, Foreign Minister Tedros told assembled reporters and observers in Geneva that a fresh view is needed to efficiently tackle the world health challenges. While

noting that Africa has never had the opportunity to lead the UN agency, he emphasized that his candidacy is based on merit as demonstrated by a respected track record both at home and in the international arena.

A leaflet distributed at the press conference included a hearty endorsement by Ethiopian Prime Minister Hailemariam Desalegn. "Dr. Tedros' signature approach takes innovation,



collaboration and community ownership as its core principles. The transformative changes he brought to Ethiopia's health sector are testimonies to his unique leadership style that gives primacy to county ownership and adaptive home-grown solutions," the Prime Minister is quoted as saying. "Through his leadership of global organizations, he has introduced reforms that helped them live up to the challenges of the day. I am proud to nominate Dr. Tedros, a transformational leader and unrelenting champion of global health, for the WHO Director General post."

Selection of the next WHO director general takes place

in May 2017. In the intervening 12 months, Tedros said he will convey his platform to the world, key elements of which include universal access to basic healthcare, emphasis on policies to improve women and girls' health, emergency-response readiness and consolidation of the WHO funding structure.

While Dr. Tedros has the formal endorsement of the African Union summit, which should guarantee 54 votes when the 194-member nations make the choice in May 2017, he will still need to do intense campaigning as efforts are reportedly underway to persuade some countries on the continent to back one of the other leading contenders, Philippe Douste-Blazy of France and Sania Nishtar of Pakistan.

Bringing Arab Education Online



Maysa Jalbout

CEO of the Abdulla Al Ghurair Foundation for Education

Education has long been a challenge in the Arab world, with inadequate access to high-quality schooling contributing to a widening skills gap that is leaving many young people, even graduates, unemployed and hopeless. In a region plagued by conflict and disorder, addressing these problems will not be easy. But, with a bold and innovative approach, it can be done.

Of course, no single strategy is guaranteed to resolve the Arab world's educational challenges. At the newly created Abdulla Al Ghurair Foundation for Education, which has \$1.1 billion and a mandate to broaden opportunities for young Arabs by providing them with scholarships, we have given a lot of thought to the effectiveness – and cost-effectiveness – of the various possible approaches. And one option stands out: online learning.

Already, Arab countries are making rapid progress in expanding Internet connectivity. By 2018, there are expected to be some 226 million Internet users in the Arab world, amounting to more than 55% of the population – almost 7% higher than the global average. But the vast

majority of young people use the Internet for social media, rather than for economic or educational purposes. In this sense, they are missing out on a major opportunity, especially given the strides that have been made in improving the effectiveness and appeal of online learning.

Nowadays, the world's top universities teach computer science and engineering classes online. And, contrary to popular belief, these are not two-hour-long online lectures with no practical component. Rather, they comprise short video tutorials, interactive activities to practice concepts in realistic scenarios, and quizzes and peer assessments that provide valuable feedback to students. Thanks to this fast-evolving model, online learning is now a better alternative to traditional education than ever.

This is great news. After all, delivering education via Internet technologies resolves some core challenges facing Arab countries' education systems today.

For starters, there is the sheer number of young people who need affordable access to education. Once a community has Internet access, as the Arab world increasingly does, scaling up online learning to reach the millions of young people who are currently out of school or do not have access to high-quality institutions can be done at relatively low cost.

The Arab world's few strong institutions of higher education certainly could not accommodate that many students. And even if they could, they might choose not to. We have



seen firsthand how universities in the region and around the world have shut their doors in the faces of refugees from Syria and elsewhere, forcing them to overcome huge bureaucratic and financial hurdles.

The second challenge is the low quality of education currently being delivered. For far too long, the region's post-secondary institutions have operated without having to prove that the education they provide aligns with global quality standards and expectations. Through online learning, it would be far easier to measure progress and ensure that students are acquiring knowledge and skills they can actually use.

Meanwhile, online learning can facilitate the introduction of new and innovative teaching and learning methods. For example, a reduction in traditional lecturing and rote learning could create space for the kinds of self-paced and personalized learning and assessment tools being used by

professors delivering Massive Open Online Courses on EdX and other online educational platforms.

Third, the Arab world faces the challenge of delivering continuous learning. In order to thrive in today's fast-changing economic environment, where technology is making many jobs redundant and rewarding greater specialization, workers everywhere must consistently upgrade or expand their skill sets.

As it stands, only wealthy young people in the Arab world, without personal commitments such as families and jobs, can pursue continuous learning, in the form of graduate degrees from top universities. Open online courses can level the playing field by offering professionally recognized credentials that boost a person's career prospects.

Taking all of this into consideration, we have created the Al Ghurair Open Learning Scholars Program, aimed at making some of the best education

in the world available to Arab youth through online degree programs. We are setting the bar high, by establishing our first collaboration with MIT, a leader in open online learning.

Together, MIT and the Open Learning Scholars Program will create two new 'MicroMasters' programs consisting of five 12-week courses in so-called STEM subjects (science, technology, engineering, and mathematics) that are not currently taught in the Arab world. We expect these programs – accessible to young people in Arab countries and beyond – will attract significant interest from students and strong support from employers.

But, in order to maximize the impact of our investment, perceptions of online learning must change, which will require a joint effort by educational institutions, government, and the private sector. Indeed, Arab educational institutions must begin to explore the development of high-quality online programs. For their part, governments should reconsider their position on recognizing online learning delivered by credible and internationally accredited institutions. As for private-sector actors, the key will be to reward employees with degrees and certifications received through online programs.

In the meantime, the Abdulla Al Ghurair Foundation for Education will embark on a concerted effort to make innovative STEM degrees offered online by the world's best universities available to Arab youth. Not to do so would risk allowing the majority of Arab young people to be left behind.

UAE approves new National Tolerance Programme

A new National Tolerance Programme which seeks to promote tolerance, multiculturalism and the culture of acceptance of others, while rejecting attitudes of discrimination and hatred has been approved by the UAE cabinet following its meeting last week.

"The UAE, led by Shaikh Khalifa Bin Zayed Al Nahyan will continue to promote the principles of tolerance established by the late Shaikh Zayed Bin Sultan Al Nahyan. The tolerance is a key value of our ancestors and our founding fathers. The UAE has succeeded in spreading it throughout the Arab region and the world," said His Highness Shaikh Mohammad Bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Vice-President and Prime Minister of the UAE and Ruler of Dubai, following the cabinet meeting.

Shaikha Lubna Al Qasimi, Minister



of State for Tolerance, presented the National Tolerance Programme to the Cabinet, highlighting the values of tolerance in the UAE society. The program is based on seven main pillars: Islam, UAE Constitution,

Zayed's Legacy and Ethics of the UAE, International Conventions, Archeology and History, Humanity, and Common Values.

The program will be in collaboration with federal and local

entities under five main themes: Strengthen government's role as an incubator of tolerance; Consolidate the role of family in nation building; Promote tolerance among young people and prevent them from

fanaticism and extremism, Enrich scientific and cultural content, and Integrate international efforts to promote tolerance and highlight the leading role of UAE in this area.

As part of the program, members of various segments of the society will be selected as the 'Voice of Tolerance' to promote tolerance and reject attitudes of racism and hatred through a number of activities and events, and the use of social media, in partnership with various media outlets.

The program will also launch the UAE Charter of Tolerance, Coexistence, and Peace, which is a set of agreements related to citizens, residents, teachers, students and employees aimed at promoting tolerance, coexistence and respect for cultural diversity, and the rejection of violence, extremism and racism.

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RIDLEY'S BURGER



Homegrown burger concept with the flair of a chain, this restaurant offers light, perfectly-sized burgers which you can order as a whole or have them cut for you.

Popular dish: Mr. Ridley's medium burger with fries.



Salhiya M2. Call, 5503 6869.



You can choose from the original, Mr. Ridley, or be a little adventurous with Mr. Patrick. Also offered here are a range of appetizers, and desserts that are sure to suit your taste buds.

LAYALINA



Located in a well-known section of the Arabian Gulf road, this restaurant offers a wide, yet secluded garden seating area in view of the Kuwait City shoreline. Like

a beacon for wayward travelers, Layalina's white neon sign invites all to come, sit for a bit, to enjoy some mezza and fresh bread with a refreshing drink.

Popular dish: Grilled Shish Tawook with Rice



Arabian Gulf Road in Salmiya. Call 2565 7626.

VERANDA



With refined interiors that are sure to impress the most avid design lovers, the decor at Veranda emanates with style and elegance. Veranda's culinary concept is carefully conceived around creating distinctive Middle Eastern and Mediterranean



flavors with the added twist of Asian fusion elements that deliver a new ideology for fine dining. With an attention to seasonality and freshness as the key ingredient, their evolving options will keep you interested, long after your first visit.

Popular dish: Mediterranean Shrimp Spaghetti



First floor at Harvey Nichols Kuwait. Call 2228 3141

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.

Use Yogurt in (almost) everything

Greek yogurt, frozen yogurt, yogurt in smoothies—everyone today knows and loves at least one form of yogurt. It is prepared by fermenting milk using a bacteria cluster that causes milk to ferment and thicken, giving it its characteristically tangy flavor. Cow's milk is the most common type used, but goat, sheep or buffalo's milk are also suitable.

Thanks to its wide range of flavors and creamy texture, yogurt works well in a lot of cooking applications and can be used most times in buttermilk, sour cream, or crème fraîche. From creamy dips to lusciously moist cakes to succulent fried chicken, there are tons of ways to incorporate yogurt into your cooking, but first, there are some general yogurt tips that one has to keep in mind:

Full fat yogurt is best, for both cooking and eating, because more fat means more flavor. If you are adding it to a dish, it is suggested you opt for an unsweetened flavor but the ultimate decision lies in your hands.

Low-fat and no-fat yogurts will work well for cold applications such as dips, but in case of baking, you would want all the flavor and richness to come from the regular version.

Strained and Greek-style yogurt is fine to use in a dish but it is suggested to thin it out with a little water or milk to get that traditional yogurt consistency and heat it low and slow, so the yogurt does not curdle and separate.

Here are ways you could incorporate yogurt into your cooking:



Dips and dressings: If you are a big chips or dip fan, then instead of opting for sour cream or crème fraîche, substitute yogurt into your favorite recipe for a tangy, creamy bite. Also, you can easily turn the yogurt dip into a creamy salad dressing by thinning it out with a little water/vinegar/oil to create a creamy dressing.



Soups: Stirring in yogurt into soups works particularly well for cold soups, like gazpacho. For hot soups, you will need to temper the yogurt to avoid curdling. Add a small amount of warm-but-not-boiling soup to a bowl, whisk in the yogurt, and then add the mixture back into the main soup.

Marinate: Thanks to its calcium content, yogurt is a great ingredient for marinades, because it helps break down the enzymes in meat, adding flavor and moisture while tenderizing.



Yogurt can also make a delicious sauce. Instead of a compound butter or cream sauce, drizzle yogurt mixture over your steaks and roasts. This is particularly tasty with spice-rubbed meats such as stir fry's as the yogurt provides some cooling relief to the heat.

Smoothie drinks: If you love smoothies and crave for a creamier version, then substitute the milk in your go-to recipe for yogurt. Or try out the traditional Indian lassi—a shake-like drink that can be made with fruit, spices, and/or herbs.

Keep it sweet: Yogurt can be easily substituted in cake, muffin, and sweet bread batters instead of sour cream. It also works in ice cream or sorbet batches. You can make your own frozen yogurt by adding in water and sugar syrup. Or you could keep it simple and serve with roasted fruit for a light dessert.



Recipe

Chilled avocado and yogurt soup with tomato salsa



Halve and pit two large ripe but firm avocados. Set aside half an avocado for the salsa and put the remaining avocado flesh in a blender with 1 ½ cup buttermilk, 1 ½ cups yogurt, two heaping tablespoons chopped cilantro, one large thinly sliced garlic clove, ½ jalapeño chili with seeds removed, and ½ teaspoon toasted and ground cumin seeds.

Blend until smooth. Taste and add more chili if desired, and then blend again. Transfer to a bowl and stir in enough cold water to thin the soup to a pleasing consistency, about 1/2 cup. Stir in one tablespoon freshly squeezed lime juice, or more to taste, and season with salt. Chill thoroughly.

Just before serving, prepare the salsa: In a bowl, stir together one large plum tomato, halved lengthwise, seeded and cut into ¼ inch dice, ¼ cup finely minced white onion, two heaping tablespoons of chopped cilantro, ½ jalapeño chili with seeds removed for less heat if desired and finely minced, and one small finely minced garlic clove. Cut the reserved avocado half into 1/4-inch dice and fold it in gently, and then season to taste with salt and lime juice and stir again gently to avoid mashing the avocado.

If the soup has thickened in the refrigerator, whisk in ice water to thin it to the desired consistency. Taste for seasoning. Divide among 6 bowls. Top each serving with a spoonful of salsa and serve.



COOKING Tips



To tenderize beef, coat your meat in baking soda and leave for about an hour before rinsing it off to remove the bitter taste.



After removing sautéed meat from the pan, add chicken broth to create a sauce. Use a metal spatula to remove any stuck-on bits from the pan's surface. These bits will give the sauce flavor and thickness.



When mixing minced meats for meatloaf or meatballs, mix everything until the mixture is just combined. Over mixing could result in the dish turning stretchy or chewy.

Invention of Dr. S. Neelamani and his team at KISR wins US Patent

Dr. S. Neelamani, Senior Research Scientist in the Coastal Management Program, Kuwait Institute for Scientific Research and his colleague Dr. K. Al-Banaa won

for cost effective protection of coasts from wave erosion, to shield offshore oil terminal facilities from direct wave action and to create a relatively calm marine area so as to

and groins or by using artificial beach nourishments using large quantities of sand. Each solution has its own merits and demerits.

For countries with less resource of good quality stone (like Kuwait), a more cost-effective alternate coastal protection structure is needed. With this point in mind, the KISR team worked on new types of floating breakwaters for over three years. They tested 30 different floating breakwaters in the wave flume facility to understand its wave transmission characteristics. For Kuwait type marine environment, a floating pontoon type breakwater with 15 to 17 meter width was found to reduce about 70 percent of waves acting on the beach. However, based on the scientific investigation, KISR

has proved that a floating pontoon breakwater with 7 to 8 meter width and 5 skirt walls of about 2 meter depth at the bottom will be equal to or better than 17 to 18 meter wide pontoon type floating breakwater. The new invention is expected to save 30 to 40 percent of the cost of conventional pontoon type floating breakwater.

The proposed floating breakwater looks elegant, is easy to construct, install and reorient; in addition, it will also not damage corals on the seabed nor pollute the water body. It is found to be very suitable for Kuwait as well as for other Gulf type marine conditions.

The inventors thanked Kuwait Foundation for the Advancement of Sciences and Kuwait Institute for



Scientific Research for sponsoring their research work and for the infrastructure facility to fulfill the research. They added their special thanks to Mr. Josko Ljubic, Mr. George Joseph and Mr. Ashok for their technical support.



a patent from the US Patent Office (Patent No US9,340,940 B2 dated 17 May, 2016) for their invention of a novel floating breakwater.

This new invention can be used

facilitate extended periods of marine construction activity.

Conventional coastal erosion protection involves using stones to build seawalls, offshore breakwaters

Famous Bollywood singers headline IIT-IIM's musical extravaganza



IIT-IIM Alumni Association, Kuwait, in association with the Indian Embassy organized a grand musical evening titled 'The Sound of Music' at the Indian Embassy Auditorium on Friday, 27 May. The audience was comprised of their sponsors, friends and guests from the Indian Embassy, Chartered Accountants Association and Indian Business and Professional Council, Kuwait.

The stars of this grand musical extravaganza were two popular Bollywood Singers Shrikant Narayan and Nirupama Dey, who enthralled the audience with a mellifluous set of Hindi songs, ably supported by Anand Kapadia.

The event began with Bhushan Joshi, who presented a brief introduction of the two Bollywood singing stars of the

evening, Shrikant popularly known as 'The voice of Rafi' and a Limca book of record holder for non-stop singing of Rafi songs and Nirupama Dey, a Zee 'Sare-Ga-Ma-Pa'



contest finalist and their accompanying musicians Sanjay Marathe and Vinayak Mangde from India along with local tabla and dholak players. He also introduced Anand Kapadia, the General



Secretary of IBPC, who is well known for his melodious voice among the talented singers in Kuwait.

Peeyush Jain, the President of IIT-IIM Association

that the IITs and IIMs are the prime institutions of India which have their own place, reputation, value and name in the field of education not just in India but globally as well.

The Chief Guest K.K. Pahel, thanked the Association and congratulated them for their fruitful endeavors.

Once the stars of the event Shrikant and Nirupama took the stage, the audience was treated to the best music from the yesteryears of Hindi cinema for over three hours. Shrikant, who keeps alive the voice of immortal Rafi in this present era, lived up to his reputation. Ms. Nirupama sweetly sang beautiful numbers. Both singers also rendered some popular duets. The attendees were then treated to a sumptuous dinner from M/s Taal.



LuLu Group supports Ramadan 'Reading Nation' Campaign launched by Dubai Ruler

As part of the Ramadan 'Reading Nation' campaign launched by His Highness Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Vice President and Prime Minister of the UAE and Ruler of Dubai, LuLu Group announced a contribution of AED2 million to provide 200,000 books to refugee camps and schools around the world.

Speaking on the Group's allocation, Yusuff Ali MA, Chairman of LuLu Group, said: "This is a great humanitarian initiative launched by His Highness Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum during the Holy Month of Ramadan and will certainly help build our future generations and nurture their minds and the souls. I am honored and proud to associate with the Reading Nation campaign that I am confident will create a global impact in spreading knowledge

among underprivileged children.

His Excellency Tariq Al Gurg, Chief Executive Officer, Dubai Cares, said: "We appreciate and commend the LuLu Group for its support and contribution to the Reading Nation campaign. The Group has consistently reinforced the various humanitarian initiatives launched by the UAE and led the way as a proactive corporate enabler that encourages private sector companies in the country to give back to the community that has shaped their prosperity."

The Reading Nation campaign will continue until the 19th day of Ramadan, which coincides with Zayed Humanitarian Day. The goal of the campaign is to provide five million books to students-in-need in refugee camps and schools around the Arab and Islamic world.

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12 JUNE



The British Academy of Sport will be hosting the Summer Swim Camp from 12 to 30 June, on Sundays, Tuesdays and Thursdays, the time of which will vary with the days. The camp is open to both boys and girls aged 3 to 12 years. European qualified teachers will be accompanying and teaching these children and at the end, participants will be awarded certificates. For more information: Call, 25623604, 99458013 or Email, rak@bas.edu.kw

Ramadan essay contest

PAWS Kuwait will be holding a Ramadan essay contest at its premises. For the essay, in 1000 words or less, describe how Islam promotes kindness to animals. Winners will be awarded with valuable prizes including airline tickets to Dubai, vouchers and more. Submit your Arabic essays to, Hassan@tiescenter.net and English essays to officialpawskuwait@gmail.com, along with name and age. Deadline to submit is 12 June and prizes will be awarded at the TIES Center on 20 June. For more information: Visit www.tiescenter.net, or email, info@tiescenter.net or call, 25231015.

13 JUNE



Blood donation camp: Under the patronage of Minister of Health, H.E. Dr. Ali Al Obaidi, the Central Kuwait Blood Bank will be holding 'BE THE 1' blood

donation campaign at the Prestige Ballroom, Avenues at 9:30pm. This campaign will be the first of its kind, endorsed worldwide by football icon, Cristiano Ronaldo.

19 JUNE



British Academy of International Arts along with British Academy of Sport will be holding their Ramadan Camp from 19 to 30 June, from 10am to 2pm. Children aged 3 to 12 years can participate. The event will provide fun games such as swimming, table tennis, gymnastics

and more. Free shirts, awards and certificates will be distributed. For more information: Call, 50962809 or Email, and@baia.edu.kw.

24 JUNE

International Yoga Day

The Indian Embassy in Kuwait will be organizing the 2nd International Day of Yoga at the Embassy Auditorium, from 6am onwards. For more information and registration: Visit, www.indembkwt.org/iyd

26 JUNE

Quran memorization competition

TIES center will be hosting the Ramadan Quran Competition at its premises, Villa No. 67, Street 413, Block 4, Shuhada Area, at 9pm.

Recite, memorize and understand short chapters of the Quran. Classes will be held every Tuesday in Ramadan from 12:30pm to 2pm to help you prepare. The competition is divided into three, non-muslims will write a quiz on Chapter 21, Surat Al-Anbiya (The Prophets), New Muslims will have 8 short suras and non-arab born muslims will have Juz 29, from Surat Al-Mulk until the end of Surat Al-Mursalat.

- There will be five winners from each category. First place is KD50, second place KD40, third place KD30, fourth and fifth place KD15 each.
- The last date to register is 21 June and candidates will be judged privately on 26 June.

For more information: Call, 25231015 or visit, info@tiescenter.net.

Writing for children at DAI

Writing for Children, a program for 8 - 12 year olds will be held at the Yarmouk Cultural Centre on Thursdays from 3:30 - 4:30 pm. The program is open to all and is free of cost. For more information and registration, send your child's name and age to: info@ darmuseum.org.kw.

NYF offers free yoga classes

Free yoga, breathing, meditation and reiki classes will be held by an experienced female yoga teacher for all age groups. Classes are assigned on the basis of different health problems, stress and other problems by different techniques. For more information: Call, 99315825.

Free drum classes

For those interested in drums, free drum music classes are being held in Salmiya for all age groups, from beginners to advanced, by a well-experienced drum teacher. For more information: Call, 94974295.

Free fitness classes

Zumba, Masala Bhangra workout, aerobics, toning and many more free classes will be held at B.FIT studio in Salmiya. To register: Call, 65077062.

360 MALL celebrates the spirit of Ramadan with various social initiatives

360 MALL - Kuwait's iconic mall by the Tamdeen Group - is celebrating the spirit of the Holy Month of Ramadan through a variety of initiatives meant to impart a sense of tradition and giving to shoppers.

The mall is hosting its annual Rijeemy Walkathon in partnership with Rijeemy Centre, a popular nutrition and diet center, to encourage Kuwaitis to fight obesity, promote a balanced diet and live a healthy lifestyle. This year, however, the walk will take place only on Thursdays from 5.00 pm to 6.00 pm.

Expanding on the theme of fitness, 360 MALL is also collaborating with Fitness First which will host free style exercises from 4.00 pm to 5.00 pm, on Sundays, Tuesdays and Wednesdays in the Holy Month.

Participants will have the opportunity to measure their fitness through Body Mass Index measurements; all sessions will be free of charge and attendees will receive a free one-day pass to a Fitness First gym.

In addition to fitness, 360 MALL also aims to foster an interest in Islamic culture; the mall will host an



exhibition in collaboration with the Kuwait Capital of Islamic Culture on the Ground Level, opposite Lenôte, while also displaying rare copies of the Quran and other vintage items from June 20-25.

To add further diversity to the month's celebrations, visitors to the mall will have the opportunity to witness the 'Art of Can' exhibition, to be organized by Boushahri Group, the exclusive agent of Red Bull, from June 15-25 on the Ground level in 360 MALL's main atrium.

The 75 piece display will be the

result of a nation-wide creative competition that has beckoned designers, and artists across disciplines, to create 3D, physical or digital art-- using the Red Bull can as inspiration.

Claudia Lopusinska, Marketing Manager, 360 MALL, said: "This year 360 MALL is hosting a diverse range of initiatives during the Holy Month. We are keen to inspire visitors to learn more about Islamic culture. Through our collaboration with Rijeemy Centre and Fitness First, we aim to help our society get fitter whilst tackling the issue of obesity in Kuwait."

IMA Youth Wing to organize Iftaar get together

IMA Youth Wing will be organizing an 'Iftaar get together' to launch its campaign against 'Wastage of resources' on the theme 'Fastibiqul Khairaat' which means Race with each other in doing good.

The iftaar will be held on 17 June at Masjid Alghanim, Khaitan from 5:30 pm. Maulana Waliullah Saeedi, a prominent visiting scholar from India and 'Peace TV Speaker' will be the Chief Guest and speaker.

Iftar will be served at the end of the program. Separate seating arrangements will be made for ladies. For more information: Call, 97144518, 66268005 & 66219945.



Japanese Ambassador meets President of Kuwait University

The Ambassador of Japan to Kuwait H.E. Takashi Ashiki met with the President of Kuwait University, Dr. Hussein Al-Ansari on 8 June. During the course of the meeting, they discussed important issues regarding Japanese language courses at the language center at Kuwait University and scholarships for Japanese students studying Arabic at the University.

Kuwait University became a member of 'Sakura Network' which provides learning environment for those who wish to learn Japanese and further advance the quality of the Japanese-language education. They also discussed future collaboration in the field of cultural exchange.

KWA to conduct Iftar meet

Kuwait Wayanad Association (KWA) will be conducting Iftar meet on 24 June at Popins Auditorium, Abbasiya at 5:30pm. The association has conducted a similar Iftar meet last year and tends to do the same this year. Prominent personalities from different walks of life in Kuwait will be present at the function. For more details: Call, 51133482, 51333231, 66411512



K11 beat Delhi Bellies to win UCL 2016

The Upkar Cricket League 2016 (UCL) saw fierce competition between 8 teams competing in the tournament held on Friday, 27 May in Jawharat Al Salah School premises, Riggae.

The event was attended by players and their respective families and friends as well as spectators who showed support for their teams.

UCL had participation from all current members and non-members as well as those who hail from all walks of life and was won by K11 who outplayed their opponents Delhi Bellies in the tournament finals. A positive aspect of the event



was that it was the first time for female participation with each team inducting 2 female players. During

the match, a lady opened the inning and another female player did a one over bowling too.

For publication of your announcements, upcoming activities or local events please email us at editor@timeskuwait.com
To publish images kindly send pictures in high resolution.

IOM Kuwait conducts second Awareness Campaign on Human Trafficking

The International Organization for Migration (IOM) in Kuwait launched its second awareness campaign on human trafficking at a series of shopping malls in Kuwait under the auspices of the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior Sheikh Mohammed Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah. This builds on the previous awareness campaign which was conducted by IOM in September 2015.

The campaign, titled "Together Against Trafficking in Persons" (#To-

getherAgainstTraffickingInPersons), aims to familiarize the public with the difficulties experienced by trafficked persons, which include deception by the recruiter, and abuse and exploitation by the employer. It also aims to build the public's ability to identify victims of trafficking, and to publicize resources from the Government of Kuwait that are available to victims of trafficking.

The cooperation of the shopping malls which is hosting the IOM

booths, in addition to IOM partners in the state of Kuwait, is a true testament to the position of the State of Kuwait as a global humanitarian centre.

IOM Kuwait Chief of Mission, Iman Eriqat said: "It is important to create awareness among the community, as many people do not know the true extent of the negative impact of trafficking in persons and also the definition of the efforts of the State of Kuwait and its humanitarian role and



leadership position in combatting this crime which occurs worldwide."

This positive cooperation between the International Organization for

Migration and the State of Kuwait is a reflection of the interest in the important and sensitive issues of vulnerable groups of society and commitment to social responsibility.

The event calendar is as follows: 8 to 10 June at Avenues Mall from 20:00 to 01:00am; 11 to 13 June at Marina Mall from 10:30 to 16:30pm and from 20:00 to 01:00am; 14 to 16 June at Souq Sharq from 20:00 to 01:00am and from 4 June to 5 July at Gate Mall from 20:00 to 01:00am.

BSK receives 'Top Private School Award' at the INJAZ Stars ceremony



The Kuwait youth organization INJAZ Kuwait, forms part of the global network of Junior Achievement (JA) Worldwide, this being the largest organization in the world of its kind, whose aim is to better prepare young people from school age to university for work-readiness, entrepreneurship and financial literacy.

For the academic year 2015-2016, INJAZ volunteers contributed to the Personal, Social, Health and Economic (PSHE) program delivered to Secondary students at BSK. The volunteers visited BSK over a five-

week period, and from the perspective of both the students and the volunteers, these programs were very well received.

The receipt by BSK of the award for the 'Top Private School - with the most contributed hours' is indeed a fitting accolade for the relationship that has been forged over many years of collaboration. The philanthropic investment of time and expertise by big business in Kuwait into the education of students is in many ways one of the most valuable gifts they are able to offer.



Young Stars Cricket Club wins U-19 Kuwait Cricket Tournament



The finals of Kuwait Cricket U-19 Tournament, organized by Kuwait Cricket, were played between Future Stars XI and Junior Young Stars at Sulaibiya Turf Cricket Ground on 4 June. The dignitaries present at the finals were

Director General Kuwait Cricket Asad Baig, Vice Chairman Iqbal Vanoo, Director, Coaching Panel, Samer Desai, Director Women's Cricket Mahboob Khan, Director Match Officials, Imran Mustafa, Irfan Adil and Tahir Khan.

ICSK Class XII students excel in NIOS board exam



Arjun Anil Raj, 81%



Annabelle Elizabeth Pereira, 79%



Shahina Fatima Abbas, 77.4%

The students of the Indian Community School (ICSK) Kuwait registered with the NIOS board had their Class XII results declared on 7 June with pass percentage of 89%.

Arjun Anil Raj, Annabelle Elizabeth Pereira and Shahina Fatima Abbas are the toppers with 81%, 79% and 77.4%

respectively. 40% students in the subject Data Entry have scored more than 90%.

ICSK became an Accredited Institution of NIOS in 2014 and is the regional study center and center for conducting examinations.

The National Institute of Open Schooling (NIOS) offers

academic as well as vocational courses in various streams at the Secondary and the Senior Secondary level similar to the CBSE and the CISCE. It is the board of education under the Union Government of India and was established by the Ministry of Human Resource Development.

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Kuwait reiterates support for global cooperation against organized crime

Kuwait has reiterated its support for implementing items and relevant protocols of the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime, which is the main international instrument in the fight against transnational organized crime.

In a speech before the second session of the government team tasked with reviewing the implementation of the convention, the Second Secretary at Kuwait's Embassy in Austria Nawaf

Ahmad Al Rajaib affirmed the need to find an effective and consensus mechanism to review the implementation of the convention through backing cooperation among member states and sharing information as well as contributing to enhancing national legislations.

The Convention is further supplemented by three Protocols that target specific areas and manifestations of organized crime: the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in

Persons, Especially Women and Children; the Protocol against the Smuggling of Migrants by Land, Sea and Air; and the Protocol against the Illicit Manufacturing of and Trafficking in Firearms, their Parts and Components and Ammunition. However, countries must become parties to the Convention itself before they can become parties to any of the Protocols.

Al Rajaib said that Kuwait signed the convention and its three protocols, considering

them a legal base for international cooperation. Kuwait, he said, has been paying much attention to achieve the goals and meet the requirements of the convention based on promoting international cooperation, exchanging legal assistance or extraditing wanted persons through enacting required laws and legislations, he added.

The United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime, adopted by a General Assembly resolution in November 2000.

LIC organizes seminar on money management



LIC International-Kuwait Unit and Warba Insurance company organized a seminar on 'How to manage your money: Be safe & smart with your money, Series-I' at New Park Hotel-Kuwait, which was attended by LIC customers, consultants and staff members.

This initiative was undertaken by LIC International, Kuwait Unit to create financial awareness among the Indian community to enable them to make wise decisions for investment of their money. Resident Manager



of LIC International Devesh Kumar explained the money matter concerns and expounded on various topics related to investments, including the do's & don'ts, importance of financial planning, dealing with inflation and the common mistakes in investments.

In his 2-hour session, Mr. Kumar emphasized the best investment goals, solutions and planning schemes for important life decisions such as higher education and retirement solutions. Following the program, LIC felicitated their valuable customers.



Marriott Hotels in Kuwait hold a Ramadan Iftar for local media

Marriott Hotels in Kuwait organized a Ramadan Iftar for the local media on Wednesday, 8 June, at Al Thuraya Ramadan Tent at the JW Marriott Kuwait City.

The event was very successful and was attended by more than 100 media representatives from different newspapers and magazines in Kuwait.

The Iftar was a great opportunity for Marriott Hotels to raise awareness about the different offers and promotions available throughout the holy month of Ramadan.

The JW Marriott Kuwait invites guests to enjoy the perfect Ramadan experience at the breathtaking 'Al Thuraya Tent'. The tent offers traditional settings complemented by live cooking stations, scrumptious seasonal specials and breathtaking ambience. Guests will also stand the chance to win valuable prizes every week, including free airline tickets to Europe, free hotel stays,



free gift vouchers and a lot more. Moreover, the Courtyard by Marriott Kuwait has recently launched a new culinary adventure called 'The Market', which offers a wide array of stations with ready-to-eat food from the most popular cuisines in the World, including Indian, Asian, Mediterranean and a lot more. Throughout the month of Ramadan, 'The Market' will offer a generous Arabian feasts featuring delicious Ramadan dishes, live cooking stations, live entertainment and a wide range of shisha flavors.

Furthermore, guests can celebrate Ramadan in style at the 'Blendz'

restaurant at Residence Inn by Marriott Kuwait. It offers sumptuous Iftar and Ghabka buffets featuring a variety of oriental and international dishes. Adding to the magical atmosphere, guests can enjoy a wide selection of shisha flavors at the restaurant's outdoor terrace and stand a chance to win weekly prizes.

Guests can also watch the Euro Cup 2016 matches live with friends and family; enjoy the great atmosphere and unparalleled hospitality at the JW Marriott Kuwait, Courtyard by Marriott Kuwait and Residence Inn by Marriott Kuwait.

'Arraya' Ballroom also offers a wide range of buffets for Iftar and Ghabka perfect for corporate events.

George Aoun, Cluster General Manager at Marriott Hotels in Kuwait, said, "On behalf of Marriott Hotels Kuwait management and associates, I would like to wish Kuwait's nationals and residents Ramadan Mubarak."

ICSK students praised for athletic achievements



The students of the Indian Community School Kuwait (ICSK) have brought glory to the school by winning several prizes in various events of the CBSE Kuwait Cluster Sports 2016-17.

The ICSK team bagged the Championship trophy in the U-19 Table tennis girls' event conducted on 14 and 15 May at the Indian Educational School (IES). The winning team comprised of Akila P. Krishnan (Class XII), Mariam Paul (Class XI), Sarah Johnson (Class XI) and Umama Bawaji (Class XI).

The Kuwait Cluster badminton tournament for boys was won by Adnan Jeff (Class VII), Aiden Anish Mathew (Class VI), Delwin Menezes (Class VIII) and Abhishek Daniel Joseph (Class VIII) in the U-14 boys category. They went away with the championship.

In the Chess tournament, the team comprised of Arshiya Anand (Class VII), Ruth Gladwin (Class VI), Sakina

Taha (Class V) and Aaliya Kadiri (Class IV) won the U-11 girls' trophy.

Also, in chess tournament U-19 category, Sneha Ashok (Class XII), Haritha Gnanasegar (Class XII), Aleeta (Class X) and Pranathi Prasanth (Class IX) were the winners.

In the U-14 boys' Swimming competition that was held on 27 and 28 April, 2016, Jai Ajith Barot (Class VI) stood 3rd in the 50m Freestyle event and Adil Roshan Anwar (Class VI) also came 3rd in the 100m backstroke event.

In the same competition, U-17 boys category, Shabbir Murtaza (Class XI) won the bronze medal in the 50m Freestyle event while Arjeet Singh Rekhi (Class XI) secured the silver medal in 4X100m freestyle. Anson Pereira (Class XI) won silver medal in 4X100m freestyle and bronze in 100m backstroke. Ebrahim Kaeed (Class XI), Nilay Thummar (Class XI), Roshan K. Thomas (Class XI) and Tariq Ahmed (Class XI) won the silver medal in 4X100m freestyle relay.

TCS celebrates 2nd Anniversary of Telangana state

Telangana Chaitanya Sravanthi (TCS-Kuwait), celebrated the 2nd anniversary of Telangana State Formation Day on 2 June at Global Technology Company (GTC) with active support of the Government of Telangana. Mr. Harikrishna, Director, Language and Culture, and Deshapathi Srinivas, Officer on Special Duty to honorable Chief Minister of Telangana State.

Also present for the grand event was TCS members, their families and friends alongside invited guests and the GTC staff. The Chief Guest of the event, GTC CEO Mr. Ramadoss, along with Consultant Narsing Rao shared the joyful moments with the Telangana diaspora in Kuwait.

The Telangana State was formed on 2 June, 2014, after a prolonged great struggle of over five decades, through innumerable sacrifices of hundreds of youth for the cause and unflinching fighting spirit of the movement's architects like Late Prof. Jayashankarji, and honorable Chief Minister, K. Chandrashekar Raoji, and the entire population of Telangana from all walks of life.

The TCS Vice President Sreeram Taduri, in his welcome address

discussed some important safety aspects and Clean-Kuwait message besides covering all the achievements of Telangana State Government in the past two years in brief. The Chief Guest, Mr. Ramadoss, gave an inspiring speech and spoke from his own

experiences in the Telangana region. TCS President Srinivas Vaidyula greeted the Telangana fraternity with best wishes and reminded all to keep the spirit of Telangana alive and urged them to remember the reasons why people fought for a separate state.



The Chief Guest of the Event, Mr. Ramadoss and an elder member of TCS, Kuwait Narsing Rao were

presented with a memento each. After the speeches, a cultural program began which featured singers of some inspiring Telangana theme based songs. In between the songs, a very interesting Telangana based Quiz competition was conducted. All appreciated the efforts of the quizmaster and the five singers.

Kalyan Jewellers attracts customers with 'The Fly Back Home in Style' campaign



Kalyan Jewellers, one of the region's most trusted and leading jewelry brands, is attracting patrons with their latest campaign 'Fly Back Home in Style'. The promotion, which launched on 29 May and is slated to continue till 24 July, gives shoppers the opportunity to win free air ticket, an American Tourister backpack, or a cruiser watch.

Those who buy jewelry worth KD200 will receive one Scratch & Win coupon that allows them to win an American Tourister backpack or a cruiser watch, along with KD20 gift voucher redeemable against uncut diamond or jewelry. In addition they are also entitled to enter into a grand raffle draw that could win them a flight ticket.

Alternatively shoppers can buy gold jewelry worth KD400 and get 3 coupons or buy diamond jewelry worth KD400 to receive 4 coupons that will increase their chances of the amazing prizes.



Français Institut Koweit holds gathering for Euro Cup match

The Français Institut Koweit organized a social gathering for a viewing of the opening match of Euro 2016: Romania vs. France at the Marriott Courtyard, Kuwait City on 10 June. Guests enjoyed an exciting match,

along with good food and company. The nail-biting finish where the inspirational Dimitri Payet scored one goal and helped France beat Romania 2-1 was met with applause from the fans of the France team.

Bhavan's schools observe World Environment Day

World Environment Day-2016 was observed at IES Kindergarten, Bhavan's Pearl Nursery and Jack and Jill Mangaf.

A special assembly was conducted by the kindergarten in which the children enacted a skit giving importance to nature and keeping it clean so that it will benefit all the animals and human inhabitants.

The program concluded with the children taking a pledge to preserve the nature, followed by an activity based on the theme.



Tata Motors and Al Zayani inaugurates new 3S facility in Ahmedi



Tata Motors, India's largest automobile manufacturer and Al Zayani Trading Company, the exclusive distributor of Tata Motors Commercial Vehicles in Kuwait, inaugurated a new commercial vehicles facility in the industrial hub of Ahmedi. Spread over 1000sq. meters, the facility will cater to the 3S - Sales, services and spares needs of Tata Motors customers bringing the brand closer to its customers to the industrial hub.

At the inauguration Tata Motors also showcased three new next-generation Tata PRIMA brand of Heavy commercial vehicles, to a select group of customers.

Setting new benchmarks in styling and features, the next-generation World-Smart Heavy Duty range from Tata Motors, is a combination of power, driver comfort, world-class performance, fuel efficiency, superior technology and safety.

The models unveiled were the Tata PRIMA 4438S (4X2) Tractor head, the Tata PRIMA 4038K (6X4) Construction tipper and the Tata PRIMA 4038K (6X4) Chassis.

With a commendable year-on-year sales growth of over 40 percent in Kuwait, Al Zayani Trading Company was awarded 'Tata Motors Best Distributor' for the year for 2015-16.

IKEA hosts first cooking competition for amateur cooks



IKEA Kuwait recently organized the first cooking competition for amateur cooks in Kuwait, bringing together people from different backgrounds who share a common passion for food. The competition was held within the vicinity of the IKEA showroom for three consecutive days with each day dedicated to a different category which included appetizers, main courses and desserts.

Over 100 participants registered to participate in the competition on www.ikea.com.kw and were required to demonstrate their creativity and cooking flair throughout

the competition. The competition was judged by three renowned chefs in Kuwait; Chef Wafaa Alkanderi, an expert in authentic Khaleeji cuisine, Chef Jenan Al Asfour, a creative culinary expert in Kuwait and Chef Reem Al Jassem, a skilled gourmet connoisseur. IKEA does not just provide beautiful solutions at home but also organizes various social activities that people in Kuwait can be part of and enjoy.

IKEA will also be organizing cooking demonstrations and classes on traditional Ramadan dishes in Kuwait through the month of Ramadan.

India's Deadly Entrance Exams

In late April, a 17-year-old girl named Kriti Tripathi leaped to her death in Kota, India, shortly after passing the country's examination for admission to the prestigious Indian Institutes of Technology (IIT). A week later, another Kota student, Preeti Singh, hanged herself, succumbing to her injuries after a few days. Singh's was the ninth suicide by a student in Kota this year alone, and the 56th in the last five. All attended Kota's "coaching institutes," whose sole purpose is to prepare high-school students for the IIT Joint Entrance Examination (JEE).

In a five-page suicide note, Tripathi expressed her frustration at having been compelled to study engineering, when her real ambition was to become a NASA scientist. She also described the pressure she had faced at the coaching institution. Tripathi implored the Human Resource Development Ministry to shut down such institutes, which force their students to endure unbearable stress and depression. The story is all too common, but should the blame really be laid on the coaching institutes?

Protest movement The Resistible Rise of Populism

The global anti-establishment rebellion, seen through the eyes of Ricardo Hausmann, Theda Skocpol, Yanis Varoufakis, and other Project Syndicate commentators.

In fact, Kota's coaching institutes are a symptom of a larger problem, hinted at by the city's senior administrator, District Collector Ravi Kumar Surpur, in an emotional letter he wrote in response to the latest deaths. Addressing parents directly, Surpur pleaded with them not to subject their children to excessive stress in an attempt to live vicariously through them.



Indian parents are known for demanding academic excellence from their children. They know that a professional degree in the right field is a passport to social and economic advancement, so they push hard to ensure that their children get one – something that India's higher-education system does not make easy. Given this deeply entrenched culture of academic ambition, the planned administrative inquiry into conditions at the Kota coaching institutes is unlikely to result in remedial action.

The toll this culture takes on young people is obvious. Students are forced to pass brutally difficult examinations – only about 10,000 of the 500,000 who take the IIT-JEE each year score high enough to be admitted – in subjects they often detest. And Indian students are far more likely to push themselves until they crack than to drop out.

Engineering and medicine remain the subjects of choice for middle-class Indian parents. The country graduates a half-million engineers

every year, some 80 percent of whom end up in jobs that do not require an engineering degree. But, in a throwback to the mid-twentieth century, Indian parents

“

When succeeding in tough entrance examinations is the only way to fulfill one's educational goals, test preparation becomes the be-all and end-all of schooling.

”

view engineering as the gateway to modernity, and continue pressing their children to study it. Students who do not make it to an IIT end up in institutions of varying quality, many of which do not equip their graduates for today's labor market.

But at least there are enough

engineering colleges in India to meet demand. Medicine, by contrast, is a frustratingly crowded field – and for no good reason.

India's medical profession is controlled by the Medical Council of India, an opaque and self-serving cabal that has intentionally limited the supply of available medical college seats. Medical colleges must be recognized by the MCI, which has seen fit to permit only 381 to exist. That leaves only 63,800 slots each year in a country of 1.2 billion people – enough space for fewer than 1% of Indian students aspiring to attend medical school.

As if that were not bad enough, some of the seats are awarded against "donations," with the wealthy essentially purchasing positions that their marks do not merit. Meanwhile, high-achieving students who just barely missed the cutoff have to find alternatives – or pursue another field altogether.

Those whose families can afford it often end up studying medicine abroad.

Many do not return to India, depriving the country of their much-needed expertise. Some return after having attended obscure colleges in countries like Georgia or China, only to have the MCI refuse to recognize their degrees and block them from practicing. For those who cannot afford to go abroad – even bright students who barely missed the cutoff for a spot at an Indian university – studying medicine is no longer an option.

Yet India desperately needs doctors. According to the World Health Organization, the country has just 0.7 doctors per 1,000 people. In the United States and the United Kingdom – two countries to which Indian doctors often emigrate – the rate is 2.5 per 1,000 and 2.8 per 1,000, respectively. The crippling lack of capacity means that lives are lost every day – particularly in rural areas – for want of medical attention.

India could be graduating four or five times as many capable doctors as it does each year. Yet the MCI has been allowed to pursue its restrictive approach, depriving poor Indians of adequate health care, while augmenting the already-huge pressure on students to gain a seat in a medical college.

It is in this context – with a huge population competing for a tiny number of seats in professional colleges – that coaching institutes like those in Kota thrive. When succeeding in tough entrance examinations is the only way to fulfill one's educational goals, test preparation becomes the be-all and end-all of schooling. Eager to satisfy pushy parents, young people sacrifice their own interests at the altar of a false god. The 56 pyres lit in Kota over the last five years are a tragic testament to how damaging this conception of academic excellence can be.

Euro 2016 kicks off with first victory to host France



The Euro 2016 tournament which kicked off at the Stade de France in Paris with host nation France winning 2 – 1 against Romania on Friday, 10 June, will see 24 teams vying with each other over 30 days at 10 different venues to climax at the Stade de France on 10 July.

For the first time, there are 24 teams competing in the finals. That is an increase from the 16 that had taken part in every edition since the tournament was hosted in England in 1996. With six groups of four teams, it means the top two will qualify for the last 16, plus the four best third-placed finishers. In other words, only eight teams will fail to qualify from the group stage.

One point could be enough to put a team into the last 16 – and from then the tournament goes to a knockout

format. France, favored to win this year's tournament on home soil, is expected to face stiff resistance from Spain who are hoping to retain the won in 2008 and 2012.

Though the tournament got off to a colorful start, off the pitch, there were several concerns starting with fears over terrorism at the tournament, a garbage workers strike that has seen garbage pile up on the streets of Paris, as well as the issues with train strikes. Hooliganism, a common trait during such games reared its head early with two English football fans arrested in Marseille after police used tear gas.

Keep informed of the latest scores, highlights and daily happenings at Euro 2016, both on and off the pitch, by visiting our website www.timeskuwait.com

IES celebrates world environment day

C BSEi section of Indian Educational School (IES) celebrated the World Environment Day 2016 in a memorable way in the school hall with the Principal Mr. T. Premkumar was the Chief Guest.

Children showed their interest in nature by taking care of saplings, then bringing them to school to create a small garden in the arena. The Chief Guest Mr. Premkumar, in his inaugural address, reminded the children of the importance of preserving the environment and emphasized the selflessness of mother earth.



Kids from various classes presented a variety of entertainment programs while the

inter-class contests like coloring and poster making competitions enriched the message of the day.

ESF students performing charitable endeavors

The English School Fahaheel (ESF) has a strong tradition of charitable work and helping the community. In the spirit of those values, the Deputy Head Boy and Deputy Head Girl visited The Kuwait Red Crescent Society and handed over a cheque from the ESF Fundraiser, organized by the ESF Sixth Form, for the Syrian Refugee Fund.



THE WORLD'S MOST BEAUTIFUL MOSQUES

For the world's 1.6 billion Muslims, the month of Ramadan is an annual event that represents a time to fast and devote oneself to prayer, purification and charitable acts. To mark the world's biggest religious observance, here is a list of some of the world's most beautiful mosques and their special characteristics.



Nasir al Molk Mosque, Shiraz, Iran



Al-Masjid an-Nabawi, Medina, Saudi Arabia



Blue Mosque, Istanbul, Turkey

Al-Masjid an-Nabawi, Medina, Saudi Arabia: Built by the Prophet Muhammad circa 622, this is the second holiest site in Islam after the Al-Haram Mosque in Mecca. It now houses the tomb of the Prophet Muhammad, inside the Green Dome. Non-Muslims are not permitted to enter some parts of the Medina.

Sheikh Lotfollah Mosque, Iran: This mosque in Isfahan, a city said to rival Athens and Rome, is explored by very few western tourists as it is in Iran. Built in the early 17th century under Shah Abbas I, it does not have a courtyard or minaret, making it architecturally unusual. There are stories that the mosque was built for use by members of the Shah's harem, although they are not backed up by reliable sources.

Nasir al Molk Mosque, Shiraz, Iran: Lesser known still is the Nasir al Molk mosque in the university city



Ibn Tulun Mosque, Egypt

of Shiraz in southern Iran. Adorned with stained glass windows – unusual in Islamic architecture – it makes for a spectacular sight in the early morning and late afternoon, when the sun's rays cause twirling light patterns across the embellished murqanas, a form of architectural ornamented vaulting.

Blue Mosque, Istanbul, Turkey:

Majestic, magnificent and utterly beguiling, the Blue Mosque has six needle-like minarets that form an essential part of Istanbul's skyline. It was built under the reign of the Ottoman ruler Ahmed I between 1609 and 1616, and is now open to non-worshippers every day outside of prayer times.

Aya Sofya, Turkey: Opposite the Blue

Mosque in the historic Sultanahmet district of Istanbul, the squat, rosy Aya Sofya was built more than 1,000 years before its neighbor. The original 'Church of the Holy Wisdom' dates to the 6th century, but the building on the site when the Ottoman Empire took the city was turned into a mosque. The Aya Sofya today is a mixture of Byzantine glittering mosaics and inscriptions from the Koran in Arabic. It is now an utterly majestic museum.

Ibn Tulun Mosque, Egypt: Slightly more low-key but no less beautiful is the Mosque of Ibn Tulun in the Egyptian capital. It was commissioned during the Abbasid era, and although it is believed to be Cairo's oldest mosque, it has undergone several restorations.

Hassan II mosque, Morocco: This mosque proudly supports the world's tallest minaret, at 210 meters. The world's third largest

mosque, it is the only such building in Morocco that non-Muslims can enter. It stands on the seafront in Casablanca, and a defining feature is that the seabed is visible through the glass floor in the hall.

Umayyad Mosque, Syria: The Great Mosque of Damascus is easily one of the finest buildings in the Islamic world. The Shrine of Saint John the Baptist (Prophet Yahya) is believed to contain the man's head.

Great Mosque of Herat, Afghanistan: In lapis lazuli (a precious gem), brick and stone, this large congregational mosque in the north-western city of Herat is quite simply astonishing. With foundations laid by Sultan Ghayas-ud-Din Ghorri in 1200, it was extended, amended and repaired throughout subsequent eras, and took its current form in the 15th century, although it was damaged in the Anglo-Afghan wars in the 19th century.



Ramadan offerings at some of the hotel restaurants in Kuwait.

Al Jahra Copthorne Hotel & Resort – Taima'a Restaurant
Buffet Price: KD12
Telephone: 24590000

Al Noukhaza Restaurant
Buffet Price (Mangaf): KD11.950
Buffet Price (Shaab): KD14.950
Telephone: 24757775 or 1823888

Courtyard by Marriott
Buffet Price: KD13
Telephone: 22997000

Crowne Plaza – Al Ahmadi Restaurant
Buffet Price: KD14
Telephone: 1848111

Hilton Resort – Teatro Restaurant
Buffet Price: KD15.500
Telephone: 22256222

Jumeirah Messilah Beach – Garden Cafe
Buffet Price: KD19
Telephone: 22269600

Millennium Hotel & Convention – Lamar International Restaurant
Set Menu Price: KD14
Telephone: 22050505

JW Marriott
Buffet Price: KD15
Telephone: 22455555

Movenpick – Free Zone – Bays Restaurant
Buffet Price: KD12
Telephone: 24610033

Movenpick – Al Bida'a – Breeze Restaurant
Buffet Price: KD15
Telephone: 22253100

Radisson Blu – Al Bustan Restaurant
Buffet Price: KD14
Telephone: 25673000

Sheraton – Coral Tent
Buffet Price: KD17.250
Telephone: 22422055

Symphony Style Hotel
Buffet Price: KD11
Telephone: 25770000

The Regency Kuwait – Silk Road Restaurant
Buffet Price: KD18
Telephone: 25766880

Ramadan TIMING 2016							
Day	Ramadan	Date	Fajr	Zuhr	Asr	Iftar	Isha
Sunday	07	June 12	3:13 am	11:48 am	3:22 pm	6:48 pm	8:20 pm
Monday	08	June 13	3:13 am	11:48 am	3:22 pm	6:48 pm	8:20 pm
Tuesday	09	June 14	3:13 am	11:48 am	3:22 pm	6:48 pm	8:21 pm
Wednesday	10	June 15	3:13 am	11:48 am	3:22 pm	6:49 pm	8:21 pm
Thursday	11	June 16	3:13 am	11:49 am	3:22 pm	6:49 pm	8:21 pm
Friday	12	June 17	3:13 am	11:49 am	3:23 pm	6:49 pm	8:22 pm
Saturday	13	June 18	3:13 am	11:49 am	3:23 pm	6:50 pm	8:22 pm
Sunday	14	June 19	3:13 am	11:49 am	3:23 pm	6:50 pm	8:22 pm
Monday	15	June 20	3:13 am	11:49 am	3:23 pm	6:50 pm	8:22 pm
Tuesday	16	June 21	3:13 am	11:50 am	3:23 pm	6:50 pm	8:23 pm
Wednesday	17	June 22	3:14 am	11:50 am	3:24 pm	6:51 pm	8:23 pm
Thursday	18	June 23	3:14 am	11:50 am	3:24 pm	6:51 pm	8:23 pm
Friday	19	June 24	3:14 am	11:50 am	3:24 pm	6:51 pm	8:23 pm
Saturday	20	June 25	3:14 am	11:50 am	3:24 pm	6:51 pm	8:23 pm
Sunday	21	June 26	3:15 am	11:50 am	3:24 pm	6:51 pm	8:24 pm
Monday	22	June 27	3:15 am	11:51 am	3:24 pm	6:51 pm	8:24 pm
Tuesday	23	June 28	3:16 am	11:51 am	3:25 pm	6:51 pm	8:24 pm
Wednesday	24	June 29	3:16 am	11:51 am	3:25 pm	6:51 pm	8:24 pm
Thursday	25	June 30	3:16 am	11:51 am	3:25 pm	6:51 pm	8:24 pm
Friday	26	July 01	3:17 am	11:52 am	3:26 pm	6:52 pm	8:23 pm
Saturday	27	July 02	3:17 am	11:52 am	3:26 pm	6:52 pm	8:23 pm
Sunday	28	July 03	3:18 am	11:52 am	3:26 pm	6:51 pm	8:23 pm
Monday	29	July 04	3:18 am	11:52 am	3:26 pm	6:51 pm	8:23 pm
Tuesday	30	July 05	3:19 am	11:52 am	3:26 pm	6:51 pm	8:22 pm

AUSTRIA

Glorious Alpine scenery, monumental Habsburg architecture, and the world's favorite musician – Austria's tourist industry certainly plays up to the clichés. However, it is not all bewigged Mozart ensembles and schnitzel; modern Austria boasts some of Europe's most varied museums and contemporary architecture not to mention attractive and sophisticated cities whose cafés and clubs combine contemporary cool with elegant tradition.



Salzburg: Numerous cities claim a connection to Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, but few were as important to the famous composer as Salzburg. It is here you will find No. 9 Getreidegasse, the house where Mozart was born. Now a museum called Mozart's Birthplace, the rooms once occupied by his family are full of mementos, instruments, and portraits. Another address associated with Mozart is Makartplatz 8, where he took up residence in 1773. Mozart's Residence contains many interesting artifacts related to his life and times, and was where the composer entertained Europe's musical elite and wrote many of his symphonies.

Kitzbüheler Horn: Located in the Tyrol region, Kitzbüheler Horn is one of the most picturesque of Austria's many summits. Accessible by cableway via the Pletzeralm or by climbing from the village of Kitzbühel, the summit affords glorious views. In addition to this, there also is the Gipfelhaus, a unique mountaintop home; a chapel; a restaurant; and an Alpine garden.



Krimmler Ache: Best known as Austria's tallest waterfalls, the Krimmler Ache plunges 380 meters in three tremendous cascades and makes for an excellent excursion from the nearby village of Krimml.

Eisriesenwelt: Found on the western edge of the Tennengebirge, the spectacular World of the Ice Giants is the largest system of ice caves in the world. Covering some 30,000 square meters, the caves were carved by an underground river in the Tertiary period. Discovered in 1879, they were opened to the public in 1912. After winding along the Great Ice Wall, you will be confronted by

the massive Hymir Hall with its impressive ice formations and icicles. Stone steps lead to the Eistor, or Ice Gate, a 1,775-meter-high wall of ice, and the great Ice Palace.



The Grossglockner Road: From Bruck, in the Pinzgau, to Heiligenblut, at the foot of the Grossglockner, this road is one of the most magnificent mountain roads in Europe. Originally a Roman road, it was 'rediscovered' with the advent of the automobile due to its numerous panoramic views.



Medieval Burg Hochosterwitz: To the east of St. Veit, on a crag rising some 160-meters above the valley, sprawls the imposing Burg Hochosterwitz, Austria's most important medieval castle. The steep access road to the castle, the Burgweg, winds its way up through the 14 defensive gates to the beautiful arcaded courtyard where you will

find the little chapel with its wall and ceiling paintings from 1570 and the church at the southwestern end of the castle with its high altar dating from 1729.

Melk Benedictine Abbey: This is one of the world's most famous monastic sites, and its spectacular buildings are laid out around seven courtyards. The most prominent part of this massive 325-meter-long complex is

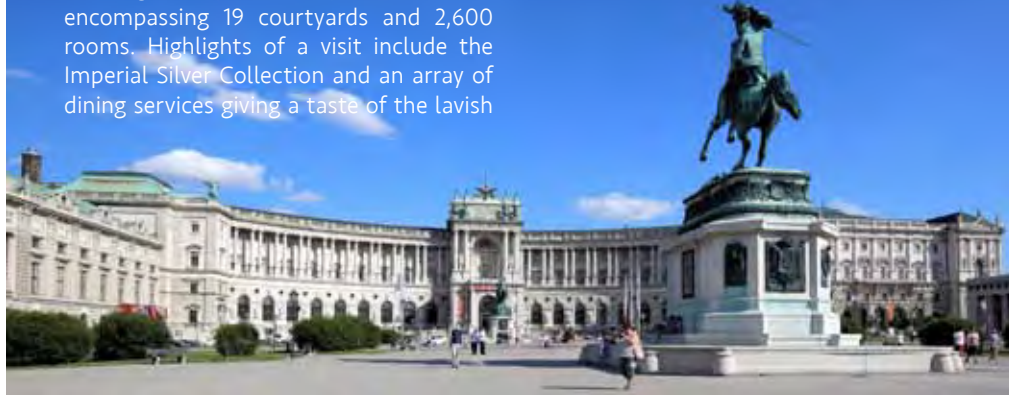


the west end and its twin-towered church rising above a semicircular terrace range. Perched on a rocky outcrop high above the town of Melk and overlooking the Danube, the abbey contains numerous other great reasons to spend a few hours touring it: the tomb of Saint Coloman of Stockerau; the 196-meter-long Imperial Corridor with its portraits of Austria's rulers, including one of the Empress Maria Theresa and more.

The pilgrimage church in Maria Saal: Perched on a hill high above the Zollfeld, the Church of Maria Saal is one of the leading places of pilgrimage in southern Austria. The present twin-towered church was built in Gothic style in the first half of the 15th century on the foundations of a Roman basilica, and was remodeled during the Renaissance and Baroque periods. Highlights include the

The Vienna Hofburg: The spectacular Hofburg Palace in Vienna was for centuries the seat of Austria's monarchy, the powerful Habsburgs. Together with its squares and gardens, the entire Hofburg complex occupies 59 acres encompassing 19 courtyards and 2,600 rooms. Highlights of a visit include the Imperial Silver Collection and an array of dining services giving a taste of the lavish

imperial banquets that once took place here; the Sisi Museum, focusing on the life and times of Empress Elisabeth; and the Imperial Apartments, a series of 19 rooms once occupied by Emperor Franz Joseph and his wife.



Vienna: Most people visit Vienna with a vivid image in their minds: a romantic place, full of imperial nostalgia, opera houses and exquisite cakes. Even so, the city can overwhelm with its eclectic feast of architectural styles, from High Baroque through the monumental imperial projects of the late nineteenth century, to the decorative Jugendstil (Art Nouveau) style of the early twentieth, used to great effect on several of the city's splendid U-Bahn stations.

west facade with twin towers and its fine old gravestones.

Hofkirche and the Museum of Maximilian I:

Innsbruck is home to the Hofkirche, or Court Church, with its spectacular Tomb of Emperor Maximilian I who died in 1519. Widely considered the finest work of German Renaissance sculpture, the monument's central feature is the massive black marble sarcophagus with a bronze figure of the Emperor. On the sides of the sarcophagus are 24 marble relics depicting events in the Emperor's life, and around it stand 28 larger-than-life-size bronze statues of the Emperor's ancestors and contemporaries. Other pieces of sculpture include 23 bronze statues of saints from the Habsburg family and 20 bronze busts of Roman emperors.



The Styrian Armoury: In the heart of Graz is the Landeszeughaus, the Styrian Arsenal. Built in 1644, the building houses a spectacular collection of completely preserved 17th-century arms and armor – enough to arm 32,000 men, including helmets, and weaponry.

Mangoes help curb obesity and blood sugar

Mangoes are one of the most cultivated fruits in tropical regions, with India which grows the most number of mangoes producing over 18 million tons annually.

In recent years the potential health benefits of mangoes have been widely investigated. Mangoes have been found to contain a variety of vitamins and minerals, including vitamin C, A, E and K, as well as a range of B vitamins. In addition they contain elements that have antioxidant and anti-inflammatory properties beneficial to our health. New research shows the effect that mangoes have on blood sugar, obesity and diabetes.

In tests conducted on mice, researchers found that mice fed

mangoes had lower percentage of body fat, lower blood cholesterol levels and lower blood sugar levels.

In a separate study, obese individuals given 10 grams of freeze-dried mango pulp every day for 12 weeks were found to have lower blood glucose levels. But researchers caution that studies using more people will be needed before concluding for sure that mangoes have a positive effect in lowering blood glucose levels.

Another study provides hope that mangoes might be useful in the fight against obesity. Mangoes contain a range of chemicals known as polyphenols, some of which reduced the ability of fat cells to multiply in the



laboratory. Although the research will need to be duplicated in humans, the authors are confident of the results, concluding: "These results suggest that a diet abundant in mango might be helpful in the prevention of obesity and obesity-related diseases."

Although mango is nutritionally rich, everything should be eaten in moderation. Mangoes are relatively high in carbohydrate and, for someone who is watching their weight or glucose levels, they should be eaten as part of a calorie controlled diet. In conclusion, adding mangoes to a healthy diet could be beneficial for blood sugar, lipid levels, and possibly obesity. However, further research is needed to solidify these findings.

Feet condition may signal other illnesses

When you have a small problem on your feet, you might tend to neglect it. But doctors warn that while your feet may not be killing you, it could be alerting you to a serious problem. Here, we look at some signs manifested on the foot that could be symptoms of other illnesses

Persistent sores: A common symptom of diabetes is neuropathy, or damage to the nerves. This means that patients are unable to feel or notice injuries, for example, having a stone in the foot or a blister. If the injuries get worse and become infected, they can lead to ulcers and gangrene, and the need for amputation. Nerve damage can also cause the feet and toes to change shape. Other signs of diabetes

textures can reflect an even wider variety of systemic problems. If there is discoloration or deformity of the nails, and this is not linked to the use of cosmetics, it might be a good idea to seek medical advice.

Swollen feet: Swollen feet can indicate a wide range of problems, some of which can be life-threatening. They range from poor circulation and

Enlarged big toe: Gout can cause the toe to be red, hot, swollen and extremely painful. Gout is the most common type of inflammatory arthritis among men. It is a type of inflammatory arthritis that happens when too much uric acid, or monosodium urate, builds up in the tissues and fluids of the body. As uric acid crystals tend to collect in the coolest part of the body, gout normally manifests in the big toe, and this is where the symptoms tend to appear first. People who are overweight or obese, and those with poor circulation, are more prone. Alcohol, a meat-rich diet, and some medications can add to the risk. Gout also increases the risk of kidney stones.

Foot cramping and spasms: Muscle spasms can be uncomfortable, but they can also be signs of deficiencies in the body. The spasms can be caused by dehydration. Insufficient hydration can mean that the muscles are not getting enough oxygen and that there is a lack or imbalance of electrolytes or nutrients, especially sodium, calcium, potassium, or magnesium. This could be a side effect of diuretic medication, which aims to reduce excess fluid in the body. If the spasms happen while walking, it could indicate a circulatory problem. Spasms can also result from overexertion, or not stretching enough when exercising. Finally, the type of shoes might contribute, for example, changing from flat shoes to high heels.

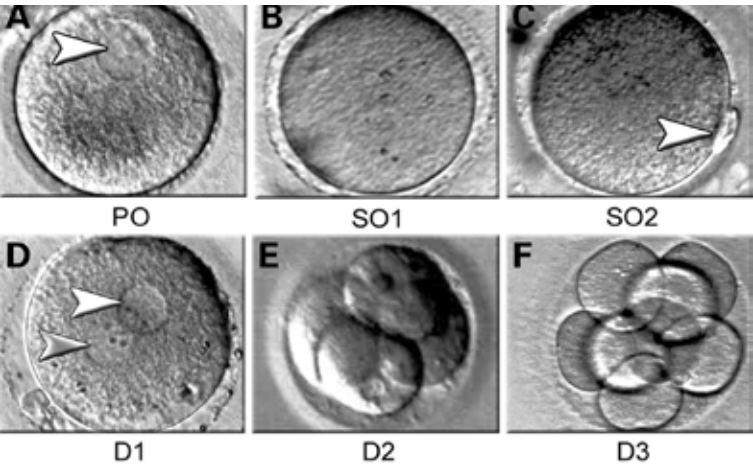


that appear in the feet include dry, cracked, and peeling skin, calluses, and poor circulation.

Colored toenails: Yellow toenails are common among women who always wear nail polish, but they can also be a sign of something more serious. Conditions linked to yellowing toenails include tuberculosis (TB), jaundice due to liver problems, inflammation of the thyroid gland or the sinus and even a lung condition that could lead to breathing problems. A variety of nail colors and

related heart failure, kidney or liver failure, to deep vein thrombosis (DVT) or a blood clot, lymphatic buildup and cellulitis, among others. If there is redness, warmth, and inflammation, there could be an infection. Bruising and swelling suggests a sprain or fracture. Painless swelling in the feet happens when fluid builds up in the body, and gravity means that it collects in the feet. Home treatment includes raising the feet when sitting down, exercising the legs, reducing salt intake, and avoiding tight clothes. Losing weight may help some people.

Scientists map gene activity of human embryo's first days



Human egg fertilization triggers a flow of genetic activity. After 1 day, the single cell becomes two, after 2 days there are four cells, after 3 days there are eight, and so it continues. Now, for the first time, scientists at the famous Karolinska Institutet in Sweden have mapped the genetic activity that accompanies this early stage of embryo growth.

The international study found novel insights into the regulation of early embryonic development in humans. The study is the first to map all the genes that are activated in the first few days of embryo development from the point of fertilization; a discovery the researchers said was akin to finding the "ignition key" that switches on human development.

While there are approximately 23,000 human genes, the order in which genes are activated following fertilization has been a mystery until now. The team found that on the second day after fertilization only 32 of the 23,000 human genes were switched on. By the third day, the number of active genes rises to 129. Seven of these

active genes had not been previously identified. Most genes carry the instructions for making proteins. There are a number of repeated sequences in our DNA that were initially thought to be 'junk' DNA but were later discovered to be regulating the genes that code for proteins. The new genes the researchers found appear to interact with the so-called 'junk' DNA, and this interaction is essential for triggering early embryo development. This could have far reaching consequences for future research in reprogramming cells into so-called pluripotent stem cells, which have the potential to treat a range of diseases, as well as in the treatment of infertility.

New research has also shown that it is not the aging of the eggs themselves but aging of their environment that appears to reduce older women's chances of conceiving through IVF (in vitro fertilization). The researchers found that retrieving eggs from the ovaries earlier than in conventional IVF led to increased production of good quality embryos and higher success rates.



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Speedy Makeup tips

There are many cute makeup looks, but trying to recreate them on a daily basis might make you late for work or whatever exciting event you are going for.

Some perfect looks take time, but others can be done speedily provided you have the makeup tricks to get the job done. You don't have to spend time trying to create the perfect makeup look, there are many quick ways to do a cat-eye or add blush on your skin. To help you shave time off your beauty routine and get to wherever place you are going with time to spare, here are some tricks.

Brows: Create your brow shape by lining the underside of your brow with an eyebrow pencil. This gives you a sharper and the most natural-looking brow shape, since you can blend it in more seamlessly. Just be sure to start at the outer corner of your brow and work inward, so your arch is darker on outer side and lighter as you move in toward your nose. Be sure to try a pencil in one shade lighter than your brow hair. Fill in your brow with quick strokes of an angled brush dipped in brow powder. Using tiny flicking motions, which create hair-like strokes, begin at the outer corner of your brow and work your way inward to fill them in flawlessly.



Contouring: Not everyone needs a full contouring map to sculpt their face. You only really need to apply

bronzer along the perimeter of the forehead if you wanted to create the illusion of a smaller one — same goes with swiping matte bronzer down the sides of your nose to make it appear thinner, as well as applying a darker powder along your jawline to give it definition. But not everyone needs all of these techniques; however, everyone can benefit from chiseling their cheeks a bit, which happens to be the fastest way to contour anyway.

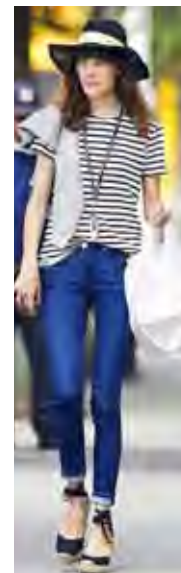
A foolproof technique: Suck in your cheeks and use a small fluffy brush and a matte bronzer that is one or two shades darker than your skin tone. Then, starting right at your temples, use light sweeping motions to bring the color down toward the corner of your mouth. That way, you blend the powder at the same time and don't end up with a harsh straight line of bronzer, which is a telltale sign you are wearing it.

Blush: The right way to apply blush is to sweep a flat rounded blush brush over a universally flattering coral or apricot-colored blush. Then, smile and starting at the apples of your cheeks, use light strokes toward the tops of the ears. This keeps the blush exactly on the apples and helps blend it out seamlessly. Using this application technique rather than a back-and-forth method, also prevents the pink color from going anywhere near the outer corners of your nose, which can look like redness around the nostrils.

Lip liner: The quickest way to line your lips is to do it after you have applied your lip colour but you should only consider lip liner in a hurry when your lips badly need definition. If the lip colour you are using doesn't tend to bleed, apply a lip colour one shade lighter than the lipstick only where you need it, like your cupid's bow, for example, for a fast application.



Sensational Stripes



Stripes are an essential part of any timeless wardrobe, and with a few smart choices, anyone can flaunt them in a fresh and modern style. Deciding on how to wear stripes in a way that works for your lifestyle and personal taste can depend on many things, including your height and body type.

For example, vertical stripes are great for petite women and those with more curvy figures as they elongate the body and draw the eye up and down, rather than side-to-side.

Thin or pin stripes can also have a slimming effect, while bold, thick stripes can draw the eye to the wrong places.

Put a twist on classic Breton stripes: A classic Breton stripe in navy and white will work for anyone, it's just a matter of deciding what kind of clothing is right for you—it could be a cotton dress or t-shirt or

even a thick knit sweater with brass buttons. The Breton stripe can be worn as a classic element of a sophisticated and minimal wardrobe, or worked into a fashion-forward closet in many exciting ways.

How about you wear a Breton stripe sweater with cropped flare jeans or under a leather jacket. The stripes even work with bold colors like red and orange when you want to introduce a pop of color into your ensemble.

Try an unexpected take: If a simple navy-and-white striped piece feels too basic for you, branch out into new colors and patterns. Multicolor stripes can be tough to pull off, so try just one piece at a time, worn with easy dark denim jeans, a black pencil skirt or under your favorite neutral coat. You can go as bright or clashing as you like, just play with combinations till you get it right. For example, bright rainbow stripes go well with neutral tones

that offer contrast or shimmering items that contribute to its overall effect.

Rock a matched set: A striped matched set doesn't have to be as bland as it sounds. If you stick with neutral colors like white, blue, black and grey or even camel, this look is actually really sophisticated and easy. Look for pieces that have a fit you feel comfortable in, and could be worn separately too. Your best option is a sleeveless top and wide-leg trousers that are designed to look sophisticated in any subtle print or solid color, and these pieces could easily be worked into any existing wardrobe.

Play with striped accessories: A fun way to work stripes into your wardrobe is to find accessories or shoes in a vibrant eye-catching print to make a strong statement in your ensemble. Striped accessories are a great idea for anyone who has a consistent wardrobe of solid pieces and wants to change things up.

Outstanding Orange lipstick

Orange lipstick is back in a big way and this bold shade is ready to be part of your daring, inspiring makeup regiment. But actually wearing this statement color on your lips is a bit difficult. You dab it on your lips, and then spend the day feeling like a drunken clown on a rampage. With the right tips, you can wear the mouth-watering shade. So, read on for advice on how to wear orange lipstick without looking like a decorative orange.

Make it the focus of your look: You can wear the bright lipstick color just about everywhere—a bold lipstick is a year-round essential. To really pull orange lips off, make

sure you have a beyond-perfect outline; use a lip liner in a shade similar to your lipstick to make this happen. And because this is such a major lip look, it is important you keep the rest of your makeup balanced. Pair your orange lips with lightly highlighted skin, bold brows and mascara for a simple beauty look that lets your kisser really shine.

Wear it with smoky eyes: Smudgy, sexy eye makeup is a fall beauty essential—but instead of pairing it with the usual red lip, take a turn for the unexpected and rock a swipe of orange instead. Playful without being juvenile, a semi-

matte orange lip flatters every skin tone and adds a touch of glam to this classic beauty look.

Pick a pastel: If you are a little hesitant about jumping headfirst into a tangerine dream, choose a shade that is creamier than carrot. Almost-pastel shades work in gloss, satin or matte finishes and look amazing on every skin tone—plus, they tend to allow a little of your lips' natural color to peek through, diffusing the intensity of the orange a little. Apply light shades with a lip brush for totally even coverage and wear with warm-toned blush for



a gorgeously flushed look.

Pair with color: Don't think that fall is the time to abandon all your fun eye makeup—and never fall into the trap of believing that bold lips can only work with a neutral eye. The trick is choosing two colors that complement one another in intensity; a pale purple eye shadow and muted orange lipstick is a match made in makeup heaven.

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Uber wins \$3.5 billion Saudi Investment

Uber, the online transportation network, last week received a record US\$3.5 billion investment from the Saudi Arabian Public Investment Fund (PIF) -- the largest-ever investment in a closely held technology firm.

Operating in over 66 countries and 449 cities worldwide, Uber with a valuation of about \$62.5 billion, is now considered the most valuable venture capital-backed firm in the world.

The Saudi investment is part of a deal that will allow Uber to expand its Middle East operations, said Yasir Al Rumayyan, managing director of PIF, who will take a seat on Uber's board

of directors. "We appreciate the vote of confidence in our business as we continue to expand our global presence," said Uber CEO Travis Kalanick. "Our experience in Saudi Arabia is a great example of how Uber can benefit riders, drivers and cities, and we look forward to partnering to support their economic and social reforms."

Saudi Arabia is working from the blueprint of its Vision 2030 plan, which is designed to wean the kingdom from dependence on oil, Al Rumayyan said. "We've seen first-hand how this company has improved urban mobility around the world, and we're looking forward to being part of



that progress," he commented.

Under the Vision 2030 plan, the country will unlock strategic sectors from tourism and entertainment, encourage entrepreneurship, boost job opportunities, and increase the

number of women in the workforce.

Uber currently has invested more than \$250 million in the Middle East, operating in nine countries and 15 major cities in the region, including Cairo and Alexandria in Egypt; Beirut; Amman, Jordan; Tel Aviv; Doha, Qatar; and Riyadh, Jeddah, Mecca and Medina in Saudi Arabia. It has more than 395,000 active riders in the region -- a 500 percent increase from the first quarter 2015 to 2016 -- and about 19,000 active drivers. More than 80 percent of riders in Saudi Arabia are women, due in part to women not being allowed to drive or take public transit.



Microsoft could transform PC into an Xbox

With sales continuing to lag behind Sony's PlayStation 4, Microsoft has started to focus on combining PC gaming with the Xbox One. The first signs of this started when the Xbox One was originally launched with a customized version of Windows 8, but the software maker upgraded the console to Windows 10 in November.

With an anniversary update to the Xbox One due in the summer, Microsoft has finally started to combine its Windows and Xbox app and games stores to set PC gaming and Xbox One up for an interesting future. Microsoft is currently working on a secret project internally, codenamed Helix, designed to more closely combine Xbox and Windows 10. Microsoft wants to enable features like streaming PC games to the Xbox One, but sources familiar with the company's plans also

tell us there are greater ambitions to make Xbox One games playable on a PC without needing a console for streaming.

Part of this could involve bringing the full Xbox One UI and system directly into desktop versions of Windows 10. The latest Xbox One dashboards are built on top of Windows 10, so most of the work involved would be customizing the interface towards keyboard and mouse. Bringing the Xbox One UI over to Windows 10 machines would effectively turn every PC into an Xbox One, especially if they're also capable of running the latest console games.

If Xbox One games are truly playable on PCs, then this approach also boosts Microsoft's Universal App platform and the ability to offer a single store purchase that will work across PCs and consoles.



Samsung plans to launch bendable smartphones

Samsung is reportedly planning the release of two smartphones with bendable OLED screens next year. One model is said to fold in half, while another has a 5-inch display that 'unfurls' into a tablet-sized 8-inch panel. The phones may be announced as soon as Mobile World Congress in February 2017.

There are also reports that the next Galaxy Note may skip a version number, moving to 7 in order to align with the

flagship Galaxy S range. The bendable phones, however, reportedly will not be Galaxy S models; the initiative is codenamed Project Valley.

The Project Valley phones could escalate Samsung's showdown with Apple next year, which is rumored to be shaking up the 2017 iPhone model with a new 'bezel-less' design and a switch from LCD to OLED screens. This year's new iPhone is expected to be cosmetically similar to the 6 and 6S.

Motorola introduces the modular Moto Z

Motorola, now owned by Lenovo, was also given stage time at its parent company's Tech World event last week to launch its modular phone the Moto Z, which uses backpack-like accessories to double as everything from a small speaker to a portable projector.

The Moto Z will be available in two forms, Moto Z and Moto Z Force, with both having a new system for accessory add-ons called Moto Mods. The Mods attach to the back of the phone via magnets and provide a new look, improved audio, a projector, or other extra features.

The Moto Z has a 5.5-inch, quad HD AMOLED display; Qualcomm Snapdragon 820 processor with 4GB of RAM; 32 or 64GB of storage with SD card expansion; 13-megapixel camera with f/1.8 lens and optical image stabilization; fingerprint scanner; and 2600mAh battery. Moto is highlighting the fact that the phone is a scant 5.2mm thick without any Mod accessories attached and claims that it is the thinnest premium smartphone.

The Moto Z Force has many of the same features as the standard Z, but upgrades the camera to a 21-megapixel unit; the display to a shatterproof panel; and the battery to a 3,500mAh cell. As a result the Force is thicker than the Z, at a more pedestrian 7mm.

The Moto Mods attach to the



Z or Z Force via four magnets and communicate with the phone through a series of pins on the back of the device. The company is supplying a single Style Shell Mod with each phone, which can be had in a variety of materials or finishes, such as nylon, wood, or leather.

Mods in various styles and capabilities will be available for separate purchase. The SoundBoost Mod, which was built in partnership with JBL, is a speaker that expands the output of the device with two three-watt drivers and adds an extra 1,000mAh of battery capacity. If you're not interested in a speaker, but want longer battery life, the Power Pack Mod

adds a 2,220mAh cell to the back of the phone. The Insta-Snap Mod adds a pico projector to the phone and lets you broadcast your phone's display up to 70 inches wide at 480p resolution.

The Mods are integrated into the phone's software, so when a battery mod is attached to the phone, you can monitor the charge status of both the internal battery and the mod's cell. The SoundBoost Mod requires no pairing or set up -- once it's connected to the phone, sound just automatically pipes out of its speakers. Mods can also be attached or detached on the fly and don't require the phone to be rebooted in between.

Lenovo showcases augmented reality Tango phone

Lenovo unveiled the world's first smartphone fueled by Google's Project Tango (or just 'Tango', as it is now known) computer vision efforts, at the company's Tech World event in San Francisco.

Called PHAB2 Pro, the phone runs on Android Marshmallow, has a huge 6.4 display running at 2560x1440, 64 GB of internal storage, 4 GB of RAM, 16MP rear camera, 8MP front camera, 4050mAh battery and a fingerprint scanner on the rear of the case. So what is new, you ask?

The big thing about the phone is its augmented reality capabilities. It has a whole array of sensors on the rear that make it 'Tango'

enabled -- the first phone to be able to claim as much.

So what then is Tango? First announced about two years ago, Project Tango is Google's effort to bring hardcore computer vision capabilities to phones and tablets, giving those devices a sense of where they are in a room and what is around them. Imagine being able to wave your device around to scan a room to create an accurate 3d model, then dropping properly scaled renders of furniture you're considering right into the room. ; imagine augmented reality games that can be played on your table top, characters climbing over and falling off the table's edges.



Fingerprint scanner that fits into a USB port

We know conventional passwords are not the most secure, especially if they are re-used across multiple sites. Biometrics are often a quicker and more effective approach, but most older devices do not come with fingerprint sensors or iris scanners. Still, we do not want anyone to be able to guess our PC password. Now, Synaptics thinks it can make our old laptops more secure with its new fingerprint USB module, the Turnkey, which slips into any Windows PC's USB port. Users just have to enroll with their print, pop the USB into the port, and it will become the primary way they gain access to their notebook.

The Turnkey USB is FIDO-certified, meaning it has been vetted and meets certain security and privacy standards. What is unclear, however, is whether a hacker could just pull out the fingerprint scanner and attempt to log into the laptop with a normal password. It does not appear to lock in place.



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