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EXCLUSIVE to THE TIMES KUWAIT

# The Best Investments We Can Make



**Muna Al Gurg**

A businesswoman and philanthropist, is the chairwoman of Young Arab Leaders UAE, a member of the board of the Al Gurg Foundation and the Emirates Foundation, and a founding board member of the nonprofit initiatives Hub Dubai and Endeavor UAE.

The desire to make a difference is born of a fundamental belief in something greater than ourselves, and by the concern that we all have for the wellbeing of our fellow humans.

As an Arab woman, I find it impossible to sit back and watch, or worse, turn away as parts of the Middle East suffer through such a difficult time in the region's already troubled history. Millions of innocent people have been displaced from their homes, and millions more are being driven across national borders into an uncertain and unstable future. Their need for help is clear.

To be sure, we can only do so much as individuals. But by uniting around common goals, we have the power to create effective initiatives, and improve lives. And I have always believed that education and social entrepreneurship are two areas where we can have the greatest sustainable, long-term impact. Together, these sectors create opportunities at every level of society, from refugees who are unable to complete their studies, to professionals seeking to further their career prospects or pursue an innovative vision.



The ongoing conflict in Syria has driven a vast number of refugees into camps that have evolved from temporary dwellings into makeshift cities. A prime example is the Za'atari Camp in Jordan, which now hosts 80,000 residents; but similar camps can be found in Lebanon and other countries around the region. Mass forced migration is not just a challenge for Syria's immediate neighbors. As refugee flows have turned a local crisis into a global issue, Europe's political, economic, and social fabric has been tested, too.

When refugees are torn away from their daily lives, they lose the chance to pursue an education. To address this problem, organizations such as the Unite Lebanon Youth Project (ULYP) are now identifying children from refugee camps who have the potential to complete their formal education and influence those around them.

With an education, these young people will be better equipped to effect positive change in their communities, now and in the future.

The ULYP has close ties to prestigious institutions such as the American University of Beirut, which has long been regarded as an incubator for successful entrepreneurs in the region. The ULYP, which I support by funding annual scholarships, acknowledges that education is neither the only solution nor a quick fix. Accordingly, the project takes a long-term approach, and makes investments in individuals who one day could benefit larger communities. After all, it is better to teach people to fish than simply to feed them.

Similarly, after someone has been empowered with the knowledge and financing to start their own company, they can start thinking about the greater good - at which point the true

value of entrepreneurship becomes apparent. Entrepreneurship is powered by dreams and aspirations, vision and ideas. And although financial support is important, it is not the only ingredient in the recipe for success. Entrepreneurs also need access to talented mentors and support networks.

It was with this idea in mind that I joined the board of Endeavor UAE, a global nonprofit from the United States that empowers entrepreneurs around the world. Endeavor's beneficiaries are not run-of-the-mill businesspeople, but rather those with the potential to become role models. We support individuals who can inspire their colleagues and peers, and improve their communities.

Not every entrepreneur will be successful. But by giving the brightest young business leaders financial support and access to a global network of mentors, we can help them realize their potential to transform the economies of entire countries. Moreover, this creates a virtuous circle, because today's entrepreneurs can identify the entrepreneurs of tomorrow, and furnish them with the capital they need to change lives in the future.

I have always believed that with success comes a responsibility to think about the wider world. In July 2015, I returned to my alma mater, the London Business School, to launch a scholarship that will support students in the MBA and Executive MBA programs. In the same way that a Palestinian or Syrian refugee might complete their studies through the ULYP, or a young innovator might receive guidance through Endeavor, I hope that LBS students will be empowered to build a better future for us all.

We live in an ever more interconnected global economy, and on an increasingly unequal and unstable planet. Our goal should not be just to make money, but also to make a difference.

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# Pressure on rents as 37,000 apartments vacant

The real estate market, which saw a softening in early 2017 with sales falling to KD180 million, appears to be continuing its lethargic performance.

Latest data from the real estate sector reveals that the number of apartments lying empty since the start of the year has nearly doubled from 20,000 to over 37,000 at the end of April. With more than 10,000 residential apartments poised to enter

also fell by 27 percent compared to last month, reaching KD291,000 per deal, the bank said. Sales in investment sector fell by 42 percent quarter-on-quarter and 51 percent compared to the previous year, reaching KD42 million. The sector registered 60 deals compared to 81 deals the month prior, with average deal value falling to KD706,000 per deal. The number of investment apartments lying vacant is

increase in number of expatriates who are deciding to send their families back to their home countries.

The average cost of around KD300 for an apartment is no longer viable for many expatriates, and with salaries remaining unchanged, the increase in cost of living is driving the exit of many expatriate families. Upcoming school closings and summer holidays are only likely to increase this exodus.

Obviously, owners of the 37,000 apartments currently lying unoccupied will be hard pressed to find new occupants in the coming months. Meanwhile, analysts cautioned that over the next couple of months, prices could continue to decline,

as a result of economic uncertainty, and demand/supply levels in the market. They added that Kuwait real estate market is expected to stand at levels similar to those observed in April, unless the market witnesses positive developments in crude oil prices or economic developments, both locally and globally.

According to the quarterly review by the National Bank of Kuwait (NBK), the real estate market softened in April, sales were down 30 percent y/y as growth in the commercial and investment sectors remained anemic. Though the real estate market ended the first quarter on a positive note, with total sales breaching the KD200 million mark in March, it was still down 17 percent compared to the first quarter of last year.

Continued on Page 8



the market during the second half of the year, the situation is likely to be further exacerbated. According to a report released last week by Kuwait International Bank, residential property deals in Kuwait declined by 42 percent in April compared to March due to sluggish market activity, with recovery depending on oil price rise.

A total of 305 deals worth KD89 million were registered in April, compared to 528 deals, valued at KD51 million, in March. Average deal value

cause for serious concern. One of the main reasons behind this problem is the oversupply of residential apartments, which is believed to be much higher than the demand. The investment sector witnessed a rapid growth in the past two years. According to data from PACI, there are more than 13,000 investment residential buildings in Kuwait, a number that is considered high for a market the size of Kuwait.

Another probable reason for the increase in empty apartments is the



## Kuwait wins seat at UN Security Council

Kuwait was elected on Friday to serve as non-permanent member on the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) for two-year term beginning in January 2018.

In one round of voting, the United Nations General Assembly gathered in its main hall and elected Kuwait, Cote d'Ivoire, Equatorial Guinea, the Netherlands, Peru and Poland, whom were running unopposed for the five vacant regional group seats. Out of the 192 ballots cast, Kuwait received 188 votes, Cote d'Ivoire 189, Equatorial Guinea 185, Poland 190 and Peru 186. The Netherlands takes over from Italy for a one-year term, after they agreed to split a two-year term as a non-permanent member for Security Council. They received 184 votes.

His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah

sent a cable of congratulations to First Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah over Kuwait being elected as a non-permanent member at the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) 2018-2019.

His Highness the Amir hailed the Foreign Minister for all the effort made by him, along with the ministry staff. He lauded the Kuwaiti diplomacy for being able to secure 188 votes in the elections, wishing for them more success in the future in serving Kuwait. His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah and National Assembly Speaker Marzouq Al-Ghanim sent similar cables to the Foreign Minister.

Continued on Page 5

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# Africa loses more than it gains through aid

In a time of Trump and talks about building walls and restricting trade, perhaps it is appropriate to get a few facts about Africa and African 'aid' on the table.

Africa is not poor; though many people are trapped in poverty, Africa has considerable wealth. African richness comes not only from its vast mineral and other natural resources, but also from its legions of skilled workers, its immense biodiversity and its lucrative investment and business opportunities in every sector of the economy.

Africa is rich; it is made poor by the policies and activities of the rest of the world, working in connivance with corrupt African politicians, leaders and elites, who together exploit the continent's natural and human resources with impunity.

Africa is generating large amounts of wealth and, in some ways, is booming. In 2014, the largest 500 African companies recorded a combined turnover of \$698 billion. Countries in Africa exported \$232 billion worth of minerals and oil to the rest of the world in 2015. The value of mineral reserves in the ground is of course even larger – South Africa's potential mineral wealth is estimated to be around \$2.5 trillion, while the untapped mineral reserves of the Democratic Republic of Congo are estimated to be worth an astronomical \$24 trillion.

These are very large numbers and at first glance should have enabled countries and their populace to thrive. But various reasons explain why the majority of people in Africa do not benefit from them, and why the present mode of minerals extraction actually leads to impoverishment.

Rather than 'helping' Africa with aid, we

need to stop exploiting the continent and its people. The current problem with 'aid' is that it casts Western countries in the role of benevolent benefactors, giving their wealth to poor countries. But exactly the opposite is true. Moreover, the rest of the world, especially Western countries and increasingly China, is extracting far more than they send through 'aid' to the continent.

Meanwhile, international aid and financial institutions are pushing economic models that

“The \$68 billion stolen from Africa in illicit financial flows amounts to around 6.1 percent of the continent's entire GDP.”

fuel poverty and inequality, while benefitting mainly multinational corporations and a few African elites. Given the actual flow of wealth, 'aid' currently does not exist in any meaningful sense. African countries received \$161.6 billion in 2015 – mainly in loans, personal remittances and aid in the form of grants. Yet \$203 billion was taken from Africa, either directly – primarily through corporations repatriating profits and by illegally moving money out of the continent – or by costs imposed by the rest of the world through climate change.

African governments received \$32.8 billion in loans in 2015 but paid \$18 billion in debt interest and principal payments, with the overall level of debt rising rapidly.

While Africans receive \$31 billion in personal remittances from overseas, multinational companies operating on the continent repatriate a similar amount (\$32 billion) in profits to their home countries each year.



African countries receive around \$19 billion in aid in the form of grants but over three times that much (\$68 billion) is taken out in capital flight, mainly by multinational companies deliberately misreporting the value of their imports or exports to reduce tax. An estimated \$29 billion a year is also being stolen from Africa in illegal logging, fishing and the trade in wildlife/plants.

Money is leaving Africa partly because Africa's wealth of natural resources is simply owned and exploited by foreign, private corporations.

A recent report found that 101 companies listed on the London Stock Exchange (LSE) control an identified \$1.05 trillion worth of resources in Africa in just five commodities: oil, gold, diamonds, coal and platinum. These 101 companies have mineral operations in 37

African countries and are mainly British, with 59 incorporated in the UK. However, some 25 of the 101 LSE-listed companies are incorporated in tax havens, principally the British Virgin Islands, Guernsey and Jersey.

Multinational companies are stealing \$48.2 billion alone through 'trade mis-invoicing' according to figures produced by Global Financial Integrity. Mis-invoicing is just a euphemism for money laundering through trade.

It involves moving money illicitly across borders by fraudulently manipulating the price, quantity, or quality of a good or service on an invoice. Mis-invoicing forms the largest component of illicit financial outflows from developing countries. The \$68 billion stolen from Africa in illicit financial flows amounts to around 6.1 percent of the continent's entire GDP.

Another massive problem is corporations buying concessions at falsely knocked-down prices, often linked to corruption and to tax havens. In 2013, the Africa Progress Panel and Global Witness examined five major sales of mining rights in the Democratic Republic of Congo in which each deal involved firms registered in the British Virgin Islands. They found the firms paid at least \$1.36 billion below the market value – almost double what the DRC spends each year on health and education combined.

The article above is not meant to make the rest of the world look bad or absolve Africans of any guilt. Instead it is an attempt to portray a problem that urgently requires a solution. The world needs to change the way it talks and thinks about the continent; Africa is rich, what the rest of the world needs to do is to stop making it poorer.

## Ethiopian elected as new Director-General of WHO

Former health minister and foreign minister of Ethiopia, Dr. Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus has been elected as the new Director-General of the World Health Organization (WHO). Dr. Tedros who will take office on 1 July for a five-year term, was elected by the World Health Assembly (WHA) at its meeting on 23 May in Geneva.



The WHA, which is the world's highest health policy setting body, governs the WHO through health ministers from the 194-member nations. Dr. Tedros, who had officially announced his candidacy for the post of the Director-General at the 69th meeting of WHA in 2016, won overwhelming endorsement from the African Union and Health Ministers of the continent. He was nominated as the sole candidate from Africa, based on merit and his prolific national and global credentials.

With technical, political and

diplomatic competencies, Dr. Tedros who was Ethiopia's health minister from 2005 to 2012, and the country's foreign minister from 2012 to 2016, brings to the top job at WHO the experiences and expertise of a seasoned diplomat and health professional.

As health minister Dr. Tedros helped craft an ambitious and innovative health reform agenda that was instrumental in saving the lives of millions of children. Rather than building expensive hospitals, he set up a program to train 35,000 health workers who then went on to provide health care in nearly every community across Ethiopia. As a result of this program, women and children, who are often the most vulnerable and underserved in society, were able to access various health services, including family planning guidance for women and life-saving vaccines and treatment for children.

In nearly seven decades since the WHO was established, this is the first time that an African has been elected to head the specialized United Nations health agency. Dr. Tedros who has a doctorate in Community Health is also the first non-physician to head the world body. He will replace current Director-General Margaret Chan of China who served two consecutive terms from 2008.

## AFDB annual meeting ends with call for inclusive growth

The 52nd African Development Bank Group (AFDB) annual meeting, which was held in Ahmedabad, India, ended on a high note with participants applauding the bank's healthy balance sheet and its early successes in implementing its 'High 5' priorities. The five-day annual meeting held under the theme of 'Transforming agriculture for wealth creation in Africa' was inaugurated by Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi on 23 May.

The Annual Meeting of the Board of Governors of the Bank from 54 regional member countries and 26 non-regional member states constitutes the core purpose of the gathering. It also provides a unique forum for representatives of government, business, civil society, think-tanks, academia and the media – from Africa and beyond – to debate key issues on Africa's development, and to discuss the Bank's performance in delivering on its mandate.

Over 3,500 top government officials, business leaders, representatives of NGOs, civil society, as well as members of the academic community and the media participated in the Annual Meetings, which were preceded by high-level meetings, symposiums and seminars on the bank's 'High 5' priorities – Light up and power Africa; Feed Africa; Industrialize Africa; Integrate Africa; and Improve the quality of life for the people of Africa.

Speaking on the sidelines of the meeting about an investment forum the bank was going to set up, President of African Development Bank, Akinwunmi Adesina, said, "We are going to set up an African investment forum. This forum is going to be totally transactional forum, where we bring in investors to look at projects that are on the continent and also monitor and evaluate investments that are being made."

"What we want to do at AFDB is to help to leverage huge pulls of capitals that are sitting out there globally in pension fund, sovereign funds and also similar ones in Africa, into power, into infrastructure, roads, rails, ports and aviation in Africa. So it is going to be a totally transactional forum where we make deals happen. The only currency in that conversation will be deals," he added.

Reflecting the significance of agriculture in Africa and in the Bank's development work, the 2017 Annual Meetings



was held under the theme: "Transforming Agriculture for Wealth Creation in Africa." Agriculture has a central place in the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the African Union's Agenda 2063, both of which focus on poverty reduction, overcoming hunger and food insecurity.

Reflecting the global and continental agenda, the Bank has aptly prioritized agriculture transformation by designating it as one of its High 5s: Feed Africa.

Agriculture is an important economic sector in Africa given its centrality to poverty alleviation, food security and economic transformation. Africa spends about US \$35 billion per year on food imports and this figure could rise to US \$110 billion by 2025.

The potential of the agricultural sector in Africa and the need to bridge the gap on food supply is itself a compelling business case for private sector investment. With over 65% of the world's remaining arable land, a youthful population – with 420 million people between the ages of 15 and 35 years – and a favorable climate, Africa has the potential to become a global agriculture powerhouse and the setting of the next Green Revolution.



EXCLUSIVE to THE TIMES KUWAIT

# Chinese ejection from SDR



**Benjamin J. Cohen**

Professor of International Political Economy at the University of California, Santa Barbara, is the author, most recently, of *Currency Power: Understanding Monetary Rivalry*.

Last month, the Chinese government tightened its grip on the renminbi's exchange rate. China has now effectively reneged on a promise it made 18 months ago, when it lobbied its way into the basket of currencies that determines the value of the International Monetary Fund's synthetic reserve asset, the Special Drawing Right (SDR).

China's latest move will hardly strengthen confidence in its currency. As some of us warned at the time, the renminbi's admission to the SDR basket was a highly political decision that could have adverse long-term consequences. The basket had previously comprised the US dollar, the euro, the British pound, and the Japanese yen — all world-class currencies that meet the IMF's two criteria for admission: they are issued by the world's leading exporters, and they are 'freely usable', meaning that they are widely exchanged worldwide.

By contrast, the renminbi met only the first criterion when it was included in the SDR. Although China was already the world's largest exporting country, its financial markets were primitive, and its currency plainly fell far short of being freely usable. In 2015, the renminbi ranked seventh in global central-bank reserves, eighth in international bond issuance, and 11th in global currency trading; and it remained non-convertible for most capital-account transactions.

Still, the renminbi was admitted. China had made it abundantly clear that it would not be happy with a negative decision, and no one wanted to poke the dragon. But rather than



upholding its usual standards, the IMF and its principal members settled for China's vague promise to make the renminbi more usable sometime in the future.

Historically, the People's Bank of China (PBOC) had fixed the renminbi's exchange rate on a daily basis, without regard to underlying market sentiment; and it had allowed for the renminbi to trade only within very narrow limits. But even before the IMF decided to include the renminbi in the SDR, the Chinese government announced that it was loosening its control over the currency. The PBOC declared that market signals would henceforth be factored into its daily exchange-rate fixing. And it promised gradual liberalization of China's capital controls, which would boost the renminbi's attractiveness to investors.

And yet the Chinese authorities' latest move indicates that they have no intention of playing by the rules. Instead of further loosening its grip on the exchange rate, the PBOC is reasserting control and reducing the role of market sentiment in its decision-making.

“*At best, China's government acted prematurely when it insisted that the renminbi be included in the SDR. At worst, it set an unfortunate precedent that could encourage other big emerging economies.*”

## Kuwait wins seat at UN Security Council

Continued from Page 1

The five overall seats available for election in 2017 were two seats for the African Group (Cote D'Ivoire and Equatorial Guinea); one seat for the Group of Asia and the Pacific Small Island Developing States (Kuwait); one seat for the Group of Latin American and Caribbean States (Peru); one seat for the Eastern European Group (Poland); and one seat for the Western European and Others Group (the Netherlands).

The five new members elected this year will take up their seats on 1 January, 2018 and will serve through to 31 December, 2019. Kuwait First Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al Hamad Al Sabah led the Kuwaiti delegation during the voting process, accompanied by Kuwait's Ambassador to the US Sheikh Salem Abdullah Al Jaber Al Sabah, and Sheikh Sabah Al Khaled's office Director, Ambassador Sheikh Dr. Ahmad Nasser Al Sabah, as well as Kuwait's Permanent representative to the UN Mansour Al Otaibi and Deputy

Assistant Foreign Minister for International Organizations Nasser Al Hayyen.

Kuwait, which joined the United Nations in 1963, had been elected only once as a non-permanent Security Council member in 1978-1979. During the campaign for membership, which it launched in 2016, Kuwait pledged to adopt balanced policies in dealing with the issues on the agenda of the Security Council.

Following the winning of the seat, Kuwait reiterated its intention to follow up on the implementation of Security Council decisions on conflict resolution in the region. It also said it was looking forward to representing its regional grouping and to refer its concerns to the Security Council in order to contribute to security and stability at the regional and international levels.

The Security Council is made up of 10 non-permanent members elected to two-year terms and five permanent powers: Britain, China, France, Russia and the United States. The Council is considered to be the only UN body that can issue binding resolutions.

abroad. This has increased downward pressure on the renminbi, and has forced the PBOC to spend more than \$1 trillion in foreign-exchange reserves to prop up the exchange rate. And yet that still wasn't enough to prevent Moody's Investors Service from downgrading China's credit rating earlier this month, leaving policymakers on the defensive.

Of course, China's current problems may amount to a brief detour on the long road to greater openness. But they may not. If the Chinese government is serious about opening its capital market, it will have to implement reforms that go straight to the heart of the Chinese Communist Party's model of political and economic management. An efficient, open financial sector could seriously erode the CCP's authority, not least because financial repression is a key component in China's machinery of political autocracy.

At best, China's government acted prematurely when it insisted that the renminbi be included in the SDR. At worst, it set an unfortunate precedent that could encourage other big emerging economies, such as India or Russia, to demand the same treatment for their currencies, regardless of whether they meet the IMF's criteria. Indeed, if China can get into such a prestigious, exclusive club despite its arbitrary policy behavior, then why can't they? Never mind that the IMF's authority would be severely compromised.

Looking to the future, there is only one solution. The renminbi should be removed from the SDR, unless China can make credible commitments to pursue serious and permanent financial liberalization.

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### 5 steps to better

# Crab Cakes

*Crab cakes are a lot like meatballs: both come together with the help of an egg, breadcrumbs, and a few common minced vegetables and herbs; both are hand-patted and pan-fried; and both have a sidekick sauce - marinara for meatballs, tartar for crab cakes.*

The two dishes part ways when it comes to protein. Ground meat is as low-maintenance as it gets - just dump it in the bowl and start piling on the other ingredients. Even the kind of crab meat you buy in tubs at the store that is already been hand-picked - requires another once-over.

Meticulously picking over the crab meat is the single most important step in making crab cakes. Nothing ruins a meal like biting into a shell fragment. Here listed are the five steps to preparing crab cakes:

#### 5 Steps to preparing crab cakes:

- Pick that crab. Designate one little bowl for shell fragments and another bigger bowl for catching the clean crab. Try to keep the lumps intact as best you can.
- For every ¼ kilogram of crab meat, add in a small handful of minced shallot, another of chopped fresh parsley, a bigger handful of diced red pepper, and another of diced green pepper. You will use about half of each pepper.
- Also add an egg, three to four heaping spoonful of mayo, a heaping handful of dry breadcrumbs (or toasted fresh crumbs that have been pulsed till fine), and a squirt each of Dijon and Worcestershire sauce. A few shakes of Tabasco, Crystal, or your favorite thin hot sauce are welcome now, too. Mix everything up gently to avoid breaking up the lumps of crab. If the mixture is too wet, you can add in some more breadcrumbs, and if it is too dry then go for the mayo.
- Form the patties.
- Thoroughly dredge each patty in all-purpose flour and fry them in clarified butter for the best

browning. Flip only once. Drain on paper towels, and serve hot with tartar sauce.

Now, for that sidekick sauce. To make a killer tartar, mix together the following: mayo, relish (or minced pickles/gherkins), capers, dill (preferably fresh), fresh chives, Dijon, and fresh lemon juice. The order dictates the general proportion, with mayo being the main ingredient and fresh lemon juice coming in at just a dribble. The sauce can be made ahead of time so you are not frantically mixing while your cakes cool.

If you do forget, you can also make a quick tartar sauce with just mayo and relish. Or, just sprinkle them with lemon juice.

If you still need a recipe, here is one to go with:

**Crab cakes with fennel, scallions and green apple.**

#### Aioli



#### Ingredients:

Egg yolk, at room temperature, as fresh as possible  
2 cloves garlic, minced  
Freshly ground black pepper  
1 tbsp. Dijon mustard  
1 cup canola oil, or other neutral oil  
2 tbsp. lemon juice  
1 pinch cayenne pepper  
Sea salt

#### Preparation:

Empty the egg yolk into a small bowl and mix with the minced garlic. Add 1 tbsp. of Dijon mustard and a few generous turns of the pepper mill.

Slowly incorporate the oil in a thin stream, while constantly beating with a fork or mini whisk. Continue whisking for about five minutes, until the mayonnaise has risen in the bowl, turned a very pale yellow and has a consistency firm enough to stick handily to the back of a spoon. Mix in the lemon juice and the cayenne. Add sea salt to taste. Let the mayonnaise

rest in the fridge, covered, for at least one hour before use.

#### Crab Cakes

#### Ingredients:

1 fennel bulb  
1 tbsp. olive oil  
6 scallions  
½ one green apple  
¼ kilogram lump of crab meat  
½ cup panko bread crumbs  
Canola oil and unsalted butter, for cooking

#### Preparation:

Remove the stems from your fennel, and then peel the top layer of the bulb. Halve the bulb, and lay each half flat side down on your cutting board. Thinly slice. Sauté the slices over medium-low heat with 1 tbsp. of olive oil until soft. Let the fennel cool slightly, and then roughly chop it.

Wash and trim your scallions, then thinly slice the white parts only.

Halve and core your apple. Lay the flat sides on your cutting board, and thinly slice crosswise and then lengthwise—you are aiming for small batons of apple.

In a large bowl, gently mix the crab with ¾ cup of the aioli, a few tablespoons at a time. Incorporate the panko breadcrumbs, and then fold in the fennel, scallions and apple.

Form the crab into patties, and then move them to a plate. Cover with plastic and refrigerate for about two hours—you want them to solidify slightly, so they do not fall apart during cooking, and you want to give the flavors a chance to marry.

In a wide sauté pan or shallow Dutch oven, heat some canola oil and butter. Cook the crab cakes a few at a time, making sure not to crowd the pan. Cook them for a few minutes on each side, or until they are golden brown.

Serve with the extra aioli, lemon wedges, a sprinkling of cayenne and/or hot sauce.



# Kuwait leads in public spending in GCC

According to a statistic prepared by the Central Bank of Kuwait, the country's public spending is the highest in the Gulf region based on Gross Domestic Product (GDP).

United Arab Emirates (30%). Also, in comparison to international figures issued by the Eurostat – the statistical office of the European Union – Kuwait's

36.8 percent, Canada's 40.8 percent and Britain's 39.4 percent. According to analysts, this high rate of public spending reflects the extent of governmental intervention in the national economy. It also indicates the ongoing spending and consumption inflation, which poses a burden on the national budget. The public spending in Kuwait reached more than KD19 billion in the current fiscal year, with a large proportion being allocated to paying public employees' salaries and other financial benefits.

However, the analysts and rating agencies affirm difficulty in control and rationalization "because there is a natural annual increase in the salary cap, as well as in the current



spending of several ministries and authorities which are not adhering to the rationalization principle". It is worth mentioning that Kuwait's

public spending rate based on the GDP increased after the sharp fall in the nominal GDP which was affected by the drop in oil prices.



Kuwait's public spending rate of 56.4 percent of the GDP was higher than that of Oman (51.5%), Qatar (42.7%), Saudi Arabia (36.2%) and the

expenditure rate based on the GDP was higher than Europe's average rate of 47 percent, the United States of America's 32.5 percent, Japan's

## Fitness with Urvi holds grand celebrations

By Shabana H. Shaikh

On 19 May, Fitness with Urvi (FWU) successfully concluded their second and very successful season of Mission Slim Possible (MSP), a 100 days fitness and weight loss challenge that aims to motivate women to adopt lifestyle changes through exercise and healthy eating habits. FWU founder and fitness instructor, Urvi Trehan, is well-known for introducing innovating and result-oriented set challenges to motivate her members, some of whom have been taking her fitness classes since FWU's conception 6 years ago.

The event venue was transformed into a disco-era set, complete with a mirror ball and dancing lights to match the theme, while members dressed in retro style and partied to popular Bollywood numbers, belted out by DJ Dream Event. A fashion show, 'Ms Grandeur', was held wherein participants were judged on basis of their attire and knowledge of fitness related questions. Ms. Geeta, Aarti Rohtagi and Sammy D'souza judged the show.

The highlight of the evening was the prize distribution ceremony, which saw members cheering each other enthusiastically as they went up to claim their trophies. Prize vouchers worth over KD950 were generously sponsored by Healing Hands, Shahnaz Husain Salon, The Clothing Palette, American Tourister, Pink Apple, Tulip Creations, Panache by Aarti and Gita's Salon.

In this season, Urvi and her co-instructor, Sammy Dillon D'souza, introduced myriad fitness workouts

such as Muscle Work to Rhythm (MWR), Resistance training, and H.I.I.T. training, as well as, fat flush and detox diets to rid the body of impurities and improve overall health. As a result, members lost up to 16 kg and over 51 inches during the challenge without indulging in fad diets. The competition was judged in four categories.



### Winners in each category were:

Maximum Weight Loss Winners: Winner: Roshita Vincent (lost 16 kg); 1st Runner Up: Mumtaaz (13 kg); 2nd Runner Up: Kanwal Shahid (12 kg)

Maximum Inch Loss Winners: Winner: Kanwal Shahid (51.25 inches); 1st Runner Up: Roshita Vincent and Mumtaaz (43 inches); 2nd Runner Up: Jaya Daniel (38.5 inches)

Maximum Points Earned: Winner: Roshita Vincent and Shabana Shaikh; 1st Runner Up: Kanwal Shahid and Zahra Azam; 2nd Runner Up: Meenaz Surve

Fit Bess Winners: Winner: Anjeline Ariola; 1st Runner Up: Nazima Jaan; 2nd Runner Up: Jeney Jacob

The event turned even peppier



when Filipina fitness group, Zpavanoo, took center stage to perform special Disco Zumba moves for the audiences. Ms. Edelyn, President and Founder of Zpavanoo, and crew members - Zin Sarah, Zin Kim, Zin Khleyr, Zin Melva and Zin Theresa - not only entertained, but also encouraged the audience to perform along with them. MC Sonali

Jagat kept the audience engaged and entertained throughout the evening.

### Yoga Blend 30:30 and WiFi 40 GB Challenges

In the 4th Quarter of 2016, FWU teamed up with Dr. Prabha Krishna, to offer yoga classes to members under Yoga Blend. Dr. Prabha, a Naturopathic Medial Doctor with over 15 years of experience in Naturopathy, Yoga Wellness, Ayurveda and Stress Management, has been instrumental in encouraging members to remain fit and flexible through daily practice of yoga. She introduced two lifestyle centered challenges, 30:30 and Willness to Fitness in 40 Days (WiFi 40 GB), between March and May this year.

Many members experienced a sense of well-being as well as improved physical flexibility by the end of the challenges. Sherin Mathew and Mallika won in the Most Weight Loss category,

while Rohaina and Jameela won for being most interactive on social media. The winning prizes was sponsored by 'La Parilla Beauty Salon & Spa in form of service vouchers.

The stupendously organized event couldn't have been complete without the support and coordination of members who volunteered their time and skills. FWU is very grateful to everyone who made the event a roaring success and members, old and new, who continue to support and work towards a healthier lifestyle.

Fitness with Urvi holds weekly fitness classes for women only, at two locations in Salmiya. They offer rigorous and latest fitness routines including Tabata, H.I.I.T. Circuit Training, Cardio, Tae-Bo, Kick boxing, Piloxing, Callanetics, Pilates, Zumba, Masala Bhangra and much more. For more details or to join, contact Urvi at 55061896 or visit her website www.urvi.com

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## CBK assures that local banks are safe from hacking

In light of the recent spate of global hacking of government websites, hospitals and big companies, the Central Bank of Kuwait (CBK) has allayed fears of the general public saying information systems of the local banks are safe from any form of hacking.

According to the CBK, only one local bank experienced a minor anonymous attempt at illegitimate access, but it was not considered to be hacking of automation system. A team of representatives from the Central Bank of Kuwait and other local banks has taken

necessary preventive measures to avert further expansion of illegitimate incursions and made sure the action is of no effect.

The systems have been declared safe and strong enough to protect the electronic network. In the meantime, the local banks have

been instructed to liaise with Online Banking Services Company (K-net) to implement further procedures by sending SMS containing unstable password to each customer to make it impossible for any intruder to operate a banking transaction in any account.

## Bhavans revels in the glory of 'twin delight' in grade 12 CBSE examinations

### Science Stream Toppers



**Anshika Shrivastav**  
School topper: 97.4%  
Subject wise top scores  
Mathematics - 100%  
Chemistry - 98%, Bio - 97%



**Anirudha Ramesh**  
Second place: 97%  
Subject wise top scores  
Computer Sc - 99%  
Physics - 98%, Chemistry - 98%



**Aaysha Wasmiya Sageer**  
Third place: 95.6%  
Subject wise top scores  
Computer Sc - 99%

### Commerce Stream Toppers



**Sakina Juzer Bankoda**  
School Topper: 95.8%  
Subject Wise Top Scores  
Informatics - 99%  
Economics - 98%  
Business Studies - 95%  
Accountancy - 95%



**Raania Tahani Pattan**  
Second Place: 92.8%



**Fathima Hishma Rizqi**  
Third Place: 91.4%



**Aditya Jaypal**  
English - 98%

### Subject Wise Topper

Sageer scored 99 percent in Computer Science and were toppers in the school.

Sakina Juzer Bankoda topped Informatics with 99 percent. Out of 16 students, 7 (44%) obtained A1 grades with 95 percent and above.

Anshika and Anirudha topped Chemistry with 98 percent, while 26.3 percent of the candidates obtained A1, with 17 percent securing the same in Biology. Anshika Shrivastav scored 97 percent in Biology to be the topper in the subject.

In Physics, 32 percent of the candidates obtained A1 with Anirudha Ramesh being the highest scorer with 98 percent.

Sakina Juzer Bankoda of the Commerce Stream was the top scorer in Business Studies (95%), Economics (98%), and Accountancy (95%).

Principal T. Premkumar said, "The underlying reality of success is nothing other than accountability... coupled with passion one gets nothing less than the best."

The chairman, Bhavans Middle East N. K. Ramachandran Menon and Mr. Premkumar congratulated the students on their victory.



## Budding Bhavanites celebrate Fun in the Sun and Lemonade Day

The 'Fun in the Sun' and 'Lemonade Day' was celebrated by the kindergarteners from Bhavans, IES and Jack and Jill on 23 May. The children came dressed in cool summer outfits.

A coloring activity (LKG) and a mask (UKG) pertaining to the day was done in the class, shortly after which children were escorted to the school playground by the teachers.

Peppy music numbers were played and the children danced to the different tunes.

Later, the children were seated in their respective classrooms while the teachers prepared lemonade with the items brought in by the children. At Jack and Jill, the children got their lemonade at a stall. Photographs were then clicked against a colorful backdrop.



## Pressure on rents as 37,000 apartments remain vacant



Continued from Page 3

In particular, investment sector transactions, which accounts for individual apartments and apartment buildings, dropped from 115 in January to 73 in March, a 3 percent decline y/y.

The shift in the composition of the investment sales towards less expensive single investment apartments than buildings resulted in a 30 percent decline in quarterly KD sales from a year ago. In line with this shift, sales volume also registered a fall in this sector, going from KD66.8 million at the start of the year, to KD59.8 million at the end of the first quarter, a drop of 27 percent y/y.

Adding to the dampened sentiment in the real estate sector was the decision by the Public Authority of Housing Welfare (PAHW) to distribute most of the 30,000 plots to applicants for the South Mutlaa City. Though construction permits for the distributed plots will not be available until road and infrastructure construction is complete,

the allocation on its own has diminished appetite for real estate elsewhere, especially in the residential sector.

According to a development plan follow-up report for 4Q16, work on South Mutlaa project, which is part of the strategic development plan, is so far 12 percent complete. In March 2017, PAHW awarded the second of four infrastructure contracts in South Mutlaa City to China Gezhouba Group. The contract, valued at KD216 million, is for major infrastructure work and is expected to be completed by March 2019.

On a positive note, inflation in housing services retreated to a multi-year low in line with the softness in the real estate market.

Inflation in the housing component, mostly comprised of housing rents, slowed from 6.4 percent y/y in 4Q16 to a three-year low of 4.3 percent y/y in 1Q17. Softer housing inflation has been a key contributor to Kuwait's recent lower inflation.

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# Satish Sharma seeks to address business concerns of Indians

Satish Sharma, a veteran of the insurance industry in Kuwait, and running a successful insurance business in Kuwait recently spoke to The Times about enhancing business and economic cooperation between India and Kuwait and providing a substantive platform for fostering and strengthening links among the Indian business and professional community.

Sharma whose family has been in Kuwait for over 60 years pointed out that a much-needed change was required among the Indian

business community and to make a meaningful difference in the way they engaged in the greater interest of the community.

"There are a lot of concerns that are not being addressed and the need of the hour was to pro-actively engage with the businessmen so as to enable them to better convey their concerns and aspirations," he pointed out

He stated that there were many critical issues facing Indian businesses and professionals operating in the GCC, and that it was necessary that businessmen were prepared to

confront these challenges effectively. The austerity drive sweeping the region, the upcoming launch of VAT in Kuwait and other Gulf nations, and the imminent introduction of GST in India, are just a few of the issues that could have severe repercussions on Indian businesses in the country, he noted.

"As businessmen and professionals we need to have a better understanding of these issues and how to effectively and efficiently tackle them through both in-depth and broad-based discussions on a



common platform," said Mr. Sharma.

"While big business conglomerates have a lot of internal strength to handle such issues, smaller self-

owned businesses need to share and solve each others concerns.

Satish Sharma, who was born in Kuwait in 1952 and has lived his entire life in Kuwait, has for the past 40 years been associated with the insurance industry. He recently retired from Metlife, a global leader in the insurance industry, where he was the agency manager for the past 32 years. He now runs his own insurance consultancy offices in Kuwait/Dubai/Delhi and Mumbai, and as such is well-versed in the business environment in most of the Gulf countries and India.



## AAK Supermoms organize Out to Lunch



The AAK ladies organized a Supermoms Out to Lunch event for its members on 26 May at Hotel Samrat.

The event commenced with an introduction and welcome by the President, Felcita Dsouza, followed by prayer. The guest of honor for the event was Liza Chacko, an ex-Agnesian.

Various games were conducted and prizes distributed where, Mrs. Chacko won the Super Bulls Eye Mom's prize; Celine Mendonca - the Superstar Mom's prize and Lavina Pinto - the Supermom prize.

## Gyanotsav 2017-a percussion of talent at ICSK Senior



Gyanotsav, an annual educational fair by the Indian Community School Kuwait (ICSK) Senior, was successfully hosted on the 18 May. The event was divided into two entertaining sessions - the morning session welcomed students of invited Indian schools in Kuwait, and the following session was open to all. The distinguished Dr. Ameer Ahmed of the Indian Doctors Forum graced the occasion as the Chief Guest, accompanied by Joint Secretary of the Board of Trustees Agnello Fernandes.



The twenty-six departments of the school worked fervently in the creation of their exhibits, and competed in three broad categories under the general theme of 'Educational Technology for Human Welfare and Social Development'.

The students of ICSK Senior enjoyed their day as they indulged in 'learning by doing', which is a primary goal of the institution. The introduction of the on-the-spot exhibit where participants were to recreate their ideas on the spot within ten minutes ignited the competitive spirit among the contestants.

A total of 1,224 exhibits were put on display in the campus and prizes were awarded to the winners based on the judgement made by eminent panel in three categories - Middle, Secondary and Senior Secondary. The grand exhibition concluded with raving reviews and applause of all who attended, including students of other CBSE affiliated schools in Kuwait and a large number of parent community.

## CBSE appoints ICSK principal to provide post-result counseling

Principal of the Indian Community School Kuwait (ICSK), Dr. V. Binumon, has been appointed by the Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE), to provide post-examination counseling to students in Kuwait.

The CBSE initiated counseling sessions are meant to help students and their parents overcome common psychological worries and address general queries related to Class 10 and 12 results.

The voluntary, free-of-cost telephone counseling sessions, which are being held from 28 May to 11 June, can be availed of by calling the mobile number 94784839 from



4pm to 8pm.

Earlier this year, Dr. Binumon had been selected by the CBSE to provide pre-examination counseling to students. He is a multi-faceted personality with long years of expertise and experience as an education counselor and is sensitive to the needs of students.

The CBSE tele-counseling is an outreach program offered by trained counselors and school principals of select CBSE affiliated schools located in India and outside India. Techniques to cope with result related anxiety are also available at the CBSE website www.cbse.nic.in by clicking on the Helpline icon.

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**PRAYER TIMINGS - KUWAIT**

DAY	RAMADAN	DATE	IMSAK	FAJR	SUNRISE	DHUR	ASR	MAGRIB	ISHA
Sunday	09	June 04	3:02 AM	3:12 AM	4:49 AM	11:48 AM	3:22 PM	6:46 PM	8:16 PM
Monday	10	June 05	3:02 AM	3:12 AM	4:48 AM	11:48 AM	3:23 PM	6:47 PM	8:17 PM
Tuesday	11	June 06	3:01 AM	3:11 AM	4:48 AM	11:48 AM	3:23 PM	6:47 PM	8:17 PM
Wednesday	12	June 07	3:01 AM	3:11 AM	4:48 AM	11:48 AM	3:23 PM	6:48 PM	8:18 PM
Thursday	13	June 08	3:01 AM	3:11 AM	4:48 AM	11:49 AM	3:23 PM	6:48 PM	8:18 PM
Friday	14	June 09	3:01 AM	3:11 AM	4:48 AM	11:49 AM	3:23 PM	6:49 PM	8:19 PM
Saturday	15	June 10	3:01 AM	3:11 AM	4:48 AM	11:49 AM	3:23 PM	6:49 PM	8:19 PM
Sunday	16	June 11	3:01 AM	3:11 AM	4:48 AM	11:49 AM	3:23 PM	6:49 PM	8:19 PM
Monday	17	June 12	3:00 AM	3:10 AM	4:48 AM	11:49 AM	3:24 PM	6:50 PM	8:20 PM
Tuesday	18	June 13	3:00 AM	3:10 AM	4:48 AM	11:50 AM	3:24 PM	6:50 PM	8:20 PM
Wednesday	19	June 14	3:00 AM	3:10 AM	4:48 AM	11:50 AM	3:24 PM	6:51 PM	8:21 PM
Thursday	20	June 15	3:00 AM	3:10 AM	4:48 AM	11:50 AM	3:24 PM	6:51 PM	8:21 PM
Friday	21	June 16	3:01 AM	3:11 AM	4:48 AM	11:50 AM	3:24 PM	6:51 PM	8:21 PM
Saturday	22	June 17	3:01 AM	3:11 AM	4:48 AM	11:50 AM	3:24 PM	6:51 PM	8:21 PM
Sunday	23	June 18	3:01 AM	3:11 AM	4:49 AM	11:51 AM	3:25 PM	6:52 PM	8:22 PM
Monday	24	June 19	3:01 AM	3:11 AM	4:49 AM	11:51 AM	3:25 PM	6:52 PM	8:22 PM
Tuesday	25	June 20	3:01 AM	3:11 AM	4:49 AM	11:51 AM	3:25 PM	6:52 PM	8:22 PM
Wednesday	26	June 21	3:01 AM	3:11 AM	4:49 AM	11:51 AM	3:25 PM	6:52 PM	8:22 PM
Thursday	27	June 22	3:02 AM	3:12 AM	4:49 AM	11:52 AM	3:26 PM	6:53 PM	8:23 PM
Friday	28	June 23	3:02 AM	3:12 AM	4:50 AM	11:52 AM	3:26 PM	6:53 PM	8:23 PM
Saturday	29	June 24	3:02 AM	3:12 AM	4:50 AM	11:52 AM	3:26 PM	6:53 PM	8:23 PM

## Marriott Hotels in Kuwait holds exclusive Ramadan Iftar for local media



**M**arriott Hotels in Kuwait organized a Ramadan Iftar for the local media on 28 May, at Al Thuraya Ramadan Tent at the JW Marriott. The event was attended by more than 100 media representatives from different newspapers and magazines in Kuwait.

The Iftar was an 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 'Al Thuraya Tent', which offers traditional settings complemented by live cooking stations and scrumptious seasonal



specials.

Guests will also stand the chance to win valuable prizes every week.

The Courtyard by Marriott Kuwait also has offers at the 'Atrium' Restaurant which include generous Arabian feasts, live cooking stations and live music.

The 'Blendz' restaurant and 'Arraya' Ballroom will also be offering Iftar and Ghabka buffets.

Cluster General Manager at Marriott Hotels in Kuwait, George Aoun said: "Marriott Hotels in Kuwait always try to offer their guests exceptional Ramadan experiences, including rich Iftar and Ghabka buffets, live entertainment and valuable prizes at competitive prices."

# Global food takeaway firm buys Kuwait's Carriage



In a bid to strengthen its presence in the GCC region, Delivery Hero, one of the world's leading online food delivery platforms is set to buy Kuwait-based food takeaway company Carriage.

Carriage, which was founded in Kuwait and has since spread to other markets in the region, operates a hybrid business model. The company offers both delivery marketplaces and own delivery services in the Middle East, allowing it to add restaurants that either do not offer deliver services themselves or intend to discontinue their own delivery services.

The Berlin-based Delivery Hero is the leading global online food ordering and delivery marketplace with number one market positions in terms of restaurants, active users, gross merchandise value or website traffic, in more countries than any of its competitors. It also operates its own delivery service. The company has over 6,000 employees.



Niklas, said: "Carriage is an innovative player in the Middle Eastern food delivery market and will be a perfect addition to our current offering under the Talabat brand and strengthen our foothold in this region," said Niklas Östberg, CEO of Delivery Hero.

For his part, the CEO of Carriage,

Abdullah Jihad Almutawa said, "We are delighted to join forces with the leading global player in our space and are excited about the new opportunities that lie ahead of us. Becoming part of Delivery Hero will strengthen our business and extend our reach considerably."

## Indian Embassy announces rationalization of Visa fee

The Government of India has rationalized visa fee with effect from 1 April 2017 for various types of visas as described under. The visa fee for country specific has also undergone change and a complete list new visa fee structure is available in the Website of the Embassy and CKGS, Kuwait.

Sl. No.	Visa	Fee in KD
1.	Tourist Visa (T)	
	Up to 1 year/Single or Multiple	32.000
	Up to 5 year/Multiple Entry	63.000
2.	Business Visa (B)	
	Up to 1 year/Single or Multiple	38.000
	Up to 5 years/Multiple Entry	78.000
3.	Entry Visa (X)	
	Up to 6 months/Single/Multiple	25.000
	Up to 1 year/single/Multiple	38.000
	Up to 5 year/Multiple	63.000
4.	Employment (E) & Project Visa	
	Up to 6 months/single or Multiple	38.000
	Up to 1 year/Multiple entry	63.000
	Up to 5 year/Multiple entry	94.000
5.	Student Visa(S) Valid for duration of the course or 5 years, whichever is less/multiple entry	25.000
6.	Medical (Med) and Medical Attendant (Med X) Visa	
	Up to 6 months/Single/Multiple	25.000
	Up to 1 year/single/Multiple	38.000
7.	Conference/Seminar Visa (C) Up to 6 months/Single/Multiple	25.000
8.	Journalist Visa	
	Up to 6 months/Single (or double entry with the approval of HOM)	25.000
9.	Research Visa (R)	
	Up to 6 months/single or Multiple	25.000
	Up to 1 year/Multiple entry	38.000
	Up to 5 year/Multiple entry	63.000
10.	Missionary Visa (M)	
	Up to 6 months/single or Multiple	25.000
	Up to 1 year/Multiple entry	38.000
	Up to 5 year/Multiple entry	63.000
11.	Mountaineering Visa (MX)	
	Up to 6 months/single or Multiple	25.000
	Up to 1 year/Multiple entry	38.000
12.	Transit Visa Up to 15 days/single or double entry	7.000

3. While all Kuwait and other foreign nationals resident in Kuwait are encouraged to take Indian visa for promotion of people-to-people contact, trade and tourism, it may be noted that the Embassy is issuing tourist visa for Kuwaiti nationals up to 6 months with multiple-entry at the cost of KD 32.000. The visa fee up to one year Business visa is now KD 38.000. Those visiting India frequently are advised to take one-year business visa (instead of tourist visa with validity of 6 month) to facilitate more visits for commercial and trade purposes.

3. All applicants may visit Passport and Visa Centres of CKGS at (a) 17 Floor, Behbahani Building, Sharq, Kuwait : Tel. No. 22440392 (e-mail: [indiavisa.kuwait@ckgs.com](mailto:indiavisa.kuwait@ckgs.com)) or ; (b) Complex Kais Alghanim, 4 Floor, Mecca Street, in front of Annod Complex, Fahaheel, Kuwait: Tel. No. 22909229 (e-mail: [indiavisa.kuwait@ckgs.com](mailto:indiavisa.kuwait@ckgs.com)). (c) Jleeb Al Shuyoukh (Abbasiya) 2nd Floor, Jleeb Al Shuyoukh Block 1, Street 1, Xcite building, Kuwait Tel. No. 24342428 (e-mail: [indiavisa.kuwait@ckgs.com](mailto:indiavisa.kuwait@ckgs.com)). CKGS's website is <http://www.kw.ckgs.in>.

5. In emergency cases, Indian Embassy accepts visa applications directly at its Visa Wing from applicants and contact Visa Officer at Telephone no. 22530600/ Ext 279.

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**06 JUNE**



**Exhibition Undiscovered:** Visual Therapy will be organizing an art exhibition, Undiscovered, featuring the works of young Kuwaiti talents, Omar Al Nakib and Ahmad Jamal, at its premises, from 9pm to 12am. Omar Al-Nakib is a Kuwaiti artist studying English at the American University of Kuwait, and Ahmad Jamal is an architect, artist and animator. For more information on the event: Visit, [www.visualtherapy.art](http://www.visualtherapy.art)

**11 JUNE**



**Knowledge Workshops:** Introduction to Rhino: 3D Modeling: A Knowledge Workshop: Introduction to Rhino; a 3D modeling software program in collaboration with Shahab Al-Bahar will be held in Crystal Tower Floor 24, Ahmad Al-Jaber Street, Kuwait City, on 11 and 15 June, from 7:30pm to 10pm. The course will focus on attaining a comfort level in Rhino but will also show how the program can be used in sync with other programs such as Illustrator and Photoshop to create comprehensive and appealing representational outcomes. For more information: Call, 22970270.

**11 JUNE**



**Kidpreneurs Summer Camp:** A two-week camp, Kidpreneurs Summer Camp will be held by Sirdab Lab, on 11 and 22 June, from 11am to 2pm. The camp is a way for kids to get a chance to explore their entrepreneurial spirit, along with various Medias to express themselves creatively. For more information and to register: Email, [info@sirdab-lab.com](mailto:info@sirdab-lab.com) or call, 97768939.

**26 JUNE**

**B-Underwater Bubble Show:** A visually stunning cirque-style show, B-Underwater Bubble Show will be held in Al Jabriyah from 26 June at 5pm to 30 June at 8pm. The event is a blend of drama, mime, dance, puppetry, juggling, contortionism, sand art and magic. Colorful costumes, bright effects and millions of bubbles, large and small, will make this a one-of-a-kind experience for everyone. For more information: Call, 66709925.

**Singing Superstar Season 2:** Indian Youth Society will soon be hosting the second season of Singing Superstar. Singing enthusiasts will now have an opportunity to showcase their talent. Registrations have commenced, but the final date and venue is yet to be announced. For more information and to register as a participant: Visit, [www.indianyouthkuwait.com](http://www.indianyouthkuwait.com), or call, 66361912.



**Free yoga classes:** NYF is offering free yoga, breathing, meditation and reiki classes by a well-experienced female yoga teacher for all age

groups. Classes will be assigned on the basis of health issues, stress and any other problems. For more information and to register: Call, 99315825.



**Free drum classes:** Free professional drum classes are available at Salmiya for learners of all age groups and experience levels. For more information and to register: Call, 94974295.

**Free fitness classes:** B.FIT Studio is offering free fitness classes: Zumba, Masala Bhangra workout, aerobics, toning and much more, in Salmiya. For more information: Call, 65077062.

**NSH observes UNO's No Tobacco Day**

In connection with the UN's 'No Tobacco Day', NSH conducted an awareness session for their employees and the community.

In this regard, NSH conducted informative sessions for the community members in different places including work locations that involved theoretical and practical training on how to observe personal hygiene standards and prevent health problems, particularly the consequences of Tobacco and Smoking.

The purpose of these sessions was to raise health awareness among the beneficiaries, change their common wrong practices and reduce their morbidity rates, thereby helping increase safety and productivity

that would ultimately reflect positively on the savings at large, NSH said in a statement.

A multilingual team - English, Hindi, Malayalam, Tamil, Telugu, Bengali and Odiya - was formed to ensure clear and effective delivery of information. Posters highlighting the dangers of consuming tobacco were displayed. A matter of pride is that, towards the end of the session, several participants came forward and pledged that they would not use tobacco or smoke anymore. NSH Global Village Harmony (NSH GVH), a voluntary organization registered under the Indian Embassy in Kuwait is the GCC Best CSR Gold Award winner- 2017, and National Excellent CSR Award - 2016.

**ICSK gleams with scintillating class XII results**

**ICSK TOPPERS- COMMERCE**



**1st -Vineetha-95.8%**



**2nd -Alamelu and Alex Johnson-95.2%**



**3rd - Sandra -94.8%**

In this season of results, it is celebration time at the Indian Community School Kuwait (ICSK). In keeping with past tradition, the results of the AISSC Examination March 2017 put the school once again in the top spot. In a spectacular performance ICSK achieved 97 percent first class in the class XII CBSE Examination. ICSK had 241 students registered for the same this year, the highest number from any school in Kuwait.

The ICSK students are Kuwait subject toppers in English, Home Science, Physical Education, Psychology, Economics, History, Political Science, Business Studies and Accountancy.

Vritika Vijay Lal Naik is the Science Stream topper with 96.8 percent, Vineetha Rebecca Jacob is the Commerce Stream topper with 95.8 percent and David Mathews is the topper in the Humanity stream with 93 percent. Alamelu Indira and Alex Johnson Puthethu have shared the 2nd position in Commerce stream with their aggregates of 95.2 percent while Sandra Ann Thomas is in the 3rd position with 94.8 percent. In the Science stream Aysha Mubeena and Megha Maria Akash has secured the 2nd and 3rd positions with 96.6 percent and 95.4 percent respectively. Madhumita Venugopal and Shreya Sudhir Shenoy have bagged the 2nd and 3rd positions in the Humanity

**ICSK TOPPERS-SCIENCE**



**1st -Vritika-96.8%**



**2nd-Aysha -96.6%**



**3rd - Megha -95.4%**

**ICSK TOPPERS-HUMANITIES**



**1st -David-93%**



**2nd-Madhumitha -92.2%**



**3rd - Shreya -92%**

stream with 92.2 percent and 92 percent aggregates as a true reflection of their exemplary achievement.

This exemplary performance by the students of ICSK is the result of the concerted efforts of dedicated and motivated teachers, unrelenting support of management, personal care and extra coaching provided to students and the atmosphere

conducive to success at ICSK. The management and teachers of ICSK take immense pride in the exemplary performance put in by their students and congratulate them for the outstanding results. By doing so, they have brought laurels to their institution, proving once again that ICSK leads in quality education and is a center of educational excellence.

**BAIA wows audiences with Buggy Malone**



BAIA recently staged the musical comedy Buggy Malone. The one set stage was set as Fat Sam's 1920's Jazz club with a live Jazz band on stage.



With a cast of over 40 young actors, the event had with itself solo singing, slick dance routines and comic timing. The performance had the audience clapping till the end.

# New visa ban puts families in serious crisis

The recent decision announced by the Ministry of Interior banning the renewal of family visa for parents, siblings and other relatives of expatriate workers, except children and spouses, has caused serious crisis among expatriate families.

The problem is more overwhelm-

ing on some expatriates who served Kuwait diligently for several decades before retirement, and later transferred their residence on children who were born and bred in the country.

The decision, which was issued last Thursday and became effective the following Sunday, led to congestion

at various residency departments in all six governorates. Parliamentarian Waleed AlTabtabai described the recent decision by Interior Ministry banning the renewal of family visa for parents, siblings and other relatives of expatriate workers, except children and spouses, as "inhuman". He also

said that it will cause many social problems in Kuwait.

Tabtabai called on the Interior Ministry to extend the visit visas for Syrian dependents and then renew their stay every year until the situation improves in Syria. The lawmaker said the new

restrictions on the residences for parents, sisters and brothers will be debated in the National Assembly human rights committee. He did not however give any timeframe for the meeting as the National Assembly is expected to close the current term next week.



## ICSK Amman invests school senate 2017 - 18

The Indian Community School Kuwait (ICSK), Amman held a solemn Investiture Ceremony on 15 May in the presence of the distinguished Chief Guest Dr. Narayana Kilarkaje,



Associate Prof. & Chairman, Dept. of Anatomy, Faculty of Medicine, Kuwait University, and a large gathering of parents.

The ceremonial lamp was lit by the Chief Guest escorted by the Principal Rajesh Nair, Vice Principal Dr. Mary Isaac, Senate Advisor Jaya Nirmal and Senate President Bhavna Sara John.

The Chief Guest Dr. Narayana Kilarkaje invested the core senate members, the house captains and vice-captains with the badges of office. Principal Nair administered the oath to the members of the senate. This was followed by an inspirational song sung by the newly elected senate as an expression of keeping their promises with unity and sincerity.

The prefects of the four houses were invested with badges by their house mentors. The Senate President gave the acceptance speech which was followed by the vote of thanks proposed by the Vice Principal Dr. May Isaac.

## ICSK Amman organizes TRANSCEND 2017



ICSK Amman organized a Mega Exhibition 'TRANSCEND 2017' on 18 May. The event was attended by Hon. Chairman Shaikh Abdul Rahiman, Hon. Secretary A. Amer Mohammed and Hon. Treasurer S.N. Raju from the ICSK Board of Trustees.

The exhibition had students and teachers from various classes and departments preparing projects on the topics assigned to them. Live music and dance performances were organized. Drawings, paintings and creative art works of students were exhibited in the art gallery. Rjs

of Radio Amman conducted live shows with riddles, quizzes and other performances.



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# New paths for leadership in international development



**Mark Suzman**  
Chief Strategy Officer and President of  
Global Policy and Advocacy at the Bill &  
Melinda Gates Foundation

Official development assistance (ODA) helps to save lives, build more stable and safer societies, and project soft power around the world. That is a point that my boss, Bill Gates, drove home recently, when he addressed the United Kingdom's leading military and security thinkers at the Royal United Services Institute in London.

Bill had been asked how he would respond to anyone in the UK who felt 'demoralized' by the fact that Britain is one of only a few countries that meet the United Nations-mandated

“  
*The \$2.5 billion Lives & Livelihoods Fund is supporting critical projects targeting disease eradication, primary health care, support for farmers, and basic infrastructure in the poorest communities throughout the Muslim world.*

commitment to spend 0.7 percent of its gross national income on development aid. But highlighting the impact of British ODA was just part of the answer; Bill also emphasized the many other countries that are also meeting their aid commitments.

In Europe, Denmark, the Netherlands, Norway, Luxembourg, and Sweden have been meeting the UN threshold for a while, and Germany recently joined their ranks. France is not there yet, but it is increasing its contribution.

Beyond Europe, Saudi Arabia, the



United Arab Emirates, and Qatar are also among the world's largest significant ODA donors - a reality of which not many people are aware. They are all donors to the Lives & Livelihoods Fund, the Middle East's biggest multilateral development initiative. The fund's other donors are the Islamic Development Bank, the Islamic Solidarity Fund for Development, and the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation.

The \$2.5 billion Lives & Livelihoods Fund is supporting critical projects targeting disease eradication, primary health care, support for farmers, and basic infrastructure in the poorest communities throughout the Muslim world. It began last year with \$363 million in approved funding for six large projects in Arab and African countries. In February, the first initiative, a \$32 million project to combat malaria in Senegal, got underway, and another round of projects was approved earlier this month, taking the total authorized funding to more than \$600 million.

Aid cannot solve all the problems facing Muslim countries in the Middle East and Africa. But it can support the emergence of more stable, more

prosperous, and healthier societies that are less vulnerable to civil war or terrorism. The Gates Foundation believes that donors from the Muslim world, in particular, have an integral role to play in addressing poverty and instability. Far more can be achieved together - by combining



resources and sharing expertise - than separately.

Domestic projects can support these countries' capacity to lead the way on international development.

For example, the Shaghaf fellowship program, supported by the King Khalid Foundation and the Gates Foundation, is designed to encourage some of the brightest young Saudis - many of them women - to pursue careers in the non-profit sector that focus on local and global social

governments, from the UK to the UAE, can achieve far more than would be possible alone.

Fortunately, governments in the Middle East seem to recognize this, and are increasingly seeking development partnerships. And there are plenty of opportunities.

The UAE has been a major champion of polio eradication, an endeavor that the UK has funded generously. Qatar has joined recently as a donor to Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance, to which the UK has been the largest donor in recent years. Saudi Arabia is a longstanding donor to the Global Fund for AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria, another partnership in which the UK is a significant player.

Observers often point to the soft-power benefits of providing aid to developing countries. But they often fail to notice the advantages brought about by strengthening relationships among donor countries that work together to advance international development.

Donor countries would do well to embrace this reality and seize opportunities to build ties with new global partners that share their commitment to fighting poverty.



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## Donald Trump's historic mistake

# US reneges on Paris climate change agreement

On Thursday, June 1, US President Donald Trump finally announced his intent to withdraw from the international Paris Agreement on climate change, which the United States had signed, ratified and agreed to implement in November 2016.

By reneging on the landmark international commitment designed to combat global warming, the US has become an outcast among the international community and in the eyes of some a 'rogue state'. It now joins the exalted ranks of just two other nations that failed to sign the climate treaty — Nicaragua and Syria.

At least, those two countries failed to sign up, not because they denied climate change or believed they would not be affected by it, or thought they were somehow separate from the rest of the world. Nicaragua took a principled stand saying the accord failed to punish those who did not live up to the pledged commitments and it also wanted rich countries to pay more for climate change, as they were historically responsible for causing more damage to the environment. Syria, on the other hand, was effectively an international pariah state and in the height of internal conflict at the time of the Paris accord, as such it was in no position to commit to limiting its climate emissions.

The American decision on the other hand is purely political and stems from the US President's isolationist beliefs. In the run up to the presidential elections, Mr. Trump had vowed to pull the US out of the Paris climate deal, claiming that the agreement was unfair to the US. Characterizing the Paris agreement as a deal that aimed to hobble, disadvantage and impoverish the United States, the president said that it cost the US\$3 trillion in lost GDP and 6.5 million jobs. These unsubstantiated, out-of-the-toupee figures were immediately challenged by many democrats and by environmentalists.

The fact is the US renewable energy and efficiency is booming, with some three million jobs created in these industries, far outstripping jobs in fossil energy. The solar and wind industries are creating jobs 12 times faster than the rest of the US economy. The price

of energy from renewables has plummeted, making it more affordable to home owners and businesses.

Obviously, the country that will be hurt the most by withdrawing from the climate pact is the United States. This move will make it tougher for the Trump administration to execute



its international priorities and undermine its global standing. It will be harder for US businesses to compete in the booming clean energy marketplace that the Paris Agreement accelerated.

Equally as important, rejecting the nation's climate targets will make America less competitive in the global clean energy market. The combined commitments of countries under Paris have helped contribute to a \$23 trillion opportunity in climate-smart investments between now and 2030. Under such a scenario, it is only the president and his coterie who seem to understand the mathematics behind supporting fossil fuels and aborting the climate agreement.

Whatever the reasons for his decision, the US cannot just pull on its boots and walk out of the agreement. As per the terms of the climate change agreement, the US cannot submit its withdrawal until November 2019, and it would not formally be out for at least a year after that. Alternatively, the US could pull out of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change altogether, which would take only about one

year. And, in the meantime, the US could simply ignore the commitment made by President Obama last year, as there are no clear legal repercussions for doing so.

President Trump has already backpedaled on many of the climate change curbing legislations introduced by his predecessor Barack Obama. In late March, he signed the Energy Independence Executive Order, saying it would put an end to "war on coal" and "job-killing regulations". The new executive order will impose less restrictive rules on methane emissions from the oil and gas industry and more freedom to sell coal leases from federal lands. In another move, the president recently appointed climate change skeptic Scott Pruitt to head the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).

Natural gas and coal account for an equal share of the 66 percent of energy supplied for electricity generation in the United States; nuclear power provides 20 percent, other renewables account for 7 percent, hydropower for 6 percent, petroleum 1 percent and other gases less than 1 percent.

In the wake of the latest US decision, China, the EU and India, which along with the US make up the four biggest emitters of carbon dioxide, have reiterated their commitment to the climate change accord. Though President Trump indicated he was open to another climate deal "on terms that are fair to the United States", the leaders of France, Germany and Italy quickly snubbed him, issuing a joint statement rejecting

any re-negotiation. Another good news is that the majority of Americans and many major American businesses do not support the president's decision. The Democratic governors of New York, California and Washington states all quickly vowed to respect the terms of the Paris deal, as did more than 600 business, big and small, which together account for more than \$1 trillion in annual sales and nearly two million employees.

Disney's chief executive Robert Iger and the entrepreneur Elon Musk both resigned from White House advisory councils in opposition to the decision. Former New York Mayor Michael Bloomberg noted that the US can still meet its commitments to fight climate change, despite President Donald Trump's withdrawal from the Paris accord. He argued this could be done "through partnerships among cities, states and businesses", saying Americans would not let Washington stand in their way."

US environmentalists, who were taken aghast by the president's decision, said they would challenge it in the courts. These actions are an assault on American values and they endanger the health, safety and prosperity of every American, they said.

It is doubtful if the US president is even aware that his promises of reviving the economy and making 'America Great Again', actually hinges on curbing climate change. Repeatedly mouthing the word 'Great' or 'Good' has made no man or country great or good.

“ Another good news is that the majority of Americans and many major American businesses do not support the president's decision. ”



# Getting serious about smartphone addiction

Parents do not need polls to tell them their teenage kids are addicted to mobile devices; it is something they observe on a daily basis. Nevertheless, the latest poll by Common Sense Media should come as an eye-opener to even the most teen-weary parent.

**W**hile the poll results showing 59 percent of parents said their teens were addicted to mobile devices was not surprising, what was truly shocking was that 50 percent of teens admitted to being addicted.

Perhaps it is time to get serious about the multiple ill effects that tech-addiction does to teens.

**Lack of empathy:** Clinical social workers and sociologists have observed a lack of empathy among young cellphone addicts.

Empathy is a trait essential to the well-being of society. It enables understanding and appreciation for the feelings of others. Without empathy and human connection, young people can become cold and cruel to others. Then, when they encounter cold and cruel responses from other young people, the cycle perpetuates itself and grows.

Whether users are addicted or not, cellphone use can perpetuate a lack of accountability, breed irresponsible behavior, feed malevolence, and retard the ability to effectively nurture social skills inherent in our

civility to be kind, thoughtful, caring, loving and understanding.

**Instant gratification:** Smartphones summon information and entertainment on demand. Thus, instant gratification becomes a constant expectation on and offline.

Smartphones and computers socialize us into a pattern of communication that then carries over to our everyday non-tech communication lives. We expect answers right away, become impatient, use shorter sentences, get right to the point instead of engaging in small talk, and can ignore feelings of others in expressing ourselves.

This lack of soft skills, which include people skills and critical-thinking skills, can interfere with getting a job and with getting promotions. Socializing and building authentic relationships in real life with others is a muscle. The more we use it, the better we get at it. The reverse is also true. Therefore, as teens interact primarily with people through a screen, they often lose the skills needed to connect in person.



**Emotional disabilities:** Smartphones offer young people more access to the world, but they also give more of the world access to young people. Without buffers and filters, teens and preteens can be influenced in all the worse ways.

Researchers reported a strong association between heavy internet use and depression. They also observed a link between heavy Facebook use and depressive symptoms, including low self-esteem.

Teens are in the stage of development where they still do not have a strong sense of identity, so by constantly being on social media, they are effectively exposed to ads and models that promote unrealistic bodies or body weight. Ultimately, these ads negatively affect younger people's mental health due to the skewed representation of beauty or

lifestyles that align with the products and services of many companies.

**Breaking Smartphone Addiction:** Most experts advise parents to encourage their children to limit the time they spend online. The key is to help kids find balance in their activities. There are specific steps parents can take to achieve that balance. Talk about it: Do not just lay down rules — discuss smartphone use with kids and explain why they need to seek balance and do other things. Help your child understand technology is not bad, but ask them, "Do you control it or does it control you?"

**Set boundaries:** Be smart and practical about it. Not all online time is equal; sometimes kids simply have to be online for schoolwork, and other times, it is for fun. Parents need to set boundaries on the latter. Consider forbidding devices at the

dinner table and leaving them outside bedrooms after bedtime.

**Set a good example:** Put your own devices down. Practice what you preach; after all, many parents also are addicted and need to regain their life balance. Nearly 28 percent of teens think their parents are addicted to their mobile devices, and 69 percent of parents admit to checking their devices, at minimum, every hour, according to the Common Sense Media poll.

**Help them find balance:** Offer alternatives or suggest other activities. Find some activities that they can do alone, some they can do with friends, and others they can do with parents. Again, the keyword is 'balance'. Technology is not going away. If anything, it will become more pervasive. The key is to ensure that tech remains a tool — a servant and not a master.

## Seven wonders in tech stocks

**Q**uietly and inexorably, the 'seven sisters' of the global technology industry are acquiring monster market values. Apple, Alphabet, Microsoft, Amazon and Facebook are the five most valuable firms in the world, and Tencent and Alibaba, their peers in China, are not far behind.

In total the seven companies are now worth an incredible \$3.6 trillion; 40 percent more than a year ago and more than the combined value of all firms with a

primary listing in Britain, the world's fourth-largest base for public companies. Bulls argue that the tech platforms' huge increase in value reflects their rising profits. But their share prices have moved up faster than their earnings. As a result, together they trade on a price-earnings multiple of 34 times, up from 26 times a year ago. That is not quite bubble territory, but it is getting close.

## Intel launches credit card-sized PC



**I**ntel launched its Compute Card, a credit card-sized device that is basically an entire PC, at the Computex 2017 show in Taipei last week.

The company officially launched the card with a full list of partners and what we can expect to see from them product-wise. Some of these devices were at the show and ranged from Sharp showing off digital signage using the Compute Card, while Seneca and Foxconn displayed mini PCs. LG stuck the Compute Card in its monitors to turn them into all-in-ones. In future the card might also show up in tablets and interactive whiteboards. Intel says the Compute

Card will start shipping in August.

Surprisingly, Intel's most well-known partners, including Lenovo, HP, and Dell, were not ready to show

off their products. Intel says they will definitely create something but we do not have an idea of what those devices might be.

**The compute card will be available in four variants:**

Processor	7 <sup>th</sup> Gen Intel® Core™ i5 vPro™ (i5-7Y57) processor	7 <sup>th</sup> Gen Intel® Core™ i3 (m3-7Y30) processor	Pentium® N4200 processor	Celeron® N3450 processor
Memory	4GB DDR3	4GB DDR3	4GB DDR3	4GB DDR3
Storage	128GB Intel SSD	128GB Intel SSD	64GB eMMC	64GB eMMC
Connectivity	Intel Wireless-AC 8265 (2x2 .11ac & Bluetooth 4.2)	Intel Wireless-AC 8265 (2x2 .11ac & Bluetooth 4.2)	Intel Wireless-AC 7265 (2x2 .11ac & Bluetooth 4.2)	Intel Wireless-AC 7265 (2x2 .11ac & Bluetooth 4.2)

The company's also putting out its design kit today that includes guides and reference designs for developers. The Compute Card might not take over, but it at least is giving us hope for a future of powerful pocket PCs.



## Samsung brings Notebook 9 Pro with Stylus S pen

**S**amsung brought its S Pen technology to the company's notebook line at the Computex show, which was held in Taipei, Taiwan from 30 May to 3 June. Samsung launched its new Notebook 9 Pro embedded with an S Pen that slides into its base. Unlike the previous Notebook 9 series, this Pro version now also has a 360-degree hinge that enables it to be used as both a laptop and tablet.

The S Pen includes 4,000 levels of pressure and the ability to detect tilt for shading. It also includes Samsung's Air Command software for drawing, notes, and editing documents. Samsung is also ensuring its S Pen is fully compatible with Windows Ink,

allowing Notebook 9 Pro users to use the stylus across all of Windows 10.

Samsung is releasing 13.3- and 15-inch models of the Notebook 9 Pro, and both will include Intel's latest Core i7 processors. The 13.3-inch version will ship with 8GB of RAM, while the larger model includes 16GB of RAM. Both will include a 256GB SSD, and the 15-inch model has AMD's Radeon 450 graphics card inside.

Samsung is using USB-C support for fast charging, alongside two regular USB ports, a HDMI port, and support for microSD storage. There's even a Windows Hello camera at the front, with support for facial recognition to log into Windows 10.

## War on tobacco

# Raising awareness, sustained efforts on control policies

*Tobacco kills more than seven million people every year and over half of these deaths occur in just four countries — China, India, USA and Russia, according to the latest Global Burden of Disease (GBD) study conducted by the Institute for Health Metrics and Evaluation (IHME), an independent population health research center at the University of Washington.*

Tobacco threatens the health, economies and development of people around the world. The global annual costs from tobacco use is US\$1.4 trillion in healthcare expenditure and lost productivity from illnesses and premature death.



# STOP SMOKING

Globally around 226 million tobacco users live in poverty. In low-income countries, sometimes more than 10 percent of household income is spent on tobacco products, leaving less money for food, education and healthcare.

The study shows that 12 percent of deaths of all people aged over 30 are due to tobacco. Tobacco related illnesses, including heart and lung diseases and cancer leaves many families without their main salary earners while increasing healthcare costs. The tobacco industry targets women by implying that smoking equates to gender equality, and enhances glamor, sociability and success.

Up to 7 in 10 tobacco farm workers are women and are often exposed to hazardous chemicals.

Second hand smoke affects 1 in 2 children worldwide.

Up to 14 percent of children from families who farm tobacco do not attend school and instead work in tobacco fields. The new estimates from the GBD study are based

on smoking habits in 195 countries and territories between 1990 and 2015, and illustrate that smoking remains a leading risk factor for death and disability. With growing and ageing populations already heightening the burden of tobacco, it will be crucial to support more smokers to quit and stop people from starting smoking.

World No Tobacco Day which is held each year on 31 May aims to raise awareness and encourage governments and the public to undertake measures to promote health and development by confronting the global tobacco crisis.

Since the implementation of the WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control in 2005, many countries have applied tobacco policies resulting in reductions in smoking prevalence, but the authors of the study warn that the war against tobacco is far from won, and argue that policy makers need renewed and sustained efforts to tackle the epidemic.

Worldwide, between 1990 and 2015, smoking prevalence decreased by almost a third (29.4%) to 15.3 percent in 2015. A new study shows that a 5 percent increase in the price of tobacco results in a 3.5 percent drop in consumption. Nevertheless, today one in four men (25%) worldwide smoke, as do one in 20 women (5.4%). Moreover, population growth has led to an increase in the overall number of smokers, increasing from 870.4 million in 1990 to 933.1 million in 2015. Deaths attributable to smoking increased by 4.7 percent in 2015 compared with 2005 and smoking was rated as a bigger burden on health — moving from third to second highest cause of early death and disability. The 10 countries with the largest number of smokers in 2015 were China, India, Indonesia, USA, Russia, Bangladesh, Japan, Brazil, Germany and the Philippines, who together accounted for almost two-thirds of the world's smokers (63.6%).

The study shows that Indonesia has very high smoking levels and has not yet ratified the WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control. In contrast, Brazil, which has been a leader in tobacco control, showed one of the largest reductions in smoking prevalence for men and women between 1990 and 2015 — halving from 28.9 percent to 12.6 percent in men and 18.6 percent to 8.2 percent in women.

Today, the smoking epidemic is being exported from the rich world to low-income and middle-income countries, slipping under the radar while apparently more immediate priorities occupy and absorb scarce available human and financial resources. Having previously targeted Eastern Europe successfully, the tobacco industry is now setting its sights on sub-Saharan Africa. The industry is expanding its market by exploiting the region's patchwork tobacco control regulations and its limited resources to combat the industry's marketing tactics.

Despite progress in some settings, the war against tobacco is far from won, especially in countries with the highest numbers of smokers. To markedly bend the global tobacco epidemic's trajectory, a renewed and sustained focus is needed on comprehensive tobacco control policies around the world.



## Greek village reveals genetic secrets on heart disease

**A** genetic variant found in an isolated Greek population has been shown to protect the heart against cardiovascular disease. The findings, by researchers at the Wellcome Trust Sanger Institute in the United Kingdom and their collaborators, could have far-reaching implications in studies on protecting against heart diseases.

In the village of Mylopotamos, northern Crete the population are unusual as they have a diet that is rich in animal fat and should cause health complications, yet they have good health and live to an old age.

In an attempt to solve the puzzle, scientists made a genetic portrait of the population by sequencing the entire genome of 250 individuals to get an in-depth view. This was the first time Mylopotamos villagers had their whole genome sequenced. The team then used the results to give a more detailed view of approximately 3,200 people for whom previous genetic information was known.

Scientists discovered a new genetic variant that was not previously known to have cardio-protective qualities. The variant, rs145556679\*, was

associated with lower levels of both 'bad' natural fats — triglycerides — and 'bad' cholesterol — very low density lipoprotein cholesterol (VLDL). These factors lower the risk of cardiovascular disease.

The cardio-protective variant may be almost unique to the Mylopotamos population. The genome sequencing results of a few thousand Europeans has only revealed one copy of this variant in a single individual in Tuscany, Italy. A separate variant in the same gene has also been found to be associated with lower levels of triglycerides in the Amish founder population in the United States.

Researchers said that by studying isolated populations, they were able to identify those genetic variants that are at a higher frequency compared to cosmopolitan populations and this in turn increased their power to detect if these variants were disease causing. With isolated populations, we can get a unique view into rare genetic variants that play important roles in complex human diseases including cardiovascular disease, which is the most common cause of death worldwide.

## A POSSIBLE FLIP SWITCH FOR BINGE-EATING

**R**esearchers have identified a subgroup of neurons in the mouse brain that, upon activation, immediately prompt binge-like eating. Furthermore, repeated stimulation of these neurons over time caused the mice to gain weight. The zona incerta (ZI) is a relatively understudied part of the brain.

Intriguingly, patients receiving deep brain stimulation of the subthalamus, which includes the ZI, for the treatment of movement disorders can exhibit characteristics of binge eating. To explore this phenomenon in greater detail, Xiaobing Zhang and Anthony N. van den Pol optogenetically labelled GABA neurons in the ZIs of mice.

Researchers found that within ten



minutes of continuous stimulation of neurons in the ZI, mice rapidly consumed 35 percent of their daily high-fat food store, meant to be eaten over a 24-hour period. The researchers also found that a hormone which signals a reduced energy state in the gut, excited neurons in ZI and that just five minutes of stimulation every three hours over a period of two weeks, resulted in the mice increasing their food intake and gaining weight.



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## Cobbled streets, charming castles and historic churches

From beautiful Budapest - the city of lights - to its many quaint villages and fantastic scenery, Hungary evokes a strong sense of history and tradition at every turn. Yet while Budapest, justifiably compared with cities like Prague and even Paris, is by far the country's biggest tourist draw, be sure to spend time traveling beyond the capital. Cities and towns of all sizes have preserved their classic old historical attractions, many of which exhibit influences from various cultures, including Turkish invaders and Italian Renaissance designers. And Hungary's countryside includes some of the most beautiful scenery to be found anywhere in Eastern Europe. In fact, wherever you are in Hungary, you are never far from spectacular mountains and lakes, beautiful river scenes - the awesome Danube runs right through the country - and lush valleys, all providing great opportunities for hiking and other fun outdoor activities.



**Budapest:** Situated on both banks of the Danube, Budapest unites the colorful hills of Buda and the wide, businesslike boulevards of Pest. Though it was the site of a Roman outpost during the 1st century, the city was not officially created until 1873, when the towns of Óbuda, Pest, and Buda united. Since then, Budapest has been the cultural, political, intellectual, and commercial heart of Hungary.



**Historic Spa Towns:** If you are looking for a vacation that combines some down time with a rich cultural experience, Hungary delivers. There are many historic spa towns and facilities throughout the country offering everything from simple bathing in regenerative waters to longer stays in lovely spa resorts.



**Sopron:** Just 64 kilometers south of Vienna and eight kilometers from the Austrian border near the eastern foothills of the Alps, Sopron is a popular destination for day trippers. Much of

its allure stems not just from its attractive surroundings, but also from its many well preserved medieval and Baroque buildings. All told, the town boasts 115 officially-listed monuments and 240 protected buildings, one of the largest such collections in Europe. All the buildings in the Old Town are found within the confines of the medieval town wall built on Roman ruins. Many of these are of particular interest as they contain features added from other historic periods.



**The Danube:** The spectacular Danube River flows through Hungary from north to south, and as it passes through Budapest splits the city in two. One of the best sunset views of both Buda and Pest is from the lovely Freedom Bridge, a favorite spot among locals. Other great places from which to view this majestic river is at the Danube Bend, one of the country's most popular recreational and excursion spots. This is where the river winds its way through the heavily wooded Visegrád Mountains before turning sharply south towards Budapest.



**The Buda Hills:** There is so much to like about beautiful Budapest, and so much to explore, including its numerous open spaces and parks. The Buda Hills, on the western outskirts of the city, is one of the most popular of these areas. Rising to heights of more than 518 meters, the hills are crisscrossed by a comprehensive system of trails, perfect for walking or biking.

Once there, you can explore numerous caves, and afterwards take a ride back to town on the classic Cog-wheel Railway.



**Tihany:** This is one of the most popular holiday resorts on Lake Balaton. Originally an island, this tiny peninsula - covering just eight square kilometers - boasts some of Hungary's most extraordinary scenery. Designated a nature reserve, the southwestern section is closed to traffic and is wonderful to explore on foot along the well-marked trail network. A must-visit landmark in the town itself is the beautiful 17th-century Benedictine Abbey with its spectacular views of the lake and the surrounding area.



**The Caves of Lillafüred:** Lillafüred in the Bükk Mountains is another very popular spa destination in Hungary. It is also famous for its many spectacular caves, all within an easy walk of the town. Some of the most interesting to explore are the István Cave with its fantastic stalactite formations, and the Petöfi Cave, famous the world over for the impressions of extinct plant species left in the limestone walls. For a more adventurous hike, take the trail to the Szeleta Cave with its relics from the Ice Age, including skillfully made arrows and spears.

**Buda Castle:** This historic landmark - now a UNESCO World Heritage Site - ranks right up there with Versailles in terms of its majestic



proportions and wonderful design. Built on the site of a palace destroyed during the Siege of 1686, this newer structure was rebuilt in the 18th century for the Habsburg monarchy and includes more than 200 rooms. Its spectacular symmetrical layout focuses on the lovely 61-meter-high central dome facing the Danube, from where amazing views of the castle can be enjoyed.

**Cathedral of St. Peter:** Dominating the northwest corner of the fortified Old Town of Pecs lies the Cathedral of St. Peter. Built on the site of an ancient Roman burial chapel, the cathedral, like many historic attractions in Hungary, shows influences from many different cultures. Inside, many unique religious artifacts from throughout Hungarian history have been collected and are on display.

**Visegrád Royal Palace:** Located above the beautiful old town of Visegrád in the Danube Bend, just 40 kilometers north of Budapest, the ruins of Visegrád Royal Palace and the old citadel make for an easy day trip from Hungary's capital. The first Royal Palace was built under Charles I, and was extended a hundred years later with many Italian flourishes, gaining it a reputation as one of the finest palaces in all of Europe. While now largely ruins - the legendary palace was only rediscovered in the 1930s - the palace impresses with its dimensions and incredible views over the Danube and the surrounding area.





## Azerbaijan embassy celebrates National Day



**A**mbassador of Azerbaijan H.E. Elkhan Gahraman held a reception on 24 May to celebrate his country's National Day at the Marina Salwa Hall. The chief guest on the occasion was the Minister of Education and Higher Education Dr. Mohammad Al-Fares. The reception was attended by diplomats, special invitees and media personnel.



## Guyanese President's address to the nation



**I**n his 51st Independence anniversary address to the nation, President David Granger said the occasion should inspire Guyanese to continue to work towards preserving the 'free state', establishing a 'green state', and creating a 'cohesive state'; while at the same time celebrating the country's diversity and bridging its differences.

He noted that Independence Day in Guyana celebrates the moment in history when, after 350 years of Dutch and British colonization, its peoples abolished foreign rule.

beliefs, and to share the common space they call homeland.

"The 'free state' is one that is free from discrimination. It is one that is built on the basis of respect for cultural diversity, political inclusivity and social equality. The 'free state' recognizes our common and complex heritage.

Moreover, he noted that the 'cohesive state' is concerned with constructing a multi-cultural society and creating the conditions for diverse peoples to coexist. "The 'cohesive state' is not a political expedient. It can be realized only by respecting the differences and the diversity of society, and by the removal of anger, hatred, ignorance and poverty. It can be created by mutual respect for each other's cultural and religious differences," he added.

On the other hand, the Head of State outlined that independence also bequeathed a state through which Guyanese became heirs of a magnificent patrimony. "The 'green state' is a natural product of our verdant and luxuriant environment. Our ecosystems — our coastland, hinterland, highlands, islands, wetlands, grasslands, lakes, rivers, rainforests and waterfalls — are our birthright. Our bio-diversity is the endowment of our ancestors, the patrimony of all Guyanese, and the bequest we hold in trust for posterity," he asserted.

The President said the 'green state' can flourish, and can furnish a 'good life' for generations to come by engendering a spirit of shared social responsibility.

"The 51st anniversary of Independence inspires us all to continue to work towards preserving the 'free state'; towards establishing a 'green state', and towards creating a 'cohesive state.' I extend fraternal congratulations to all — at home and in our diaspora — as we celebrate our freedom, our statehood, and our precious patrimony," the President said.



"We established a 'free state' with the hope of ensuring equality and eradicating poverty. It was the day on which we adopted our own Constitution and erected institutions to govern ourselves and guarantee our freedom," the President said.

The Guyanese Head of State also said that Independence Day celebrates the unique combination of the people who came — Africans, Chinese, Indians and Portuguese — and with the Amerindians who lived here from time immemorial, contributed to the creation of a multi-racial and multi-religious state.

President Granger noted that the 'free state' which was established on 26 May, 1966 recognized the country's commitment to social cohesion, through which its people learned to accept and respect each other's values and



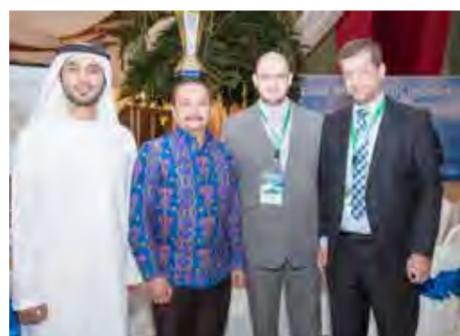
## Wonderful Indonesia Festival draws huge response



**T**he Indonesian embassy held a travel and tourism event at the Six Palms in Marina Hotel hotel last week Wonderful Indonesia Festival. The festival event had several Indonesian travel and tourism specialists who were able to showcase some of the wonderful and beautiful places in Indonesia.

The event was graced by Ambassador H.E. Tatang Razak who has been promoting Indonesia

as both a tourism and trade destination among the local and expatriates in Kuwait. Several trade delegations including media has visited Indonesia during the last two years to explore and experience the great potential first hand. Indonesia is a diverse country within hours you can see the pristine beaches on one side and snow atop the mountains on another within just a few hours' drive.



# A Sustainable Economy for the Arab World



**Mahmoud Mohieldin**  
World Bank Group's Senior Vice President for the 2030 Development Agenda, United Nations Relations, and Partnerships, and a former minister of investment of Egypt.



In recent decades, millions of people in the Arab world have been lifted out of extreme poverty. But progress is now at risk of slowing, or even reversing, owing to a vicious circle of economic failure and violent disorder. To prevent such an outcome, Arab countries must move fast to build a more sustainable economy, underpinned by greater private-sector creativity and vitality, improved public services, and the creation of regional and global public goods.

The first step toward achieving this is to recognize the scale and nature of the potential barriers to success. Arab countries today are faced with slow overall GDP growth and tightening fiscal constraints. Disparities in access to education, training, and health care – partly a reflection of those fiscal constraints – exacerbate already rising inequality.

As we have seen in the region, such circumstances can fuel political polarization and violent conflict, with the concomitant displacement, loss of life, destruction of infrastructure, and staggering economic costs. While economic development is no guarantor

of peace, development failures do often contribute to extremism and violence, as popular anger combines with a loss of institutional legitimacy. The existence of nearby conflicts, which can have destabilizing spillover effects, heightens the risk of unrest.

Technological innovation can be part of the solution for Arab economies; but the accompanying disruption of markets and livelihoods raises its own challenges. Equally difficult to manage are risks like climate change and pandemics, which transcend borders and thus cannot be addressed by any single country.

Overcoming these challenges will not be easy. The key to success will be smart cooperation: between the public and private sectors; between government and civil society; among countries; and between countries and international organizations.

One of those international organizations is the World Bank Group, which engages with countries to help

protect the poor and vulnerable, improve resilience to refugee and migration shocks, and ensure inclusive and accountable service delivery. We also work to strengthen the private sector, so that it can create jobs and opportunities for young people throughout the Arab world. And we promote other kinds of cooperation, particularly regional cooperation on shared public goods and in sectors like education, water, energy, and climate change.

A major goal of cooperation must also be to raise funding. Official development assistance (ODA), which last year stood at \$142 billion, will never be sufficient to meet the region's extraordinary financing needs, even if it is combined with government resources. To put this into context, ODA for 2015 amounted to just one-third of Germany's annual health-care bill.

The United Nations trade arm, UNCTAD, estimates that, to reach the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs),

the world will have to close a \$2.5 trillion gap, annually. To achieve this, we must use innovative mechanisms to leverage and mobilize global funds, especially from the private sector.

Fortunately, the private sector has trillions of dollars that it can shift toward the effort to build a more sustainable economy and, specifically, to achieve the SDGs. But it needs encouragement, which the World Bank Group has attempted to provide, using concessional financing, investment guarantees, and matching investments. We have also worked to encourage countries to improve the policy and regulatory environment for development and growth, thereby becoming more attractive destinations for private-sector resources.

But more must be done to encourage the private sector to invest in sustainable development. For starters, businesses need purpose. As a recent report by Deloitte points out,

companies should be able to articulate a clear purpose that is connected to a wider social, environmental, or even economic goal. That purpose can act as a compass for the business, influencing its organizational culture and values, and guiding stakeholders' individual and collective behavior.

Of course, a sense of purpose alone won't drive the private sector to shift investment toward sustainability. The Business and Sustainable Development Commission (BSDC) has reported that investments in the SDGs bring enormous returns, including new opportunities, massive efficiency gains, impetus for innovation, and improved reputations.

Once companies recognize these benefits and decide to adopt a purpose-driven approach, they need help monitoring and reporting outcomes. Specifically, they need a transparent framework that enables them more easily to share information about progress on their long-term economic, social, and environmental objectives. There are efforts underway to create such a framework, but much more needs to be done to create the right incentives for businesses to participate.

The ranks of businesses supporting the transition to a sustainable economy are growing. But, to complete that transition, particularly in Arab countries, many more companies and other private-sector entities will need to step up. Of course, their pledges must be reflected and reinforced by commitments from governments, multilateral institutions, and civil society.

The road ahead is fraught with difficulties, but the Arab world has overcome similarly daunting challenges in the past. Now as much as ever, the region has the people, resources, and opportunity to thrive.

Ramadan Mubarak

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