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Promoting FDI helps New Kuwait 2035 vision



THE TIMES REPORT

Foreign Direct Investments (FDI) are key to attracting resources, including capital, skills and technology to a country. Foreign investments help Kuwait enhance productivity and also assist in the transition from the country's overwhelming dependence on hydrocarbon revenues, which is a primary objective of the New Kuwait 2035 plan.

However, investing in Kuwait has often been considered as a daunting process reserved for the extremely adventurous foreign investor or the very foolhardy one. Lending weight to this investment perspective has been the country's Sisyphean efforts over the years to lure in foreign capital — while



one arm of the government attempts to pull in investments, the other arm has consistently pushed back investors.

According to UNCTAD's World Investment Report 2019, foreign inflows to Kuwait that totaled US\$410 million in

2016, fell to \$348 million in 2017 and to \$346 million in 2018. The FDI stock in the country also decreased by 3.3 percent in 2018 to total \$14.7 billion (10.5% of the GDP), down from the \$15.2 billion in 2017.

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A Kuwaiti generation born in prosperity

Kuwait is not only a rich country but also generously shares its considerable wealth with citizens. The cradle to grave welfare state and the ideal model of governance delivered by its rulers, are the envy of people around the world.

The government provides a monthly allowance to each citizen right from birth, free schooling all the way to university level, life-long medical care and water, electricity and petrol at highly subsidized rates.

...CONTINUED ON PAGE 10



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Patients to be issued smart health cards

Despite a few cases of medical errors, the general safety level of patients in public hospitals across Kuwait is very high, said the Director of Regional Center for Patients Safety Assurance at the Ministry of Health, Dr. Waleed Al-Busairi.

The Center is committed to closely monitoring all public and private hospitals in the country in order to ensure the safety of all patients, said Dr. Al-Busairi. He added that as part of the measures to provide more convenience to patients, the Center

has drawn up a plan to issue smart cards to all patients. These cards would carry the entire medical history of the patient on a chip and would include laboratory tests, X-ray images and other medical records that will be needed by doctors and healthcare providers.

Noting that there were also plans to coordinate with health authorities in other countries in the Middle East, Dr. Al-Bushairi said this would help to identify problems they face in the

implementation of measures to ensure the safety of patients. He added that workshops would be organized to focus on the responsibilities of medical practitioners to overcome problems in coordination with the National Center for Health Information, chaired by Dr. Fatmah Al-Asousi. The Center would analyze statistics on mortality in the country to examine the deaths caused by medical errors and to lay down plans to reach zero medical error levels in future, said Dr. Al-Bushairi.

Meteorologist warns of cold winter ahead



Though rains are expected to be less severe this year and the flash floods witnessed last year may not be recur, the country could be in for a very severe winter with temperatures dropping to one degree Celsius in the months ahead, warned a meteorologist in Kuwait.

"Predicting weather has become difficult in recent years due to climate change that has

affected the global climate," said meteorologist Mohammad Karam, a former director of the Meteorological Department.

Pointing to recently published studies which show a decline in solar activity, Mr. Karam predicted that this could lead to a fall in temperatures to as low as one degree Celsius on some days during the upcoming winter.

The weather-man also emphasized the need to form a specialized committee to meet any weather-related emergencies, similar to the one set up last year at the time of the floods that devastated parts of the country.

"I believe it is necessary to prepare for weather-related emergencies in order to reduce the chance of loss of life or material damage. This can be done by reactivating the emergency room, as was done during the previous rains and the continuation with the warning bulletins," said Mr. Karam.

Moving on to the need to harvest rainwater, Mr. Karam said that we could follow the example of the UAE, which has constructed huge underground reservoirs to store rainwater and uses it for irrigation and agriculture. "We could try something along those lines, as rainfall in Kuwait averages around 150 millimeter per year.

Singer Cris Delanno featured in 'Waves of Brazil'

The Brazilian Embassy announced that Brazilian singer Cris Delanno and her band will perform at Yarmouk Cultural Center on 6 October, 2019, at 07:00 pm.

Cris Delanno is a composer, interpreter, arranger and musician. She has recorded 12 albums and traveled the world singing Brazilian music in major concerts, such as Latin Grammy Awards (TV Concert - 2002), Roskilde Festival (Denmark), Ronnie Scott London's jazz club), North Sea (Netherlands), Gets Bossa Nova (Japan), Bossa Cabaret (Paris) and during FIFA World Cup South Africa 2010.

The band member Alfredo Cardim, is a pianist, composer and arranger, who has performed with famous artists from around the world such as Ron Carter, Astrud Gilberto, Gonzaguinha. He has developed an unmistakable style at Samba Jazz. Ronaldo Silva is a member of one of the most



traditional Brazilian drummer families and has accompanied renowned Brazilian artists such as Milton Nascimento and Caetano Veloso.

Alexandre Cavallo is a bassist, composer and arranger, and has also played with great names in Brazilian popular music industry, such as Ivan Lins, Elza Soares, Carlinhos Bown and Jorge Benjor.

Kuwait central bank praises initiatives focused on workforce development



Kuwait's top banker on Sunday highlighted the significance of a local initiative to bolster the workforce in the country's banking sector, saying the broad endeavor also allows novice

employees the chance to hone their skills.

The initiative entails varied training programs directed at employees of the banking sector, read a statement by the Central Bank of Kuwait (CBK), citing its governor Dr. Yousef Al-Hashel. The programs are part of a plan that aims to have the careers of bank employees remain on a steady upward trajectory, CBK's governor emphasized, saying an efficient workforce would help better serve the populace. On other initiatives in the works, he said a program seeking to lure fresh graduates into the banking sector is coming up, in addition to other ones catering to researchers and economic experts.



New India Assurance celebrates 100 years of industry presence



New India Assurance, the leading General Insurance Company of India, marked the completion of 100 years of its operations this year with a function at its premises. A specially designed cake was cut by the Senior Most employee of the Company Majeed Ansari, along with Vijay Kapur, General Manager, MS Behbehani & Co and Ram Mohan Reddy, Chief Operating Officer of New India Assurance.

In his address, COO Ram Mohan Reddy, provided some background of the formation of the Company and its legacy that has crossed over a century. He added that today the sun never sets at New India Assurance, as the operations have expanded to almost every nook and corner of the world, with its operations in over 28 countries.

He mentioned that it was always a pride for the company to tie-up with the Behbehani group as Chief Agents in Kuwait. He congratulated the efforts of all the present and erstwhile staff members for their unstinted support without which this great



milestone could not have been achieved.

In his address, General Manager Kapur, gave the details of the company's formation in Kuwait, and mentioned that the Agency was established in 1953 in Kuwait by Late S B Monteiro and Late Mohd Saleh Behbehani. Both the organizations had mutual trust and respect for each other, which was the reason for the organization to continue over the years and remain as one of the most preferred General Insurance Company in Kuwait.

Four senior staff members, Majeed Ansari, Lourito Fernandes, B. Penchalaiah Naidu and Hafees Jaffer, who had completed over three decades of dedicated service with the organization, were felicitated by Vijay Kapur General Manager and Ram Mohan Reddy, COO.

A befitting felicitation was arranged for Vijay Kapur, GM who has completed many decades of service in the organization. The function concluded with presentation of mementos to all the staff members followed by high tea.

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South Korea celebrates National Day and Armed Forces Day

In commemoration of the National Day and Armed Forces Day of his country, the South Korean Ambassador to Kuwait H.E. Hong Youngki hosted a reception at Jumeirah Hotel on 2 October.

The reception also celebrated the 40th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between South Korea and Kuwait.

Members of the diplomatic corps, Kuwait officials, special invitees, members of the South Korean community in Kuwait and media personnel attended the event. Special guest on the occasion was the Minister of Oil and Minister of Electricity and Water Dr. Khaled AlFadhel.

In his address to the audience, South

Korean Ambassador Youngki welcomed all present on the occasion and extended his best wishes for the continued peace, progress and prosperity for the state of Kuwait.

Lauding the long-standing, friendly and ever-expanding bilateral relations between the Republic of South Korea and Kuwait, he pointed out that this year was exceptionally meaningful as it was the 40th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic ties between both countries.

He stated, "The great achievements of our bilateral relations and cooperation in the political, economic, social and cultural fields during the last 40 years manifest in our wonderful partnership to work for the

greater good of our people."

He mentioned that South Korea is the largest market of crude oil for Kuwait, while Kuwait is the third largest construction market for Korea.

In this regard, the ambassador noted that Korean corporations have been contributing to achieving the 'New Kuwait Vision 2035' of His Highness the Amir through their diligent participation in infrastructure projects like 'Mubarak Al-Kabeer Port', 'the New Refinery Project', and 'Sheikh Jaber Causeway Project', which was recently inaugurated with the honorable attendance of His Highness the Amir along with the Korean Prime Minister, Lee Nak-yeon.

Speaking to media attending the

event, Minister Dr. AlFadhel lauded the distinguished level of the relations between Kuwait and South Korea, and emphasized that the occasion coincided with the 40th anniversary of the special ties between both countries.

Pointing to the contribution of South Korean companies in developmental projects in Kuwait, the minister said, "The South Korean companies play an active role in the development of mega projects in Kuwait, such as Saad Al-Abdullah City as well as electricity and water projects."

An exhibition showcasing medical tourism in South Korea and some of the products of the country was held on the occasion.

French embassy clarifies need for clear personal photos for visas

The French embassy in Kuwait said it was ready to listen to complaints from applicants of long-term visa to France. The embassy stressed that female applicants of long-term visa will need to provide their photographs without wearing a headscarf.

"According to the instructions issued by the French government, female applicants for long-term visas must provide a photo of an exposed head unless they have stated religious reasons that prevents them from doing so, stressing that in any case, the photo should show the under chin and top

of the forehead and facial contour.

The statement added that upon arrival in France, the visa holder would have to provide photographs of the exposed head when applying for a residence card to the competent authorities in the country.

Coops to stop hiring expatriates

In response to warnings issued by lawmakers, the Union of Cooperative Societies has been ordered to stop hiring expatriate workers.

Earlier MP Safa'a Al-Hashem had apparently sent a warning to the Minister of Social Affairs, Saad Al-Kharraz, saying: "If I [come to] know that you are still opening the door for the recruitment of workers from a certain Arab country in the cooperative societies, I will file a grilling notion against you in parliament."

On 15 September, the Minister of Social Affairs Saad Al-Kharraz had warned the Union of Cooperative Societies against hiring workers from an Arab country, and on 25 September the minister issued a decision to

stop issuing work permits for migrant workers in cooperative societies and to implement the replacement policy.

Undersecretary at the Ministry of Social Affairs Abdulaziz Shuaib also issued instructions to the Public Authority for Manpower not to issue work permits for migrant workers to work in cooperative societies until further notice.

Shuaib explained the request comes out of the ministry's keenness to implement and follow up the policy of replacing expatriate workers with national labor in cooperative societies and provide all means of support for national labor in implementation of the replacement policy.

Sponsors to pay for deportation of workers

Citizens to be denied services in a long-awaited move, the Ministry of Interior (Moi) is to reclaim money due from sponsors for charges related to the deportation of workers under their visa.



The sponsor will have to bear all expenses, including airfare, incurred by the Moi for deporting workers apprehended for violating the residence or labor laws, even if they have been reported absconding by the sponsor.

To facilitate the reclaim process, the Moi has tied up with the Citizens Service Centers in all governorates. Accordingly, if a citizen fails to pay what they owe the ministry, all their transactions with the Citizens Service Centers will be blocked.

The belated action on the part of Moi is expected to deliver a severe blow to visa traders, who sell visas to workers at exorbitant prices and then expect the ministry to foot the bill for their deportations.

Visa traders often sell visas to overseas workers under false pretext and then abandon them once they arrive in the country, as they have no jobs to offer the workers. When such workers are apprehended and subsequently deported, the Moi has to bear the expenses including the price of air tickets.

The ministry said it would continue to deport the visa trade victims at its expense, but from now on, the sponsor will have to pay for the expenses incurred or their transactions with the Citizens Service Centers would remain blocked.

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Smart ways to boost protein at breakfast

Breakfast is important to keep you full and fueled in the morning — and often, that means reaching for options with plenty of protein. Eggs are the obvious choice when it comes to high-protein staples, but if you are looking to switch up your morning food routine, here are a few of the best protein-rich ways to boost your breakfasts — no eggs required.



Whip cottage cheese — then use it to top toast.

A half cup of cottage cheese packs more than 10 grams of protein, and it is a great, often-overlooked toast topper. Cottage cheese is also even better when it is whipped — or quickly blitzed in a food processor — because the texture transforms from lumpy to luxuriously airy. Top it off with a drizzle of smashed berries or jam.

Boost pancake batter with oats.

If you are looking to pack more protein and fiber into your flapjacks without any of the powder stuff, just add one simple ingredient: oats! (Bonus tip: Give the oats a quick soak in water first. It will ensure your batter stays nice and light.)

Add chia seeds to granola, smoothies, and jams.

Just one tablespoon of the tiny-but-mighty seeds contains four grams of protein and ten grams of fiber. They are perfect for sprinkling into breakfast staples — like smoothies, baked granola, overnight oats, and homemade jam. Keep a bag stocked.

Scramble chickpeas for an



all-purpose filling.

Instead of eggs, opt for scrambled chickpeas. This versatile make-ahead mixture is packed with the high-protein beans — half of which are quickly smashed to mimic the texture of scrambled eggs — plus plenty of vegetables. Pile the scramble into pitas or on top of toast, or enjoy on its own with a side of bacon.

Swirl milk and nut butter into oatmeal.

When making oatmeal, ditch the just-add-water preparation and reach for milk instead. One cup of whole milk has eight grams of protein — and if you are reaching for an alternative milk, soy milk has roughly that same amount. You can also boost your breakfast further by spooning in your favorite nut butter.



Thought for the week

“One of the most difficult things is not to change society – but to change yourself.”

Nelson Mandela

South African anti-apartheid revolutionary, political leader, and philanthropist

Take healthy steps during Breast Cancer Awareness Month

Ask Mira: Eating Right to Live Happy & Healthy

Many women are aware of breast cancer; but many forget to take the steps to detect the disease in its early stages and encourage others to do the same. October is Breast Cancer Awareness Month, which is an annual campaign to increase awareness of the disease.

Nutrition, which is basically giving your body the nutrients it needs at all life stages, is important for everyone.

As you always hear, some foods provide valuable nutrients that are beneficial to a healthy body by boosting your immune system, and helps keeping your risk for breast cancer as low as possible. Another way to help reduce the risk of breast cancer is to maintain a healthy weight.

Studies have shown that women who gained weight after their breast cancer diagnosis had an increased risk of recurrence, so weight is an important factor. A study conducted showed the fact that Japanese women (they eat healthy food) have a much lower rate of breast cancer than American women. But when Japanese women emigrate to live in the USA, their breast cancer risk goes up. So the difference in risk has to do with lifestyle or the environment rather than any inherited risk. And the most obvious change is their whole lifestyle is the ways of eating, level of activity, and pollution.

Regarding the food we eat, there is no strong evidence that one specific food or supplement will prevent the risk of getting breast cancer or reduce the risk of recurrence.

However, during the annual American Society of Clinical Oncology held in April, a new study was presented that provided intriguing evidence that women who follow a low-fat diet, similar to the kind doctors recommend for heart health, lower their risk of dying from breast cancer. The evidence in the study indicated that

this was among the many health benefits of dietary moderation. The researchers associated with the study recommended enjoying smaller portions of meat with vegetables to the plate to balance things out. They expressed hope that cancer doctors would talk about diet with their patients who might be at higher risk of developing breast cancer.



Here are some nutritional health tips:

- Eat plenty of vegetables and fruit (more than 5 cups a day), as those contain a lot of antioxidants that prevent oxidation, which in turn prevents free radicals from producing in the body. Free Radicals formation is a risk factor of any cancer.
- Keep your body weight within a healthy range.
- Try to limit your fat intake to less than 30 percent of your total calories per day. So start eliminating some foods with the highest fat content and gradually lower the amount of unhealthy fat you eat, like fried food, butter, yellow cheese, croissants, donuts, and cakes.
- Eat food high in omega-3 fatty acids like fish, salmon, tuna, nuts, avocado, olive oil, canola oil



- Eat more Soy-based foods, like edemame, or drink soya milk. Soy contains isoflavones that act as weak estrogen in the body, and prevent cancer cells from developing.
 - Avoid trans-fat, red meat, and any food that has been cooked on very high temperatures. Do not even eat burned food.
 - Stay away from processed food and foods that contain Nitrates, like salami, hotdog, and mortadella.
 - Stay away from any foods that contain colorant like candies, and soft drinks.
 - Eat fresh and healthy food.
- Least but not last, do not forget to perform yearly regular checkups, it is fundamental.

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Celebration of the 150th Birth Anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi



Embassy of India in Kuwait celebrated the 150th birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi on 2nd October at the embassy premises, in the presence of members of diplomatic corps, Kuwaiti dignitaries and businessmen, journalists and members of the Indian diaspora.

Her Excellency Dr. Samira Ahmad Al-Sayer Omar, Director General, Kuwait Institute for Scientific Research (KISR) was the Chief Guest on the occasion, and His Excellency Dr. Tarek



Elsheikh, Representative of UN Secretary General and Resident Coordinator was the Guest of Honor.

Celebrations started with the Chief Guest and the Guest of Honour, accompanied by the Ambassador of India H.E. K.Jeeva Sagar, garlanding and paying tributes at the statue of Mahatma Gandhi. The dignitaries then addressed the gathering and underscored the prominence and relevance of Gandhian principles in today's times. Mahatma or 'Great

Soul' as Indian Father of the Nation is revered across the world, led India's non-violent freedom movement, and became a beacon of hope and inspiration to millions across the globe.

A brief cultural program comprising rendition of Gandhi's favourite 'bhajans' by children from the Carmel School, Kuwait, and a performance by Mubarak Al-Rashid, the well-known Kuwaiti singer, was also organized by the Indian Embassy on this important occasion.



UAE Exchange Centre rewards customers during Mega Festival

UAE Exchange, one of the leading remittance companies in Kuwait, is holding an ongoing 'Mega Festival' promotion in collaboration with Instant Cash, the 'World's Fastest and Dependable Money Transferor'.

The promotion, launched in 2 August, is slated to end on 7 November. Customers who transact through any of the 23 branches of UAE Exchange are entitled to a ticket that enters them into a draw. Winners chosen from the draw will receive a wealth of rewards including International flight tickets to Singapore, Georgia, or Dubai, as well as other exciting prizes.

During the promotion period, 500 prizes

including three Mega Prizes and 497 exciting other prizes will be handed over to the lucky winners.

The CEO of Instant Cash Philip C. Daniel, Marketing Manager Anjali Menon, Business Development Manager Binoy S. Skariah, BDE Pratheesh Baby were present at the launch event. UAE Exchange Kuwait was represented by Acting General Manager Krishnakumar Eacharath, who was joined by AGM, Admin and HR Dhari Al Muhareb, Head of Operations Eric Engineer, Head of Business Development and Marketing, George Varghese, Head of Branch Operations and Corporate Business, Monirul Islam, along with Department heads and Branch heads.

Kuwait Government provides guidelines to ministries on using social media sites

In a bid to thwart and curb the spread of rumors in an effective and organized manner, the Center for Government Communication (CGC) has recommended that ministries and other public sector entities follow a set of guidelines while publishing their activities and news on online social media platforms.

The recommendations emphasize the need to avoid publication of pictures of ministers,

officials or employees with any statement, attach the country's official logo as an alternative, not to publish news on personal receptions, prohibit employees from issuing any statement in the name of the ministry, and to limit statements with the name of the ministry.

The CSC pointed out that the guidelines were intended for content published online on social media platforms and not for statements issued through newspapers.

Mass transportation to solve traffic congestion

Traffic congestions and other problems associated with traffic in the country can be easily resolved provided there is a determination to tackle the problem, said the Head of Kuwait Society for Traffic Safety Bader Al-Matar.

The congestion on our roads during the rush hours can be easily resolved if the government introduces an efficient and modern mass transportation system, and encourages people both citizens and expatriates to use it, said Al-Matar.

Some of the other steps recommended by the Traffic Safety Society include smart traffic management and rescheduling the school times



so that students leave and return to their homes ahead of peak hours. Al-Bader added that the Traffic Society is ready and willing to assist the government in solving the traffic issue in the interests of the country and its people.

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Farewell reception held for outgoing Kenyan Ambassador

Dean of the diplomatic corps and Ambassador of Botswana H.E. Manyepedza P. Lesetedi hosted a farewell dinner in honor of the outgoing Kenyan Ambassador H.E. Ali Abbas Ali, on the completion of his successful tenure in Kuwait.

Assistant Foreign Minister for African Affairs Ambassador Hamad Al-Mashaan was the chief guest at the function held at the Crowne Plaza Hotel on 29 September. In attendance at the event were members of the diplomatic corps, representatives of various International organizations and special invitees.

Speaking on the occasion, Ambassador Ali expressed his appreciation to the ruling family, the government and people of Kuwait, as well as the diplomatic community for helping make his tenure in Kuwait a successful one. He hoped that existing strong relations between Kenya and Kuwait would be further boosted in the years ahead.

For his part, Ambassador Lesetedi lauded the diplomatic



efforts of the Kenyan ambassador in strengthening ties with Kuwait during his tenure, and commended the ambassador on these achievements. He wished Ambassador Ali the best for



his future endeavors. On behalf of his diplomatic colleagues, Ambassador Lesetedi presented a memento to the outgoing ambassador.

Crime Beat

Garages performing illegal repairs shut down

According to Kuwait law, a car damaged in an accident should not be repaired by a garage unless the owner produces an accident report, issued by the area police station where the accident occurred. The law is intended to encourage victims of traffic accidents to report the incident to the police, while also preventing people who cause traffic accidents from escaping prosecution. All car company garages insist on a police report before they undertake any repairs on a damaged vehicle. However, there are some private garages that perform repairs on vehicles damaged in accidents without any police report in defiance of the law. Police in Farwaniya recently conducted a raid on several such vehicle repair garages operating in Jleeb Al-Shuyoukh and Hassawi and issued citations for repairing damaged cars without a permit from the Ministry of Interior (Mol). Garages which repair vehicles without permission face closure, warned the Mol.

Masked men rob Indian of KD80

Two masked men are alleged to have robbed an Indian at knifepoint and escaped with KD80 that was in his possession. In his complaint to the Ahmadi police, the victim said, two masked men pulled over next to him and pulled out a knife and held it to his throat and ordered him to hand over his wallet. The man said, fearing for his life, he obeyed.

Filipinos arrested for flying drone over vital installation

Personnel from the Vital Installations Security Department detained two Filipinos for flying a drone without a license over secure facilities in Al-Zour. Following their interrogation by security staff they have been referred to the competent authorities for further action. The incident came to light when the Acting Director-General of the department Col Sa'fak Al-Azmi using monitoring devices in the presence of Assistant Director of the Department Colonel Musaed Shamroukh working at the Al-Zour Station saw a drone hovering over Al-Zour Power Station. They soon identified its source and arrested the two Filipinos.

Inebriated Turk offers bribe to officer

Traffic police arrested a Turkish man for driving a vehicle under the influence of alcohol and then offering a bribe to the officer to let him off free. According to charges filed against the man, he was pulled over by a traffic officer for reversing his car along the main road. While issuing a citation against the offender, the officer discovered the man was intoxicated. The driver then offered KD400 to the officer as bribe to release without filing a report. The officer arrested the driver and drove him to Abu Halifa Police station where he was charged and detained.

Kuwait Airways to launch direct flights to Paris next month

Kuwait Airways' chief marketing officer Munawar Al-Munawar announced that Kuwait Airways will begin flying directly to Paris as soon as next month. The announcement was made on Tuesday, 1 October during the international tourism expo in the French capital, where representatives of the world's most renowned airlines have assembled.

"Our participation in an event of such magnitude is part of our efforts to promote the services we offer our passengers," he said, pointing out he was glad that Kuwait Airways is on par with top airlines from around the world. Kuwait Airways' presence in this event is a testament to its prominence on the global aviation stage, according to Anwar Sheikh, an official at the company's Paris-based office. The airline's ever-expanding



fleet of aircrafts has helped create a more diverse and comprehensive itinerary, he added, saying French nationals are among the company's most loyal clientele. Kuwait Airways' participation in this expo will help give Kuwait much

needed global exposure, said the Gulf state's ambassador to Paris Sami Al-Sulaiman. The feedback Kuwait Airways has received from its French customers has been nothing short of complimentary, the diplomat emphasized.

Kuwait has ample reserve funds

Kuwait has ample reserves that ensure the country's strong financial position, says the rapporteur of parliament's budget committee MP Riyadh Al-Adasani.

The rapporteur was responding to warnings by current and former officials, including former finance minister Bader Al-Humaidi, who claimed that a financial crisis would erupt unless the government rationalized its spending, as the state's reserves had dwindled to KD7 billion.

Pointing out that the reserves were "far higher" than the quoted figure, Al-Adasani added that following efforts by the budget's committee, the government had transferred KD8.4 billion to the state reserve fund. He also clarified that the expected deficit of the Public Institution for Social Security is KD17.4 billion and not KD19 billion as stated by others. The most important aspect to consider here, said Al-Adasani, is that it is a projected deficit for the future, and not the actual current deficit. Though the country has huge assets, it must be managed in the best way possible, said the lawmaker while adding the government must tackle problems related to distortions in the state budget and final accounts.

He also warned that his plans to grill the prime minister and the finance minister would go ahead unless the government appeals against the prosecution's decision to shelve the investigation into suspected money laundering cases in which current and former MPs are involved. He said the government pledged to file the petition but so far nothing has been done.



In other news from lawmakers, MP Al-Humaidi Al-Subaei said he had put off plans to grill the minister of social affairs and labor over the ministry's decision to suspend social aid to thousands of Kuwaiti women.

Subaei, however, said yesterday that ministry officials informed him that only 1,130 women were affected, as they had failed to update their files by bringing certificates from various ministries to prove they were in need. He added the officials informed him that the women are no longer required to bring such certificates personally, as the ministry has already written to other government bodies and the update is expected to be completed within a week's time.

The ministry of social affairs pays out a KD280 million every year as social aid to over 44,000 citizens.

Private sector fails to attract workers



Kuwait Vision 2035 calls for a greater involvement of the private sector in the economy and in creating new jobs for nationals. However, new statistics reveal

that the number of employees, both citizens and expatriates, joining the private sector has been falling steadily in the last couple of years.

In its latest report to the National Assembly, the Ministry of State for Economic Affairs disclosed that the private sector has been failing to attract workers over the last many years. The report showed that there are currently around 1.7 million workers in the private sector and that the number of new entrants has been falling steadily. In 2016, around 100,000 expatriates newly joined the private sector, in 2017 only 86,000 foreigners joined the sector, in 2018 the number fell still further to 33,000 and so far this year, only 24,000 have joined the private sector.

Despite Kuwaitization and emphasis

on hiring Kuwaitis in private sector, the fall in number of expatriates recruited to the private sector was not compensated by a corresponding increase in the number of nationals opting for private sector employment. In fact, according to the available figures, the number of citizens working in the private sector fell from 72,549 in 2018 to 71,013 in 2019. Apparently, the government's push to have more citizens join the private sector is not having the desired result — a total of 1,539 Kuwaitis ended up leaving the private sector in just one year. The reasons for private sector failing to attract employees are manifold. In the case of expatriates, the main reason is the decline in economic activity over the

last many years, which has led to large scale retrenchments, salary cuts, and fall in offered pay scales.

In addition, the government's decision to cut subsidies on utilities and impose higher charges on most services has led to a rise in cost of living for the average foreigner in the country. Consequently, many expatriates have decided to either leave the country or at least send their families away.

In the case of Kuwaitis, the private sector has traditionally failed to provide them with an equivalent pay scale or perquisites offered by the public sector. Many Kuwaitis choose to sit at home without work while waiting for a vacancy in the public sector, rather than join the private sector.

Lulu Hypermarket holds 'Best of Egypt 2019' promotion



Lulu Hypermarket, the regional retail leader, launched its 'Best of Egypt 2019' promotion on Thursday, 3 October at the Al-Rai outlet of the hypermarket.

The event was inaugurated by Ambassador of Egypt to Kuwait, H.E. Tarik AlKouny in the presence of top Lulu Hypermarket management and a large gathering of shoppers, well-wishers and media personnel.

A colorful cultural program of traditional music and folk dances, including the Horse Dance, Puppet Dance and Tanoura Dance graced

the inauguration event. Special food stalls and sampling counters have also sprung up inside the promotion venues to give shoppers a taste of the best of Egyptian foods.

The 11-day festival, which runs until Saturday, 12 October at all outlets of Lulu Hypermarket in the country, features some of the best products and food items from Egypt at exceptionally competitive prices.

Lulu Hypermarkets in Dajeej, Egaila, Fahaheel, Jahra, Khaitan, Qurain, Al-Rai and Salmiya have also been decked up for the 'Best of Egypt'



promotion, with large cut-outs and posters of historic monuments and culturally important places in Egypt

in a bid to boost tourism to the country.

Among the popular brands

highlighting their products at the Best of Egypt 2019 promotion are the likes of Al Zaher, Al Marwa, Frosty Foods, Mr Freeze, Sea Star, Summer Moon and a whole lot more. Products from all these popular vendors are being offered at highly competitive prices only during the promotion period.

The Best of Egypt 2019 has become an annual event that shoppers eagerly look forward to, as it enables them to purchase some of the finest Egyptian products at an exceptional value.

Licenses of 17 newspapers, magazines revoked for non-publication

The ministry's assistant undersecretary for journalism, publication and prints affairs issued a decision to suspend the licenses of 17 weekly and monthly newspapers and magazines.

The monthly newspapers and magazines are Dalal, Kuwait Auto, Sawalef and Ostora, Yaqtha,

Al-Majales, Waseet Al-Jahra, Elanak, Al-Imtiyaz, Nujoom, Ummati, Arab, Jufaina, Kalam, Burgan, Rumooz and Safaqt. The cancellation of licenses was due to ceasing of publication for more than six months without providing an acceptable excuse to the ministry.

Report outlines Kuwait's handling of climate change issues

Kuwait's Environment Public Authority (EPA) has issued its inaugural report over the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, which contains the latest information on how the Gulf state is coping with the global challenge. When compiling the report, Kuwait's environment agency strictly adhered to the provisions under the aforementioned UN framework, EPA chief Sheikh Abdullah Ahmad Al-Sabah said in a statement.

He mentioned His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah's plan to have 15 percent of the country's energy



needs come from renewables, which in turn, would help reduce greenhouse gas emissions in the long run. The report was a major collaborative effort involving numerous state bodies, the official revealed, saying EPA remains committed to all global conventions over climate change.

The report primarily pinpoints the factors responsible for climate change in Kuwait, according to EPA's Assistant Director General for Environmental Inspection Dr. Sameera Al-Kanderi.

On climate change statistics, total greenhouse gas emissions recorded in Kuwait in 2016 amounted to 86,336 million tons, with that figure likely to be slashed by four percent by the year 2035, said Sharif Al-Khayat, an EPA researcher. The oil industry's marquee projects, including those focusing on renewable energy, will be highly instrumental in bringing that plan to fruition, he added.

CONDOLENCES



Mrs. Angeline D'souza

Wife of late Adolf D'souza, passed away on Tuesday 24th September 2019. She leaves behind her two children, Ansel and Andrea D'souza.

Mrs. Angeline D'souza was an employee of Boodai Trading Company.

May her soul Rest In Peace

UN official praises noticeable educational development in Kuwait

The UN Secretary General resident representative and coordinator, Tarek El-Sheikh, lauded Kuwait for taking strides on the path towards overhauling its educational system, however, the United Nations wishes to see further steps forward. The remark was made on Thursday, 3 October, during a UN-organized seminar on the international organization fourth goal for sustainable development (good teaching) that the UN 2030 scheme at this level is designed to develop education and qualify cadres to meet requirements of development and the labor market.

The United Nations aspires to see greater development of education in Kuwait, particularly with respect of teaching sciences and mathematics so that the country would have qualified cadres to accomplish development, he said.

The seminar is part of a series of monthly gatherings, organized by the UN office in Kuwait to coordinate with



local partners for exploring the UN potential role in boosting development. Salah Al-Majdi, the Education Ministry assistant for educational research, has indicated that the department strategy that focuses on "the human capital according to Kuwait Vision 2035" is largely inspired by the UN

sustainable development plans.

Dr. Hiba Ahmad, supervisor of education at the World Bank in Kuwait, indicated that some of reforms in the sector had been done in coordination with the WB. Future cooperation between Kuwait and the WB will be centered on "developing the human capital," not only in education but also in other sectors, such as health, as envisaged by the Kuwait Vision 2035, Dr. Ahmad said.

Dr. Fatima Al-Hashem, from the Gulf University or Sciences and Technology, presented recommendations of a study prepared by Qatar Research Foundation regarding the first three levels of teaching in Kuwait. Among the recommendations is a proposal to enhance teachers' skills, she said, lauding the significant progress that has been made in the sector in Kuwait but recommending more efforts for further improvement.

Aman Exchange and The Times Kuwait conclude exciting online draw



A total of 25 lucky winners were awarded KD25 worth of remittance vouchers each for participating in the online promotion, Register every day for a Chance to Win.

The promotion, which was held from 10 September to 4 October, saw more than 25 winners claim their prizes from Aman Exchange.

To participate, readers of The Times Kuwait online portal www.timeskuwait.com had to fill in a simple form that automatically entered them into the lucky draw. Winners were selected by random every day and announced on the website. They collected their prizes immediately at the Aman Exchange head office and had to do a transaction by using their winning voucher.

Among the first in Kuwait to provide online money transfers, Aman Exchange prides itself on being one of the leading companies for bank transfers and the only exchange company offering digital remittance through Western Union in Kuwait.

A new entrant into the remittance market Aman Exchange has in a short span of time built a considerable reputation and credibility for their customer satisfaction and reliability.

For the complete article, see here:

<https://www.timeskuwait.com/news/aman-exchange-and-the-times-kuwait-team-up-for-online-draw/>

Names of the winners are:

10th September 2019 – Mathew Moolayil Varghese
11th September 2019 – Riya Rani Santosh Kumar
12th September 2019 – Karen May Pallingayan
13th September 2019 – Catherine Arguelles
14th September 2019 – Biju John
15th September 2019 – Kusuma Sanjeev Rao
16th September 2019 – Rafid Abdul Rahman
17th September 2019 – Jince Antony
18th September 2019 – Ashfaq Mohammad
19th September 2019 – Shabin Rajan Parambil
20th September 2019 – Abdul Latheef Paredath
21st September 2019 – Yatin Chauhan
22nd September 2019 – Dr. Nithin Mathew Cherian
23rd September 2019 – Parthasarathi Bardhan
24th September 2019 – Murthaza Ali Esmail
25th September 2019 – T Premkumar
26th September 2019 – Sayeed Mohammed Osman
27th September 2019 – Monir Nur Al Amin
28th September 2019 – Mohammed Sawkot Ali Abdulrazzaque
29th September 2019 – Khuzaima Nandarvawala
30th September 2019 – Raja Krishnan
1st October 2019 – Prabhakar Gangadhar Seru
2nd October 2019 – Mohammed Nizam Uddin
3rd October 2019 – Roby Thomas
4th October 2019 – Anish Thomas

Saudi Arabia names road after late Kuwait ruler

Saudi Arabia has named a road in its southwestern city of Abha after the late Kuwaiti Amir Sheikh Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah to commemorate his memorable contributions.

The initiative is a token of appreciation for the late Kuwaiti Amir's political accomplishments and a testament to the admiration he has garnered from the Saudi people, the secretary of the kingdom's Asir region Dr. Waleed Al-Humaidi told state-run Saudi Press Agency (SPA) on Wednesday, 2 October.

The bustling road dotted with national landmarks in this southern Saudi city now carries the name of the late Kuwaiti Amir, he said.



Kuwait Ambassador says country hopeful to enhance flights with India

Kuwait is looking forward to enhance cooperation with India by increasing number of flights between the two friendly countries, Kuwaiti Ambassador to India Jassim Al-Najem said on Friday, 4 October.

Ambassador Al-Najem made the statement to a local news outlet after meeting with Indian Minister of State for Commerce and Industry and Minister of State for Civil Aviation Affairs Hardeep Singh Puri and delivering an official letter requesting to increase the number of seats between the two countries.

The previous agreement at this level between the two countries is limited to 12,000 seats per week, the ambassador said. He stressed that the Memorandum of Understanding signed in 2007 did not meet the ambitions, expressing Kuwait's aspiration to sign a new agreement aimed at allocating greater share of seats to the airlines of both the countries.

Al-Najem affirmed the keenness of the political leadership in both countries to enhance cooperation in various fields, praising the historic relations between the two friendly countries based on solid foundations of mutual respect. On his part, minister Puri affirmed his country's keenness to enhance trade exchange and cooperation with Kuwait in various fields, especially in the aviation sector. This sector is one of the main sources of national income, especially with the increase of Indian expatriate



community in Kuwait, which currently stands at around one million people.

On the increase in the number of Kuwaiti tourists coming to India and the number of Indian transit passengers to Kuwait, Puri said it was agreed to hold a new round of bilateral talks in the near future in the Indian capital New Delhi. The minister praised the historic and distinguished relations between India and Kuwait. A delegation from the General Directorate of Kuwaiti Civil Aviation headed by Director General Sheikh Salman Al-Hamoud Al-Sabah discussed in India earlier this year cooperation in the field of civil aviation and air transport during the World Aviation Summit held in Mumbai last January.

Saudi Arabia allows foreign men and women to share hotel rooms

In a marked departure from earlier rules, the Saudi Commission for Tourism and National Heritage has confirmed that foreign men and women checking into hotels would no longer need to provide marital ID or proof of relationship to share rooms.

In a country where sex outside marriage and intermingling of genders is banned, the ability for unmarried foreign visitors to share a room, points to the government's desire to lure international tourists and make the country more attractive to global travelers. Many of the gender segregation rules have been pushed aside as part of the kingdom's makeover and its bid to attract as many as 100 million visitors annually by 2030.

Last month, Saudi Arabia made tourist visas available for citizens from up to 49 countries, with an aim to spur growth in the tourism sector and

diversify its economy away from oil exports. Until recently, entry to the kingdom was limited to resident workers and their dependents, business travelers, and Muslim pilgrims who are given special visas to visit the holy cities of Mecca and Medina.

Various other changes have also taken place to make the country more alluring to tourists, including allowing for visitors to dress modestly and forgo the all-covering black robes that women were required to wear in public. Allowing women to drive and travel abroad unaccompanied, music festivals, opening of cinema halls and mixed gender events are increasingly becoming the norm.

However, there are fears that the social reforms and transformations being spearheaded by de facto ruler Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman could risk a conservative backlash.

Privatization of power projects on the anvil

Kuwait has reportedly drawn up plans to sell up to 44 percent stake in Al Zour and Al Khiran power projects to investors by the middle of 2020 and early 2021 respectively.

"We are in the process of appointing the consultant for the two projects, in cooperation with the Central Agency for Public Tenders," said Mutlaq Al-Sanei, who heads the Kuwait Authority for Partnership Projects (KAPP) in a recent media interview. The plan is to sell at least 26 percent of shares in both projects, which could possibly up as high as a 44 percent stake, said Al-Sanei. Neither KAPP nor the government have made clear on how



they intend to approach the sale of shares, or even if an initial public offering (IPO) was being planned.

However, during the interview, Al-Sanei did provide a hint of future plans when he disclosed that the government is to begin the first phase of an IPO for selling shares in another power project, the Az-Zour North Independent Water & Power Project.

BATUMI

Pearl of the Black Sea

WILSON D'CUNHA
SPECIAL TO THE TIMES KUWAIT

Batumi, often called the 'Pearl of the Black Sea', is a resort and port city in Georgia located to the southwest of the country along the Black Sea coast. Lying near the foot of the Lower Caucasus Mountains, Batumi is the capital of the Georgian autonomous republic of Adjara and is the second-most-populous city in the country.



Batumi is one of the oldest cities in Georgia dating back to the early 8th century, but the initial settlement in the area, named Batus, traces its origins back to the 4th century BC. Batumi's interesting historical past has considerably influenced the architectural diversity of the city and paved the way for its present day innovative architectural styles.

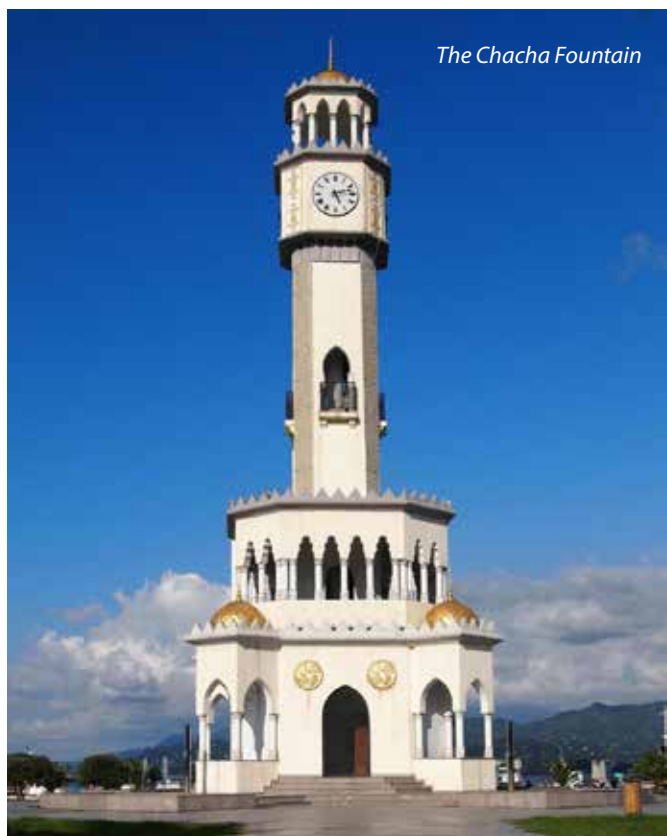
Access to the city is easy. Batumi Airport is the second biggest airport in Georgia and serves many international destinations, including Dubai, Moscow and Istanbul. There are also direct flights from London, Berlin and many more European cities to be added soon.

There are so many great things to see and do in and around the city that a week could pass by without you even realizing it. Everything about the city from its architecture, culture, scenic surrounding nature, the exquisite food, will leave you enthralled and the whole family will find something engaging to do in Batumi.

Old Batumi's most historical part is stretched between the seaport and the Boulevard, and features distinctive building facades and balconies. The Boulevard encompasses a waterfront promenade with a park and beach. Modern high-rises and a major restoration works on 19th-century classical buildings along its historic Old Town have transformed the city's skyline over the last ten years.

Europe Square lies in the center of the city and gains its name from Batumi joining the Assembly of European Regions, the largest independent network of regions in Europe. It is the main happening place in Batumi, with every celebration or event, including Batumoba (Day of Batumi), Gandagana Folk Festival and the Christmas Market, taking place within the confines of the square.

Jazz concerts and other musical festivals are a regular at the square, with the Enrique Iglesias gig in 2011 cramming a record crowd of over 50,000 into the place. A statue of Medea, who in ancient Greek myth helped the young warrior Jason to retrieve the Golden Fleece, adorns the center of the square as a symbol of ancient Georgian connections with the European world. Another dramatic feature of the square is the



The Chacha Fountain



Astronomic clock tower, where you can besides checking out the time, you can also know the position of the sun, the moon and the planets at any given time.

The Alphabetic Tower is a 130-meter-high structure in Batumi designed to symbolize the uniqueness of the Georgian alphabet and



Iconic Ali and Nino Statue

people. The structure combines the design of DNA, in its familiar double helix pattern. Two helix bands rise up the tower holding 33 letters of the Georgian alphabet, each 4 meters tall and made of aluminum. In the middle of the building is an exposed elevator shaft leading to the very top of the building, in the crown of which is a colossal silver ball. The structure has a revolving restaurant on the third floor, which goes around 360 degrees in an hour, offering visitors a panoramic view of the city and the Black Sea.

Another major draw in the city is the Chacha Fountain or Chacha Tower near the marine station. Built in 2012, the tower is an exact replica of a tower that once stood in the same spot more than a 100-years ago, but which was later razed by the authorities. Four



Georgian National Dances

fountain pools surround the tower, which rises in the center to a height of 25-meter and is flanked on four sides by smaller turrets. The fountains are reported to spew Chacha, a strong Georgian spirit, at supposedly irregular intervals.

Around 9km north of the city, Batumi Botanical Garden showcases flora from around the world. Work on the 108 hectare Batumi Botanical Garden began in the 1880s under the guidance of Russian botanist Andrey Nikolayevich Krasnov. The site, which officially opened to the public in November 1912 was one of the largest botanical gardens in the former Soviet Union.

The gardens have undergone various phases of expansion and development over the years and since 1925 it has been a principal institution for the study of Caucasian maritime subtropical cultures. Religion is important to the people and visiting the church with your family is a tradition. With 80 percent of the people Orthodox and the other 20 percent mainly Muslim, the city's churches and mosques are filled to capacity. Catholic churches, such as the Catholic Church of the Holy Spirit, Saint Nicholas Church and the Batumi Armenian Church,

as well as the Batumi Mosque and the Batumi Synagogue attract worshippers throughout the week.

Georgian food is superb and the secret to their cuisine lies in the freshness of ingredients. The local market is always busy with people selling home-made products, huge watermelons, cheese, spices or other local goodies. Khachapuri is a traditional Georgian dish, with each restaurant having a different way of preparing it. It is usually made of cheese-filled bread sometimes topped with an egg, which looks much like a pizza, but tastes totally different. It is served as a main course and is extremely filling.

Makhuntseti waterfall is located near the town of Keda, at 335 meters above sea level. Near the waterfall several picnic sites are available for visitors. While visiting the waterfall it is also possible to visit nearby tourist attractions, including the ancient arched stone Makhuntseti Bridge, Adjarian wine houses, and private wine cellars scattered throughout Keda Municipality.

The Mtirala national park is quite amazing and it offers around 4 kms of scenic hiking and a wonderful experience. With mass tourism yet to catch up with the area, the hiking trails appear remote and almost like a forgotten part of the world.

Georgia is famed for its rich and vibrant traditional music, and the country is home to a variety of urban singing styles, including a mixture of native polyphony, middle eastern monophony and later european harmonic languages. Nowhere is this musical diversity more evident than in Batumi which hosts the annual Batumi Black Sea Music and Art Festival.

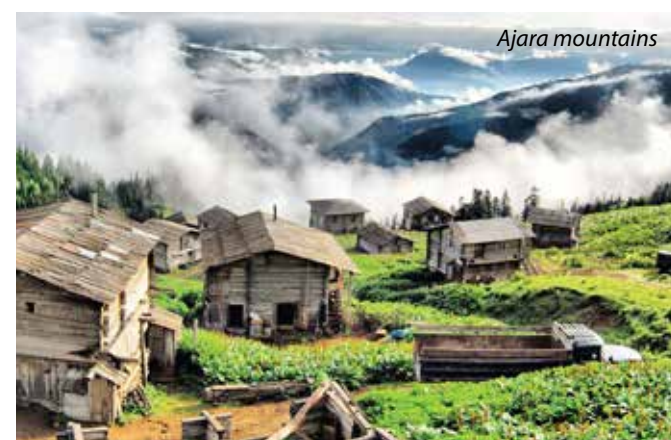


Mtirala National Park

This year, the seventh iteration of the festival was held from 1 to 10 September under the patronage of UNESCO, which has now been lending its patronage to the event for three years in a row. The patronage highlights the unique and exceptional status of the festival. The festival regularly invites leading international musicians from Europe and other countries around the world to perform, and many will offer younger musicians masterclasses.

Sound of classical music transcend the seaside city during the 10-day festival with musical masterpieces of Bach, Beethoven, Saint-Saëns, Chopin, Ravel and Liszt flood the streets of Batumi. However, above all, the Batumi Black Sea Music and Art Festival is a celebration of music, a reminder that nothing brings people and nations together like music and other arts.

You need to visit Batumi with an open mind, and if you do not limit yourself to the beach and the well-trodden tourist paths, you will discover a whole new world and be surprised to learn that Batumi is so much more than just another seaside resort on the Black Sea coast.



Ajara mountains

EXCLUSIVE to THE TIMES KUWAIT

Regulating Cyberwarfare



JOSEPH S. NYE

A professor at Harvard and author of the forthcoming *Do Morals Matter? Presidents and Foreign Policy from FDR to Trump*.

Whether or not a conflict spirals out of control depends on the ability to understand and communicate about the scale of hostility. Unfortunately, when it comes to cyber conflict, there is no agreement on scale or how it relates to traditional military measures. What some regard as an agreed game or battle may not look the same to the other side.

A decade ago, the United States used cyber sabotage instead of bombs to destroy Iranian nuclear enrichment facilities. Iran responded with cyber attacks that destroyed 30,000 Saudi Aramco computers and disrupted American banks. This summer, following the imposition of crippling sanctions by US President Donald Trump's administration, Iran shot down an unmanned American surveillance drone. There were no casualties. Trump initially planned a missile strike in response, but canceled it at the last moment in favor of a cyber attack that destroyed a key database used by the Iranian military to target oil tankers. Again, there were costs but no



Kaiser returned from vacation at the end of July and discovered how Austria had filled in the check, his efforts to de-escalate were too late. Nonetheless, he expected to prevail and almost did.

Had the Kaiser, the Czar, and the Emperor known in August 1914 that a little over four years later, all would lose their thrones and see their realms dismembered, they would not have gone to war. Since 1945, nuclear weapons have served as a crystal ball in which leaders can glimpse the catastrophe implied by a major war. After the Cuban Missile Crisis in 1962, leaders learned the importance of de-escalation, arms-control communication, and rules of the road to manage conflict.

Cyber technology, of course, lacks the clear devastating effects of nuclear weapons, and that poses a different set of problems, because there is no crystal ball. During the Cold War, the great powers avoided direct engagement, but that is not true of cyber conflict. And yet the threat of cyber Pearl Harbors has been exaggerated. Most cyber conflicts occur below the threshold established by the rules of armed conflict. They are economic and political, rather than lethal. It is not credible to threaten a nuclear response to cyber theft of intellectual property by China or cyber meddling in elections by Russia.

According to American doctrine, deterrence is not limited to a cyber

response (though that is possible). The US will respond to cyberattacks across domains or sectors, with any weapons of its choice, proportional to the damage that has been done. That can range from naming and shaming to economic sanctions to kinetic weapons.

Earlier this year, a new doctrine of 'persistent engagement' was described as not only disrupting attacks, but also helping to reinforce deterrence. But the technical overlap between intrusion into networks to gather intelligence or disrupt attacks and to carry out offensive operations often makes it difficult to distinguish between escalation and de-escalation. Rather than relying on tacit bargaining, as proponents of 'persistent engagement' sometimes emphasize, explicit communication may be necessary to limit escalation.

After all, we cannot assume that we have enough experience to understand what is an agreed competition in cyberspace or that we can be certain of how actions taken in other countries' networks will be interpreted. For example, Russian cyber meddling in US elections was not an agreed competition. With a domain as new as cyber, open rather than mere tacit communication can enlarge our limited understanding of the boundaries.

Negotiating cyber arms-control treaties is problematic, but this does not make diplomacy impossible. In the cyber realm,

the difference between a weapon and a non-weapon may come down to a single line of code, or the same program can be used for legitimate or malicious purposes, depending on the user's intent. But if that makes traditional arms-control treaties impossible to verify, it may still be possible to set limits on certain types of civilian targets (rather than weapons) and negotiate rough rules of the road that limit conflict.

In any event, strategic stability in cyberspace will be difficult to maintain. Because technological innovation there is faster than in the nuclear realm, cyberwarfare is characterized by a heightened reciprocal fear of surprise.

Over time, however, better attribution forensics may enhance the role of punishment; and better defenses through encryption or machine learning may increase the role of prevention and denial. Moreover, as states and organizations come to understand better the limitations and uncertainties of cyberattacks and the growing importance of Internet entanglement to their economic wellbeing, cost-benefit calculations of the utility of cyberwarfare may change.

At this point, however, the key to deterrence, conflict management, and de-escalation in the cyber realm is to acknowledge that we all still have a lot to learn and expand the process of communication among adversaries.

“Negotiating cyber arms-control treaties is problematic, but not impossible. In cyber realm, the difference between a weapon and a non-weapon could be a line of code, or a same program could be used for legitimate or malicious purposes, depending on the user's intent.”

casualties. Iran then carried out, directly or indirectly, a sophisticated drone and cruise missile strike against two major Saudi oil facilities. While it appears there were no or only light casualties, the attack represented a significant increase in costs and risks.

The problem of perceptions and controlling escalation is not new. In August 1914, the major European powers expected a short and sharp 'Third Balkan War'. The troops were expected to be home by Christmas. After the assassination of the Austrian archduke in June, Austria-Hungary wanted to give Serbia a bloody nose, and Germany gave its Austrian ally a blank check rather than see it humiliated. But when the

A Kuwaiti generation born in prosperity

...CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

In addition, the government delivers high-quality essential foods at very subsidized rates — not only for the Kuwaiti citizen and his family, but also for the domestic helpers employed in the household. Besides the free plots of land distributed to citizens, the government also provides housing grants to build what would be considered luxury villas in other parts of the world.

And, then there is the social security net and guaranteed employment that every Kuwaiti benefits from. Kuwait is also a tax free society and the government collects no income taxes from Kuwaitis. Besides taking very good care of its sick and elderly, Kuwait also sends many citizens abroad for specialized medical treatment, training and higher studies at full government expense.

Kuwaitis are also blessed to have a unique style

of government, which could be termed as the best of both worlds — a very generous government and a semi-democratic political system that allows them to make their voice heard through parliament. The result is a society that is one of the most open and democratic in the region.

Kuwait has also earned a remarkable name for itself among the international community, thanks to the benevolence of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, and his generosity in helping distressed people around the world, which has seen the United Nations conferring on him the unique and undisputed title of Humanitarian Leader of the World.

As an expatriate, one would wonder what issues parliament would have to debate given the cradle to grave benefits and largesse granted to citizens. But it appears that all is not well in this land of milk and honey. The well-intentioned, government moves

to ensure and secure a continued comfortable life for citizens has been running into trouble for some time now.

Kuwaitis are used to a lavish lifestyle that includes luxury cars, villas, clothes and travel, and also an army of maids, drivers and helpers. However, this subsidized luxurious lifestyle is becoming increasingly difficult to sustain, as oil revenues on which the state depends for its largesse begins to dwindle. Changing citizens' attitudes, lifestyle and, more importantly, curbing their complete dependence on the state for undeserved benefits, could be a step in the right direction.

Expatriates currently account for two-thirds of the population and they make up nearly 80 percent of the workforce in the country. Attempting to replace this large expatriate labor force with citizens is a non sequitur; even replacing a percentage of expatriates with citizens would require the

nationals to imbibe many of the work cultures and skills that foreigners brought to this country and helped develop it.

A Bloomberg report published in 2018, for whatever it is worth, ranked Kuwaitis last in terms of the level of activity, and showed citizens topping the list of the world's laziest people. The report revealed that 67 percent of the population in Kuwait could be classified as 'lazy' — the highest among countries covered by the World Health Organization.

Of course, a large number of hardworking Kuwaitis might disagree on the findings of this report, but that does not change the general impression that expatriates have regarding the work habits of their hosts.

You can share your thoughts with
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Preventing Digital Feudalism



MARIANA MAZZUCATO

Professor of Economics of Innovation and Public Value and Director of the UCL Institute for Innovation and Public Purpose (IIPP). She is the author of *The Value of Everything: Making and Taking in the Global Economy*.

The use and abuse of data by Facebook and other tech companies are finally garnering the official attention they deserve. With personal data becoming the world's most valuable commodity, will users be the platform economy's masters or its slaves?

Prospects for democratizing the platform economy remain dim. Algorithms are developing in ways that allow companies to profit from our past, present, and future behavior — or what Shoshana Zuboff of Harvard Business School describes as our “behavioral surplus.” In many cases, digital platforms already know our preferences better than we do, and can nudge us to behave in ways that produce still more value. Do we really want to live in a society where our innermost desires and manifestations of personal agency are up for sale?

Capitalism has always excelled at creating new desires and cravings. But with big data and algorithms, tech companies have both accelerated and inverted this process. Rather than just creating new goods and services in anticipation of what people might want, they already know what we will want, and are selling our future selves. Worse, the algorithmic processes being used often perpetuate gender and racial biases, and can be manipulated for profit or political gain. While we all benefit immensely from digital services such as Google search, we did not sign up to have our behavior cataloged, shaped, and sold.

“

Rather than talking about regulation, then, we need to go further, embracing concepts such as co-creation. Governments can and should be shaping markets to ensure that collectively created value serves collective ends.

”

To change this will require focusing directly on the prevailing business model, and specifically on the source of economic rents. Just as landowners in the seventeenth century extracted rents from land-price inflation, and just as robber barons profited from the scarcity of oil, today's platform firms are extracting value through the monopolization of search and e-commerce services.

To be sure, it is predictable that sectors with high network externalities — where the benefits to individual users increase as a function of the total number of users — will produce large companies. That is why telephone companies grew so massive in the past. The problem is not size, but how network-based companies wield their market power.

Today's tech companies originally used their broad networks to bring in diverse suppliers, much to the benefit of consumers. Amazon allowed small publishers to sell titles (including my first book) that otherwise would not have made it to the display shelf at your local bookstore. Google's search engine used to return a diverse array of providers, goods, and services.

But now, both companies use their dominant positions to stifle competition, by controlling which products users see and favoring their own brands (many of

which have seemingly independent names). Meanwhile, companies that do not advertise on these platforms find themselves at a severe disadvantage. As Tim O'Reilly has argued, over time, such rent seeking weakens the ecosystem of suppliers that the platforms were originally created to serve.

Rather than simply assuming that economic rents are all the same, economic policymakers should be trying to understand how platform algorithms allocate value among consumers, suppliers, and the platform itself. While some allocations may reflect real competition, others are being driven by value extraction rather than value creation.

Thus, we need to develop a new governance structure, which starts with creating a new vocabulary. For example, calling platform companies “tech giants” implies they have invested in the technologies from which they are profiting, when it was really taxpayers who funded the key underlying technologies — from the Internet to GPS.

Moreover, the widespread use of tax arbitrage and contract workers (to avoid the costs of providing health insurance and other benefits) is eroding the markets and institutions upon which the platform economy relies. Rather than talking about regulation, then, we need to go further, embracing concepts such as co-creation. Governments can and should be shaping markets to ensure that collectively created value serves collective ends.

Likewise, competition policy should not be focused solely on the question of size. Breaking up large companies would not solve the problems of value extraction or abuses of individual rights. There is no reason to assume that many smaller Googles or Facebooks would operate differently or develop new, less exploitative algorithms.

Creating an environment that rewards genuine value creation and punishes value extraction is the fundamental economic challenge of our time. Fortunately, governments, too, are now creating platforms to identify citizens, collect taxes, and provide public services. Owing to concerns in the early days of the Internet about official misuse of data, much of the current data architecture was built by private companies. But government platforms now have enormous potential to improve the efficiency of the public sector and to democratize the platform economy.

To realize that potential, we will need to rethink the governance of data, develop new institutions, and, given the dynamics of the platform economy, experiment with alternative forms of ownership. To take just one of many examples, the data that

one generates when using Google Maps or Citymapper — or any other platform that relies on taxpayer-funded technologies — should be used to improve public transportation and other services, rather than simply becoming private profits.

Of course, some will argue that regulating the platform economy will impede market-driven value creation. But they should go back and read their Adam Smith, whose ideal of a “free market” was one free from rents, not from the state. Algorithms and big data could be used to improve public services, working

conditions, and the wellbeing of all people. But these technologies are currently being used to undermine public services, promote zero-hour contracts, violate individual privacy, and destabilize the world's democracies — all in the interest of personal gain.

Innovation does not just have a rate of progression; it also has a direction. The threat posed by artificial intelligence and other technologies lies not in the pace of their development, but in how they are being designed and deployed. Our challenge is to set a new course.



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EXCLUSIVE to THE TIMES KUWAIT

Empowering Africa's Women Farmers



RUTH MEINZEN-DICK

A senior research fellow at the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI).

Over 60 percent of all employed women in Sub-Saharan Africa work in agriculture. Yet the region's women farmers often reap a meager harvest, not because of inclement weather or poor soil quality, but because of their gender, or more specifically, because of a dense web of laws, policies, programs, and customs that put them at a significant disadvantage.

Closing the gender gap in agriculture will require action on three fronts. The first is land rights. In most of Sub-Saharan Africa, women rarely own land. Instead, women farmers usually access land through a male relative, most commonly a husband, brother, or father. This arrangement leaves them highly vulnerable; a death, divorce, or simply a man's change of mind can leave a woman farmer landless overnight.

“The final front is perhaps the trickiest: decision-making power. In far too many contexts, women farmers lack the authority to manage the crops they produce or the income they generate. This has far-reaching implications for development.”

The resulting insecurity affects the way women farm. At constant risk of displacement, long-term productivity-enhancing investments do not make financial sense. Why build terraces to reduce erosion and improve soil health if someone else can claim the land and its improvements



as soon as the work is finished? Why plant an orchard if it can simply be taken away once the final tree is in the ground?

Over the last two decades, many countries have taken important steps to promote and protect women's land rights. For example, Ethiopia introduced joint land registration — with the names and photographs of both husband and wife included on certificates — thereby formalizing women's rights to the land they farm. Such reform has been shown to lead to increased investment in land, especially by women. The investment rises even higher among women who are also educated about their land rights, highlighting the importance of legal literacy programs.

But land is only the first step. Women also lack equal access to inputs, including fertilizer, better seeds, mechanical equipment, and agricultural extension services that would connect them with information about improved agricultural practices. This inequality is compounded by unequal access to the credit farmers need to purchase inputs. In Kenya, Malawi, Sierra Leone, Zambia, and Zimbabwe, studies have

shown that women are less likely to benefit from financial services.

Improving access to financial services and agricultural inputs thus constitutes the second front for empowering women farmers. Development agencies and NGOs have begun working to design woman-focused financial services and programs to improve access to agricultural inputs. African women are also helping one another, with a growing number of women's organizations, such as microfinance groups, working to improve access to financial services, new technologies, and information. For instance, in Kenya, members of such self-help groups are likelier than other women to know about climate-smart agricultural practices.

The final front is perhaps the trickiest: decision-making power. In far too many contexts, women farmers lack the authority to manage the crops they produce or the income they generate. This has far-reaching implications for development.

In Sub-Saharan Africa, agriculture is 2-4 times more effective in reducing poverty than growth in other sectors. Moreover, as the Goalkeepers report released last month

by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation showed, women are more likely than men to invest resources under their control in meeting their children's needs, such as food and education.

Given this, enabling women farmers to control their resources is important to achieving not only United Nations Sustainable Development Goal 5 — gender equality and empowerment of women and girls — but also many others, including eliminating poverty (SDG1) and ending hunger (SDG2).

Though some progress has been made on all three fronts to empower women farmers, it is nowhere near enough. To encourage and guide further action, my colleagues at the International Food Policy Research Institute and I designed the Women's Empowerment in Agriculture Index, which measures decision-making power, access to resources (including credit), control over income, time burdens, and membership in groups.

By providing insight into the extent and sources of women's agricultural disempowerment in various contexts, the WEAI — and a later adaptation, pro-WEAI, which facilitates project impact assessments — is helping governments, donors, and NGOs to design effective interventions. So far, the WEAI (including adaptations) has been used by 99 different organizations in 54 countries. For instance, WEAI insights guided the design of Bangladesh's ANGeL project, which aims to identify actions and investments in agriculture that will improve nutrition and empower women.

When Africa's women farmers thrive, everyone benefits: the women themselves, the children in whom they invest, the communities that they feed, and the economies to which they contribute. With the right investments and policies, Africa's woman-run farms could produce a bumper crop of development.

Promoting FDI helps New Kuwait 2035 vision

...CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

The bulk of foreign investments in Kuwait were directed towards the oil and gas sector, followed by real estate, construction and financial services. The majority of foreign investments came from the United States and China.

The lack of diversity in the economy and its continued dependence on a hydrocarbon sector that is vulnerable to volatility of international oil prices, along with the high level of state intervention in the market, makes Kuwait a less than ideal investment environment. In addition, the limited size of the market and questions around its political stability, from internal squabbles as well as external potential threats, make investments in the country appear as a risky proposition for many international investors.

Moreover, despite Kuwait being named among the top 20 improvers in the World Bank's 'Ease of Doing Business Index for 2019, Kuwait has consistently ranked low in the 'business friendliness' index over the years. In 2018, Kuwait was ranked 97 out of 190 countries in the index; the lowest even among the six-nation Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) bloc. One reason for this poor ranking could be the rentier business model that prevails in the country. A citizen is able to gain controlling equity in a company, solely by lending his or her name to a business.

At the time of Kuwait's independence in 1961, it was an accepted business principle and sanctioned policy that in order for any commercial enterprise to operate in the country, it should have a Kuwaiti partner. A new Commercial Law No.68 of 1980 codified this widely accepted norm and stipulated that a commercial entity in the country should be at least 51 percent owned by one or more Kuwaitis, or the enterprise had to be represented by a Kuwaiti agent. The lukewarm response by international investors to Law 68/1980,

especially its poor safeguards for foreign investments, led the government to revamp the law in 2001 and introduce the Foreign Direct Investment Law No.8/2001 (FDI Law). The new law aimed to encourage and secure direct foreign investment by creating an exception to the Commercial Law and allowing foreigners to own up to 100 percent of a commercial entity, but limited that ownership to only a handful of select industrial sectors.

The FDI Law granted full ownership to investments in entertainment, hospitals, housing, infrastructure, insurance and tourism sectors. The government even sweetened this law further by offering incentives in the form of land grants and a 10-year tax holiday. However, as usual, there were strings attached to the law, including compelling foreign enterprises receiving incentives to hire Kuwaitis at a fixed proportion of total people employed, as well as restrictions on who could invest in the country. Understandably, the FDI Law failed to elicit the expected response from investors.

Additionally, foreign investors were often overwhelmed by the bureaucracy involved in obtaining a license and delays in receiving land grants. Even though the government had established a special entity, the Kuwait Foreign Investment Bureau (KFIB), specifically to oversee and speed up implementation of the FDI law, there were reports that a license application could take a minimum of eight months to process. Implementation of FDI policies were also held back by prevailing political instability, which saw governments pass through parliament's doors at a rapid frequency.

In 2013, spurred by the strategic vision of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah to transform Kuwait into a regional financial, commercial and cultural hub by 2035, the government launched the overarching Kuwait Development Plan 2035, later renamed as the New Kuwait 2035 plan. At

the core of 2035 plan was diversifying the economy away from its over reliance on hydrocarbon revenues by, among others, encouraging foreign investment in the country.

Accordingly, in June 2013, the old FDI Law was revamped and replaced by the new Foreign Direct Investment Law No.116/2013 (New FDI Law). The new 'investor-friendly' law, which was finally implemented in 2015, aimed to promote the flow of foreign funds into the country by opening up more sectors for investments, reforming legislations regarding ownership, providing attractive incentives, and making it much easier and quicker for investors to obtain a license. As part of the revamp process the KFIB was restructured and renamed as Kuwait Direct Investment Promotion Authority (KDIPA). The new authority was mandated to promote direct investments in the country, and tasked with implementing necessary developmental, regulatory, promotional and advocacy policies and processes. KDIPA was given broad powers to attract investors, including by granting tax and customs exemptions to qualifying investors for up to 10 years, and to streamline the business environment to enhance the country's business competitiveness, and mitigate hurdles to investments.

In 2016, through Decision No.313 of 2016, the KDIPA set up a scoring system to evaluate and grade all foreign investment applications, in order to accept or reject the application, as well as determine the incentives that could be offered. An application scoring 59 percent or lower is automatically rejected by the scoring system; where the score is above 60 percent but below 70 percent, the application would be entitled to a foreign investment licence, but without any tax incentives.

An application scoring above 70 percent but below 80 percent would receive the license as well as

one incentive of their choice; and applications scoring above 80 percent would be entitled to a foreign investment licence and all incentives available under the new Foreign Direct Investment Law. Incentives for investors under the new FDI Law include tax exemptions for a maximum period of 10 years from the date of operations of the licensed entity; customs duty exemptions for the importation of materials and equipment if the material and equipment is held for a period of five years from the date of obtaining the incentive; and allocation of land and real estate.

The new FDI Law allows a foreign investor to establish a 100 percent foreign-owned Kuwaiti company, a licensed branch, or a representative office of a foreign entity in nearly all sectors of the country's economy, except those on a 'Negative List' drawn up by the government.

The negative list includes: Extraction of crude petroleum and natural gas; Manufacture of petroleum coke products, fertilizers and nitrogen compounds; Manufacture of gas or its distribution through mains. In addition, foreigners cannot invest in: Activities of hiring labor, including domestic labor; Activities of membership organizations; Compulsory social security; Real estate activities; Security and investigation activities; and in Public administration and defense.

The KDIPA is structured as a 'One-Stop Shop' where the application of an investor is evaluated by a specialized team comprising members from relevant ministries and departments, and responded to within 30 days of receipt of a license application. If approved, the investor is then provided with all the required licenses enabling them to begin operations immediately. The setting up of KDIPA is definitely a welcome move by the government, now all that remains to be seen is how investors respond to the makeover.

Oral medication for people with type 2 diabetes

People suffering from type 2 diabetes face a huge psychological and economic burden in having to take regular injections, along with the problems associated with ensuring the safe disposal of used syringes and medication vials.

Having an oral medication in place of injections would be a win-win situation for the user and the ecosystem. Last week, the US Food and Drug Administration tentatively approved a new drug called Rybelsus for treatment of type 2 diabetes.

The drug is the first glucagon-like peptide (GLP-1) treatment that does not need to be

injected. It mimics a glucagon-like peptide receptor in the body that stops the liver from making too much sugar. It also helps the pancreas make more insulin.

People with type 2 diabetes often do not have enough of the GLP-1 protein. In granting its approval, the FDA stated that Rybelsus contains a boxed warning about the potential increased risk of thyroid C-cell tumors, among other possible side effects. It also noted that Rybelsus, is "not recommended as the first choice of medicine for treating diabetes."

Doctors hope that the new oral drug could lead to the development of new, oral



versions of other drugs. While there are other pills available for patients with diabetes, they are usually destroyed by stomach acids and so have to be injected. Rybelsus is just one

of several new drugs to come on the market recently for diabetes treatment. Three other oral drugs for type 2 diabetes were approved by the FDA in late 2017, although they use different mechanisms than GLP-1. Some oral insulin sprays are also in development. The market for new diabetes drugs is robust due to the demand for them. Giving those patients another treatment option may be important.

However, the FDA has warned that Rybelsus is not recommended as a first-line treatment for diabetes and that there are several potential side effects in terms of increased risk of other health problems.

Blood test to detect multiple cancers

Numerous types of cancer could be screened with a high degree of accuracy from a single blood test that is now being developed.

The test, developed by Grail, a healthcare company focused on early detection of cancer, uses next-generation sequencing technology to probe DNA for tiny chemical tags (methylation) that influence whether genes are active or inactive.

Researchers at the Dana-Farber Cancer Institute in the US found that when applied to nearly 3,600 blood samples -- some from patients with cancer, some from people who had not been diagnosed with cancer at the time of the blood draw -- the test was able to successfully pick up a cancer signal from the cancer patient samples, and correctly identify the tissue from where the cancer began (the tissue of origin).

The new test looks for DNA, which cancer cells shed into the bloodstream when they die. In contrast to 'liquid biopsies', which detect genetic mutations or other cancer-related alterations in DNA, the new technology focuses on modifications to DNA known as methyl groups. Methyl groups are chemical units that can be attached to DNA, in a process called methylation, to control which genes are turned 'on' and which are 'off'. Abnormal patterns of methylation turn out to be, in many cases, more indicative of cancer, and cancer type, than mutations are. The new test zeroes in on portions of the genome where abnormal methylation patterns are found in cancer cells.

"Methylation-based assays outperform traditional DNA-sequencing approaches to detecting multiple forms of cancer in blood samples," said one researcher. In the study, investigators analyzed cell-free DNA (DNA that had once been confined to cells but had entered the bloodstream upon the cells' death) in 3,583 blood samples, including 1,530 from patients diagnosed with cancer and 2,053 from people without cancer. The patient samples comprised more than 20 types of cancer. The overall specificity was 99.4 percent, meaning only 0.6 percent of the results incorrectly indicated that cancer was present. For the 97 percent of samples that returned a tissue of origin result, the test correctly identified the organ or tissue of origin in 89 percent of cases. Detecting even a modest percent of common cancers early could translate into many patients who may be able to receive more effective treatment if the test were in wide use.



Disease diagnosis by AI similar to that by doctors

Artificial intelligence (AI) is just as good at diagnosing a disease based on a medical image as healthcare professionals, says the first systematic review and meta-analysis on the topic.

Researchers at University Hospitals Birmingham NHS Foundation Trust in the United Kingdom, who set about examining whether AI can diagnose illnesses as effectively as healthcare professionals from medical images, found that AI could correctly diagnose disease in 87 percent of the cases, whereas detection by healthcare professionals yielded an 86 percent accuracy rate.

Furthermore, when it came to assessing

the AI's diagnostic performance compared with that of healthcare professionals, the researchers looked at two outcomes: specificity and sensitivity. 'Sensitivity' defines the probability that a diagnostic tool gets a positive result in people who have the disease. 'Specificity' refers to the accuracy of the diagnostic test, which complements the sensitivity measure. The researchers found that the specificity for deep learning algorithms was 93 percent, compared with humans at 91 percent.

Though the sample cases we studied were few, they were of high quality and within that high quality of studies we found



that deep learning could indeed detect diseases ranging from cancers to eye diseases as accurately as health professionals. But it's important to note that AI did not substantially outperform human diagnosis, said the team behind the research.

Synthetic vaccine to combat epidemics

A new vaccine developed against the mosquito-borne virus Chikungunya, which can be stored at warmer temperatures and negates the need for refrigeration, could mark a major advance in vaccine technology. The vaccine, which was engineered using a synthetic protein scaffold, could probably revolutionise the way vaccines are designed, produced and stored in the future.

Vaccination has proven to be an exceptionally powerful medical tool in the fight against infectious diseases that decimate populations in many parts of the world. Vaccinations have helped eradicate smallpox from the world, and aided in constraining measles, polio and tetanus. However, severe challenges to human health persist, evidenced by epidemics caused by Ebola, Zika and others. This is particularly severe in developing countries which often lack adequate infrastructure and resources to prevent or manage outbreaks, bringing about disruption and damage in affected communities and massive economic shortfall.

A recent example is Chikungunya, a virus transmitted by the bite of an infected



mosquito. The disease causes crippling headache, vomiting, swelling of limbs and can lead to death. Even if a fever ends abruptly, chronic symptoms such as intense joint pain, insomnia and extreme prostration remain. Formerly confined to sub-Saharan Africa, Chikungunya has recently spread worldwide as its mosquito host leaves its natural habitat due to deforestation and climate change, with outbreaks reported in the US and Europe.

Researchers from the University of Bristol and the French National Centre for Scientific Research (CNRS) in Grenoble, France, teamed up with computer technology giant Oracle to find a way to make vaccines that are able to

withstand warm temperatures (thermostable), can be designed quickly and are easily produced.

The team worked with a synthetic protein that forms a multimeric particle resembling a virus but is completely safe as it has no genetic material inside. The scientists were completely surprised to find that this particle also remained incredibly stable even after months, without refrigeration.

The particle with its flexible surface allowed the scientists to insert small, harmless bits of Chikungunya to generate a virus-like mimic that they could then potentially use as a vaccine. Tests using the particles on animals have yielded exceptionally promising results and have set the stage for a future vaccine to combat Chikungunya in humans.

The vaccine candidate is easy to manufacture, extremely stable and elicits a powerful immune response. It can be stored and transported without refrigeration to countries and patients where it is most needed. Intriguingly, the scientists said they could very rapidly make similar vaccines to combat many other infectious diseases.

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The velvet trend is rising on its sophistication and elegance. Velvet is a firm winter favorite, and one woman inevitably resort back to party season after party season. But can you wear it in summer, too? Yes - as long as you're up for making a few adjustments.

In summer, to counter balance the dense fabric, it's best to reveal a little bit of skin with clever cut works - for example an open shoulder. Other things to gravitate towards are pale tones, slouchy fabrics and punchy patterns.

Here are a few tips to ensure you look less old shindig, more outdoor soiree in your new summer velvet buys.

Opt for lighter shades: Think crushed pink, heathered grey and shimmering taupe. Seize the opportunity while the weather is a little more forgiving to wear light velvet. This is a great option for night out with friends; just add some colorful jewelry and silky top.



Wonderful VELVET

It's also a great work wear option; offset crumpled velvet with a crisp white shirt and leather loafers.

Velvet is also at its most fantastic in rich jewel hues. Certain bright colored pieces lend a fabulous edge to outwear. For those who prefer it simple, black velvet is a classic shade, and is super flattering on a LBD.

Play with patterns: Patterns can transform velvet from wintry evening ensemble to chic day-time look. It's dressy enough for events (just add a block heel and a blouse) but is equally appropriate for lunch in the sun, or an afternoon dwindled away in a garden. Try teaming embellished velvet with trainers and a denim jacket.

Let it play well with others: Velvet fashion can be hard to pair with other styles if you don't know what to look for. In this case, juxtaposition is a striking way to go. To offset the femininity of a velvet maxi dress, pair it with a leather jacket or throw on classy velvet outwear over your more edgy pieces. Don't underestimate the styling value of velvet when it comes to mixing different fabrics, prints and styles in your ensemble.

Re-work the classics: There's a reason velvet jackets are always in style: they really



are timeless. A velvet blazer is a chic, office-appropriate cover-up, and feels far more luxurious than your average navy or black one. Bored of the blazer? Give this classic a modern update and replace with a summer-suitable kimono-style jacket.

Take a relaxed approach to tailoring: A simple velvet dress can provide the basis for an enviable evening look. Meanwhile, a pretty velvet suit is the ideal option for those who want to dress classier. Wear the jacket and trousers together over a slouchy tee for the full effect. Alternatively, if the duo feels a little heavy for summer, wear as separates. It's also easy to find daywear pieces in crushed velvet, but be wary that such designs don't look cheap. Always go for smooth velvet in the best fabric that feels luxurious.

Don't shout about it: Summer velvet doesn't need to make a big statement. Go casual and opt for a slouchy velvet T-shirt or a blouse.

Go for accessories that compliment any ensemble: Velvet accessories are a desirable option whatever the season. Jazz up an otherwise simple outfit with a colorful velvet clutch, or slip on some velvet flats to take you comfortably (and stylishly) from desk to dinner.

Hair hack for the best bangs



Bangs can be tricky, can't they? They look so effortlessly perfect and cool on the models. But things can get complicated when regular girls try to do them proper. The perfect bangs seen in magazines are far from your reality, especially after a long night of beauty sleep. You normally go to bed with beautiful bangs but then wake up the next morning with a bushy, mess atop your head that causes you to spend hours trying to get them back to normal. Because no one has time for all of that, here is some bang-saving nighttime trick that will help you have a great hair day, every day.

How to prep your bangs before bed

STEP 1: Brush out bangs with a comb or paddle brush to remove any product that might be lingering from the day.

STEP 2: Spritz your bangs with dry shampoo to absorb any excess oil that may accumulate throughout the night.

STEP 3: Wrap your bangs in a large- or medium-sized hair roller (depending on the length of your bangs) and make sure it's secure enough to withstand the night. This will help keep the shape of your bangs intact. If you rock side bangs, just sweep your fringe to the side and secure it with a bobby pin. Make sure they are pinned at the ends to avoid an odd dent in your bangs when you wake up.

How to style your bangs in the morning

STEP 1: Take out your curlers or bobby pin and brush out your bangs with a comb or paddle brush. If they're looking a little too rounded, don't worry — they will loosen up throughout the day.

STEP 2: If your bangs are still looking a little disheveled but not in an effortless, cool-girl way, simply spritz a little water on them and blow dry them using a small, round brush. Lightly spritz them with flexible-hold hairspray to maintain their shape throughout the day and voila. You officially have a bang hairstyle that's ready in minutes and looks even better than the night before.

Using color correcting concealer

Out of all of the benefits of your beloved concealer, one of the most life-saving and astonishing abilities is color correcting. That's right — some concealers have the power to counteract the colors that come from certain skin concerns like purple and blue hues that come with under-eye circles and bright reds that happen with acne flare ups. But figuring out how to use different color correctors can be a little confusing. Here is a guide that breaks down everything you need to know about color correcting concealers, including how to choose which one is right for you.

Color correcting concealers are designed to cover any skin imperfections like redness, sallowness and general discoloration. They are specially formulated to tackle those tricky areas like dark circles, scars, sun damage, dark spots and hyperpigmentation. And while some mild skin discoloration issues can often be covered by your foundation and concealer, wearing a color correcting concealer underneath your foundation will give you the complete coverage you're looking for.



How to apply a color correcting concealer: Once you have your product, keep in mind that less is more. After applying the proper color corrector, press your foundation onto your face and follow up by applying your skin-toned concealer using a damp makeup sponge. This pressing technique

will ensure that the color correcting concealer will stay in place. To avoid makeup that looks cakey, remember to only use correcting concealers on areas where they're needed.

What color corrector shade is right for me: Choosing the right color correcting concealer comes down to two things: color and consistency. If you have an extreme case of discoloration, you may need a thicker formula with a more intense hue. To even out any mild to moderate discoloration, you can get away with using a lightweight formula that isn't so intensely pigmented.

If you're confused about what color to get, refer to the color wheel. Complementary colors, or opposite pairings on the color wheel, cancel each other out which can help to give your face a neutral canvas for applying foundation.

Green color correctors: The color green can help to correct any redness such as birthmarks, rashes and skin sensitivities. If you struggle with an uneven skin tone, like having moderate

redness on the cheeks, try opting for a green concealer with a light to medium coverage. For those with more severe redness on their face like acne marks or rosacea, go for a full-coverage formula to help counteract those bright red hues. Just be careful not to put too much product on your blemish because you don't want it to look cakey or unnatural.

Yellow color correctors: Yellow corrects pink and very subtle red hues. Use a yellow concealer to correct issues such as broken capillaries or mild skin sensitivities. This color is also great for neutralizing common redness that occurs around the nose and mouth. For the best results, apply a small amount onto your hand and blend, blend, blend — and follow with your foundation.

Pink color correctors: Pink hues counteract any yellow and mild green colors. Use a pink concealer to brighten very olive, sallown skin. Very light shades of pink are also great for highlighting. Sweep some product onto the highpoints of your cheekbones and inner corners of the eyes to bring some light and brightness to your face.

Red, orange & peach color correctors: Wondering what color corrects dark spots? Orange, red and peach colors can help correct the blue and purple-ish hues that come from under-eye circles, as well as dark spots caused by aging or sun damage. Consider using an orange concealer for a blue bruise whereas peach is great for covering less pigmented blue blemishes. Lighter skin tones can use peach for covering hyperpigmentation, while deep skin tones may benefit from orange and red shades.

Amazon's mega hardware event



Amazon, which wrapped up its huge 2019 hardware event, has launched a slew of new and revised products. Here are some of the 15 products that were announced at the show.

Echo Buds are the company's first foray into wireless headphones. They feature dual armature drivers in each bud to balance the sound, and provide five hours of continuous battery life, that are extended to 20 hours with the included case. Amazon has incorporated Bose's smart noise isolation in the buds to make it easier to hear what you are listening to, and the buds priced at \$129 are a value buy as in addition to Alexa, they will work Google's Assistant and Apple's Siri.

Ring Indoor Camera available for \$60, is a very small device that can be powered by your wall outlet, or run on a battery. Importantly, this product supports Alexa's new 'Home mode' that disables video recording at your command. A retrofitting alarm kit will enable you to fix the

Ring to your existing home security kit for an additional \$199.

Echo Flex is Amazon's smallest Echo device. It plugs directly into a power outlet, and it contains a microphone for Alexa queries and commands. It will cost \$25 and if you want to add on a motion sensor and nightlight attachment, that costs an extra \$14.

Eero mesh Wi-Fi has a dual-band radio with adaptive backhaul that you can ask Alexa to pause signals going to particular devices, or to activate, say, the guest Wi-Fi network. Amazon touts that it only takes 10 minutes or less to set up this device. It costs \$99, and you can order a three pack for \$249.

Echo Show 8 with an eight-inch screen and available for \$129, complements the Echo Show 5 and Echo Show 10, giving customers yet another sizing option to choose between. Alexa on the Show will be able to pull contextual information from recipes, and say them out loud so that you do not need to be glued to the Echo Show's display while cooking.

Echo Studio is the latest entry to the Echo smart speaker lineup. It supports Dolby Atmos and 3D audio. Amazon says that it is the "most innovative speaker" that it has built. The speaker can adapt its sound output based on the room that it is placed in and is available for \$199.

Echo Speaker in its latest avatar has features found in the more capable Echo Plus, like neodymium drivers, and it has new fabric design colors.

Portable apps for productivity

Smartphones loaded with popular apps are often touted as providing us with the freedom to leave behind our desktop and laptop, while still remaining productive. However, this claim is not really true. Unless you have really small fingers and can remain focused on a tiny screen for long, attempting to accomplish productive work on a smartphone is not a smart choice.

An alternative is to take along a tablet loaded with your favorite apps, but the downside is that you will have to lug the additional weight of the unwieldy tab wherever you go. A more elegant solution is to carry portable versions of your favorite productivity apps, or even games, on a small USB and be able to work, or play, by just plugging it in a host laptop or desktop.

Portable apps are an especially efficient and handy solution when you have access to public computers in a library, university or even at your workplace, but do not have the rights to install new software. By using standalone apps loaded on a USB, you do not alter the Windows registry or leave behind configuration files on your host computer. Rather than carry around a USB that



could get misplaced, you could even upload the portable apps to a cloud folder and then sync it the device you will be using.

Portable apps, which are lighter versions of many popular productivity apps, are readily available for download. The portable versions are usually smaller in size and functionality to the full-sized apps, but they get the work done. In addition, they do not use any installer, as all the executables and related files are contained in a single folder.

Portable apps are available as standalone solutions — meaning you take along only the ones you need — or can be part of a bigger platform or suite of apps that offer a variety of software to choose from, such as the PortableApps suite, which contains over 400 apps rolled in one suite.

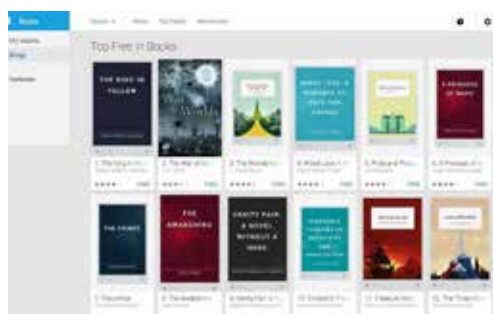
A shortlist of some of the popular portable productivity apps include: Chrome or Firefox (Browsers), LibreOffice (MS Office alternative), LastPass (Password manager), VLC (Media player), Foxit (pdf Reader), GIMP (Image editor)

Books to read online for free

For booklovers the internet can provide a treasure trove of reading material in the form of free books, essays, poems and short stories. But finding free material to download and read later without infringing on copyrights of the authors could prove more elusive.

To say that copyright laws are convoluted is an understatement, and depending on where you stand with regard to copyrighted material, these laws have been a bane to many readers and a boon to many authors and more so to their publishers.

According to the United States Copyright Act of 1976, any work created on or after 1 January, 1978, is automatically copyrighted for the author's lifetime plus an additional 70 years. Yes, it is a very long time; but powerful vested interests were behind having the law enacted. It is a truism to say that politicians who enact laws, love vested interests; and so this copyright law remains the one currently in force.



Before 1978, the last major revision to statutory copyright law in the United States occurred in 1909. According to that law copyrights had to be manually renewed after 28 years and then again after another 28, for a total of 56 years, after which they entered the public domain. The result is that any books that were published before 1964 and did not have their copyright renewed — because their authors were not aware that they had to renew, forgot to do it, no longer cared about the copyright, or where no longer around — fell into the public domain.

As a result, according to the New York Public Library (NYPL), there could now be upward of 480,000 books that are now out of copyright and should be available for readers to access completely free. The NYPL has been working on a project to identify, verify and scan these books. However, the processes involved in determining which books are actually in the public

domain could take time. In the meantime, there are already many resources online where you can find free books and stories to read, including:

Project Gutenberg: Founded in 1971, the project boasts over 60,000 e-texts in its collection, all of which are free for download. Netgalley, is a site where many publishers give access to pre-publication copies of their books to bloggers, reviewers, librarians, or other influencers, in the hope that they will recommend the book to their readers.

Amazon: If you are a Prime member, you can get one or two free books a month via Amazon's First Reads program and access others via the Prime Reading feature. If you are more into audio than print, LibriVox is a good resource to check out. This service offers audio versions of public domain books in MP3 format. The readers are all volunteers, so the quality of the readings can vary, but if you find a reader you like, you can always do a search to see what else they have produced.


There is a variety of publications online that offer well-written (and well-edited) short stories. Some provide free access to one or two of the stories in the latest issue, while others are entirely free.


Some of the better-known literature magazines include Narrative Magazine, The Vestal Review (which specializes in flash fiction), Ploughshares, Granta and Pank. If you are more into genre publications than straight literature, there is a wealth of free stories to be found, especially in the science fiction / fantasy genre. A short list of available publications includes Tor.com, Clarkesworld, Lightspeed, Beneath Ceaseless Skies, Strange Horizons, and Uncanny. There are many others.


If romance is your poison, then you will find plenty of free online romances if you register with well-known publisher Harlequin.

In addition, online services and print-on-demand have made it possible for thousands of authors to bypass traditional publishing companies and publish their novels, short story collections, and other works on their own. Smashwords, with over 520,000 titles, offers access to thousands of self-published books, and many of them are free.

Most public libraries today allow their patrons to borrow ebooks. Three of the most popular apps used by libraries are Libby, OverDrive, and Hoopla. You can also often borrow books in Kindle format.

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How to work with a top market influencer



Influencer marketing is all the hype right now, producing exceptional ROI almost unlike anything before it. Nothing can go wrong, right? Influencer marketing has been proven to deliver 11 times higher ROI than traditional forms of digital marketing.

This type of marketing is extremely effective - if done right.

Below are 4 guidelines that will help prepare you for a foray into influencer marketing

According to Talkwalker's influencer marketing survey, 69% of respondents ranked influencer marketing as a strategic priority for 2019. That is no surprise, given that influencer marketing has been proven to deliver 11 times higher ROI than traditional forms of digital marketing.

If it is done right, so here are some key guidelines to help you work with influencer.

1. Define your own KPIs before you define them for your influencer

What are you looking for from this influencer partnership? Consider the below options:

- **Brand awareness**
- **Shift in brand perception**
- **Content creation - to be leveraged on your own social media channels**

Direct boost in sales (If so, do you have a plan in place to track conversions from the influencer's pages? And are your expectations in line with the average engagement rates of the influencer?)

An influencer could have millions of followers without having a lot of influence over them. They could have bought likes and comments - i.e. fake engagement. They could also have a limited but highly targeted and engaged niche follower base that is ideal for your brand.

If you want to deliver on your influencer marketing campaign, you need to start by measuring your own needs and ensuring they align with your influencers and social media platforms of choice.

2. Find the right influencer for your campaign

Do not be blinded by reach. There is no such thing as a great influencer. One brand's great influencer is not necessarily going to be a great one for your brand. In fact, an influencer who achieved great results for one of your campaigns, is not necessarily going to be a great fit for all of your campaigns.

Think about your campaign objectives strategically. Think about your target audience. Think about the kind of content the influencer creates. Do you see a connection? If you do not, repeat this process with another influencer profile until you find the right one.

One more thing - you need to vet your influencer. Deep dive into their statistics to identify any key patterns. You can use this short checklist to guide your vetting process:

Are their followers consistently engaged?
Do they have suspicious (bot-like) comments that are spiking the engagement rates?

Do their posts come across as being authentic and credible?

Have they been involved in any controversies before?

Are they or have they ever been associated with any of your competitors?

Is the content of their posts entirely aligned with your brand values?

3. Be crystal clear about all aspects of the partnership... without infringing on your influencer's creative license

While the connection you want to build is personal and human, don't forget that this is ultimately a business transaction. For the partnership to achieve its maximum potential, you should ensure that you are on the same page as your influencer.

A formal agreement or contract is the best practice as it allows you to clearly outline expectations or deliverables and gives your influencer a clear action plan that allows them to map out their content ideas and activities as best suits them without interfering with their creative autonomy.

Your agreement should cover:
Duration of the partnership/campaign

Expected compensation, if any (consider the format of payment - barter deal, fixed amount, or percentage of direct conversions?)

Exclusivity (of brand affiliations, influencer content usage, etc.)

Quantity and type of influencer content (photos, carousels, videos, blog posts, etc.)

Approval rights and process (indicate whether the content needs to pass through the brand manager for certain approvals before posting)

4. Closely monitor the analytics - pre, during, and post campaign

Do not fall into the trap of using analytics only at the start of your influencer campaign. The role of analytics does not end with vetting the influencer's social performance and history before partnering up with them.

After both you and your influencer put a lot of hard work into the partnership, you need to be able to assess what worked and what did not and report on results. It is very important to have a powerful analytics tool that empowers you to analyze and optimize your influencer marketing performance.



The Zen rule for becoming happier

The end of one year, and the beginning of a new one, is a good time to take stock, but not an easy time to do so. Diaries get packed with social engagements, deadlines, and travel. In the northern hemisphere, cold, short days can seem to conspire against a sense of newness or possibility.

Any decision to change one's life, in such a complex context, needs to be extremely simple and easy to follow.

Luckily, Zen Buddhism is predicated on principles of simplicity. Leo Babauta, founder of Zen Habits and author of several courses and e-books on habit-changing, explains it with characteristic minimalism here.

In order to make any change in one's life—whether it's to get out of debt, become fit enough to run a marathon, or get on better with your family—he says, start with a single change. It should be small; not a goal, but a tiny first step. It could be to run for ten minutes; to spend two minutes drawing; to prepare a healthy work lunch for one day a week. It could be to stay in hard conversations for a moment after you want to leave, and spend that moment trying to listen.

Babauta advises that to turn changes into habits, it's important to make the change tiny, and let it embed: he suggests making one change every four to six weeks. Having experimented on himself, he also advises addressing one thing at a time, rather than trying to solve work, love, health, or family problems simultaneously. He has boiled down all his teachings into what he calls one "algorithm... a series of steps that you can apply to make any change, no matter what your situation":

1. Start very small.
2. Do only one change at a time.
3. Be present and enjoy the activity (do not focus on results).
4. Be grateful for every step you take.

The beauty of the method is that its smallness removes the problems that result from many self-help recommendations and resolutions: too often they leave people quickly overwhelmed by the task in hand, or swamped by a sense of failure. The change should be so small it is not hard to do. What takes rigor, for people drenched in stimuli and commitments, is identifying something that is truly small enough.



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