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THE TIMES REPORT

Kuwait was recently lauded for being among the top 20 improvers in the annual Global Competitiveness Index published by the World Economic Forum. The country moved up eight spots in 2019, to rank 46th among 141 countries in the index. Despite this overall ranking improvement, on several components that constitute the national competitiveness ranking, the performance of Kuwait was worrying to say the least.

For instance, in business dynamism Kuwait scored 56 to rank 94 among 141 countries; in innovation capability, Kuwait ranked 108th with a score of 30; and, in terms of competition in services, Kuwait



ranked even lower at 109 position and a score of 58.7.

The lower ranking and scores, especially in providing competition in services, should be cause for concern to the authorities and underlines the

urgent need to improve on these metrics. Competition in the marketplace is important not only for consumers and businesses, but also for the economic growth and development of the country. ...CONTINUED ON PAGE 14

Hello KUWAIT
 An Expatriate

There should be no poor people in Kuwait

Every year Kuwait and people living here give away millions of dinars in charity. The money is given to various causes around the world, from building houses and feeding the poor, to medical treatment and even educating people for better livelihood. Money from Kuwait is utilised for the betterment and upliftment of people irrespective of their region, nationality or religion. ...CONTINUED ON PAGE 15

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Indian embassy holds 'Know India Seminar'

Embassy of India, in association with India Tourism, conducted a 'Know India Seminar' on 01 December at the Hotel Radisson Blu, Kuwait.

The event was well attended with the presence of a large number of distinguished guests comprising government officials, representatives from the Kuwait Chamber of Commerce and Industry, leading tour operators, representatives from airlines, frequent tourists, and travel bloggers from



Kuwait, members of the media, representatives of lifestyle/travel magazines and members from the Indian Community in Kuwait.

Addressing the gathering, the Chief Guest of the Evening, Yousef Mustafa, Kuwait's assistant undersecretary in the tourism sector of the Ministry of Information, praised the bilateral relations between India and Kuwait and hailed the role played by people-to-people linkages in nourishing and strengthening the relationship over the

years. In his address, Majdi Abu Omar, general manager of Kuwait Travel & Tourism Agencies Association, spoke about India's rich heritage and the myriad touristic options available for all kinds of travelers. For his part, Seetharaman Avany, India's assistant-director at the Ministry of Tourism, made a detailed presentation on India Tourism. In addition, the delegates from India delivered a presentation on the latest product offerings from India.

Speaking on the occasion, Indian Ambassador H.E. K. Jeeva Sagar highlighted India's unique features, its rich and diverse geographic and cultural tapestry, the

special connect between peoples of the two friendly countries, and invited industry representatives from both the countries to make use of this opportunity to explore collaboration opportunities so as to provide tourists with enhanced value offerings and seamless travel experience.

A brief interactive session, followed by B2B meetings, were also held during the event. The seminar provided an excellent opportunity for participants to learn about the new developments taking place in the Indian tourism sector and also provided a unique platform for business networking.



LuLu's Twenty14 Holdings completes million pound investment in London's Great Scotland Yard Hotel

Twenty14 Holdings, the hospitality investment arm of LuLu Group International has completed investments of £ 300 million in UK, with the inauguration of the Great Scotland Yard in London today. The hotel will be open for business from 9 December.

The historic property was acquired in 2015 for Rs. 1,025 crores, and the makeover of the hotel involved a further Rs. 512 crores. In addition to the Great Scotland Yard, Twenty14 Holdings had acquired the celebrated Waldorf Astoria Edinburgh – The Caledonian in Scotland in 2018.

Steeped in history, The Great Scotland Yard was once a dwelling for visiting Kings of Scotland during the Tudor period, while today the building is most famous as the former headquarters of the London Metropolitan Police force. In 1910, the building served as the British Army Recruitment Office and Royal Military Police headquarters.

Speaking about the new project, M. A. Yusuf

Ali, Chairman and MD of LuLu Group International said: "London is one of the world's greatest cities and the Great Scotland Yard Hotel represents its illustrious past as well as its modern significance. The hotel spotlights the city's vibrant history, its several celebrated aspects and its status as a global melting pot. In essence, we have curated an unmatched experience for every guest while recreating the historic premises into a symbol of ultimate hospitality. We welcome you to experience this unique and fabulous experience at the Great Scotland Yard."

Once the famous and historical home of law and order in London's City of Westminster, Great Scotland Yard will be a modern destination, an innovative and lively space offering multiple F&B options – The Yard, The Forty Elephants, The Parlour and Sibin serving international & British modern food under the supervision of acclaimed Chef & restaurateur Robin Gill.

Residency permit renewal linked to compliance with residency law

New instructions issued and being implemented by the General Department of Residency Affairs, at the Ministry of Interior (Mol), states that if any member of an expatriate family is found to have violated the residency law, then renewal of residency permits of all members of the family will be held in abeyance, until the violation has been rectified.

Mol also revealed that it intends to intensify security campaigns in all areas densely populated by expats, as well as in farms, livestock pens and industrial areas, after it was shown that there were more 120,000 expatriates who are proven to have violated the residency law, including members of expatriate families.

Unless the residency law violators, including those who arrived on visit visas, leave the country after the expiry of their visas or otherwise rectify their residency status, all residency related transactions of other members of the family will not be processed, explained a source at Mol.

The source cited as an example the case of some expatriate children on Article 22 visa under their mothers while their fathers were proven to have



violated the Residency Law, indicating the residency of the children under the mother's sponsorship will not be renewed until the father rectifies his status.

The source added the same applies to citizens whose domestic workers (Article 20) are found to have violated the residency law. The transactions of the citizen will in this case be held up until he rectifies the violation.

Urging expatriates to comply with the residency law, the source pointed out that the visit visa of the wife and children of an expatriate is valid for three months and is renewable, while that of the parents and siblings is valid for only one month and is non-renewable.

Expats numbers decrease in public sector

Latest statistics from the government show that expatriates employed in public sector entities decreased by 4,086 to now stand at 120,000, while citizens working in this sector rose by 12,511 to a total of 340,000.

The figures also reveal that 101,770 workers were added to the labor pool in the past year, taking those employed in the Kuwait labor market to a total of 2.8 million. Of the total workers employed, around 16 percent or 460,000 were employed by the public sector and the remaining 84 percent or nearly 2.3 million were hired by the private sector, including nearly 670,000 as domestic workers. In the private sector, there were 1.6 million expatriates and only around 64,000 Kuwaitis.

According to the statistics, the Asian community accounted for the largest chunk of workers in the labor market at 1.7 million employees followed by Arab workers at 667,000 and citizens in third spot with nearly 400,000 employees.

There were also 42,000 African workers in the labor pool, 79 percent of them hired as domestic helpers; 9,918 Europeans, with 8,637 working in the private sector, 1,272 in the public sector and 9 working in households as domestic workers. In addition, there were 9,456 US citizens, 879 from



Latin America and 672 from Australia.

The statistics also showed that number of Kuwaitis holding Master's and PhD certificates increased to 4,633 between June 2018 and June 2019, including 2,466 holders of Masters Degree and 2,167 holders of PhD. In addition, around 66 percent of the holders of Masters Degree in the Kuwaiti labor market are foreigners, and 1,812 of expatriates hold a PhD.

The number of illiterates in the country stood at over 90,000, with the overwhelming majority being expatriates and only 146 illiterates among citizens. In addition, to this vast number that cannot read or write, there were an additional 1.2 million who could barely read and write but did not have any school certificate.

Abandoned vehicles to be towed away

To enforce laws and regulations, and maintain the required level of safety and hygiene in public premises, the municipality has announced that it will tow away any vehicle found abandoned in public places.

The Public Hygiene and Road Works Department of Jahra Municipality recently

towed away several vehicles that it found parked illegally on sidewalks and other public venues. The vehicles found abandoned or neglected on government property in the suburb of Jahra were towed to the municipality garage. Retrieval of the vehicles from the garage will include heavy fines and penalties on the owners.



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Reception held to mark Romanian National Day

Ambassador of Romania to Kuwait H.E. Daniel Tanase hosted a reception to celebrate the 101st anniversary of his country's National Day.

Deputy Foreign Minister of Kuwait H.E. Khalid Sulaiman Al-Jarallah was the guest of honor at the event held at the Sheraton Hotel on 1 December. The celebration was attended by a large gathering that included members of the diplomatic corps, government officials, special invitees and media personnel.

In his address to the gathering, Ambassador Tanase stressed that Romania's National Day is the day of unity for all Romanians, and is the day that the provinces of Moldova and Wallach Transylvania decided to join the Kingdom of Romania on 1 December 1918.

Pointing out that Romania and Kuwait are celebrating over 56 years of friendship, the ambassador noted that the two countries continue to develop relations in political, economic, social, cultural, educational, academic and health fields.

Praising his country's presidency of the European Union during the first six months of this year, he underscored its contribution in opening new ways of cooperation between the EU and Kuwait, including the hosting of the 3rd EU-GCC Business Forum titled 'An Oasis of Opportunities' in March this year. Emphasizing his country's appreciation for the efforts of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah as a leader of humanitarian work, he underlined that Romania supports the mediation efforts in the



region by His Highness the Amir, and wished him good and lasting health.

For his part, Deputy Foreign Minister Al-Jarallah described the relations between Kuwait and Romania as distinct, vital and



historical. He highlighted the existence of common interests between the two friendly countries at different levels, and stressed the keenness of the two nations to further develop these relations.



Team US raises trophy in 'Challenge Cup 2019' basketball tournament

The British Academy of Sport (BAS) and the Romanian Embassy in Kuwait organized the sixth Challenge Cup International Basketball Tournament between embassies in Kuwait at the BSK Campus on 29 November. Attending the event were dignitaries and ambassadors, headed by the

patron of the tournament, Romanian Ambassador to Kuwait H.E. Daniel Tanase.

A total of eight teams representing Egypt, Greece, Lebanon, Mongolia, Palestine, Philippines, Romania, and the US participated in the tournament. The semifinals took place between

Romania and the US, and between Egypt and Palestine.

Winners of the two semifinals, Egypt and the US met in an exciting finals that saw US trounce Egypt to win the Challenge Cup for the first time.

BSK founder Vera Al Mutawa, and Director of

the British Academy of Sport, Lucian Anisia, joined the Romanian Ambassador on stage, alongside the special guest, Olympian and Multiple European Champion in swimming, Camelia Potec during the presentation ceremony held to present medals and certificates to the participants.

Dilemma of workers employed at illegal companies



Hundreds of expatriate workers employed with businesses whose licenses were suspended could face deportation, unless their sponsors rectify the status of the suspended licenses.

A special committee, comprising of members from the Public Authority for Manpower (PAM), the Ministry of Interior, the Ministry of Commerce, Kuwait Municipality and the Public Authority for Civil Information, recently held inspection visits to commercial stores in the Capital governorate.

The committee discovered over 99 commercial businesses were operating despite having their licenses suspended for various infractions. These firms were also found to be employing 498 workers, whose

residences had expired or were about to expire. The employees would not be able to renew their residency permit and could face deportation, unless the companies involved rectifying their suspended licenses, said Mubark Al-Azmi, the inspection committee chairman and acting-director of PAM.

He pointed out that the committee had sent copies of the citations against the erring companies to all members of the committee so that the respective entities can act according to its responsibilities. He also added that the committee will continue to inspect all malls in the various governorates to find out if there were any illegal businesses operating there.

Real-estate fraud victims to receive compensation amounting to billions

Only in Kuwait is one likely to hear of the government stepping in to compensate victims of financial follies under pressure from parliament. A new proposal has been submitted in parliament by MPs Osama Al-Shaheen, Dr. Adel Al-Damkhi, Khalid Muhammad Al-Otaibi, Abdullah Fehad Al-Anzi and Saleh Ahmed Al-Ashour to establish a fund for compensating victims of real estate fraud.

The reason given for establishing the fund is that the number of real estate fraud victims exceeded 20,000 citizens and the total amount of money involved is estimated at KD3 billion. Due to the large number of victims the MPs suggested ratification of a law

on establishing a fund to compensate these victims — similar to the fund for supporting the Capital Market Authority shareholders who incurred huge losses.

If you did not read that figure right, it was 20,000 citizens who fell victim to the fraud. Did no one ever explain the term 'caveat emptor' to citizens.

For the uninitiated, the term means: The buyer is responsible for checking the quality and suitability of goods before a purchase is made. But this explanation is unlikely to stop the government from conforming to the demands of lawmakers and forming a fund for fraud victims.

Kuwaitis allowed only 2 drivers per family

Each Kuwaiti family is allowed to hire only two drivers, says a new circular sent to the residency affairs department in all governorates.

Hiring of a third driver would be considered only in exceptional circumstances and that too with a no-objection-certificate provided either by the Assistant Undersecretary of Residence Affairs at the Ministry of Interior Major-General Talal Ma'arafi or

from the Director-General of General Department of Residence Affairs Brigadier AbdulQader Shaba'an.

The new instructions are apparently aimed at strengthening the government's attempts to rectify the skewed demographic imbalance between citizens and foreigners in the country, reduce the number of domestic staff in each household and ease traffic congestion on roads.

Thai embassy celebrates country's National Day



To commemorate Thailand's National Day, and the birth anniversary of His Majesty the late King Bhumibol Adulyadej, the Chargé d'affaires at the Royal Thai Embassy in Kuwait, Pisoot Suwanrasami hosted a reception at the Crowne Plaza Hotel on 4 December.

The Assistant Foreign Minister for Asian Affairs Ambassador H.E. Ali Suleiman Al-Saeed was the chief guest at the function, which was attended by members of the diplomatic corps, high ranking Kuwaiti officials, special invitees, members of the Thai community and media personnel. In his address to the gathering, the Chargé d'affaires underlined the importance of the 5th of December for all Thai people, "as it was

the country's National Day, Thailand's Father's Day, and the birthday anniversary of His Majesty King Bhumibol Adulyadej the Great, who during his 70-year reign had wholeheartedly dedicated himself to improving the lives of the Thai people."

On the close diplomatic relationship between the Kingdom of Thailand and Kuwait which was established in 1963, Mr. Suwanrasami lauded the cordial ties of 56 years, which were built based on good understanding, constructive cooperation, mutual respect and support for each other."

Noting that bilateral trade between Thailand and Kuwait has been continually increasing, he pointed out, "In 2018, the total trade between the two countries amounted to US\$1.3 billion dollars.

And this year, we are expecting the total trade volume to increase at least 5 percent from last year."

Highlighting that Thailand has long been one of the most favorite tourist destinations he affirmed that it was due to the variety of tourist attractions, as well as the country's medical tourism with benefits such as reasonable costs, high quality hospitals and medical personnel.

Elaborating, he noted that last year alone more than 74,000 Kuwaitis visited Thailand, and the number is expected to reach 100,000 a year. He added the tourist market in Kuwait is Thailand's highest constant growing market in the Middle East. Concluding his speech, the Chargé d'affaires stated, "The Royal Thai Embassy

in Kuwait will always provide the best services to Kuwait, its people and business community and will render our full cooperation for the betterment of relations in all fields between our two countries and people."

Speaking on the sidelines of the function, Assistant Foreign Minister for Asian Affairs Ali Al-Saeed expressed his delight to participate in the celebration of the National Day of the Thai embassy, and noted that the relations between Thailand and Kuwait are very old.

The ambassador also mentioned that Thailand is known as an important tourist destination for Kuwaitis with Kuwait Airways scheduling daily flights to Thailand.

ALSAYER achieves GSAS operation platinum certificate for Aswaq Al Qurain showroom

ALSAYER Holding was bestowed with the prestigious 2019 GSAS Platinum rating Sustainability Award as the first retail in Kuwait, from Gulf Organization for Research and Development (GORD), for the new state-of-the-art sales showroom for Lexus and Toyota vehicles at Aswaq Al Qurain.

Mubarak Al-Sayer, CEO, said, "ALSAYER Holding is continuously achieving all the defined milestones for best sustainability practices along with the rewards and recognitions from the global third parties like GORD and Arabia CSR Network. We believe that the private sector has been invaluable at every stage of New Kuwait Vision 2035".

The design of this building has been aligned with the Group's strategic focus on sustainable business solutions. This includes a system for power generation, large glass facades for natural daylight, latest LED light



fittings, auto water mixers, automatic car washing in order to optimize the energy and water consumption.

The 'Sustainability Award' conferred by Minister of Municipality and Environment of Qatar during the summit's opening ceremony at Doha.

SIMS organizes mega sports day-2019



Salmiya Indian Model School's (SIMS) much-awaited Sports Day event was held at the Kaifan Stadium on 28 November. The Ambassador of Somalia H.E. Abdullah Mohammad Odowa graced the event as the Chief Guest. The other dignitaries present were the SIMS owner Dr. Sheikha Mymoonah Al Sabah, her Representative Ahmad Dashti, Dr. Anis Ahmad and Ms. Anita Sadanand.

Students from grade 1 to 12 participated in a number of races like little red riding hood race, shuttle fun race and obstacle race for the primary section while the core athletic events included 100 meter races and a mixed relay of 4x100 meters for the senior students.

The day also included colorful drills presented by the students of classes 1 to 6 and the tiny tots of the Kindergarten section. The parents and teachers participated in the sack race and lemon and spoon

race. This was followed by the final prize distribution ceremony where the winners were felicitated with medals and trophies. The winners of the CBSE Cluster Athletic Meet were also awarded with medals and certificates for their outstanding performances. The overall house championship was won by the Sapphire House.



Bangladeshi visa traders arrested

Security personnel from the Ministry of Interior (MoI) apprehended a gang of six Bangladeshis who were engaged in visa trading. The gang was arrested at the airport while attempting to leave the country with a

large number of passports, visas, work permits and forged authorization signatory papers. The gang members along with the confiscated documents were referred to concerned authorities for further investigation.



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Fresh salsa

Fresh salsa is relatively fast and easy to make. It tastes much better than what comes out of a jar. And you do not really need a recipe once you start to understand the essential ingredients and learn a little about what different chiles taste like.

The word 'salsa' just means 'sauce' in Spanish. In Mexico, a salsa can be any kind of sauce, but people generally think of salsa as two distinct things: a chile-based sauce that sits on the dining table and is spooned onto the meal, or a simmered, chile-based sauce that is mixed with meat and vegetables and then eaten with tortillas.

Basically, salsa adds an extra layer of complexity and flavor to a dish. You can use it on almost anything: meat, fish, veggies, beans. The meal doesn't have to be fancy or even well-thought-out.



How to make a basic salsa

Grab a small roma tomato, a quarter of a small onion, a garlic clove and at least two fresh chiles (serrano or jalapeño work well, or you can kick things up a notch and do habanero). If the chiles are large, you can use one instead. But in general, do not worry too much about proportions. Then coarsely chop your ingredients and toss everything in the blender. Blend the items to your desired texture, and then taste it, add at least a half teaspoon of salt, and taste again. If it is too hot, add a little more tomato. If it is too acidic, add a little more onion. If it is not spicy enough, add another pepper. If it is just bland, add more salt.

One note: You can use dried chiles instead of fresh, but you will need to soak them in warm

water for about 10 minutes first, until their skins soften up. If you are nervous about the heat, slice the chiles open with kitchen scissors or a knife before you soak them, and scrape out and discard the seeds.

These four ingredients will be enough to make a tasty sauce, but if you like, you can add more ingredients. Cilantro, lime, and spices like black pepper or cumin are always welcome. This is a raw salsa, but not all salsas are raw. You can cook the ingredients, to add even more flavor.

Here are a few important things to remember when making salsa

- Do not mix fresh and dried chiles. If you are using fresh chiles, mix as many varieties as you want. Just do not add a jalapeño and something dried, like an ancho, or the flavor and color will be off.
- Do not go overboard on onion. Onion can sweeten and mute the chile. If the salsa tastes too acidic, you can add more.
- A good salsa needs salt so add it at the end, once the flavors come together.
- You should be able to detect the flavor of the chile. If the salsa seems too tomatoey, add more chiles. If it is not hot enough, you can add more chiles after you have blended; it will not hurt the salsa. If something seems off and you cannot put your finger on it, try a little more salt.
- Experiment with different chiles. Never tasted a chile manzano or habanero? Try them. They are citrusy and perfumey and hotter than jalapeños and serranos. Making them into a salsa is a good way to learn what they taste like, and to learn how many you might want to add.
- Store it in an airtight container. Salsa will keep in the fridge for about a week. It will mellow out as the days go on, though, and it always tastes the best on the first day.

Thought for the week

Justice is never advanced in the taking of a human life.

- Coretta Scott King
American author and activist

Best food for men's health

Ask Mira: Eating Right to Live Happy & Healthy

Men are different from women in everything even when it comes to their nutritional needs. They need nutrients that can help them maintain muscle mass, prevent prostate cancer, strengthen immune system and much more.

To help you understand what you need for your health, below is a list of the main super foods to start improving your health:

Lean Red Meat: Lean cuts of beef are packed with protein with only a little more fat than chicken breast. Red meat is also one of the best sources of leucine, an amino acid that helps build muscle.

Avocado: It is considered a 'good fat' food. It decreases levels of total cholesterol and 'bad' cholesterol (LDL). Olive oil and nuts also contain good fats.

Salmon: This is another excellent source of healthy fat. It contains a



special type, the 'Omega-3 fatty acids', which protects against heart diseases, some cancers, and arthritis.

Ginger: Contains gingerol that might have a powerful anti-inflammatory effect, and research proves that eating ginger regularly may help reduce the pain of exercise-related muscle injuries. It aids in digestion and reduces migraine.

Banana: This fruit is very rich in potassium, important in muscle contractions and bone health. Getting enough potassium may be important to reduce sodium, and thus to lower blood pressure.



Tomatoes: They are rich in lycopene, a potent antioxidant that may protect against some cancers. Some research suggests that men who eat tomato sauce regularly are less likely to get prostate cancer. So adding tomato sauces to your meals can also be very nutritious.

Orange vegetables: Orange vegetables are an excellent source of beta-carotene, lutein, and vitamin C. These nutrients also play a role in lowering a prostate cancer. The best orange vegetables are red peppers, carrots, pumpkins and sweet potatoes.

Whole eggs: A whole egg provides lutein, protein, and iron. Even though the yolk is a source of cholesterol, it has more than half the protein and most of the flavor. Just because eggs are known to be rich in cholesterol, that doesn't mean it will increase your blood cholesterol level. Three whole

eggs per week are recommended.

High Fiber cereals: Fiber helps keep your digestive system running smoothly, and that will help you while performing. It also protects your heart. Start to add some muesli to your cereal cereals, or go for a high fiber cereal choice

Shellfish like oysters, crabs, mussels and prawns: Rich in zinc, which is critically important for the heart, muscles, and reproductive system. Research has linked zinc deficiency to poor sperm quality and male infertility. If you are not a seafood fan, nuts and seeds provide an excellent alternative.

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

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Public sector workers can apply online for medical leave and documents

Ministry of Health (MoH) has launched a new initiative that would allow public sector workers to apply online for medical leave and other medical reports.

Revealing the new service, the Director of Central Department for Initial Care in Ministry of Health, Dr. Rihab Al-Watyan said that applications for medical leave and other reports could be sent



through a new app that could be downloaded to smartphones.

She explained that sick employ-

ees must go to the clinic where they will receive a username and password. They could then use the app

to send the application for a medical report or a medical leave.

The medical leave would then be authenticated via a QR code, and the signature of a doctor or the head of the clinic will not be required. Dr. Al-Watyan indicated that this app is currently in the testing phase for a period of three months in clinics of the Capital governorate, as well as at the Amiri Hospital. She added that the app would then automatically



interface with the Civil Service Commission (CSC) and all other relevant institutions in Kuwait.



African diplomat praises Kuwait's generous funding in Africa

A press conference was held by diplomats from African embassies in Kuwait at the Crowne Plaza Hotel to launch the 56th anniversary of celebrations marking Africa Day.

Africa Day commemorates the establishment of the Pan-African organization, the Organization of African Unity (OAU), in 1963. The OAU, which was renamed as the African Union in 2002, aims to promote unity and solidarity of African states, spur economic development, and promote international cooperation.

Addressing the gathering, Senegalese Ambassador, H.E. Abdulahad Ambaki, said that Africa Day celebrations this year will fall on Sunday, 8 December. He lauded the vital role of Kuwait in supporting Africa via the

Kuwaiti Fund for Arab Economic Development (KFAED), which has so far financed 324 projects worth about US\$4 billion in the continent.

Ambassador Ambaki pointed out that KFAED continues to strengthen ties with Africa under the wise directives of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, by financing projects and programs under the Program for Infrastructure Development in Africa (PIDA) and AGENDA 2063 initiatives. He expressed hope for more cooperation from the Kuwaiti private sector to invest in Africa.

Ambassador Ambaki noted that Africa is rich in agriculture and natural resources, but admitted that the country is facing many constraints in terms of improving the

living conditions of its inhabitants, thereby encouraging some youth to leave the continent and explore destinations afar with the hope of realizing their dreams.

The African Development Bank and the Arab African International Bank as well as number of committees have helped to promote peace, security and development in the continent, said the Senegalese ambassador. In addition, during the 50th anniversary of the formation of the African Union in 2013, the union adopted the African Development Strategy Vision 2063, which includes seven aspirations for a better future for younger generations.

For his part, Egypt's Ambassador to Kuwait H.E. Tariq Al-Qouni said that the celebration

of Africa Day this year has a special impact on every Egyptian, especially since the Egyptian President Abdel Fattah al-Sisi will officially take over the post of ceremonial head of the African Union. "The African Union has witnessed a number of regional and international achievements that have contributed to the development within the framework of Egyptian President directives to continue to expand cooperation between world and Africa," he added.

"Egypt has supported infrastructure projects in Africa, especially the Cairo-Cape Town Highway and the Nile River rehabilitation, to increase trade volume with the Nile river basin countries, as well as to promote public health in Africa," said Ambassador Al-Qouni.

Kuwait's four airports to handle over 25 million passengers

Directorate-General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) predicts that when the four airports are fully operational in the coming years, they will together handle more than 25 million passengers annually.

Revealing this, the chief of air-traffic control at the DGCA, Raed Al-Taher, added that travel offices

and airlines need to cooperate with Directorate-General to ensure the smooth flow of passengers in and out of the country. He pointed out that currently there are 50 certified airlines and around 500 travel offices that fall under the umbrella of the DGCA and abide by its laws. He stressed the need

for passengers to book tickets from approved office, and to make sure that the data on their ticket, including name, destination, flight dates and the ticket number, are clearly and correctly indicated. To avoid any confusion and the issue of fake tickets, he clarified that original airline tickets

will have 13 digits in them.

He added, "We are aiming to increase the number of airlines using Kuwait airport from the current 50 registered airlines; we already have two new airlines, Moroccan Airlines and Iran's Kish that will provide services in the immediate future."

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UAE National Day celebrated with reception

UAE Ambassador to Kuwait Saqer Nasser Al Raisi organized a reception to mark his country's National Day on 2 December. Deputy Foreign Minister Khaled Al-Jarallah was the chief guest at

the function, which was attended by top ranking Kuwaiti officials, members of the diplomatic corps and media personnel. Speaking on the sidelines of the function, the Deputy Foreign

Minister Khaled Al-Jarallah expressed admiration for the UAE's great achievements in a wide array of domains, and noted that these achievements have drawn world attention to the UAE.

Ethiopian Embassy showcases culture at Kuwait Fall Festival 2019



The Ethiopian Embassy showcased the country's rich culture and tourist attractions during their participation at the Kuwait Fall Festival 2019, held at Yarmouk Cultural Center on 29 November.

At the event, the Embassy showcased a variety of traditional costumes, aspects of

the country's historical and religious heritage, natural and cultural tourist attractions, as well as Ethiopia's unique Coffee Ceremony. At the event, historical manifestations of the country's ancient civilizations, historical and cultural heritages, artistic works, values of tolerance and co-existence were outlined to more than 500 participants.



German embassy holds luncheon for press

German Ambassador to Kuwait H.E. Stefan Möbs held a luncheon meeting with journalists last week to thank them for their continued support to the embassy. In his remarks to the gathering Ambassador Möbs described the relations between Germany and Kuwait as special and developed at various levels.

He added that relations at the political and economic levels were very good and pointed to the very large Kuwaiti investments in Germany. He mentioned that the trade exchanges between the two countries were also excellent.

Pointing to the visit made by his country's foreign minister to Kuwait in the past month, he emphasized the signing of the joint cooperation agreement between Germany and Kuwait that was aimed at enhancing cooperation to improve joint work between the two countries.

Highlighting the achievements of the two countries during their non-permanent membership in the UN Security Council during the current year, Ambassador Möbs remarked that Kuwait was working with Germany on various bilateral and international levels. He pointed to the joint international projects that have resulted in passing several resolutions, including on women, peace and security to make the world a more peaceful place.

He elaborated that humanitarian projects were being worked out between the two countries in the Security Council under the framework of the United Nations and through the High Commissioner for Refugees, emphasizing that Kuwait is a strong partner of his country in humanitarian work.

He explained that his country, for historical reasons, was able to understand the extent of the need for teamwork to achieve peace and humanitarian work, and this is what it is doing now with Kuwait and other countries.

Highlighting the important and pioneering role of Kuwait in developing and supporting the Gulf Cooperation Council, he underscored that Kuwait plays an important role at the regional level.

He also mentioned that his country will take over the presidency of the European Union during the next two years.

Revealing that last year the German embassy issued approximately 55,000 visas to Kuwaitis and other residents of Kuwait, he admitted that this year the number was in a slight decline due to the developments and reforms affecting the Kuwaiti health office in Germany, and this has led to a decline in the issuance of visas. He stressed that he will work to increase the number of visas issued during his tenure in Kuwait and provide all facilities for patients wishing to be treated in Germany, as the country offers various healthcare benefits, as well as to increase the number of Kuwaiti students wanting to study in Germany.

Regarding the possibility of any official visits by German officials to Kuwait in the near future, Ambassador Möbs said, "This year witnessed a visit by the German Foreign Minister as well as a visit to the German Deputy Parliament, and we expected an important visit of a high-level figure to Kuwait, but it was postponed and we hope that it will take place during the next year."

ESF musicians participate in BSME Music Festival 2019

The English School Fahaheel (ESF) is a proud member of The British Schools in the Middle East (BSME). This year once again ESF's talented musicians participated in the Music Festival. This prestigious event, celebrating the abilities of accomplished musicians, is one of the most popular non-sporting events.





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Cheated expat workers organize strike against company

When expatriate employees swindle companies or citizens, parliamentarians rise up in arms and call for throwing out all expatriates or at least setting up a fund to compensate the victims. For their part, the authorities immediately swing into action and arrest the perpetrators if they are in Kuwait, or seek their extradition if they had escaped to their own countries.

However, when companies or citizens swindle employees, there is no such uproar from the lawmakers, nor is there any effective action from the government. Time and again there have been incidents where companies or citizens recruit people from abroad and, either do not provide them with the jobs they

were contracted for, or fail to pay them salaries for months on end. Very little, if any, stringent measures have been taken in the past against companies involved in such nefarious activities.

The latest incident of gross injustice to workers came to light a couple of days back, when scores of employees of a company demonstrated in front of the company office in downtown Kuwait City. The employees alleged that the company had failed to comply with the terms and conditions mentioned in the contract, refused to pay their salaries, and repeatedly violated their labor rights.

The workers, who were hired as car and motorcycle drivers to deliver 'goods' in Kuwait,

accused the company of swindling them. They said that each of them had paid an equivalent of KD 1,000 to get a job in Kuwait. They arrived in the country about nine months ago, and since then the company has not paid them their salaries, or processed their residency permits making their stay in the country illegal. The employees said that after they protested and refused to work, the company closed down the office and challenged the workers to do whatever they could do.

The workers have since appealed to the government to intervene and help them get their rights and either refund their money, or force the company to give them residence permits, as they were hired from abroad. They

said they have all the documents to prove their claims.

They added they have filed a complaint with Disputes and Settlements Department of Public Authority for Manpower (PAM) accusing the company of wrongdoing, and were looking for a lawyer to assist them in getting their dues that collectively amounts to around KD70,000.

Since news of yet another worker unrest surfaced, it has been reported that the Deputy General Manager at PAM, Dr. Mubarak Al-Azmi has personally taken up this matter and inspection team from the authority are expected to visit the workers to ascertain the facts and take action against the company.

IES holds drama competition, 'Chronicle 2019'



Indian Education School (IES), Kuwait, organized 'Chronicle 2019' – an Interschool Historical Drama Competition at the IES auditorium on 28 November.

The program was graced by the chief guest, Mahesh Iyer, Principal of Smart Indian School, in the presence of Ms. Anselma Tessa, Senior Vice Principal of IES, Ms. Jaemi Byju, Vice Principal, Middle Wing, IES, Ms. Lalitha Premkumar, Vice Principal, Kindergarten and Primary Wing, IES, and Ms. Meenakshi Nayyar, Vice Principal (CCA), IES.



The theme of Chronicle 2019 was 'Modern History of India'. Salmiya Indian School-Indigo Rebellion, Smart Indian School –Chalo Dandi March and Indian Education School-Bhagat Singh, contested with fifteen members in each team. All the three plays exuded a sense of nationalism and patriotism with a fine blend of powerful dialogue, gestures and actions.

Smart Indian School was declared winners, followed by Salmiya Indian Model School. Joshua Denis, student of IES, grabbed the best actor title for his passionate performance as Bhagat Singh. The Chief Guest Mr. Iyer honored the winners with trophies and certificates.

Three-man team of counterfeiters apprehended

Two Africans and an European were arrested for trading in counterfeit currencies. A large tranche of fake Kuwaiti dinars and US dollars were confiscated from the three men, including KD20 and US\$100 denominations. A reported tipoff is believed to have led the detectives to the counterfeiters and to nab them as they were attempting to exchange the fake notes in a local market. Counterfeiting equipment and tools to forge the currencies were later seized from the men. The trio have since been referred to the relevant authorities for further investigation and action.



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Economic growth in Kuwait to rebound in 2020



Economic growth rate in Kuwait could fall to 0.4 percent in 2019 before rebounding to 2.2 percent in 2020, "as the OPEC production cuts expire" and register 2 percent in 2021 "as the government increases

spending on oil capacity enhancements and infrastructure to boost the non-oil sector, said the World Bank in a new report on the region.

In its latest Gulf Economic Update, the World Bank also said that economic growth in the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) states was "significantly weakened" this year due to "muted oil prices and excess oil supply."

The report added that "while most GCC countries retained strong external positions in 2019, the ongoing slowdown in China and the continued global trade war are hindering their efforts to boost non-oil exports." It indicated

that overall real GDP growth in the GCC is estimated to drop to 0.8 percent this year compared with two percent last year.

Pointing out that "many countries in the region have pursued 'traditional diversification', which has meant diversifying away from hydrocarbon production towards heavy industries that still depend on fossil fuels." "The emissions-intensive nature of 'traditional diversification' has increased the GCC countries' exposure to disruptive low-carbon technologies, international policy efforts to address climate change, and negative

public perceptions of fossil fuels and their derivatives," warned the report. Elaborating on the findings in its Gulf Economic Update, World Bank Regional Director for the GCC Issam Abouseiman said: "As GCC countries strive to diversify their economies, they should ensure that diversification strategies are aligned with environmental sustainability goals." He added that this was important not only for environmental sustainability but also to help the GCC invest in sources of growth that are resilient to global technology and policy impacts.

100 Kuwaitis under investigation for fake certificates



Detectives from the Ministry of Interior (MoI) have reportedly completed investigations on around 100 Kuwaitis who are alleged to have submitted forged university degree certificates to obtain jobs in the public sector.

The investigation files have now been sent to the Public Prosecution for legal action against these individuals, including charging them

with forgery and obtaining undue monies and benefits from the State using those certificates. Forensic evidence proves that they falsified their testimonies and statements about travel to countries from where they have allegedly obtained the certificates. One man reportedly went abroad to take part in a university examination and returned within three days, despite the exams being held over a 20-day period. Nevertheless, he obtained a degree certificate from the university. Sources from MoI have revealed that the 'Higher Education' authorities in the country have sent details about even more individuals and that it is quite like that all of them will be called in for questioning and ensuring the veracity of their certificates.

The individuals under investigation include both men and women, and when confronted with evidence that they had not left the country during the period the exams were apparently held, the individuals confessed to their crime. A large number of those under investigation were found to have received their certificates from Egyptian universities. The authorities are still determining whether the seals on the certificates were original or forgeries.

NAS introduces refurbished Pearl Lounge and Hala Kuwait Service at KIA



National Aviation Services (NAS), the largest lounge operator in the Middle East, introduced its newly refurbished Pearl Lounge and renewed Hala Kuwait meet and assist service at the Kuwait International Airport Terminal 1 (KIA-T1) recently.

The official opening was held under the patronage of His Excellency Sheikh Salman Al-Hamoud Al-Sabah, President,

Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) and led by Eng. Emad Faleh Al Juluwi, Deputy Director General for Aviation Safety & Air Transport Affairs from DGCA, Adel Malallah, Chief Government Relations Officer, Mansour Al-Khezeim, General Manager and Maha Al-Musallam, Director, Customer Experience from NAS Kuwait.

Located in the departures area after

immigrations, the Pearl Lounge offers an ideal environment for passengers to relax, unwind or freshen up before or after their flight.

NAS also introduced its Pearl Assist meet and assist service called Hala Kuwait in the departures lounge. This service helps travelers avoid long waiting times when departing from or arriving into Kuwait.

ICSK felicitates school athletes



The Indian Community School (ICSK) conducted their 45th Annual Sports Meet at the Kaifan stadium on 16 and 17 November. An exuberant felicitation ceremony titled 'Resplendence' was organized at the ICSK Senior school auditorium on 22 November. During the function, the winners were presented with the awards for their hard-earned achievements. The Chief Guest for the ceremony was Dr. Haila Almekaimi, Former Undersecretary of Ministry of Information and Professor of Political Science at Kuwait University. She recently presented a talk at the Jawaharlal University on the topic 'Indo-Kuwait relationship'.

Honorable Chairman Shaik Abdul Rahiman accompanied by Shirly Dennis presented a memento as a token of gratitude and appreciation to Dr. Haila Almekaimi. Around 900 awards were

handed over to the winners including to the achievers of the cricket team, CBSE clusters, chess tournaments, annual sports meet among others. The awards were given away by the Chief Guest Dr. Haila Almekaimi, Dr. V Binumon, Mr. Shaik Abdul Rahiman, Mr. Amir Mohammed,

Mr. K. Gangadhar and Mr. Rajesh Nair to all the deserving winners of ICSK.

Rohit Krishnan, 9B (Amman branch) was selected as a member of the Kuwait U-16 National cricket team for the Asian Cricket council Under-16 Western region premier 2019 cricket tournament.



SIF-Kuwait conducts fifth edition of KCSC

The 5th edition of Kuwait Children's Science Congress (KCSC), organized by Science International Forum (SIF) Kuwait in association with Unimoni Exchange was successfully conducted on 22 November at Indian Learners Own Academy (ILOA).

44 teams of young scientists from major Indian schools in Kuwait participated in two categories. Two member students' team showcased their inventive and unique scientific projects to the large crowd of parents, teachers and well-wishers.

Teams from Indian Educational School (IES) and ILOA were qualified for the National Children's Science Congress in Junior and Senior category. Six senior teams and 11 junior teams from various schools received an Outstanding mention with A grade. Best Presentation, Best Creative Project and Future Spark award for the best conceptual project in both categories were also declared. Qualified teams will represent Kuwait in the 27th National Children's Science Congress 2019 scheduled to be held from 27 to 31 December, 2019 at Trivandrum, Kerala.



Natural-Born Climate Commitments



SALLY JEWELL
Interim CEO of The Nature Conservancy.

When world leaders gather at the 25th United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP25) in Madrid from December 2-13, they will discuss concrete steps for meeting and increasing national emissions-reduction targets. But equally important, COP25 offers an opportunity to elevate one of the most powerful tools we have to address climate change: nature.

Nature-based solutions (also known as natural climate solutions) leverage the world's forests, grasslands, wetlands, and soils to reduce greenhouse-gas emissions. Healthy ecosystems absorb and store carbon on their own. And if they are protected, restored, and managed sustainably, they can provide one-third of the emissions reductions needed to meet the Paris climate agreement's goal for 2030.

In other words, nature is offering us an opportunity that we cannot afford to miss. Reducing fossil-fuel emissions is crucial, but it will not be enough to keep global warming below 2°C, let alone 1.5°C, relative to pre-industrial levels. To secure a livable future on this planet, we also must commit to funding nature-based solutions. All countries need to start incorporating nature-based solutions into their national climate pledges, and begin investing accordingly.

Two years ago, scientists from The Nature Conservancy and its partners published new research showcasing nature-based solutions' potential to fight climate change. Yet natural climate solutions have continued to attract relatively little attention, and even less funding.

Fortunately, this may be starting to change. In September, nature-based solutions featured prominently at UN Climate Week in New York City. Although that event did not live up to UN Secretary-General António Guterres's call for "clear steps to enhance nationally determined contributions by 2020," it did offer a platform to a new generation of



Political leaders now must maintain this momentum, by taking a closer look at what nature can do to help mitigate and build resilience to climate change. For example, one promising solution is sustainable agroforestry, in which food crops are grown alongside native trees. Expanding this practice can bolster food security and boost incomes in rural communities and simultaneously restore soil health, sequester carbon, and nurture critical wildlife.

Another nature-based solution is being pioneered in Australia, where massive bushfires are putting people and wildlife at risk, and releasing enormous amounts of greenhouse gases into the atmosphere. The Nature Conservancy is cooperating with indigenous communities to improve grassland health, sequester carbon, and reduce the risk of catastrophic wildfires. Drawing on traditional knowledge dating back thousands of years, indigenous rangers set smaller, controlled burns to prevent the buildup of dry grass that contributes to larger, hotter wildfires. This program contributes to healthier grasslands while generating income for indigenous communities through the sale of carbon credits.

These kinds of programs benefit people and the environment; but much more investment is urgently needed. Although natural systems play a critical role in regulating the climate, nature-based solutions still receive under 4 percent of total public funding for climate action. France, Sweden, South Korea, the United Kingdom, and a few other countries have pledged to increase funding for international preservation and restoration efforts, and finalizing the details of these programs is now on the COP25 docket. But unless more countries make similar commitments, natural climate solutions will not achieve the necessary scale.

Worse, natural systems that could be part of the solution to climate change are facing increasingly severe threats. We have all seen the recent images of fires raging through the Amazon rainforest, which plays a major role in regulating the world's climate. Record-high temperatures, environmental crimes, weak oversight, ineffective firefighting, and other factors have increased the vulnerability of systems that store a disproportionate share of the planet's carbon.

And the Amazon is just one example. The conversion and degradation of natural land and marine habitats is ongoing around the world. Such practices undermine our

ability to adapt to climate effects like rising sea levels, and directly threaten our food security by wiping out species that pollinate crops, contribute to soil health, and provide habitats for fish and other marine life. Nature, climate, and human wellbeing are intimately connected; none can be addressed in isolation. COP25 offers an opportunity for world leaders to seize on these connections in the run up to 2020, which will be a veritable 'environmental super year'. In addition to finalizing an international

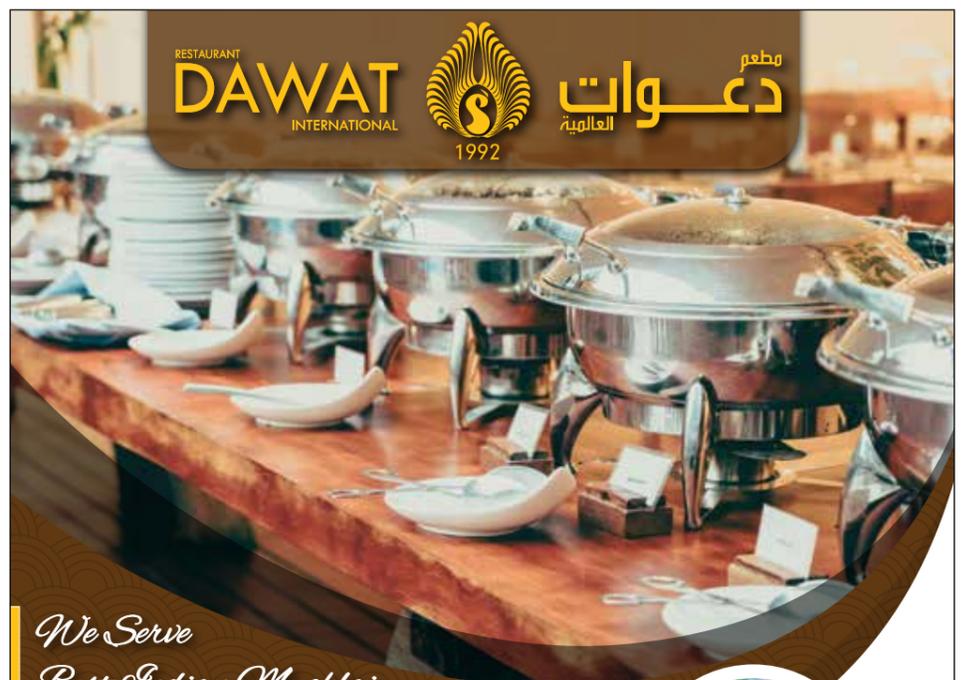
high-seas treaty and establishing a new framework for the UN Convention on Biological Diversity, governments will also revisit their climate commitments at COP26 in Glasgow, Scotland.

But any commitments that countries make at these meetings will mean little without concrete plans to back them up. We have the science, and we have the solutions. What we need now is action to leverage the power of nature. Our shared existence on this planet depends on it.

“Political leaders now must maintain this momentum, by taking a closer look at what nature can do to help mitigate and build resilience to climate change. One promising solution is sustainable agroforestry, in which food crops are grown alongside native trees”

climate and nature advocates. From the Youth4Nature coalition to the Swedish activist Greta Thunberg, young people were on hand to demand that today's leaders account for the challenges they will inherit.

Climate Week also produced an announcement from a coalition led by China and New Zealand, focused on encouraging nature-based solutions in both national climate plans and the corporate sector. And the private sector itself has made new commitments, with a group of 230 international investors (representing \$16.2 trillion in assets under management) calling on companies to take immediate action to address deforestation in their supply chains.



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Climate Adaptation Now



EMMA NAVARRO

Vice President of the European Investment Bank.

As world leaders gather in Madrid for the United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP25), they must address more than future targets for reducing greenhouse-gas emissions. They must also address the harm to people and livelihoods that climate change is already causing.

Strengthening our ability to adapt to climate change has never been more urgent. Many regions are experiencing major difficulties as a result of higher global temperatures and changing weather patterns. We must do more to help citizens and governments tackle issues such as rising sea levels, wildfires, hurricanes and other natural disasters, and increased coastal erosion. Even if we meet the Paris agreement's goal of limiting the average global temperature increase to well below 2°C, at least 570 cities and some 800 million people will be at risk from rising sea levels and more frequent and destructive storms. And these dangers will grow as temperatures climb ever higher. The very existence of some island countries and coastal communities will be threatened.

It is thus essential to reduce the risks that

Climate challenge demands much deeper cooperation between the public and private sector to increase green investment. We need to ensure that infrastructure is built to cope with the increased impact of climate change and develop clear global standards.

climate change poses to humans and the economy. Unless action is taken, climate change will reduce global GDP per capita by more than 7 percent by 2100, with equally severe consequences for countries, whether they are rich or poor, hot or cold.

The economic and broader social benefits of adaptation to climate change are clear. In September, the Global Commission on Adaptation issued a report



calling on governments, businesses, and communities to take urgent action to step up adaptation measures. The report finds that an investment of \$1.8 trillion across five key areas — early warning systems, resilient infrastructure, agriculture, mangrove protection, and resilient water supplies — from 2020 to 2030 could generate \$7.1 trillion in benefits.

Still, today's investment gap is huge. The climate challenge demands much deeper cooperation between the public and private sector to increase green investment. We need to ensure that infrastructure is built to cope with the increased impact of climate change and develop clear global standards for disclosing the climate risks that investment projects pose. For example, how will a city cope with increased flood risk, and how will agricultural land be maintained productively as droughts grow more severe? Big and small investors alike should know exactly how their money could be affected by a changing climate.

Here, public investment institutions like the European Investment Bank can assist with adaptation in many ways. The EIB has long invested in projects that reduce emissions and help countries adapt to climate change. But now we are making even larger strides toward strengthening adaptation, by deepening our expertise, creating new systems to ensure the resilience of our investments, and working

closely with the public and private sectors. For example, we will no longer fund infrastructure projects that are not climate resilient. Accordingly, we have introduced a climate risk-management system, and are adding climate adaptation criteria to all infrastructure projects.

The EIB will also be focusing on adaptation from the very earliest stages of project preparation, both through advisory services and technical assistance. Whereas we have gained much experience in the field, many of our public- and private-sector clients may lack the resources or expertise to assess climate risks. For example, the EIB has been working closely with the Caribbean Development Bank to ensure that all of its projects consider climate risks, and to develop a pipeline of climate-friendly investment projects worth more than \$300 million.

Finally, the EIB plans to increase its support for innovative technologies such as weather analytics and climate-resilient food systems, to help companies, individuals, and communities prepare for climate change. To that end, the EIB now supports the Climate Resilience and Adaptation Finance and Technology Transfer Facility (CRAFT), the first private-sector fund dedicated to addressing these problems in developing countries.

The EIB is also raising its climate-finance target, so that at least 50 percent

of its lending will support environmental sustainability by 2025, an increase from around 30 percent today. And by 2030, the EIB Group plans to support \$1.1 trillion of climate action and environmental sustainability investments through loans and grants, including for developing countries to help them strengthen the resilience of roads, railways, ports, farmland, sanitation and drinking water systems, and digital-communication networks.

Underinvestment in adaptation is particularly a problem for low-income countries, most of which are located in hotter, more vulnerable regions. Supporting these countries' efforts to adapt to climate change is essential to their ability to develop. Yet we also must not lose sight of the big picture. The higher global temperatures rise, the less we will be able to rely on adaptation. Scientists estimate that we are now heading for a temperature increase of 3-4°C by the end of the century, with disastrous consequences for people around the world.

The world's most vulnerable populations are already bearing the brunt of climate change, because they are the most exposed to the risks and have the fewest resources with which to adapt. But, given that all cities, regions, and countries are facing some type of climate risk, the adaptation imperative simply cannot be ignored.

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Aerobic exercise lowers health risks to body, brain

Regular aerobic exercise has the potential to reduce several health risks ranging from heart disease to dementia, as it is particularly effective in causing the heart and lungs to work harder than usual. Health experts recommend at least 150 minutes of aerobic activity per week that could include a mix of running, cycling, walking, swimming and aerobic classes, to benefit the body and brain.

Aerobic exercise benefits for body: Preventing heart disease: Aerobic exercise is essential for keeping the heart, lungs, and blood vessels healthy and reducing the risk of death from heart diseases.

Maintaining a healthy weight: Aerobic exercise can help people wishing to lose weight by burning more calories than they consume, resulting in a caloric deficit. However, to reach a caloric deficit, most people will also need to reduce the number of calories that they consume.

Controlling blood sugar levels: Keeping blood sugar levels under control by maintaining it within a healthy range is important

for reducing the risk of type 2 diabetes. High blood sugar also damages blood vessels and lead to heart disease. Aerobic exercise can increase insulin sensitivity so that the body requires less insulin to control blood sugar levels. During exercise, the muscles also use glucose from the blood. In this way, exercise helps prevent blood sugar levels from rising too high.

Lowering blood pressure: Over a period of time, high blood pressure which puts stress on the blood vessels and heart, can have serious consequences, such as increasing the risk of a heart attack or stroke. Aerobic exercise can help keep blood pressure within a healthy range, and is as effective as blood pressure medications in reducing high blood pressure.

Preventing and managing stroke: When blood supply to an area of the brain becomes obstructed it can lead to stroke, which can have life threatening consequences. Regular aerobic exercise reduces the risk of a stroke by keeping the blood vessels and heart healthy. It is also important for people who have had a stroke

to stay as active as possible to support recovery and reduce the risk of another stroke.

Improving physical functioning: The ability to perform tasks on your own for daily living is important in maintaining independence and well-being. Aerobic exercise improves the physical capabilities that are necessary for a person to function on a daily basis. Physical fitness also helps prevent falls and the resulting injuries.

Aerobic exercise benefits for the brain: Reducing the risk of dementia: Alzheimer's disease, the most common form of dementia, can be prevented to a certain extent by engaging in regular aerobic exercise. Research has shown that people with higher levels of physical activity have a lower risk of cognitive decline and dementia.

Overcoming symptoms of depression and anxiety: Aerobic exercise has been found to reduce symptoms in people with depression and anxiety disorders. Aerobic exercise also improves physical fitness, which may help prevent the onset of depression

and anxiety disorders.

Enhancing cognitive performance: Besides delaying cognitive decline, aerobic exercises have also been shown to enhance cognitive performance in children and adolescents, with children involved in daily exercise programs showing improved performance in cognitive tasks, such as memory tests, and in general having better grades in school.

Improving brain health: Research has shown that aerobic exercise enhances many biological processes that help the brain function. It has been shown to increase the size and function of key brain regions, such as the hippocampus; help the brain control responses to stress; reduce inflammation; increase resistance to oxidative stress. All of these factors contrib-



ute to People who have chronic health conditions should check with a doctor to ensure whether aerobic exercise is suitable for their health.

Reduce screen time in infancy

A new study into time spent by infants in front of a digital devices show that that the time they spent watching television or using a computer or mobile device increased from 53 minutes at age 12 months to more than 150 minutes at 3 years.

Researchers at the National Institutes of Health, the University at Albany and the New York University Langone Medical Center, who were engaged in the study, say that by age 8, children were more likely to log the highest amount of screen time if they had been in home-based childcare or were born to first-time mothers.

The study reveals that screen habits begin early, so interventions to reduce screen time could have a better chance of success if introduced early.

Mothers of nearly 4,000 children who took part in the study responded to questions on their kids' media habits when they were 12, 18, 24, 30, and 36 months of age. They also responded to similar questions when the children were 7 and 8 years old. The study compiled additional demographic



information on the mothers and children from birth records and other surveys. Experts recommend avoiding digital media exposure for children under 18 months of age, introducing children 18 to 24 months of age to screen media slowly, and limiting screen time to an hour a day for children from 2 to 5 years of age. In their study, the researchers found that 87 percent of the children had screen time exceeding these recommendations.

However, while screen time increased throughout toddlerhood, by age 7 and 8, screen time fell to under 1.5 hours per day. The researchers believe this decrease relates to time consumed by school-related activities.

The study team classified the children into two groups based on how much their average daily screen time increased from age 1 to age 3. The first group, 73 percent of the total, had the lowest increase, from an average of nearly 51 minutes a day to nearly an hour and 47 minutes a day. The second group, 27 percent of the total, had the highest increase, from nearly 37 minutes of screen time a day to about 4 hours a day.

Higher levels of parental education were associated with lower odds of inclusion in the second group. In addition, girls were slightly less likely to be in the second group, compared to boys, while children of first-time mothers were more likely to be in the high-increase group.

Similarly, compared to single-born children, twins were more likely to belong to the highest screen time group. Compared to children in center-based care, children in home-based care, whether provided by a parent, babysitter or relative, were more than twice as likely to have high screen time.



Board games slow down cognitive decline

A slew of studies among the elderly points to the cognitive benefits of games, including warding-off cognitive decline as age progresses. Apparently, games are not just fun for the elderly, they also bring physical and mental benefits in old age.

Previous studies have shown that even a one-hour bout of video gaming can improve attention span and provide other cognitive benefits. From brain training apps that may prevent mild cognitive impairment to 3D video games that may reverse age-related cognitive decline, playing games on a computer appears to offer several health benefits.

Researchers at the University of Edinburgh in the United Kingdom recently set out to investigate whether non-digital games, such as cards, board games, or crossword puzzles, also affect cognition in a positive manner

For their study, the research team examined 1,091 participants who were born in 1936 and whose data they accessed from the Lothian Birth Cohort 1936 — a study that evaluated the mental and cognitive capacities of its participants over a long period.

Researchers first assessed the participants' cognitive function when

they were 11 years old, and then later on at ages 70, 73, 76, and 79 using 14 standardized cognitive tests. As part of the new study, the scientists asked the participants how often they played board games, cards, chess, bingo, or crosswords at ages 70 and 76.

After accounting for possible confounding factors, such as early-life cognitive function, education, social class, sex, activity levels, and health issues, the study analysis found that people who played more games in their 70s were more likely to maintain healthy cognitive function in their older years.

Specifically, those who reported playing more analog games in their 70s experienced less relative cognitive decline from the age of 11 until 70, and less cognitive decline between 70 and 79. These latest findings add to evidence that being more engaged in activities during the life course might be associated with better thinking skills in later life.



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OPEC, non-OPEC to raise production-cuts



Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) and non-OPEC members, who have been maintaining sustained oil production cuts since 2017, agreed during their meeting last week to cut crude production further by an extra half-a-million barrels a day to maintain

what the organization said was "a balance between demand and supply."

Russian energy minister Alexander Novak announced the decision on Friday at a news conference held at OPEC headquarters in Vienna, after lengthy discussions. The additional production cuts will come into force in January and be upheld throughout the first-quarter of the year, said the Russian minister.

The existing production cut agreement that is due to expire in March 2020 removes 1.2 million barrels per day from world markets. Faced with a supply glut in the market, largely from continued production of shale oil and gas in the United States, and declining demand on global trade worries, OPEC and its allies have struggled to maintain

prices at the levels they believe are optimum for producers and consumers.

Friday's meeting in Vienna dragged on longer than expected as the parties reportedly could not initially agree on how to share the production cuts among the OPEC and non-OPEC members.

Since the launch of production cuts two years ago, Saudi Arabia has been bearing more than its share of cuts to production so as to ensure the target of 1.2 million barrels per day is met, as some countries have been accused of producing more than their assigned quota.

As part of the new agreement, it is understood that OPEC members will shoulder 340,000 barrels per day of extra cuts, with other producers contribute to

removing the remaining 160,000 from the market. But oil market analysts questioned whether an extra 500,000 barrels a day would be enough to support crude prices, given that producers were already cutting more than the mandated 1.2 million barrels per day and yet prices had not rallied as expected.

Moreover, even if OPEC and its allies maintain production cuts at 1.7 million barrels a day, more oil continues to come into the market from non-OPEC nations, including Brazil, Canada, Guyana, Norway and the United States. The extra supply could compensate for production cuts, and there is also the fear that cartel members and its allies may be reluctant to prolonged production cuts that are reducing their share in global markets.

Chinese counterfeit goods headed for Dubai confiscated

Chinese counterfeit luxury goods destined for sale in the region through Dubai have reportedly been seized by police in China and the UAE.

More than 28,000 fake luxury items worth US \$257 million are said to have been confiscated by the authorities, and 57 suspects arrested, with 37 of them in China, while UAE police also raided 10 locations in Dubai and seized 21,000 fake luxury items.

During the raid on the premises, police and customs officials unearthed more than 7,000 counterfeit luxury handbags, branded with



names and logos of luxury icons, such as Louis Vuitton and Chanel. Most of the luxury items, including clothes were being manufactured at a private factory in South China's

Guangdong Province.

Certificates, invoices, receipts, and gift wrapping were also being produced in the factory, which even offered its own limited-edition counterfeits.

Saudi to grant nationality to professionals

King Salman bin Abdul Aziz Al-Saud of Saudi Arabia is reported to have issued a decree that grants Saudi nationality to exceptionally talented foreign professionals, in a bid to attract brilliant people from around the world to participate and contribute to the country's ambitious Vision 2030 plans.

Saudi nationality is to be conferred on distinguished professionals in different disciplines including in nuclear and renewable energy, medicine, pharmacology, computer science, artificial intelligence, robotics, ecology, astronautics, aviation, culture, sports and arts, as well as Islamic scholars.

Media reports also indicate that Saudi Arabia is looking for experts in fields necessitated specifically by the country geography and resources, such as in desalination technology and in the oil industry. The naturalization step is aimed at drawing creative



people from around the world to come, live and work in Saudi Arabia.

The step is said to be in support of Saudi Vision 2030, the strategic scheme launched in 2016 by Crown Prince Mohammad bin Salman Al-Saud, with the aim of diversifying the oil-dependent economy away from its over reliance on hydrocarbon revenues and promoting national development that benefits the country and citizens.

Kuwait telecoms in collusion not competition

...CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

In 1983, when public wireless telecommunication first arrived in Kuwait there was only one service provider in the country, the Mobile Telecommunication Company (MTC), which later rebranded as Zain. As the first mobile telecommunications company in the region and with its largest shareholder being Kuwait Investment Authority, the country's sovereign wealth fund manager, MTC enjoyed benefits and patronage that allowed it to monopolize the market, charge high prices and maintain a 'take-it or leave-it' attitude when it came to services.

By the late 1990s, everyone from parliamentarians to the local bakala man became convinced that the answer to Zain's monopoly was to bring in a competitor. On cue, in 1999, the National Mobile Telecommunication Company (Wataniya Telecom) stepped in, as the country's first privately-owned mobile operator. In 2007, Qatar Telecom acquired 51 percent of Wataniya Telecom and rebranded as Ooredoo.

Then, in 2008, not satisfied with having just two telecommunications company, the authorities in their infinite wisdom decided to add a third to the mix. Accordingly, Kuwait Telecommunications Company (VIVA) was incorporated to operate and manage the third GSM mobile network in Kuwait. Saudi Telecom, the largest mobile and land-line operator in Saudi Arabia is the largest shareholder in VIVA.

Having got into the spirit of increasing competition in the telecommunication field, there is apparently no stopping Kuwait. The country is reportedly looking to issue a fourth telecom operator license, this time to a

virtual operator. Virtual network operators do not own the networks that they use to provide services, instead they lease capacity by paying a fee and usage charges to existing operators. Industry insiders reveal that the company selected as virtual operator will likely be announced by February, 2020.

With four mobile telecom operators set to offer services from next year, to a population of less than 4.8 million people, one would expect competition to be cut-throat, prices for data and voice to be rock-bottom, and consumers to be grinning from ear to ear. Instead customers of all three operators are brimming with grief at the sorry mess that so-called 'competition' between firms that are largely owned by Kuwait, Qatar and Saudi Arabia, has led them to.

Many economists, policy-makers and global guardians of the economy, such as the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund, have for long been serenading countries on the merits of competition and urging them to dismantle monopolistic practices from the business environment.

In Kuwait telecommunication field, we have managed to remove a market monopoly, but replaced it with an oligopolistic market structure. In an oligopoly where only a few select companies operate in a field, firms are free to collude among themselves to pursue monopolistic trade practices. This includes initially lowering prices to drive out or keep away smaller competitors, and once market monopoly is assured to rake in profits by charging higher prices to end-users.

Collusion among businesses is bad; it is bad for consumers, for the economy and, in the long-term, for the businesses involved. It is bad for users, as it leads to price-fixing that allow firms to charge relatively uniform

higher prices for their products; it also results in less innovation and lower quality offerings, with more of the same mediocre goods or services being provided to users. Collusion is also bad for the country's economy, as it drives down productivity, discourages foreign investment, curtails growth and encourages lobbying and corruption by a corporate-legislature nexus.

Eventually, collusion is also bad for the businesses involved because they stop growing, innovating, and competing to maximize profit for each individual firm by offering better products and services. They end up sharing in the total industry profit gained from skimming off customers. Ultimately, there is only so much that the consumer will be willing to accept, and the axiom that 'businesses have to satisfy their customers to survive', will eventually prove true.

Collusion is illegal in Kuwait and there is a Competition Protection Authority (CPA) to ensure fair and free competition in the country. But the CPA can act only in the face of explicit collusion; when the collusion is implicit, as in the case of companies in Kuwait, there is very little that the authority can do about it. Implicit colluding occurs in various ways, including through tacit understandings between the players involved, or through price-leadership, where one firm unilaterally decides to raise the price for its products and services, and others follow the leader in hiking prices.

Tacit colluding among the three telecom operators, and probably a fourth in future, is what we have in Kuwait today. Do not believe us; go compare the prices and offerings published by the three vendors on their online websites. You will notice that there is very little, if anything, to distinguish the services offered, or the prices charged by each operator. Incidentally, there is

also hardly any distinction in the form and quantity of spam the telecom operators have made a habit of spewing on users. Over the years, the service providers in Kuwait have managed to refine and increase both the quantity and immediacy of spams they send. From early requests to download the latest 'diggly tunes' for a small fee, to the audacious clickbaits and regular inducements to subscribe to products for a hefty monthly fee, spam has grown to such an extent that they now provide the operators with a steady and lucrative stream of revenue.

It is true that we can take steps to block and prevent external spam, but there is very little we can do when spam originates internally from our service provider. While we are forced to tolerate the former, do we also have to endure the latter?

If you believe that your mobile operator is overcharging you or sending you unsolicited spam messages and abusing your privacy, then make your voice heard to the authorities. The authority in this case, is the Communication and Information Technology Regulatory Authority (CITRA). Established in 2014, CITRA is responsible for overseeing the telecommunications sector in Kuwait, by monitoring and protecting the interests of users as well as service providers, and regulating the services of telecommunication networks.

Unlike many other government entities, CITRA listens and takes action on authentic and relevant complaints that it receives. They have a long list of consumer rights on their website, so if you feel your rights as a consumer are being abused by your telecommunication company, or have other genuine complaints against the service provider, visit the CITRA website at <https://citra.gov.kw> and file a complaint.





MIDI SKIRTS WITH BOOTS

A midi skirt can walk many lines: It can look breezy in the summer with a tank top and sleek in the winter with an oversized sweater, but it can be hard to find the right shoes to pair them with. Your warm-weather go-tos—sandals, heels, and mules—aren't fit for wintry conditions. While you might think boots could be too clunky with a calf-length skirt, boots of all shapes—warm thigh-highs, polished knee-highs boots, and infinitely wearable ankle styles—all have the ability to pair well with a midi skirt. It's all about matching proportions and creating the illusion of a tall and slim silhouette. Your best bet is slouchy boots (that hit at mid-calf or just under the knee), which can be worn easily under all kinds of midi skirts from floaty styles to more structured silhouettes. For added texture, go for in-season prints like snake-print or faux-croc. Without a doubt, the best look for knee high boots is the A-line look as an A-line silhouette always carries an air of professionalism and sophistication.

If you are just starting out, stick to plainer patterns initially like a pair of plain black boots and a simple flattering midi-skirt.

For those daring, read on for outfit ideas that does it flawlessly.

A shiny midi skirt: Give the shiny midi skirt you bought for the holiday party circuit some time in the daylight: A

statement-making knee-high boot is just as attention-grabbing while a chunky knit top makes the whole look less formal—bonus points if you go monochromatic.

A floaty midi skirt: Don't keep that floaty midi skirt you wore all summer in the closet this winter: Pair it with white boots and a light-knit sweater and wear it straight through winter as a reminder that the cold weather will eventually pass.

A tweed midi skirt: A cozy tweed is exactly what you need on a day when there's a chill in the air. Thanks to a monochromatic palette and modern shapes, the whole look is modern. And it looks amazing when the bottom of a midi skirt just skims the tops of an amazing pair of boots.

A slit midi skirt: A great way to show off your footwear while protecting your legs from the chill.

A midi skirt in the same color: An all-black look keeps statement boots in the spotlight—and an A-line skirt gives chunkier boots some room to breathe.

An attention-grabbing midi skirt: Pair a bolder skirt, for example one with swishing pleats for volume and a bold geometric chevron print, with a more subdued pair of Chelsea boots.

A sweet-looking midi skirt: Toughen up a sweet floral skirt with menswear-inspired hiking boots. Opt for a midi skirt with small floral- or polka-dot prints or add a casual touch with a silky slip midi skirt.

Benefits of using a hairserum



Some beauty trends come and go, but it's safe to say that using hair serum is here to stay. That's because when used after shampoo and conditioner, but before styling, hair serums can have some amazing hair care benefits. Keep reading to learn all about its benefits.

Tame frizz and flyaways: Frizz and flyaways are never fun but before reaching for your trusty hair spray, consider that using a hair serum can help nourish and tame frizzy hair.

Add shine: Besides their ability to help manage frizz and flyaways, a hair serum can also help boost your hair's shine. Use a shine-boosting product before you shampoo for luxurious nourishment, before styling to control hair and polish strands, and as a lightweight finishing touch for silky softness and luxurious shine.

Nourish dry hair: Dry hair can be really annoying to deal with. Not only does dry hair feel rough, but when your hair is parched, it can often look dull and lifeless, which isn't exactly great for your confidence. A good serum can provide humidity protection and deliver a silky finish, luminous shine, and touchable softness without leaving hair looking greasy.

Protect against humidity: Does your hair poof up the minute you walk outside on days when the weather is anything less than perfect? While you can't change your specific hair type—which certainly plays a part in this—you can help change the way it responds to environmental elements like humidity and artificial heat.

Soften your strands: When hair becomes dry or damaged, it can also feel brittle to the touch. Bring life back to your strands with a bit of hair serum that makes your mane softer and suppler.

Helps with damage: When hair is colored or over-styled with hot tools, or simply endures too much daily wear and tear without the right care regimen, it can become damaged. A great way to bring moisture back to your strands is with a good hair serum, particularly when they've lost their natural oils.

How to use hair serum: It's not quite the same as using a hair mousse or hair cream. There are actually a few different ways, but generally, it should be applied to damp hair, focusing mainly on the lengths and ends. Use about one to two pumps of a serum, and be sure to distribute the product evenly throughout your locks, then you can style as usual. Another way is to apply it directly onto dry hair to help smooth down flyaways and add shine. In this case, use a little less product and run it through dry strands, focusing on frizzy areas.

There should be no poor people in Kuwait

...CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Prosperous people in Kuwait are generous in that they contribute to help the less fortunate or the distressed. Their generosity has gone beyond borders and has reached out to the less privileged in their times of distress. Kuwait has never shirked from its responsibility in giving and this has made citizens and residents proud of the country's achievements.

Kuwait as a country has also been at the heart of humanitarian work around the world. His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah's initiatives in donating hundreds of millions of dinars worth of relief to those suffering from the effects of war and conflicts, as well as natural calamities like floods, earthquakes and famine has positioned Kuwait as the humanitarian centre of the world and His Highness the Amir as a

global Humanitarian Leader.

While every Kuwaiti is well taken care of by the government, expatriates who live in the country are supposed to be paid decent amounts, depending on their scope of work. The labor laws in Kuwait are fairly good and are supposed to protect the rights of the workers. So one would think under these circumstances Kuwait would be a happy place to live and work and that there would be no poor people in the country.

On the contrary, while it is true that expatriates remit approx a whopping US\$4 billion annually, which can be considered as savings from their income, there is also an increasing number of expatriates who are living in the country in what could be considered as below the poverty line.

There are some areas in Kuwait that are in such a dilapidated state nobody wants to even go there. Kuwait has also been fighting the menace



of begging, abuse of household helpers, non-payment of promised salaries and exploitation of workers that bring a bad name to the country.

There is a tendency in Kuwait to underpay and deny workers their basic rights despite there being strict laws that protect workers. No expatriate is supposed to come to this country without a guaranteed job, yet there are

hundreds and even thousands who are living jobless in the country. Who is responsible for this predicament that has become pervasive and remains a blot on Kuwait's image.

News of striking workers and non-payment of salaries have been taking up disproportionate space in newspapers for several years. Elimination of sponsorship system was one solution that was discussed for many years but never saw the light of day.

Appealing to the good nature of people for warm clothes and food in Kuwait is not something the country should accept. Few companies that take advantage of the good nature and charitable instinct of the large population should not be tolerated.

As per the law there should be no poor people in Kuwait, but since there are... clearly there is something amiss and the authorities need to urgently fix this predicament.

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