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Beout Investment Group to focus on expansion in service sector



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A warmer world we need to prepare for

A verified reading of 54°C was set in Kuwait, in the city of Mitribah in 2016, and the highs keep coming. Last year, the country's local media outlets reported that 53°C had been recorded in Al Jahra, making it one of the hottest places on the planet.



By Sheikha Suhaila Fahad Al-Sabah
Managing Editor

Scorching high temperatures and dry summers fanned by the northwesterly shamal wind are an inevitable part of living in Kuwait. However, in recent years there has been a troubling trend in the form of a marked increase in the number of days



when temperatures stay at record highs. Not only are the hottest days in summer becoming hotter, they are also lasting longer and coming earlier each year.

Climatologists and meteorologists claim the rise in summer temperatures and increase in the number of hottest days are a bellwether of the planet getting warmer due to the global climate crisis. The higher temperatures are also a stark reminder of the need for everyone, and at every level, from governments to businesses, civil society organizations, and individuals, to do their part to reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, and avert a potentially catastrophic future.

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Al Muzaini Exchange المزيني للمصارفة

TRANSFER TO EGYPT

200,000 EGP MEGA PRIZE

1st June - 31st July 2024

10,000
EGYPTIAN POUNDS
61 DAILY WINNERS

IPHONE 15
PRO MAX
9 WEEKLY WINNERS



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Government plans to go 'paperless' before 2030

Government is said to be planning on digitizing all official transactions through a forthcoming project, which will transition all paper documentation to a paperless environment, within a span of three to five years.

The project will include mandating all government agencies to offer their services exclusively through the 'Sahel' application and linking them electronically. The initiative aims to automate services and offer them electronically under the slogan 'Paperless Government'. Efforts are also reportedly underway to establish a national cloud-based data center

that will help expedite processes, save time, and reduce long-term costs.

The government is understood to be drafting a contract agreement with Microsoft, similar to the one it signed with Google a year ago. The contract aims to establish a strategic partnership between Kuwait and Microsoft, which will achieve several goals, including significant development of technical services and information infrastructure.

The project will focus on constructing a cloud-based data center with distinctive, world-class specifications, enhancing cyber service protection systems to combat hackers, and



strengthening various aspects of cybersecurity to defend against electronic attacks targeting government agencies' systems.

The project will also aim to prepare national

cadres for the labor market by enrolling approximately 5,000 male and female university students in courses before their graduation. This initiative aims to train them as skilled professionals who can enter the job market immediately as technicians.

The courses will be free for Kuwait University students, utilizing their university identification numbers as part of the agreement during their studies. Students who complete the courses will receive Microsoft academic certificates through educational programs that are coordinated among the university, higher education institutions, and the Ministry of Transportation.

MoJ report on crime reveals rise in misdemeanors, drop in murders

The Public Prosecution in Kuwait vigorously upholds justice by filing lawsuits, enforcing criminal laws, prosecuting offenders, and implementing judicial sentences, ensuring public security and societal stability.

The latest iteration of the annual report prepared by the Ministry of Justice (MoJ) reveals that while cases of misdemeanors witnessed a rise of 31.5 percent there was marked decrease of 26.9 percent in the rate of murder cases.

The annual report titled 'Annual Statistical Book', prepared by the Department of Statistics and Research in the Information Technology and Statistics Sector of the Ministry of Justice, noted that the year 2023 saw an increase in the overall number of cases received, and in the cases attended to by the ministry. The total number of cases received by the ministry increased from 34,373 cases in 2022 to 41,886 cases in 2023, marking a growth rate of 21.9 percent. Most of these cases were related to misdemeanors,

2023, an increase of 42.8 percent.

- Information technology cases increased from 2,814 cases in 2022 to 3,725 cases in 2023, an increase of 32.4 percent.
- Misdemeanors related to bounced cheques increased from 2,362 cases in 2022 to 2,792 cases in 2023, a growth of 18.2 percent.
- Commercial misdemeanor cases rose from 9,829 cases in 2022 to 11,438 cases in 2023, an increase of 16.4 percent.

The only decrease was observed in juvenile misdemeanor cases, which dropped from 3,875 cases in 2022 to 1,861 cases in 2023, a decrease of 52.0 percent.

Meanwhile, felony cases increased from 10,959 cases in 2022 to 11,088 cases in 2023, marking an increase of 1.2 percent. This increase is attributed to banking crime cases rising from 3,680 cases in 2022 to 3,870 cases in 2023, an increase of 5.2 percent.

On the other hand, murder and self-assault cases dropped significantly in 2023. The report shows that murder and self-assault crimes decreased from 907 cases in 2022 to 663 cases in 2023, a decrease of 26.9 percent.

- Crimes of assaulting the property of others decreased from 1,823 cases in 2022 to 1,623 cases in 2023, a decrease of 11.0 percent.
- Crimes of assaulting honor and reputation decreased from 363 cases in 2022 to 326 cases in 2023, a decrease of 10.2 percent.
- Crimes of kidnapping, arrest, and detention decreased from 383 cases in 2022 to 353 cases in 2023, a decrease of 7.8 percent.

Drug and psychotropic substance crimes decreased from 2,716 cases in 2022 to 2,695 cases in 2023, a decrease of 0.8 percent.

The Annual Statistical Book also reveals that the number of cases processed by the ministry increased from 21,476 cases in 2022 to 25,172 cases in 2023, marking an increase of 17.2 percent. The number of felony cases disposed off also increased, going from 8,754 cases in 2022 to 9,876 cases in 2023, marking an increase of 12.8 percent.

According to the 'Book', in the future various cases received annually by the ministry are likely to be on average 44,581 and to range from a minimum of 33,146 cases to a maximum of 56,017 cases during 2024-2028, with 95 percent reliability.

Similarly, the expected annual average of disposed cases is 37,754, with a minimum of 25,857 cases and a maximum of 49,651 cases during the same period and with the same reliability.

PAM to allow domestic workers to transfer to private sector

First Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Defense, and Minister of Interior, Sheikh Fahd Al-Youssef, chaired the first meeting of the Board of Directors of the Public Authority of Manpower (PAM) for the year 2024-2025. The meeting issued several decisions, including those related to developing and regulating the labor market.

The Board began the meeting by approving the final accounts of PAM for the fiscal year 2023-2024, demonstrating their commitment to transparency.

Secondly, a key decision involved PAM preparing a draft decision to temporarily lift the ban on transferring domestic workers to the private sector for two months. This initiative aims to meet the needs of the labor market. However, to ensure a smooth process and maintain a balance between supply and demand, controls and conditions



will be implemented. Overall, this meeting reflects Minister Al-Youssef's ongoing efforts to improve labor market policies across various sectors. These decisions align with the leadership's vision of achieving balance and integration between different sectors, ultimately enhancing workforce efficiency and contributing to sustainable development.

Public entities urged to draw up feasible action plans



Ministries have called on entities and agencies under their supervision to take a proactive approach to planning and submit time-bound and implementable work plans, strategies, and visions for the next period.

Rather than mere outlines the ministries are said to be looking for detailed information about the planned projects and services, with technical and administrative specifications and financial budget outlays that will be required, with an added emphasis on their scope for realistic implementation within a specified timeframe.

The government is also reportedly keen to activate mechanisms to define the competencies of various public entities and to merge some of these bodies with the aim of enhancing efficiency and avoiding overlap and redundancies in the work scope of similar organizations.

While some competencies are unique to each entity, others have been found to be largely redundant across entities, and some that seem similar but differ in function or application. The government is committed to clarifying these overlaps to improve efficiency. In addition, this

process may require certain legal adjustments within public-sector undertakings, including amending their laws and regulations, and their various competencies.

For instance, in the past there have been notable overlap in competencies in public projects, with both the Kuwait Authority for Partnership Projects (KAPP), and the Technical Unit for the Privatization Program, handling similar tasks, such as tendering, awarding, and implementation of projects. The government plans aim to define the competencies of each institution under each ministry, which could avoid hindrances in the execution of plans.

However, before any decisions are made regarding mergers, a comprehensive study would be required to examine legal, economic, financial, organizational, and technical aspects of such mergers. In this regard, the Capital Market Authority and the Kuwait Investment Authority have been reported to have begun coordinating their plans and preparing mechanisms aimed at creating local investments and developing capital markets, within timeframes defined by the Council of Ministers.



felonies, property and honor related offenses, as well as crimes such as murder, self-assault, property assault, honor-related offenses, kidnapping, arrest, detention, and others

This annual statistical book serves as a comprehensive and informative resource for specialists, researchers, and interested parties due to its valuable information, including numerical data and percentages across various case types.

Below are some of the key elements from the 'Annual Statistical Book: the details:

The total number of misdemeanor cases received by the ministry increased from 23,414 cases in 2022 to 30,798 cases in 2023, reflecting a rise of 7,384 cases or a rate of 31.5 percent. This increase was driven by various case types, including:

- Environmental misdemeanors, which surged from 3,585 cases in 2022 to 9,627 cases in 2023, an increase of 168.5 percent.
- Cases involving drug offenses rose from 949 cases in 2022 to 1,355 cases in

EPA and EU delegations in Kuwait hold seminar on green transitions

The event, hosted by the Kuwait EPA in collaboration with the EU delegation to Kuwait, provided a platform for insightful discussions aimed at advancing Kuwait's sustainable initiatives.

Kuwait Environment Public Authority (EPA), in collaboration with the European Union (EU) delegation to Kuwait and the EU-GCC Cooperation on Green Transition Project, hosted a seminar titled 'Kuwait's Sustainable Future: Collaborative Solutions for Green Transition, Renewables, and Energy Efficiency', at the EPA premises on June 26.

The event convened esteemed speakers from the EU and Kuwait, alongside participants such as industry experts, policymakers, diplomats, researchers, and business representatives. It provided a platform for insightful discussions on advancing Kuwait's sustainable initiatives.

During the event, Eng. Samira Mohamad Al-Kandari, Acting General Manager of the EPA, said, "The State of Kuwait is seeking ways for mutual cooperation with EU countries, striving diligently to support and develop its strategies in the field of renewable energy, and to enhance energy efficiency in relevant institutions. This is done while taking into consideration the specific national circumstances of Kuwait, where natural resources and energy sources differ in structure and content from those in the European Union due to geographic location and economic capabilities."



She added that regarding renewable energy investments, Kuwait has its own record in this field through its investment funds. Kuwait also seeks to gain expertise from the European Union in renewable energy through mutual cooperation in capacity building, technology transfer, improving energy efficiency, and using the best practices and available solutions.

For her part, Ambassador of the EU to Kuwait, H.E. Anne Koistinen, said during her opening remarks, "The EU, as a global frontrunner in the green transition, is committed to supporting

Kuwait in achieving its 2030 renewable energy targets. This fruitful collaboration aligns with the EU's strategy towards the Gulf, where strengthening EU-Kuwait cooperation on energy, green transition, and climate change is a top priority.

It also showcases the EU's efforts to promote sustainable development and environmental stewardship globally."

The event allowed the EU and the State of Kuwait to exchange best practices and know-how on topics such as the path to green transition, the



integration of renewable energy technologies, better environmental regulation, and strategies for economic diversification through renewable energy and energy efficiency investments.

This initiative supports Kuwait's vision of achieving its 2030 renewable energy targets as well as Kuwait Vision 2035. The success of this event reinforces the strategic importance of Kuwait-EU relations and sets a positive trajectory for ongoing collaborative efforts aimed at fostering a sustainable future for Kuwait, the European Union, and beyond.

Security campaigns to nab residency violators to be ramped up

Ministry of Interior is reportedly planning to ramp up efforts to apprehend residency violators after the grace period to regularize their residency status, or leave the country, expires on 30 June.

Last week, Major General Abdullah Safuh, the Undersecretary for Special Security Affairs and Head of Field Campaigns for Residency Violators, held a coordination meeting that included the Undersecretary for Public Security Affairs, Major General Hamad Al-Menafi, and leaders of relevant sectors.

During the meeting, Major General Safuh conveyed instructions from Sheikh Fahd Al-Youssef, the First Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Defense and Minister of Interior to, "apply the law to all violators", after the deadline. The meeting addressed the efforts made

to help residency violators who have applied to regularize their status. Additionally, it emphasized the importance of providing continued comfort for residents in shelters. The meeting also reviewed how to organize security and inspection campaigns that target various governorates and regions to apprehend violators who have not responded to the deadline.

Major General Safuh concluded the meeting by stressing the need for vigilance and readiness. He also highlighted the importance of consolidating efforts and strong coordination between field sectors to enforce the law.



MoCI shuts several domestic recruitment offices

Ministry of Commerce and Industry (MoCI) shut down several domestic worker recruitment offices found to be violating labor recruitment regulations. In a recent inspection, officials shut down five offices in Hawalli Governorate for serious breaches.

The Commercial Supervision Department discovered that these offices were not following the ministry's mandated electronic payment methods (K-Net), and, in addition, they were charging prices that exceeded the ministry's set limits. The ministry released a statement explaining their reasoning behind the closures, and emphasized its commitment to promoting transparency and fairness within the domestic labor recruitment market, including ensuring that offices provide the highest standard of service to their customers.

Failing to comply with regulations regarding electronic payments and exceeding price limits is a blatant violation of consumer rights, and also damages the reputation of the entire domestic worker recruitment sector, stressed the ministry in its statement. The ministry urged all such offices to strictly adhere to the established regulations and laws, and called on them to review and update their operations to avoid future legal repercussions.

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Congestion, unsanitary conditions prevail in labor residences

In the aftermath of the tragic residential apartment fire in Mangaf that claimed the lives of 50 workers, the government has begun a series of comprehensive and integrated inspections that target buildings and housing units used as residences for workers.

The tragedy in Mangaf exposed serious shortcomings in the living conditions faced by many migrant laborers in the country. The inspection teams aim to identify and take legal action against those buildings found to provide substandard accommodation that does not meet basic sanitary and safety standards.

A recent media report on conditions of worker residences in areas with large migrant populations, including in Fahaheel, Mangaf, and Jleeb Al-Shuyoukh, found glaring safety and sanitary violations in many of them. Rampant overcrowding of workers in small rooms that offered limited facilities and amenities, was a disturbing reality that confronted the media



team. The presence of overflowing sewage, discarded garbage, remnants of shisha smoking, and stray animals within the housing premises painted a stark picture of substandard living conditions that many laborers live in Kuwait.

It is evident that resorting to measures like cutting electricity to buildings found in violation of building codes or amending municipal laws without offering alternative, safe housing solutions will only exacerbate the problem by displacing workers from these buildings and pushing them to seek accommodation in even more crowded buildings elsewhere.

The ineffectuality of displacing workers



from their existing accommodation, without arranging adequate shelter for them elsewhere, has been witnessed in the past when forced evacuations of migrants from some areas only resulted in overcrowding in other areas.

The root cause of this issue appears to lie in Kuwait's current housing regulations. The sole existing law, No. 125 of 1992, focuses solely on non-family housing within residential areas. There is a clear need for proper and effective regulations to address specific aspects of worker accommodation, including occupancy limits, basic safety and sanitary conditions,

and proper management practices for such housing facilities.

There is also a critical lack of clear regulations and legislations governing worker accommodations in commercial and investment zones. Current practices for temporary and permanent housing solutions within industrial establishments need specific regulation. This would enhance worker productivity and facilitate oversight by relevant authorities.

An earlier study on Kuwaiti housing had estimated that there are around 13,000 residential buildings, with a staggering 71 percent of non-Kuwaitis living in investment areas. This highlights the need for better solutions.

Kuwait's worker city projects, once dubbed as a long-term solution to the problem of labor accommodation, remain stalled without assigning any reasons. Building of new worker cities and implementing long-term rental agreements for worker housing in Kuwait could be an effective way to manage the situation. This approach could ensure stable revenue and sustained development across various sectors, and would be in line with the government's efforts to diversify non-oil income and position the country as a financial and commercial hub.

Workers recuperating from Mangaf fire thank authorities

Many of those injured by the tragic fire at their apartment block in Mangaf on 12 June, and now recuperating at their new residences, recounted the horror of the early morning fire that claimed the lives of 50 of their colleagues.



The workers expressed their immense gratitude to His Highness the Amir Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, the Kuwaiti government, and the honorable people of Kuwait for the humanitarian response extended to the victims of the accident.

They also profusely thanked all the personnel of the Kuwait Fire Department, the Health Ministry, and the Interior Ministry for rescuing and saving their lives, and attending to their injuries, and ensuring their safe recovery,

as well as for all the support provided to them following the fire.

The workers also expressed their appreciation to the various government officials for the numerous visits to the hospitals where they lay injured and inquiring about their safety and wellbeing.

In particular, those recuperating from their injuries thanked the Indian Ambassador and staff of the Indian Embassy for all their efforts in ensuring the speedy return of the remains of the fire victims to India, and for visiting the injured in hospitals. They noted that the Indian ambassador and members of the embassy, who were among the first to arrive at the accident site, and at the hospitals to inquire about their health, were in touch with them daily during their treatment period.

The injured also recounted their miraculous escape from the inferno. Some of them with their legs or arm still in plaster narrated how they had to jump from the balcony of their flat to escape the fire and smoke. One worker spoke about waking up in the early morning hearing screams from other residents in the building. He woke up his colleagues in the apartment and tried to go down the stairs, but the smoke was too thick, forcing him to return to his apartment. He noted that those who continued to go down through the smoke were killed by suffocation.



Kuwait ranks sixth in Arab world in traffic congestion

Kuwait City ranked sixth in the Arab world and 550th globally in terms of traffic congestion, according to a new report titled, 'Global Traffic Scorecard for 2023' compiled by the US-based traffic data analysis company INRIX.

Dubai ranked first among Arab cities in terms of traffic congestion, followed closely by Riyadh and Abu Dhabi. New York City was named the most traffic crowded urban area in the world for the second year in a row, costing the city \$9.1 billion in wasted time. Mexico City came in second place on the list,

followed by London, Paris, and Chicago. The list of the most traffic-congested cities in the world included other American cities, such as Los Angeles and Boston, according to the report.

Traffic congestion occurs when the demand for transportation exceeds the available road space. As vehicle traffic increases, drivers, freight carriers, and bus passengers lose time and spend fuel unproductively. This wasted time has a value that the report analyzed.

Overall, the report indicated that traffic congestion cost the United States more than \$70.4 billion in 2023, a 15 percent increase year over year, with each vehicle driver losing an average of 42 hours due to traffic congestion.

London's roads remained the busiest in Europe for the third year in a row, with drivers in the British capital spending an average of 99 hours stuck in traffic in 2023.

Kuwait committed to upgrading judicial system

Minister of Justice and Minister of Endowments and Islamic Affairs Dr. Muhammad Al-Wasmi reiterated last week Kuwait's keenness to upgrade the judicial system to keep pace with global changes.

The minister announced this in a media statement issued on the sidelines of his chairing the plenary session of the 12th edition of the St. Petersburg International Legal Forum hosted by Russia during the period June 26-28,

Al-Wasmi stressed the importance of Kuwait's participation in the three-day forum, as it discusses a wide range of key topics related to the judicial system, new



jurisprudence issues and latest legislative updates, as well as the use of technology to modernize the judicial system.

He pointed out that the Kuwaiti delegation would highlight the government use of

electronic systems in the delivery of services in all sectors. In this regard, the Ministry of Justice has introduced automated systems for its various departments and linked them to the government services application (Sahel) to save time and effort for litigants.

Minister Al-Wasmi added that during the session the participants reviewed the experiences and practices of their countries and the use of modern digital means in the field of justice. "Considering the rapid developments in the world, the State of Kuwait is aware of the importance of innovation and technology in the field of justice," he clarified.

He also referred to the introduction of an electronic system for conducting remote trials. Moreover, Al-Wasmi pointed to the amendment of some articles of Law No. 9 of 2020 so that litigants can be notified by e-mail or any other "modern electronic" means of communication to shorten the duration of trials.

On the sidelines of the forum, Minister Al-Wasmi attended a meeting of the ministers of justice of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) member states. During the meeting, the conferees mulled strengthening cooperation and unifying stances regarding main issues on the forum's agenda.

Kuwait, Philippines reach agreement on domestic labor recruitment

The ministry said that the deal was clinched during talks between the Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Defence and Minister of Interior, Sheikh Fahad Yousef Al-Sabah and the visiting Philippine Overseas Employment Administration chief Bernard Olalia, which ultimately found a breakthrough to lift the ban on domestic employment from Manila.

A communique from the Ministry of Interior on 24 June stated that Kuwait and the Philippines have reached an agreement to resume the recruitment of domestic workers from the Philippines after a prolonged halt to this process.

The ministry said that the deal was clinched during talks between the Deputy Prime

Minister, Minister of Defence and Minister of Interior, Sheikh Fahad Yousef Al-Sabah and the visiting Philippine Overseas Employment Administration chief Bernard Olalia, which ultimately found a breakthrough to lift the ban on domestic employment from Manila.

The statement added that as part of the agreement, the two countries agreed to form



a joint committee related to domestic labor affairs, which would convene in a routine manner to address any sticking points that could potentially emerge.

In this regard it is relevant to recall that in May of 2023, Kuwait suspended new visas for Philippine nationals over a row involving the rights of domestic workers and employers alike. In a press statement issued after the agreement between the two sides was signed, Ambassador of the Philippines H.E. Jose Cabrera, stated that

his country's embassy welcomes the lifting of the visa ban on Filipino citizens and the return of Filipino workers to Kuwait.

The ambassador added, "The embassy looks forward to strengthening bilateral relations between the two friendly countries through upcoming meetings and discussions that will address and resolve pending labor issues and concerns to the satisfaction of both parties and to the mutual benefit of workers and employers."

Kuwaiti ambassador stresses deepening ties with India

Kuwait's Ambassador to India H.E. Meshal Al-Shemali, who called on Indian Minister of External Affairs S. Jaishankar in New Delhi last week, stressed the need to intensify efforts to deepen existing relations between India and Kuwait and diversify them into new fields.



In a statement to the media following his meeting with Minister Jaishankar, the Kuwaiti envoy said that during their talks, bilateral issues of mutual interest and ways to enhance cooperation mechanisms between the two countries in economic, political, cultural and social fields came up for discussion.

The ambassador also congratulated Jaishankar on his reappointment to the post of Minister of External Affairs following the parliamentary elections and subsequent formation of the new government.

He stressed that the days to come will witness visits by officials of the two countries at different levels, which will include political consultations and joint ministerial meetings covering various sectors.

He also stressed the importance of strengthening trade relations, which have witnessed significant development recently, as the total bilateral trade with Kuwait during the past fiscal year amounted to USD10.5 billion marking an annual growth of 34.7 percent. Kuwait is the ninth largest oil supplier to India meeting three percent of India's total energy needs.

He quoted the Indian minister as extending his sincere thanks to the leadership and government of Kuwait for their efforts and interest in supporting Indians in the background of the tragic fire accident that occurred at a residential area, killing 46 people from the Indian community residing in Kuwait.

Masterclass Lifestyle Workshops launches new batch for 'Essentials of Baking'



By Ricky Laxa
Staff Writer

Several students registered for Masterclass Lifestyle Workshops third batch of workshops on 'Essentials of Baking'. The third batch of one day baking class was launched on 28 June at the Walk Mall in Salmiya, with Masterchefs Mariefe Torio and Ricky Laxa leading the three-hour hands-on baking session.

The baking class kicked off with a brief introduction from the workshop administrator, who provided significant information and a brief history of the school and the successful stories behind graduates of the workshops. The one-day course witnessed more than two hundred attendees, who received their certificates of attendance from the master chefs.

The three-hour sessions afforded the attendees information and hands-on experience on how to create basic dough that can be used to produce a variety of breads popularly sold in bakeries.

"This one day experience has given me an opportunity to learn a skill that I never thought I would be very good at. Building on the experience I gained at the workshop, will hopefully one day open new business opportunities for me," said Allen Flores, an assistant administrator at a local bank.

Masterclass Lifestyle Workshops said it wished to thank Filipino bloggers Pot TV, Ser Paul TV and Kuya Pasabuy for helping disseminate relevant information on the workshops. Masterclass has opened its registration to the public. Interested individuals may call or send messages to WhatsApp number 55650296.

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Kuwait marks International Day of Women in Diplomacy with gala event



Kuwait's Ministry of Foreign Affairs on Sunday marked International Day of Women in Diplomacy with a lavish ceremony recognizing the increasingly significant role of women in the realm of diplomacy, which brought together a bevy of Kuwaiti diplomats.

Citing some of the most notable achievements of women diplomats in Kuwait, former foreign Minister Sheikh Salem Al-Sabah spoke of the recent influx of women in Kuwaiti diplomacy, applauding the move as a shrewd one given their dedication and commitment.

He went on to say that, the foreign ministry backs all initiatives to support women as they seek to establish parity with their male counterparts,

the minister underlined. Addressing the gathering, renowned Kuwaiti diplomat Amal Al-Hamad spoke of her prolific career that spanned decades, attributing her success as a diplomat to the overwhelming support the Kuwaiti foreign ministry has given her.

In her speech, Assistant Foreign Minister for International Development and Cooperation Tahani Al-Nasser spoke of the "evolution" of the Kuwaiti foreign ministry, citing a raft of significant international deals sealed as of late.

Foreign Ministry Advisor Sheikha Jawaher Al-Sabah was grateful for the ceremony to mark such a pivotal occasion, saying women have left an "indelible mark" on Kuwaiti diplomacy with their numerous achievements.

Kuwait felicitates women diplomats



Kuwait's Foreign Ministry organized a ceremony on Monday in recognition of the country's women diplomats, coinciding with an international day dedicated to their contributions.

Sponsoring the lavish gala on the United Nations 'International Day for Women in Diplomacy', Kuwaiti Foreign Minister Abdullah Al-Yahya, in a speech given by his deputy Sheikh Jarrah Al-Sabah, congratulated some of the country's most renowned

women diplomats to acknowledge their contributions towards Kuwaiti diplomacy, saying they represented an important pillar of Kuwaiti development.

He underlined that irrespective of rank or position, Kuwaiti women diplomats have amassed exceptional accomplishments through the years, which subsequently served Kuwait's best interests and propelled the nation to international prominence, he underlined.

Integrated labor cities could help overcome several challenges

In the aftermath of the tragic fire at the residential apartment block in Mangaf that claimed the lives of several foreign workers, discussions on developing labor cities as a potential solution to address several key issues regarding labor housing have once again surfaced.

Proponents of labor cities argue that relocating bachelors from residential areas to integrated labor cities will eliminate overcrowding and improve living conditions for the workers, as well as provide them essential services and amenities in a safe and secure environment and enhance their overall well-being.

Establishing labor cities in Kuwait has been on the drawing boards of policymakers for decades, but it has never progressed beyond the initial planning stage. It is only now that the government is seriously considering establishing labor cities to house the large number of workers in the country.

Roughly three years ago, the Ministry of Public Works collaborated with relevant authorities to define the technical specifications and necessary requirements. However, progress has stalled, leaving the project unimplemented. A well-defined plan for establishing six such cities, complete with essential services, recreational facilities, and security and healthcare infrastructure, has existed for years.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, the regional lockdown exposed the vulnerability of businesses with workforces residing in isolated areas. While the idea of labor cities resurfaced during this crisis, it receded with the decline of COVID-19 cases. Perhaps, the Al-Mangaf fire will serve as a dark reminder of the need to prioritize this initiative.

The establishment of such cities in

neighboring GCC states such as the United Arab Emirates and Qatar has proven the value of such cities in providing a holistic living environment for workers.

In its latest move to address the issue of labor housing in Kuwait, the government has designated six sites across various governorates to develop labor cities. A breakdown of the proposed locations are as follows:

Sabhan City: This site encompasses 246.5 hectares and has the capacity to accommodate 40,000 workers.

North of Al-Muta'ala: Spreading over 246.5 hectares, this location can house 40,000 workers.

South of Jahra: Located on Al-Salmi Road, this 101.5-hectare site is planned for 20,000 workers.

Sulaibikhat Kbad: This 246.5-hectare area is designated for 40,000 workers.

East of Arifjan City: Situated in Ahmadi Governorate, this 246.5-hectare site can accommodate 40,000 workers.

North of Khairan, Al-Wafrah: Encompassing 246.5 hectares, this location is planned to house 40,000 workers.

Each site will be divided into smaller plots with all amenities and facilities to cater to a maximum capacity of 5,000 residents. The design will prioritize efficient movement with dedicated road networks for vehicles, pedestrians, and buses. Additionally, a ring road will be built around each site to ensure smooth movement for security and emergency vehicles.

The project emphasizes creating a positive living environment by incorporating green spaces and afforestation throughout the cities. The aim is to have at least 12 percent of the designated area dedicated to greenery. Each

labor city will also be equipped with open playgrounds and service centers strategically distributed across the plots to cater to residents' daily needs.

Recently Kuwait Municipality announced that the first labor city project will come up in the South Jahra area and encompass a vast area of 1,015,000 square meters. The labor city project will be developed through a public-private partnership (PPP) investment model.

The concept of labor cities in Kuwait has emerged in response to a growing critical need for housing the increasing number of low-income expatriate workers employed across various industries in the public and private sector. This initiative aims to tackle several challenges simultaneously. Firstly, it seeks to address the significant shortage of adequate housing options specifically catering to low-income workers.

Secondly, the project envisions improving the overall living standards of these workers. Labor cities have the potential to offer not just housing, but also essential amenities and community facilities that can enhance their quality of life.

Thirdly, the relocation of labor housing away from established residential areas presents a strategic advantage. This can significantly reduce traffic congestion currently experienced in these areas.

Finally, the development of labor cities presents an opportunity to improve government services. By concentrating a significant population of workers in designated areas, authorities can potentially streamline the delivery of essential services such as waste collection, sanitation, and public transportation. This can lead to a more efficient and cost-effective system for all involved.



Despite several technical challenges MEW averts power shutdown

- Al-Zour station's 1,500 megawatt units boost ministry's capacity, eliminating programmed shutdowns across sectors

- The unprecedented rise in temperature led to a significant rise in demand for electricity and an increase in the consumption rate by about 2,000 megawatts.

Ministry of Electricity, Water, and Renewable Energy (MEW) successfully navigated last weekend without resorting to the implementation of the scheduled programmed shutdown of power supply to various regions in the country. The ministry managed to achieve this despite facing several challenges, including technical challenges at power stations, as well as malfunctions at various stations.

Notwithstanding the high power load from increased demand reaching 16,500 megawatts on 22 June, the electricity network remained stable, as the ministry had made arrangements to receive current from other Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) states, including an estimated 200 megawatts from Saudi Arabia, 150 megawatts from Oman, and 490 megawatts from Qatar through the GCC Interconnection Authority.

The tripartite Gulf support for the Kuwait electricity network contributed to enhancing the network's ability to meet the country's electrical energy needs, especially considering



the high temperatures the country has been experiencing for days. Additionally, the ministry succeeded in bringing the first units of the Al-Zour station, which was undergoing maintenance, back into service, which will help

cover the increasing demand for electricity during this period.

The unprecedented rise in temperature, breaking the 50-degree Celsius barrier at this time of year—an increase of about eight

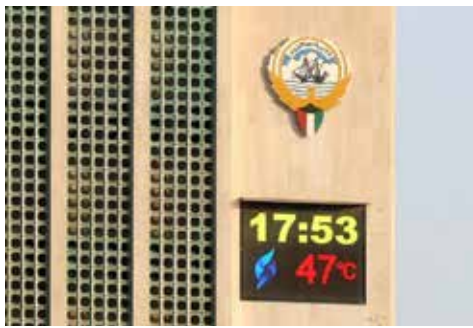
degrees compared to the same days last year—led to a significant increase in demand for electricity and an increase in the consumption rate by about 2,000 megawatts.

Sources at the ministry revealed that the entry into production of units undergoing maintenance at the Al-Zour power-station, will raise the capacity of up to 1,500 megawatts during the coming days. This would enhance the ministry's production capacity and remove the need for the scheduled programmed shutdowns from all sectors of the state.

The sources also stressed the continued negligence of consumers in rationalizing current consumption, especially at peak times, had led to the surge in demand. In addition they noted that speedy approval of maintenance contracts and tenders by the concerned government entities will contribute to the efficiency of electric power generation plants and bring the actual production capacity close to the ministry's installed production capacity, which amounts to about 18,500 megawatts.

Fire Force issues advisory on fire hazards in summer

In an advisory to the general public on the fire hazards likely to occur during the hot summer months, the Kuwait Fire Force identified several common causes of fire, including gas leaks, children playing



with fire during extended summer breaks, electrical issues, leaving exhaust fans running unattended, and using low-cost unsafe chargers and substandard electrical connections.

The Kuwait Fire Force advisory emphasized the need for fire extinguishers and smoke detectors in all establishments, including private residences, without exceptions. The department noted that these simple tools form the first line of defense against fires. Smoke detectors provide early warnings, allowing individuals to address the fire before it grows out of control.

The department advised people to learn how to use a fire extinguisher properly and to use it immediately in the event of a fire, and to call the Ministry of Interior Emergency Number so the nearest fire station could be alerted and take action to address the mishap.

To ensure home safety, the fire department recommended installing smoke and gas detectors, and keeping a fire blanket on hand, as well as having a fire extinguisher at an easily accessible spot in the home. It was also important for everyone in the house to know how to effectively use a fire-extinguisher, and what to do in the event of a fire.

Kuwait dominates global ICT rankings for second year running

Communications and Information Technology Regulatory Authority (CITRA) announced that Kuwait has secured the top spot in the 2024 Information and Communications Technology Development Index (IDI) by the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) for the second consecutive year.

The authority stated in a press release that the index continues to evolve, fostering foreign investor confidence to invest in the country, create jobs, and transfer expertise. They emphasized the importance of diversifying the state's sources of income.



Additionally, they highlighted that the IDI index assesses the country's internet accessibility in terms of coverage and affordability. They noted that 99.7 percent of individuals and 99.4 percent of families access the internet through subscriptions with internet providers or telecommunications companies, ensuring safe usage. The authority explained that the index comprises two pillars with ten indicators each, and it serves as a liaison between data and international organizations specializing in the communications and information technology sector.



Kuwait joins IOSEA agreement to conserve sea turtles and their habitats

Kuwait has taken a significant step towards the conservation of sea turtles and wildlife. The country joined the Indian Ocean-South East Asian Marine Turtle Memorandum of Understanding (IOSEA) and signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) under the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals.

This announcement was made by Dr. Abdullah Al-Zaidan, Deputy Director General for Technical Affairs at the Environment Public Authority (EPA). He further elaborated on Kuwait's participation to KUNA.

Dr. Al-Zaidan stated that Kuwait, represented by the EPA, participated in the 9th Meeting of the States Parties (MOS9) hosted by Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, from June 24 to 25, 2024. The meeting was attended by specialists from around the world.

Dr. Al-Zaidan explained the purpose of the MoU signed during the meeting. It is dedicated specifically to the conservation of sea turtles and their habitats in the Indian Ocean and Southeast Asia.

The MoU aims to protect six species of sea turtles that are listed as vulnerable, endangered, or critically endangered on the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species. These species include the loggerhead turtle, the olive ridley turtle, the green turtle, the hawksbill turtle, the leatherback turtle, and the flatback turtle.

Kuwait's accession to this organization represents a new environmental commitment in addition to its existing international obligations.

The MoU aims to protect and conserve sea turtles, bridge the knowledge gap, and restore their habitats based on the best scientific evidence. This will be done while taking into account the environmental, social, economic, and cultural characteristics of the signatory countries.

It is noteworthy that Kuwait has a long history of sea turtle conservation dating back to the Dilmun civilization on Failaka Island. Dr. Al-Zaidan highlighted Kuwait's efforts in cooperation with various local governmental and non-governmental entities to conserve sea turtles. Kuwait attaches great importance to the conservation of sea turtles through the implementation of various international agreements. These agreements include the Convention on Biological Diversity and the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora.

Additionally, Kuwait is committed to regional commitments under the Regional Organization for the Protection of the Marine Environment (ROPME). Dr. Al-Zaidan also pointed to the implementation of the Environmental Protection Law, which prohibits the hunting of wildlife and the tampering of their nesting sites.

Kuwait City ranked third most-livable city in the region

Kuwait City has been recognized as the third most-livable city in the Gulf and Arab region and 93rd globally for 2024. Abu Dhabi secured the top spot in the region and 76th globally, followed by Dubai at 78th. Doha and Manama followed closely behind at 101st and 106th positions, respectively.

The Global Liveability Index 2024, prepared annually by the Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU), the research and analysis division of the Economist Group, also showed that Saudi cities, including Riyadh and Jeddah, have witnessed significant investments in infrastructure, education, and healthcare, making them among cities in the region appealing to foreign tourists and expats to live and work in.

The EIU's Global Liveability Index 2024 attributes the strong performance of cities in the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) states, to the region's focus on sustainable investment



in healthcare and education. Notably, both Abu Dhabi and Dubai climbed two places from

their previous rankings. The focus on social infrastructure complements the Gulf region's

ongoing economic diversification initiatives. As per the World Bank's forecast, the region's economic growth is projected to reach 2.8 percent in 2024 and 4.7 percent in 2025. Job opportunities remain the primary factor influencing people's choice of destination, followed by quality of life and income-related considerations.

The Austrian capital, Vienna, holds onto its crown as the world's most livable city for the third year in a row. Copenhagen, Denmark, follows closely behind in second place, while Zurich, Switzerland, witnessed a significant jump to third place, up from sixth last year. London landed at 45th globally, while Hong Kong in Asia saw a notable rise from 61st to 50th, attributed to improvements in stability and healthcare outcomes.

On the other hand, the EIU report identifies Damascus as the least livable city globally, with Tripoli, Libya, following closely behind.

A warmer world we need to prepare for

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Global warming and climate change is intensifying heat-waves in Kuwait, making summers hotter and increasing the periods of extreme heat from what was earlier just a few days, to over a month in recent decades. Meteorological records confirm that the number of days of extreme heat has tripled since the year 2000, and in the last few years heatwaves have pushed temperatures above 50°C for several continuous days.

Warmer, longer summers are also predicted to go from a month, to several months at a stretch in future. New studies have projected that average temperature could increase by 1.8°C to 2.57°C by mid-century compared to the early 2000s, with a possibility of reaching 5.54°C by the end of the century. The envisioned higher temperature would make outdoor life in summer almost unbearable for all life forms. Additionally, rising temperatures pose significant challenges to electricity infrastructure and utility supplies, as well as to agricultural production, exacerbating an already precarious food security situation.

In addition, higher temperatures present a serious health risk to people, increasing heat-related illnesses and death. Extreme heat compromises the body's ability to regulate its internal temperature, which can lead to heat exhaustion, heatstroke, and hyperthermia, a condition where the body absorbs or generates more heat than it releases.

According to the World Health Organization (WHO), the strain put on the body as it tries to cool itself at extreme temperatures stresses the heart and kidneys, causing a worsening of chronic conditions such as cardiovascular disease, respiratory disease, cerebrovascular disease, and diabetes-related conditions. Extreme heat is also especially potent to vulnerable sections of society, including the elderly, infants, pregnant women, and migrant workers toiling outdoors.

A recent Harvard study on the impact of climate change in Kuwait, estimated that there could be a 5 percent increase in heat-related mortality by 2100 under a moderate heat scenario, and a 12 percent increase using an extreme heat scenario. The study added that by 2100, over 14 percent of all deaths in Kuwait would be due to increased heat; most of those deaths would be of migrant workers.

Higher temperatures and climate change are also expected to exacerbate the country's water vulnerabilities — Kuwait is already among the top-three most water stressed nations in the world. Water paucity combined with extreme temperatures not only lowers agricultural productivity and aggravates

food insecurity, it also increases evaporation, aggravates soil salinization, and widens land desertification. High heat also disrupts the natural balance of Kuwait's unique ecosystems, such as its coastal areas and wetlands, which lead to biodiversity loss.

Rising temperatures are also a significant threat to the energy system and economy. With economic stability overwhelmingly dependent on revenues from oil exports, Kuwait is impelled to continue producing and exporting oil. But, the extraction, refining of oil and burning of the fossil-fuels are a major source of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. Highly potent GHGs produced such as carbon dioxide (CO₂), methane (CH₄), and nitrous oxide (N₂O) amplify climate change that induces the heat surge being experienced in Kuwait.

A recent report by the London School of Economics (LSE) estimates that emissions by Kuwait's energy sector account for nearly 95 percent of the country's total CO₂ emissions, and contributes to raising the annual per capita CO₂ emissions of Kuwait to 21.6 tonnes. This is not only far higher than the average global per capita emissions, it is also higher than that of the European Union, and most countries in the Middle East.

The energy consumption pattern in Kuwait is also unsustainably high. At a per capita energy consumption of 15,590 kWh, which is projected to triple by 2030, Kuwait's humongous per capita power utilization is among the highest in the world. Growing population and increasing industrialization have led to a surge in electricity demand to run the cooling systems during the scorching summer months. However, the country's power-generation capabilities have failed to catch up with this demand, leading to unprecedented electricity outages and supply cuts in summer.

The higher energy consumption pattern also generates more CO₂ emissions and adds to the country's growing share of GHG emissions that catalyze climate change, and precipitate the excessive heat witnessed in recent years. The irony is that it was higher heat that prompted increased demand for cooling in the first place. Kuwait's climate conundrum highlights the untenable nature of today's high energy consumption rate, and underlines the need to conserve and reduce energy usage in a world growing increasingly warmer.

And, the world is warming. According to the European Union's Copernicus Climate Change Service (C3S), last year was an exceptionally hot year and indications are that 2024 could follow suit with the country already experiencing one of

the hottest summers on record. Unprecedented global temperatures from June onwards led 2023 to become the warmest year on record — overtaking 2016, the previous warmest year recorded.

Not only was 2023 the hottest calendar year since 1850, but the year also marked the first time on record that every day of the year exceeded 1°C above the 1850-1900 pre-industrial level. Close to 50 percent of days in 2023 were more than 1.5°C warmer than the 1850-1900 level. and two days in November were, for the first time, more than 2°C warmer. The 2015 Paris Climate Agreement had pledged to try and prevent global temperatures rising by more than 1.5C.

A critical driver of the unusual high temperatures experienced throughout 2023 was the unprecedented high surface sea temperatures (SSTs). Records from C3S show that global average SSTs remained persistently and unusually high in 2023, reaching record levels from April through December. The excessive SSTs were associated with marine heatwaves around the globe, including in parts of the Mediterranean, Gulf of Mexico and the

Caribbean, Indian Ocean and North Pacific, and much of the North Atlantic.

Rising SSTs have a profound effect on global climate, as it causes the amount of atmospheric water vapor over the sea surface to increase. The raised level of oceanic water vapor feeds weather systems that then increase the risk of cyclones, heavy rains and devastating floods in many countries. Changes in sea surface temperature can also shift weather patterns, potentially contributing to droughts in other parts of the world.

In Kuwait, building more power stations to increase supply capacity to cope with higher temperature will prove futile over the long-term, unless serious efforts to effectively reduce and rationalize consumption are undertaken. We need to also implement strategies that diversify our fossil-fuel reliant economy, transition towards renewable energy sources, ensure a sustainable pattern of consumption and economic development, and reduce our GHG emissions. These initiatives are imperative if we are to ensure our economic and social development in a future of higher global warming.



Kuwait clears employment waiting list with new plan

The Civil Service Bureau informed citizens that the employment crisis in the country has been resolved following the implementation of a new plan that has cleared the waiting list for citizens.

This initiative was based on directives and a sovereign decision by His Highness the Amir, Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, on February 18.

His Highness's decision established a framework emphasizing equal opportunities and fairness, marking a significant milestone in the employment process.

Dr. Issam Al-Rubaian, the head of the bureau, stated that the state has provided approximately 24,000 jobs, with 15,000 offered in the first phase. He mentioned that the number of individuals registered for employment is around 11,000, emphasizing that "after the implementation of the new plan, no citizen will remain on the waiting list. It is now their turn to secure employment."

Al-Rubaian revealed that the plan "was built on the basis of creating new job titles that fulfill work objectives and accommodate specializations that were previously unavailable," as well as incorporating specializations that can complement existing roles, aiming to encompass all fields rather than being limited to specific ones. He added, "The waiting period used to range from three months to a year, sometimes extending to two or even three years for some citizens waiting their turn," emphasizing that the 11,000 registered individuals "can now be processed."

He highlighted that the previous practice of individual nominations, where citizens approached employers, has been discontinued. "Now, registration and nomination will follow an automated system, ensuring no discrimination based on specializations, with all individuals included in the plan." He emphasized that the state is advancing with ambitious goals to provide opportunities and uphold principles of fairness.

Beyout Investment Group to focus on expansion in service sector

Abdulrahman Al-Khannah
CEO of Beyout Investment Group (BIG)

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Abdulrahman Al-Khannah, CEO of Beyout Investment Group (BIG) talks with The Business Year (TBY) about how BIG Holding's listing on Boursa Kuwait will transform the family office into a public company, enhancing growth opportunities, institutional interactions, and legacy preservation.

How do you anticipate the listing of BIG Holding on Boursa Kuwait influencing the company's growth trajectory and plans?

Transforming our family office, Beyout Investment Group, into a public company is a crucial objective. This move not only aligns with our goals but also addresses a key challenge faced by family offices, as statistics indicate that only 20 percent last beyond the third and fourth generations. Institutionalizing our family office into a public company is therefore a strategic step

toward preserving our legacy. It provides a structured framework that safeguards the company's heritage. Beyond legacy protection, going public opens doors to significant growth opportunities, especially those driven by government initiatives. Public companies, in comparison to family offices, are better positioned to bid for government-driven opportunities.

Additionally, the transition to a public company enhances our interactions with financial institutions. The established government structures surrounding entities like the Capital Markets Authority (CMA), Boursa, Central Bank of Kuwait, and the Ministry of Commerce contribute to proper governance. This, in turn, fosters trust among financial institutions, creating a conducive environment for accelerated growth. Speaking of financial growth, the public company status offers various tools such as sukuk and share swap, enabling us to allocate funds strategically. Whether through acquisitions, opening new channels or bidding for opportunities, the financial flexibility of a public company outweighs that of a privately owned company or a family office. The decision to go public is driven by the desire to secure the benefits of being a public company and leveraging the enablers that fuel our company's growth.

How is BIG Holding working to attract investment opportunities from foreign companies?

Our core strategy involves partnering with multinational companies to enhance the business landscape in Kuwait. Through initiatives such as exhibitions and my role as

a panelist on business practices in Kuwait, we actively promote a conducive business environment. Becoming a public company amplifies our global visibility. International companies researching Kuwait invariably turn to the stock market to identify leading players. Transparency as a public company builds trust for these multinational entities, facilitating their entry and operations in Kuwait. I have personally witnessed the positive impact on international partnerships, as being public enhances visibility and attracts companies eager to collaborate. This move positions us for further growth in collaboration with such partners.

Could you provide a more in-depth overview of BIG Holding's strategy?

Our strategy focuses on both vertical and horizontal expansion within our specialized service sector, primarily HR solutions. Vertically, we aim to add more labor-intensive services while staying close to our core capabilities. On the REH side, we excel in BOT and PPP projects, capitalizing on government initiatives. Horizontally, we are expanding geographically, having established in Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, and Qatar, replicating our successful Kuwaiti model. Regarding real estate, our current priority is a significant contract with the Public Authority of Housing Welfare (PAHW), M1 Project (Beyout Plus) a 250,000-sqm industrial development valued at approximately USD300 million. This project reshapes our REH strategy, requiring focused attention over the next three years. We remain open to opportunities in PPP and BOT, possibly taking a lead role



based on our track record to attract more investors.

How does BIG Holding plan to integrate sustainability into future investments?

As sustainability pioneers, our company has consistently upheld the highest ESG standards while working with the US government, multinational companies, and the Kuwait government. This commitment is reflected in our long-standing adherence to top-tier sustainability practices. Notably, the aforementioned PAHW project underscores our dedication, with a specific sustainability clause in the technical evaluation. To remain competitive and maintain relationships with the government and sophisticated clients, sustainability is a crucial focus. As we move toward an IPO, targeting the premium market necessitates the issuance of a sustainability report. This requirement is not only mandatory but also integral to our overall strategy, contributing significantly to our success as a group.

Kuwait explores potential to use recycled waste tires to fill potholes

The solution aims to ensure public safety swiftly, improve environmental conditions, and create opportunities for Kuwaiti entrepreneurs and factory owners.

Engineer Alia Al-Farsi, head of the Environmental Affairs Committee in the Municipal Council, announced that the committee held discussions with relevant parties about the possibility of using waste tires to treat and fill dangerous potholes in the streets.

This solution aims to quickly and effectively dispose of the huge amounts of waste tires generated each year so as to ensure safety of people and the environment. Additionally, the committee examined strategies for reducing tire fires and the role of the fire brigade in this effort.

Al-Farsi said during the first workshop organized by the committee in the municipal council on Wednesday, titled "Tire Dumps and Their Impact on Public Health and Environmental Safety," that the workshop discussed the random disposal of used tires in the Al-Salmi area and the outbreak of fires in them from time to time, causing fumes and substances harmful to health

and the environment.

She indicated that countries around the world, including Kuwait, face great challenges in preserving the environment and reducing



pollution through recycling and waste treatment.

She explained that the International Basel Convention on strategies for dealing with hazardous waste developed a comprehensive

table of the benefits and drawbacks of methods for the environmentally sound disposal of waste.

Al-Farsi noted that the disposal of used tires in Kuwait still relies on randomly dumping them in landfills or in the desert, stressing that the seriousness of the issue lies in the outbreak of successive fires in these tires and their negative effects on the environment.

Al-Farsi stressed the need for cooperation between all concerned parties in the country to develop sustainable environmental solutions to the problem of Al-Salmi tires, in a way that contributes to improving the environmental conditions and provides opportunities for entrepreneurs and factory owners in Kuwait.

She emphasized that investment in waste management and treatment aligns with the strategic goals of the State of Kuwait in improving the quality of life and sustaining and preserving resources.

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Digital Economy's Growing Time Tax



Diane Coyle

Professor of Public Policy at the University of Cambridge, is the author of *Cogs and Monsters: What Economics Is, and What It Should Be*, and the forthcoming *The Measure of Progress: Counting What Really Matters*

Despite the rapid proliferation of artificial-intelligence chatbots and virtual assistants, finding an answer to a question that a company's software is not programmed to address can be frustrating. Searching through countless options on price-comparison websites for the best insurance policy or airline ticket can be equally exhausting. Yet, we tend to view this 'time tax' as the cost of doing business in today's digitized global economy.

To be sure, we already spend much of our time online for both work and leisure. Internet users in the United States spend roughly eight hours per day online on activities like video meetings, shopping, or watching shows and movies on streaming services. But digital technologies also consume our waking hours in subtler ways, allowing companies to offload onto users tasks that their employees previously performed. Consider, for example, the automated checkouts that allow us to scan and bag our groceries. This reduces the need to hire cashiers, enabling supermarket chains to save on wage costs, boost revenues, and enhance productivity. It might even save consumers some time by shortening queues. Still, this represents a shift from paid labor to unpaid work by customers.

Or consider filing a tax return. Many Americans today use software like TurboTax to file their annual taxes. While this might save consumers time and money, enabling them to avoid paying for an accountant or tax expert, it also represents a shift away from paid professionals to self-service.

These trends may provide an early indication of the potential labor-market disruption caused by large language models and machine learning. A 2023 study suggests that nearly 20 percent of US workers, particularly high-income earners, are vulnerable to automation. But a comprehensive assessment of the AI



revolution's costs and benefits must also account for its impact on what economists call the "household account": our personal (unpaid) time and valuable but non-monetized domestic work.

Moreover, while AI may help companies reduce costs and boost profit margins, these gains are not necessarily shared with consumers. For example, are stores using automated checkouts charging lower prices or providing better service than their less automated counterparts?

“ While AI may help companies reduce costs and boost profit margins, these gains are not necessarily shared with consumers. For example, are stores using automated checkouts charging lower prices or providing better service? ”

In fact, there seems to be little evidence that these technologies have actually benefited consumers. While the digital economy has provided us with valuable free services, it has also enabled companies to extract money from users by obscuring prices and quality through overly complicated designs, 'dark patterns' — interfaces meant to manipulate users into making poor decisions — and potentially

collusive algorithmic pricing models.

But the real question is why digital innovation has not led to meaningful improvements in domestic productivity. The washing machine, as the late physician and statistician Hans Rosling famously argued, was one of humanity's greatest innovations because it saved caregivers — the vast majority of them women — a huge amount of time and effort. So far, the digital revolution has not produced a similar time-saving breakthrough.

One possible explanation is that it is

attention to these data.

Fortunately, researchers are working to bridge this gap. University of Kansas economist Misty Lee Heggeness, for example, is currently developing a 'dashboard' of indicators on care work in the US. Similarly, the London-based Economic Statistics Centre of Excellence is exploring ways to analyze time-use data to measure household activity.

As MIT economist Erik Brynjolfsson has argued, a new 'GDP-B' metric is required to capture the benefits of free digital services such as online search and email. Similarly, we need a measure, let us call it 'GDP-H' — that accounts for activity in the unpaid economy. The goal of such a metric would be to provide an accurate picture of economic activity. At present, we overlook much of the value that technology creates or destroys simply because it is not monetized.

While measuring the frictions created by today's digital technologies remains challenging, they take up an increasingly large portion of our daily lives. With AI-powered automation looming on the horizon, it is crucial to ensure that technological advances simplify life rather than complicate it and that the benefits are accessible to all.

To achieve this, the AI industry must generate more value than it destroys. While major new technologies are always disruptive, their social acceptance hinges on their ability to improve people's lives in meaningful ways.

PAAET reverses decision on distance learning for summer semester

The cancellation of the distance-learning decision was welcomed by academics and activists, who praised PAAET's commitment to achieving quality education and prioritizing the interests of students.

PAAET Director Dr. Hassan Al-Fijam has decided to resume in-person classes at the authority's colleges and institutes starting Tuesday, for the remainder of the 2024/2023 academic year.

The Public Authority for Applied Education and Training (PAAET) initially decided to implement distance learning for the remainder of the summer semester. However, this decision faced criticism from academics and activists, who argued that distance learning would

compromise the quality of education.

In a commendable move, PAAET has reversed its decision. PAAET Director Dr. Hassan Al-Fijam has announced that in-person classes at the authority's colleges and institutes will resume starting tomorrow, Tuesday, and will continue until the end of the 2024/2023 summer semester. PAAET is still urging cooperation and commitment to rationalizing the use of electricity in offices, halls, buildings, and facilities affiliated with the authority during



working hours from 11 am to 5 pm.

This is in line with the general direction of the state to conserve electricity and reduce consumption.

The cancellation of the distance-learning decision was welcomed by academics and activists, who praised PAAET's commitment to achieving quality education and prioritizing the interests of students. They commended PAAET's willingness to listen to the demands of specialists in the field.

Why Young Europeans Are Embracing the Far Right



Ngairé Woods
Dean of the Blavatnik
School of Government at the
University of Oxford.

Progressives have long counted on young people to champion their causes. Just five years ago, young Europeans voted for parties advocating climate action, social justice, and democratic reform. But this may no longer be a viable political strategy. June's European Parliament elections showed that many young voters have shifted to the far right, enabling Eurosceptic, anti-immigrant, and anti-establishment parties to make significant gains.

This trend is not confined to Europe. Young Kenyans protesting new taxes stormed Parliament this month, and several were killed when the police opened fire. Around the world, a new youth politics is emerging. While not always aligned with the far right, this movement is often anti-status quo, serving as a powerful warning to politicians about the need to reconsider both their message and their medium in appealing to disaffected young voters.

These voters' rightward shift is apparent across the European Union. After overwhelmingly supporting the Greens in 2019, over 16 percent of German voters under 25 voted for the far-right Alternative für Deutschland (AfD) in this year's European elections, putting the party in second place behind the center-right Christian Democrats and well ahead of Chancellor Olaf Scholz's Social Democrats. In France, 30 percent of the youth vote went to Marine Le Pen's far-right National Rally. This outcome was in line with the 2022 presidential election runoff, when Le Pen won 39 percent of voters aged 18-24 and 49 percent of those aged 25-34.

Meanwhile, 21 percent of Italian voters aged 18-34 helped Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni's Brothers of Italy win a strong mandate to pursue its agenda. In Spain, the ultra-conservative Vox party increased its share of the youngest voters (under 25) to 12.4 percent. By contrast, the far-right Sweden Democrats came in fourth, despite winning 10 percent of voters aged 22-30.

Europe's swing to the right has led many politicians to harden their positions on issues like immigration. But young voters' growing support for xenophobic, anti-EU, and ultra-conservative parties is driven less by anti-immigrant sentiment than by a powerful sense of betrayal by establishment politicians. As older generations, who have

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lived economically secure lives, consume a growing share of government budgets through generous pensions and health care, young Europeans grapple with a cost-of-living crisis and dwindling economic prospects.

This growing frustration can be partly attributed to EU politicians' failure to ensure stable, well-paid jobs for young people. Youth unemployment among Europeans aged 15 to 24 reached 13.8 percent in 2023. In Spain, the rate was 27.9 percent, compared to 27.7 percent in Greece, 20.7 percent in Italy, and 18.9 percent in Sweden.

for the far right has increased across the bloc amid growing evidence that no matter how hard they work, most young people will end up poorer than their parents.

The problem extends beyond the labor market. In many European countries, young people are also navigating a housing crisis, overcrowded classrooms, and struggling health-care systems. In the face of rising rents, exorbitant tuition fees, and stagnant real wages, young voters are increasingly asking themselves who will address their concerns. Far-right politicians, while wrongly blaming

interactions. His famous observation that "the medium is the message" is even more pertinent in the age of platforms like TikTok, which enable far-right demagogues to tailor their messaging to young people.

What veteran politicians who mistake social media for a broadcast medium fail to understand is that it can be a powerful tool for fostering engagement, bonding, and identity formation. But politicians who view social media as a round-the-clock focus group, shaping their policies according to voters' whims and immediate reactions, are just as dangerous as those who ignore it entirely.

By fueling shared grievances, social media can help political movements expand and rally supporters. For example, while Scholz belatedly joined TikTok in April, the German far right has used the platform to create a powerful narrative — some might say an alternative universe — that speaks to young voters' fears and anxieties. Consequently, many EU policymakers feel increasingly isolated as they try to do their jobs while online groups mobilize against them.

As a generation of young voters spends much of its time on platforms like YouTube, TikTok, and Instagram — in the United States, teens spend an average of 4.8 hours per day on social media — the result could be a toxic political cocktail. To win back disaffected young people, political leaders must offer them a future they can believe in and embrace the media platforms where young people live.

“Media theorist Marshall McLuhan highlighted that the medium through which people communicate shapes their interactions. His observation that ‘the medium is the message’ is even more pertinent in the age of platforms like TikTok, ”

To be sure, there has been some progress in addressing the problem. Youth unemployment in France declined from 25 percent in 2016 to 15.7 percent in 2023; in Italy, it fell from 42.7 percent in 2014 to 22.8 percent in 2024; in the Netherlands, it decreased from 13.2 percent in 2013 to 8.7 percent in 2023; and in Germany, it dropped from 15.5 percent to 6 percent between 2005 and 2023. Even so, support

immigration, at least recognize that there is a problem, and they are doing so in ways that resonate with younger voters.

Social media is a prime example. In the 1960s, media theorist Marshall McLuhan highlighted the importance of how messages are communicated, not just what is being said. The medium through which people communicate, he argued, shapes their



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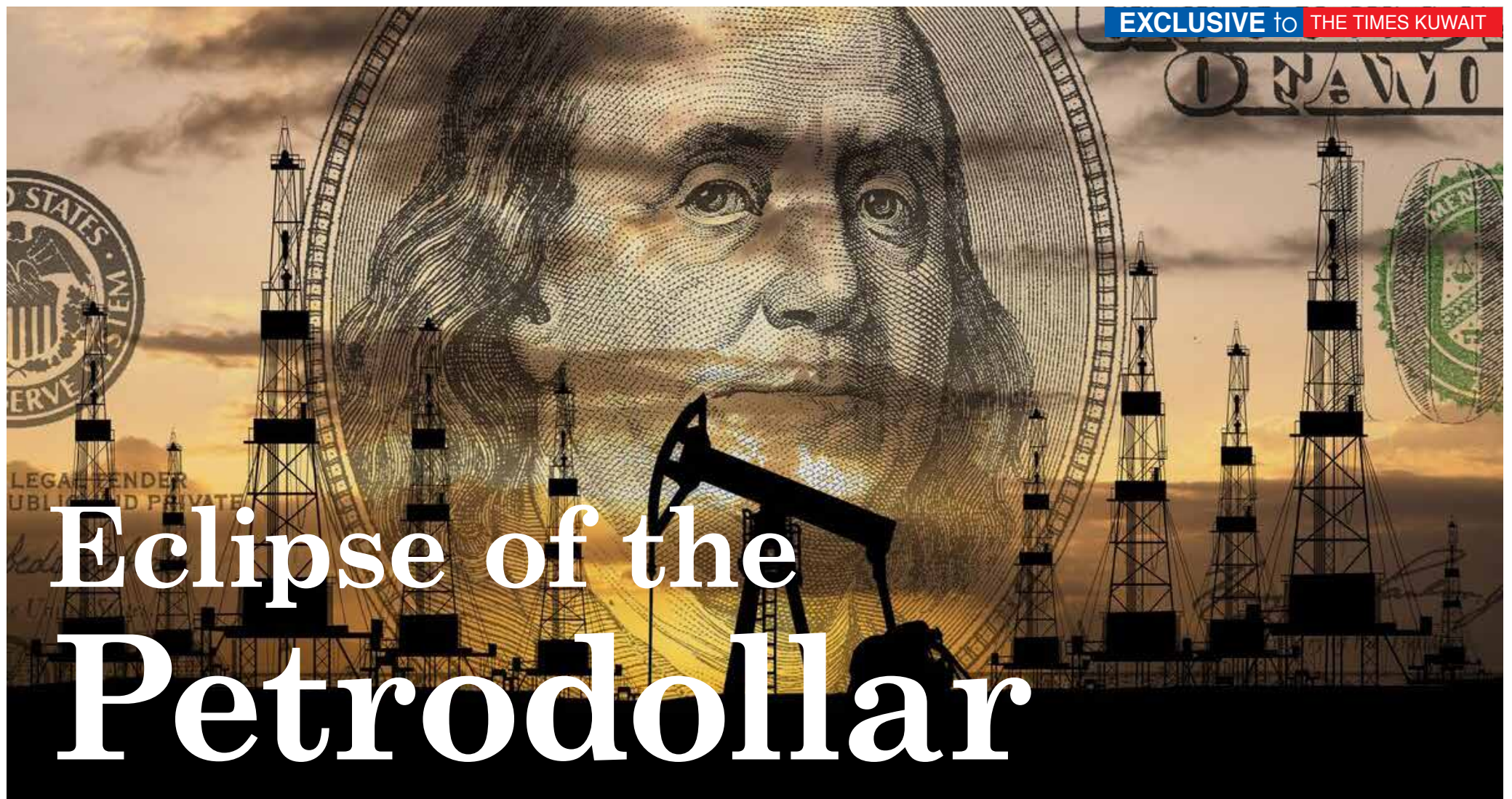
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Eclipse of the Petrodollar



Hippolyte Fofack

A former chief economist and director of research at the African Export-Import Bank, is a Parker fellow with the SDSN at Columbia University, a research associate at the Harvard University Center for African Studies, a distinguished fellow at the Global Federation of Competitiveness Councils, and a fellow at the African Academy of Sciences.

Much of the reporting earlier this month about the 'non-renewal' of a decades-old 'petrodollar agreement' between Saudi Arabia and the United States was riddled with inaccuracies and half-truths. Some outlets even went so far as to allege that Saudi Arabia would "stop using the US dollar for oil sales." Still, despite these errors, and although the dollar remains dominant, the momentum for de-dollarization is building, reflecting broad geopolitical and macroeconomic shifts.

The petrodollar system — whereby oil is priced in dollars and oil-exporting countries invest surplus revenues in dollar-denominated assets — emerged in the mid-1970s, after US President Richard Nixon ended the greenback's convertibility into gold. This helped smooth the transition to the post-Bretton Woods system of floating exchange rates. More crucially still, it cemented the dollar's position as the world's reserve currency and delivered decades of prosperity for Americans, who benefited from being the preferred market for global corporations in a context of increasing global demand for the greenback and capital inflows into the US.

The arrangement is rooted in a secret 1974 deal between Saudi Arabia and the US: the Saudis would recycle their petrodollars in US Treasuries in exchange for an American security

guarantee, thus creating a strategic alliance that has shaped global politics for decades. By the next year, all of OPEC had agreed to price oil in dollars and invest in US government debt, allowing American banks to extend loans to countries in the Global South amid increasing financial-market deregulation.

As oil became the crucial resource for powering economic growth, industrialization, and technological advancement, oil-importing countries needed dollars to pay for their energy. At the same time, the global population boom increased demand for manufactured goods and oil, further strengthening the dollar's position. By 2000, more than 70 percent of all foreign-exchange reserves were held in dollars, which dominated international trade (dollar invoicing encouraged exporters to borrow dollars to hedge and importers to borrow dollars for working capital) even as the industrialized Asian economies eroded America's share of it.

Though the dollar's dominance was not without challenges — most notably the

French economist Jacques Rueff put it.

More recently, however, there have been moves toward de-dollarization. Central banks more than doubled their gold purchases between 2021 and 2022, and maintained a similar level in 2023. Equally important, local-currency settlement (LCS) for bilateral trade has become more common. In 2023, India made its first-ever rupee payment for crude oil from the United Arab Emirates, and China used the renminbi to settle around half of its cross-border trade and investment, leveraging its Cross-Border Interbank Payments System and the currency-swap agreements that the People's Bank of China has signed with more than 40 central banks.

The shift away from petrodollars can be attributed to several factors. Before 2000, the US was the world's biggest trading partner to more than 80 percent of the world's countries, whereas now that number has dropped to less than 30 percent, and China has largely assumed America's previous role. The global energy

extensive use of sanctions has highlighted the political and financial risks of relying on the greenback as a reserve currency, medium of exchange, and a unit of account. De-dollarization is increasingly seen as the best way to mitigate these risks and enhance growth. As a result, countries are diversifying their foreign-exchange reserves: In 2022, the dollar's share of global reserves fell ten times faster than over the previous two decades, to 58 percent, from 73 percent in 2001.

Meanwhile, digitalization has facilitated the use of LCS for cross-border trade and payments, bypassing the constraints associated with dollar funding and strengthening financial resilience. For example, the central banks of Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore, and Thailand recently implemented a QR-code-based system that allows residents to make digital cross-border payments without using a vehicle currency.

The acceleration of de-dollarization is undeniable. The International Monetary Fund found that, in 125 economies, the median usage of renminbi in cross-border payments with China increased from 0 percent in 2014 to 20 percent in 2021; for a quarter of these economies, renminbi usage has risen to 70 percent. The shift away from petrodollars is an important factor. In 2023, one-fifth of global oil trade was settled in non-dollar currencies. And Saudi Arabia's deepening energy ties with China have led to long-term oil-trading contracts denominated in renminbi ('petroyuan').

In an emerging multipolar world, digitalization is enabling economies to develop alternative payment mechanisms. The Federal Reserve Bank of New York recently acknowledged that a small group of countries have "declining dollar shares in official reserves," while a handful of central banks are increasing gold purchases.

As geopolitical risks continue to erode trust, these numbers will keep rising. Drawing on digitalization to create a plurilateral framework for settling cross-border transactions in local currencies will be crucial to avoiding a costly fragmentation of the global payments system in a multipolar world.

“ America's use of sanctions has highlighted the political and financial risks of relying on the dollar as a reserve currency, medium of exchange, and a unit of account. De-dollarization is increasingly seen as the best way to mitigate these risks ”

financialization of the US economy and the precipitous decline in domestic manufacturing — the benefits that accrued to America were immense. The influx of foreign capital into US Treasuries supported low interest rates and a robust bond market, turning Wall Street into the world's preeminent financial center. Today, around 70 percent of foreign-currency debt is dollar-denominated. Moreover, issuing the world's reserve currency meant the US did not have to worry about trade deficits, allowing its economy "to give without taking, to lend without borrowing, and to acquire without paying", as the

landscape has also changed significantly. The US used to rely heavily on Saudi Arabia for oil, but its shale boom in the mid-2000s put the country on the path to energy independence. Now China is the leading importer of Saudi oil, although many countries, including Saudi Arabia itself, are embracing renewables to accelerate the green transition.

The rise of the Global South, thanks to increasing technology diffusion and globalization of value chains, and heightened geopolitical tensions are driving the world toward a multipolar order, while America's



EXCLUSIVE to THE TIMES KUWAIT

Embracing the AI-Energy-Climate Nexus



Sultan Al Jaber

The United Arab Emirates' Minister of Industry and Advanced Technology, is COP28 President, CEO of ADNOC, and Chairman of Masdar.



Six months ago, at the United Nations Climate Change Conference in Dubai (COP28), the world transcended geopolitical divides — something few believed possible — and united behind a realistic plan, known as the UAE Consensus, to promote sustainable prosperity and address the threat of climate change. Nearly 200 governments and all sectors of the global economy coalesced around a practical, science-based pathway for achieving low-carbon economic growth while keeping 1.5° Celsius within reach.

The key to the agreement's success was inclusivity: no one was excluded, no industry was sidelined, and no solution was off the table. As we move to implementation, the world must leave no stone unturned to accelerate progress. Specifically, that means embracing artificial intelligence, which promises to have a far-reaching, transformational impact on the energy transition and is projected to add \$7 trillion to global GDP over the next ten years.

It is difficult to overstate the potential of AI in the fight against climate change. This evolving technology can change the pace of progress by redesigning industrial processes, optimizing transport systems, maximizing energy efficiency, and minimizing emissions at scale. AI will also strengthen our adaptive resilience through innovations in agriculture, water security, and health.

But AI development will necessarily lead to a surge in energy demand. Resolving the contradiction between AI's thirst for electricity

dips in usage. In material sciences, researchers are using AI to identify the molecular structures best suited for carbon capture. The technology is also transforming agriculture, another energy-intensive sector, by analyzing micronutrients, enhancing crop yields, and minimizing water use by as much as 40 percent. Over the next five to ten years, AI is expected to enable breakthroughs in fusion, hydrogen, and modular nuclear power, long-term battery storage, and as-yet-unimagined climate solutions.

The flipside to AI's transformative potential is its insatiable energy consumption, which is putting additional stress on an already-stretched power system. Since 2019, emissions from the largest AI firms have increased by roughly 30 percent. By 2030, demand for data-center power worldwide is expected to grow by 160 percent, owing to the technology's vast processing needs, and these new operations could consume as much electricity as Canada, implying a doubling of carbon dioxide emissions. Bridging this gap will be difficult, as no single energy source is currently capable of meeting such a huge leap in demand.

Major tech companies are starting to collaborate with energy companies to face this challenge head-on. In May, Microsoft and Brookfield closed a deal to develop 10.5 gigawatts of renewable capacity by 2030. Masdar, the United Arab Emirates' leading renewable-energy company, is on track to quadruple its capacity to 100 gigawatts by 2030 and is exploring opportunities to supply the tech sector with clean electricity. There is also increased investment in nuclear-powered data centers, although these will take decades to build. In the interim, up to 200 billion cubic meters of natural gas — the least carbon-intensive fossil fuel — per year will be needed, as will significant investment in global grid infrastructure to cope with increased demand.

Adopting a holistic approach is critical to addressing these problems and reaping AI's potential benefits. To that end, I am convening a 'Change Makers Majlis' — a majlis being a traditional gathering that encourages the exchange of diverse perspectives — in Abu Dhabi in November to discuss AI and the energy transition. Business leaders from the energy and technology sectors, policymakers, investors, and civil-society organizations will come together to reimagine the relationship between energy, AI, and inclusive economic growth.

The UAE has an established track record as a responsible energy supplier. Given our commitment to sustainable development, and our emergence as an AI leader — with

investment platforms like MGX, infrastructure developers like G42, and the region's largest and fastest-growing large language model, Falcon — we are keen to bring all relevant stakeholders together on an issue of profound importance

to all humanity. By building a bridge between energy and AI, we can help realize the UAE Consensus and, in doing so, take advantage of the greatest economic opportunity since the First Industrial Revolution.

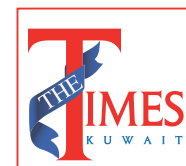
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and its potential to accelerate a just transition will require technology and energy firms to cooperate in new and creative ways.

There are grounds for optimism. AI is already driving efficiency gains across industries. Through AIQ, its technology joint venture with G42 and Presight, ADNOC has used predictive maintenance and machine-learning tools to reduce carbon dioxide emissions by up to a million tons in just one year. Other power companies are using neural networks to mitigate the intermittency and storage challenges of renewable energy by forecasting weather patterns and preempting peaks and



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Thought for the week

“To ask what causes poverty is like asking what causes cold. It is the absence of energy. Similarly, poverty is the absence of wealth. We should ask, "what are the causes of wealth?"

- Madsen Pirie
British Researcher and Author

Heal your nails with special food

Ask Mira: Eating Right to Live Happy & Healthy



Broken Nails? I suffered from that problem, and changing a bit of my food choices helped me a lot. So, this week's subject is mainly for you ladies out there, more specifically for those who suffer from broken nails. Growing strong nails might be a bit hard and might take some time.

Good nutrition and essential vitamins and minerals intake will help you a lot to see faster results. You just need to choose the most nutritious food that will help your nails grow stronger and longer.



More protein, more iron, more Vitamin B6 and B12: Nails problems are a sign of protein deficiency. So, you need to increase your protein intake from the best sources like animal products such as meat and cheese, but also vegetarian protein sources may actually be more nutritionally beneficial due to their low saturated and fatty content. Beans, peas, lentils and legumes are rich in protein but are also very lean, so make them a great part of any nutrition for nails plan.

More zinc-rich food: Zinc plays a significant role in growth and development of our cells. Zinc deficiency has a serious impact and causes skin problems, hair loss,

abnormal discolorations of your nails, diarrhea, impaired taste sensation and reduced appetite! Teenagers have the highest risk of this deficiency as zinc is used at higher rates when the body is at maximum growth. Increase your consumption of oysters which is extremely high zinc. Chocolate and sesame seeds are also good sources of zinc, along with pumpkin and watermelon seeds.

More calcium and Vitamin D: The deficiency of calcium and Vitamin D causes your nails to lose their strength. They become dry and broken. You can find calcium and Vitamin D in green leafy vegetables, dairy products, sesame seeds, sardines, chicken, whole eggs, enriched cereals. A daily supplement can even help.

Last but not least, the best way is to always provide your body with all the varied and important nutrients by eating a well-balanced diet. You will need plenty of protein, fresh fruits and vegetables. Water intake is also important, as it provides moisture for your nails.

We are what we eat. And what we eat actually does affect the appearance of these external parts of our bodies.



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



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

RECIPE

Crispy Spinach Chaat



Chaat is a savory snack that originated in India, which is occasionally served as an appetizer in restaurants, but is a regular feature of many wayside stalls in cities across the country. The spinach chaat is a fresh take on the popular fare and is served as a tea-time snack at homes and parties. Spinach chaat is a delicious assembly of crispy batter fried spinach leaves and is a gluten-free appetizer.

Total time: 15 to 20 minutes
Serving: 4 people

Ingredients:

For the batter:

- 1 cup chickpea flour (besan)
- 1 tbsp rice flour
- 15 spinach leaves (medium-sized)
- Water as needed to make a thick batter
- Salt to taste
- 1/2 tsp red chili powder
- 1/4 tsp turmeric powder
- 1 tsp carom seeds
- Pinch of asafoetida
- Small pinch of baking soda
- Oil for deep frying

For the chaat:

- 1 cup sweetened curd (yogurt) (whisked)
- 2 tbsp tamarind chutney
- 2 tbsp coriander, mint chutney
- 1 tsp chaat masala
- 1/4 tsp red chili powder
- For garnish:
- Masala peanuts
- Few pomegranate kernels
- Coriander leaves (finely chopped)

Instructions:

- To make Crispy Spinach
- Add water, salt, asafoetida, baking soda and spices to chickpea flour to make a thick flowing batter and set aside
- Heat oil and coat the spinach leaves with batter and deep fry until golden brown and crisp

Assembling the Chaat:

- Arrange crispy spinach in a plate
- Pour sweetened curd and both chutneys over the crispy spinach
- Sprinkle chaat masala, and red chili powder over the leaves
- Garnish with peanuts, pomegranate kernels and coriander leaves
- Serve immediately, as the dish is not suitable for reheating or freezing



Chef Chhaya Thakker

Indian Chef Chhaya Thakker, who has a huge following online on WhatsApp and YouTube will be sharing her favorite recipes and cooking tips with readers of The Times Kuwait. For feedback, you can write to editortimeskuwait@gmail.com

Soaring temperatures increase heat-related risks

Summer has arrived early this year in Kuwait; it announced its arrival on 1 June with a record 49 degree C temperature, more than four degrees higher than the average for this time of the year. But Kuwait is not an exception; higher than normal temperatures have been recorded in many cities around the world. Higher than usual temperatures in the holy city of Mecca, Saudi Arabia, during this year's annual Hajj pilgrimage in June, led to over 1,300 people dying from heat-related causes.

Although summers are associated with an increase in temperatures, weather experts say that continued global warming and climate change will likely lead to the world experiencing earlier and longer summers with higher temperatures. In addition to the warnings by climate and meteorological scientists, health experts caution that increasing summer temperatures could also lead to a surge in heat-related, as well as other health risks.

According to the World Health Organization (WHO), during the 2000–2019 period, around 489,000 heat-related deaths occurred each year, with 45 percent of these in Asia and 36 percent in Europe. In Europe alone in the summer of 2022, an estimated 61,672 heat-related excess deaths occurred. Health experts point out that it is critical for everyone to understand the health risks that can come with extreme heat and take precautionary measures. The negative health impacts of heat are predictable and largely preventable with specific public health and multi-sectoral policies and interventions, as well as by preventive measures taken by individuals. To raise public awareness on the harm that high heat can have on the body, and to help prepare for what could be warmer summers in the years ahead, here we publish some of the ways that heat increases risks to specific organs of the body, and also share insights on how to stay cool during the warmer summers ahead.

Temperature extremes affect health by compromising the body's ability to regulate its internal temperature. Loss of internal temperature control can result in various illnesses, including heat cramps, heat exhaustion, heatstroke, and hyperthermia from extreme heat events. Temperature extremes related to heat can also worsen chronic conditions such as cardiovascular disease, respiratory disease, cerebrovascular disease, and diabetes-related conditions.

Specific sections of the population are at a higher risk of experiencing health issues in hot weather. These include infants and young children, elderly people, pregnant women, and people with chronic health conditions, as well as those working outdoors in high temperatures. Infants and young are especially vulnerable as their bodies cannot regulate body temperature, and they cannot request or access fluids on their own. The elderly, in particular those with underlying health conditions, are also at increased risk.

But, no matter what your age, no one is immune to health risks from heat, and understanding the symptoms and early signs of heat related illness can help protect yourself, and anyone around you who may be at a higher risk, from more severe health outcomes. Some of the most common health risks that can increase when temperatures are higher include:

Migraine attacks: Data indicates that migraine attacks affect 12 to 15 percent of the general population, and the effects can be debilitating. Heat adds to the inflammatory effects that can prolong migraines, moreover, in higher temperatures, people may be dehydrated which decreases the ability of their bodies to ward off a migraine attack.

Migraines should not be confused as 'severe headaches', even though throbbing headaches are a symptom of migraine. Other signs of migraine include heightened sensitivity to light and sound, irritability, seeing odd shapes or hearing things ahead of a migraine, nausea, and dizziness.

Heart attacks: This is another risk that increases with rising temperature. Research published in 2023 suggested that cardiovascular disease deaths caused by heat could surge by an estimated 162 percent by mid-century (2036-2065). Heart attacks occur when blood flow to the heart is impaired.

When we are exposed to heat and especially temperatures higher than our body temperature, the heart has to work a lot harder to pump the blood out toward the skin to allow for sweating and other cooling mechanisms that the body utilizes to protect from heat. The increased work-load on the heart can reduce blood supply and lead to heart attacks and other heart problems in those at risk. Symptoms of a heart attack could include pain or pressure in the chest, arm pain, shortness of breath, nausea, lightheadedness. If you are anyone you witness is experiencing



these symptoms call the emergency medical services or seek the nearest medical facility. Stroke: Another heart ailment that could arise from higher heat is stroke, a condition where blood flow to the brain is suddenly interrupted. A 2020 study indicated that weather conditions, including high temperatures, are becoming a novel stroke risk factor. The authors noted that there can be a lag period of one to six days between weather exposure and stroke.

Similar to the cause for a heart attack, extreme heat puts additional stress on the body, which can lead to an increased incidence of stroke, especially among the elderly and those with other risk factors such as high blood pressure.

Symptoms include weakness of arms or legs, especially on one side, vision changes, facial droop, slurred speech, difficulty walking or feeling off balance.

Heat-stroke: Yet another heat-related risk that increases with an uptick in temperatures is heat stroke. Heat-stroke should not be confused with stroke or heat exhaustion, but the three are related. Heat stroke is when your body overheats due to surrounding heat and the core body temperature rises to over 40 degrees C. This particularly impacts those working outdoors in high temperatures. Heatstroke is a medical emergency, and usually includes symptoms such as confusion, altered behavior, a change in speech, and even seizures.

Heat exhaustion: This is your body's warning sign that it is overheating. Symptoms like headache, dizziness, and nausea signal the need to cool down and rehydrate with fluids and electrolytes. If you are working outdoors and feel symptoms of heat exhaustion, seek shade immediately, take a rest, apply cool compresses, and rehydrate with fluids, but avoid caffeine drinks that can make dehydration worse.

Kidney disease: This condition affects millions of people

around the world, and a research in 2022 suggested a significant association between kidney disease-related emergency room visits and extreme heat exposure. The study, which is based on more than a million kidney disease-related emergency room visits in New York from 2005 to 2013, showed that there was a stronger association between increased heat and visits by people with acute kidney injuries, kidney stones, and urinary tract infections.

The kidneys help our body regulate fluid. But with excessive heat leading to excessive sweating, in addition to the other stressors on the body, kidney problems can worsen. Additionally, kidneys need fluids to function, and higher heat can lead to dehydration which reduces fluids available to kidneys.

Higher or lower blood pressure: Another health risk from increased high heat is that blood pressure can become too low or too high. As you sweat more heavily in higher temperatures, your body loses fluids and blood volume which can lead to a drop in blood pressure. In addition, dehydration's strain on the kidneys can also decrease blood pressure, especially in dehydrated people. Symptoms include dizziness and lightheadedness.

On the flip side, some people may experience increased blood pressure as heat rises, as the body has to work harder to circulate blood to try to keep cool and allow for sweating and evaporation that is needed so that the body temperature does not get elevated, as can happen in heat strokes. High blood pressure can be asymptomatic but could also trigger headaches and dizziness.

Health experts offer the following guidelines to stay cool as temperatures rise.

- Know your risk for heat-related health issues
- Remain hydrated, and remember that fluid intake depends on various factors, including age and health, pregnancy, and lactation status, so it is important to stay hydrated according to your condition.
- Make sure to drink two to three cups of water before stepping out in the heat
- Avoid outdoor physical exertion if the temperature is over 34 degrees C
- Seek shade and wear protective clothing, like hats, when outdoors
- Use fans, misters, or an air-conditioned environment if available
- Watch out for signs of heat-related and other illness
- Seek medical care promptly if you are concerned

If you are feeling dizzy, weak, nauseous, or have a headache, get out of the heat, drink lots of fluids, and use a wet cloth or an ice pack. If that does not seem to work, call your doctor. If you or someone you know is experiencing an altered mental status, call emergency health services.

Better, more productive, farming through nanotechnology

Advanced technologies used in modern medicine enable healthcare professionals to control and target the delivery of medications to specific cells in the body. Research scientists are now experimenting with employing similar technologies and techniques in agriculture to improve quality and quantity of farming outputs that will be needed to meet increasing global food demands.



In the latest such research published recently, scientists at the University of California, Riverside and at the Carnegie Mellon University in the United States, have highlighted some of the best-known strategies for improving agriculture with nanotechnology.

Nanotechnology is an umbrella term for the study and design of nano-sized products. A nanometer is one billionth of a meter, or about 100,000 times smaller than the width of a human hair. Extensive studies have been conducted on

using nanotechnology to deliver drugs to specific cells in the body that need them most. However, similar studies on using nanotechnology in agriculture have so far not been tried on a large scale.

Currently the techniques employed to deliver agrochemicals to agricultural crops and plants are inefficient, for instance, nearly half of all fertilizer applied on farms is wasted as it does not reach the targeted crops, instead they end up harming the environment. The wastage is even worse in the case of pesticides, where it has been found that only 5 percent of applied pesticides reach their intended targets, with the rest ending up contaminating the environment.

Agriculture currently accounts for up to 28 percent of global greenhouse gas emissions (GHG). Ironically, the role of agricultural GHG emission also speeds up global warming that leads to extreme weather events, such as floods and droughts that cause agriculture outputs to suffer. The use of nanotechnology in agriculture could enhance the delivery of fertilizers and other essential nutrients, improve plant resilience to adverse conditions, and help raise global agricultural output.

In their review, the researchers highlight specific approaches borrowed from nanomedicine that could be used to deliver pesticides, herbicides, and fungicides to specific biological targets. These include coating nanomaterials with sugars or peptides that recognize specific proteins on plant cells and organelles. Such innovative techniques allow scientists to take the existing molecular machinery of the plant and guide desired chemicals to where the plant needs it, for example to sites of plant pathogen infections.

Three Myths Haunting the West



Yanis Varoufakis

A former finance minister of Greece, he is leader of the MERA25 party and Professor of Economics at the University of Athens.

Confident elites reflect viable regimes. Today, elites on both sides of the Atlantic are anything but confident. For the past year, they have been rubbing their eyes in disbelief that things have turned out the way they have.

In the United States, centrists are appalled that the masses seem so ungrateful for President Joe Biden's economic successes that they are gravitating toward Donald Trump. In Europe, the sweeping gains of varieties of Trumpism at the expense of liberal icons like French President Emmanuel Macron and Germany's Greens have caused similar despondency.

Across the West, the failure of draconian sanctions to dent the Russian economy, and the resilience of Chinese tech companies in the face of severe sanctions, is stirring up a mixture of nihilism and jingoism. Three myths underpin the collective frustration of Western centrists who once took their hegemony for granted.

The first myth is that the political center is, by definition, the far right's greatest foe. The second is that of a representative agent, some fabled 'average voter', who decides elections. The third is that sanctions and tariffs would hold back China and Russia because of their dependence on Western technology, capital, and payment systems.

Each myth is worse than erroneous; all of them are misleading. Debunking them is a



necessary, if insufficient, step toward making sense of the present.

Begin with the myth of a mighty clash between the center and the far right and ask: Would Macron's rise from nowhere to become president of France have happened if Marine Le Pen and her National Front (as it was then known) were not a strong challenger? By all accounts, no. But would someone like Le Pen have become a strong challenger were it not for someone like Macron implementing policies that favor the already ultra-rich (through tax cuts and massive money printing) while

allowing austerity to take an enormous toll on at least half the population? Again, no.

While there is no doubt that Macron and Le Pen (very much like the Democrats and Trump in the US) loathe each other, their power is symbiotic. The political center's policy of state socialism for the very few and austerity for the many feeds the neo fascist right, whose rise feeds back into the center's strongest claim to be the only bulwark against neofascism.

Now consider the myth of the ungrateful average voter recklessly discounting Western economies' robust post-pandemic rebound. The only people who find Macron's political meltdown puzzling, or who blame the US masses for failing to appreciate the great economy Biden has bestowed upon them, live in a world of spreadsheets of per capita statistics and macroeconomic data. For them, a decimal point of GDP growth here and a percentage point off unemployment rates there is supposed to make all the difference.

In 1992, Bill Clinton's campaign mantra was 'It's the economy, stupid'. It still is. But the question today is: Whose economy? When you ask strugglers why they are angry at a time when GDP is growing, they reply: "Maybe your GDP is growing, but mine isn't." When you tell them that inflation has leveled off, they hit back: "Maybe your prices aren't rising, but the ones I pay are through the roof!" To put it bluntly, it is entirely logical that, in our post-2008 world, the majority's life prospects diminish amid glowing macroeconomic data.

Having overestimated their hegemony over their own populations, Western centrist elites proceeded to overestimate their power over external foes, Russia and China in particular. In both cases, the result of exercising this undeniably great power was precisely the opposite of what was intended.

In Russia's case, the unprecedented Western sanctions in response to the invasion of Ukraine proved a godsend for President Vladimir Putin. His greatest weakness had been his limited authority over Russia's oligarchs, who had been able to hedge their bets by keeping most of their loot in the West. But the sanctions gave Putin the opportunity to force them to choose between Russia and the West, sweetening that ultimatum with the prospect of taking over the lucrative businesses (such as McDonald's or IKEA) abandoned by Western corporations.

In addition, Russia's war economy, cut off from Western supply chains, led to a massive re-industrialization drive. That effort overcompensated for the severe loss of imported intermediate goods and the associated price hikes.

China's resilience has been even more of a disappointment to Washington policymakers who believed that Biden's CHIPS and Science Act, which banned anyone (not just Americans)

from selling advanced semiconductors to Chinese companies, would decisively blunt China's Big Tech firms and help the US win Cold War II. Huawei, for example, deployed superior software to squeeze more computing power out of smaller microchips, while it and other domestic chipmakers played catch-up on the hardware side. Meanwhile, the flood of low-cost and technologically superior electric vehicles and green-energy equipment caught American and European authorities off guard.

Perhaps the greatest blow to the confidence of Western elites came after the imposition of sanctions, as they struggled to convince their populations that re-shoring was happening and manufacturing was back. Only then did it dawn on them that 30 years of domestic disinvestment, both in manufacturing and in their states' ability to get things done, had left the West impotent. Wherever we look — whether the US, the United Kingdom, or

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People who find Macron's political meltdown puzzling, or who blame US masses for failing to appreciate the great economy Biden has bestowed upon them, live in a world of spreadsheets of per capita statistics and macroeconomic data.

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the European Union — we find states lacking the expertise they once had to build things; from Britain's railways and America's nuclear submarine program to green energy, public health, and much else.

The contrast with developments in Russia and China thus weighs heavily on Western policymakers, who for decades have been lured by corporate lobbyists and allied think tanks into depleting their states' capacity to do what needs to be done. Whether this bitter realization persuades them to jettison the three myths that have blinkered them for so long remains to be seen.



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