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 Chairman's Club
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15 Dining
 in KUWAIT

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Global pact for a better today, a brighter tomorrow

THE TIMES KUWAIT REPORT

World leaders gathering at the United Nations Headquarters in New York during this last week of September will have a full agenda ahead of them, as they seek to address the multiplicity of intertwined global challenges, and seize opportunities to build a better world for generations living today, as well as to safeguard the interests of future generations.

The high-level meetings will begin on 22-23 September with the pivotal Summit of the Future, a once-in-a-generation opportunity for the global community to pave a path for a more inclusive, equitable and sustainable world today, and for tomorrow. The Summit will also reaffirm commitment to the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), and accelerate the



pace to achieving them by 2030.

The summit is significant in that it provides a venue for key global powers to seek a reset in their relations, frayed in recent years from geopolitical exigencies. The high level

gathering also offers the prospect of reviving multilateralism and revitalizing international cooperation essential to deal with current and emerging crises, and to mitigate, if not avert the potential existential threats that loom ahead.

Although the summit holds immense potential, there is also a growing realization among many world leaders that the global institutions and tools, many of which were established in the 1940s and colored by the aftermath of World War II, are inadequate to address current challenges. Upgrading and restructuring global institutions is seen as critical to making them more effective, inclusive, and fit-for-purpose to address current and emerging crises.

Promoting international peace, stability and security, achieving inclusive economic growth, addressing climate change and its repercussions, tackling critical environmental challenges, bridging the widening financing gaps, and confronting the threats and opportunities of digital technologies, are some of the other issues that global leaders will aim to tackle at the two-day summit.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 8

Al Muzaini Exchange  المزيني للصيرفة

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BECOME A MILLIONAIRE

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Chairman's Club fostering leadership, youth empowerment

"We are focused on evolving the concept of the Chairman's Club from strictly business to business and leisure."

— Mohammed Al Haroun, CEO and Secretary of the Board

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The Business Year (TBY) recently met with CEO and Secretary of the Board of the Chairman's Club Kuwait, Mohammed Al Haroun, to learn more about the Club and its future plans.

Al Haroun explained at length about how the club is gradually evolving — from its earlier raison d'être of providing a discreet private space for business leaders to meet, discuss and take economically impactful decisions — to a space that blends business with leisure, and which has a long-term goal of becoming a hub for developing and executing strategies for Kuwait's future.

Can you elaborate further on your background?

I have been in the F&B business for about 20 years. I have a bachelor's degree in biochemistry and started as a quality assurance officer in airline catering. There, I learned a great deal about operations and food safety management. There are many prerequisites to fulfill before even thinking of creating a restaurant and serving a meal. Two years ago, I was brought in by the Chairman's Club to improve costs, operations, and daily workflow. With a team effort, my team has tackled the notes and provided better results, which I am proud of, and I am looking forward to more challenges.

The Chairman's Club Kuwait (CCK) was established in 2004. How has it evolved since you came on board?

The idea of the Chairman's Club was to bring business leaders into a safe space where they could meet away from the press. There might be deals taking place or meetings between friends, and because they are from large companies, meeting in public might draw unwanted attention.

Second, we want to gather decision-makers, so most clients are CEOs, chairmen/women, or business owners. To put it simply, the meetings here shape Kuwait's economy. This happens in our private club with access limited to our members and their invitees. We cater to the exclusive community and provide for their business and leisure needs. For example, they can rent the facility for a small wedding or host a birthday party.

How do you plan to bring more value to the Chairman's Club?

We have developed new standard operating procedures within the CCK. We are identifying clients' needs without them even asking. Once they walk in, we know who they are, what to put on the table, how to set up the meeting, and how they want to be addressed. Some of our clients require a private meeting and do not want to be disturbed, not even by the waiter. They want to walk in, place an order, and be left alone. We have developed a standard to know our clientele. On the kitchen side, we have also raised standards on food safety and upgraded machinery and training. There is also ongoing job training; all our employees can access two yearly courses. Completing the training, employees get promoted.

How are members of the Chairman's Club selected?

We look at what they have done for the community or how they have succeeded in their business. Our community consists of various industrial leaders, and we cover almost every sector in Kuwait. When adding a new member, we ensure they fit within the CCK community. They could be successful at their business but might need to fit in with what we are building here.

How do you plan and bring value to events?

We used to wait for an event to happen, or our members would inform us of events they wanted. Now, we are taking the initiative to create events and have planned monthly events throughout the year. These could be a seminar, an art gallery, or a private viewing of exclusive jewelry or watches. Sometimes, we bring globally recognized speakers to host a talk and meet the Kuwaiti elite. They know that when they come here, they meet the decision-makers in the Kuwaiti business sector.

Do you offer anything for youth and future leaders?

We host youth programs to shape how our young leaders think, and plant the seeds of entrepreneurship in them. Instead of having them focused on just their careers, we also want them to focus on building up themselves. This is how we aim to shape the future. This will require persuading the government and the private sector to utilize their skills in new businesses that cater to the country's needs. We plan to host youth events related to the Chairman's Club or within our KIPCO group of companies.



Entrepreneurs are another focus area, and we can teach them how to identify numbers and read between the lines of financial statements to understand where they should enter and exit a market through our ongoing events that might include these activities that benefit our economy.

How do you envision the Chairman's Club evolving in the long term?

We are focused on evolving the concept of the Chairman's Club from strictly business to business and leisure. That change will require significant effort via events and word of mouth. In the long term, our goal is for the Chairman's Club to be where new strategies or visions for the country are developed and executed. We want to be where the seeds for big ideas are sown and applied all over Kuwait.

Mohammed Al Haroun is an F&B professional and founder of Evolve Gym, with almost 20 years of experience within the F&B industry. He is also a provisional auditor of Food Safety Management Systems (FSMS) for ISO 22000, HACCP system, and ISO 9001.

Penal code amendment introduces more severe fines, penalties

Decree-Law No. 93 of 2024 introduced last week, brings about significant amendments to the Kuwait Penal Code, imposing more severe penalties for insulting public officials, as well as protecting the human rights of prisoners.

The new provisions include a three-month jail term and a KD300 fine for insulting a public employee while on duty. Similar offenses against judges, prosecutors, police, military personnel, or guards while performing their duties, will carry a one-year prison sentence and a KD1,000 fine.

The amendments also introduced a penalty of five years' imprisonment and a fine of KD5,000 for any public employee who causes harm, physical or psychological pain, or instills fear in a person with the intent of forcing them to confess to a crime.

The new decree states:

• First Article:

The following texts shall replace the provisions of Articles (134) and (135) of the Penal Code referenced:

Article 134: Anyone who insults, whether by words or gestures, a public employee while performing their duties or because of them, shall be punished by imprisonment for a period not exceeding three months and a fine not exceeding

KD300 and not less than KD100, or one of these two penalties.

Anyone who insults, either verbally or through gestures, a judge, members of the Public Prosecution, or any member of the police force, the army, or the National Guard during the performance of their duties, or because of it, shall be punished by imprisonment for a period not exceeding one year and a fine not exceeding KD1,000 and not less than KD300, or by one of these two penalties.

Article 135: Anyone who assaults or resists a public employee with force or violence while they are performing their duties, or because of it, shall be punished by imprisonment for a period not exceeding one year and a fine not exceeding KD1,000 and not less than KD300, or by one of these two penalties.

If the assault is against any of the individuals mentioned in the second paragraph of the previous article, the penalty shall be imprisonment for a period not exceeding two years and a fine not exceeding KD2,000 and not less than KD500, five hundred dinars, or by one of these two penalties.

If the assault is committed against a member of the police force, the army, or the National Guard while they are performing their duties in the dispersal of a gathering, meeting, demonstration,

or procession, or with the intention of resisting them or disrupting their duties, the penalty shall be imprisonment for a period not exceeding five years and a fine not exceeding KD5,000, and not less than KD1,000, or by one of these two penalties.

• Second Article

A new Article No. (135) bis shall be added to the Penal Code, which reads as follows: The victim of the crimes provided for in Articles (134) and (135) of this law may not withdraw their complaint, reconcile with the accused, or grant a pardon.

• Third Article:

The following text shall replace the text of Article (53) of Law No. (31) of 1970:

Article 53: Any public employee, or any person in public service, who, either personally or through others, causes harm, physical or psychological pain, or instills fear in a person or any member of their family with the intent of forcing them to confess to a crime or to provide statements or information about it, shall be punished by imprisonment for a period not exceeding five years and a fine not exceeding KD5,000 dinars, or by one of these penalties. Any official who is present, approves, or remains silent about the commission of the act when they have the



authority to prevent it shall be subject to the same penalty.

The penalty shall be imprisonment for a period not exceeding seven years and a fine not exceeding KD10,000 and not less than KD3,000 three thousand dinars, or by one of these two penalties, if the act described in the two preceding paragraphs is committed based on any form of discrimination, regardless of its cause or type.

If torture is accompanied by an act punishable by law with a more severe penalty, the accused shall be punished with the harsher penalty. If torture results in death, the accused shall be punished with the penalty for intentional homicide.

NDHR underlines employer, employee rights and obligations

National Diwan for Human Rights (NDHR), an independent entity working in Kuwait, released last week a list of rights and obligations that employers and employees are required to follow in order to comply with the law and international human rights percepts.

The NDHR aims to promote and protect human rights, and to disseminate and enhance respect for public and private freedoms, in accordance with the rules of the Constitution, and provisions of international agreements ratified by Kuwait.

The following information is being disseminated by the NDHR in the public interest.

Rights of workers to occupational health and safety:

- Every worker has the right to work in an environment that guarantees occupational safety and health as a basic right that the worker is entitled to. As per agreements issued in this regard, the right to occupational health and safety is both an international and regional right of a worker.
- Occupational health and safety has systems

and laws that the worker must know, and the employer must provide and adhere to fully.

Obligations of employer towards foreign workers include:

- Knowing the relevant immigration laws in Kuwait that govern the hiring of foreign workers.
- Ensuring that the worker has a valid, legal contract and that they fully understand its content.
- Opening a personal bank account for each worker so as to transfer their salary monthly. This protects both the rights of an employer and the rights of the worker.
- Keeping a copy of salary receipts that show that the workers have received their salary and any transfer receipts from Kuwait.
- Giving the worker at least one day off a week.
- Paying the worker his salary as agreed, on time, and without any delay.
- Not forcing a worker to work for a job they refuse. Kuwaiti law criminalizes forced labor.
- Not keeping the worker's passport; it is criminalized by Kuwaiti law. The worker has



the right to keep his identity papers and passport with him.

- Not restricting the worker's freedom of movement, and they must not be mistreated in any kind of way.

Rights and Duties of foreign worker:

As a foreign worker you have the right to:

- Refuse to sign a contract in a language you do not understand.
- Get a copy of your employment contract.
- Know the nature of the authorities and

procedures to complete your official residence in the country.

- Receive full salary according to the contract, or in the case of an unjust salary deduction.
- Not be asked to pay a part of your income to your employer in order to allow you to work for a third party.
- Keep your passport and all your documents with you at all times.
- Receive the entire amount of salary mentioned in your work contract at the end of each month.
- Have a daily and weekly break from work.
- Read the labor law applicable to you in order to understand your rights and obligations.
- As a foreign worker it is also your duty to:
- Do your job according to what is stated in the employment contract.
- To preserve the employer's funds and belongings.

For Complaints and Grievances:

For more information or to report any violation of trafficking in person, please contact: Email: Complaint@NDHR.ORG.KW

Kuwait among countries with highest per capita food waste

New study reveals that Kuwait features prominently among countries producing the most per capita food waste.

Data from the Food Waste Index Report - 2024, compiled by Utility Bidder, the UK-based business energy consultancy, shows that food waste is an extremely prevalent problem across the world. The index, which ranks countries on the basis of average per capita household waste, shows that Portugal produces the most food waste per capita, with 124kg wasted per person. With a population of 10.4 million, Portugal is estimated to produce roughly 1.27 billion kg of food waste annually.

Other countries featured in the index for producing the highest per capita food waste include:

Switzerland, which produces the second-largest amount of food waste per capita, at 119 kg per person. With a population of around 8.78 million, Switzerland wastes over a billion kg of food.



Serbia is another European nation at the top of the food waste rankings pyramid. Serbian citizens produce an average of 108kg of food waste per citizen and the country as a whole produces 781 million kilograms of food annually. Italy ranks in fourth spot with a per capita household food waste of 107kg. Ranking fifth on the index are both Mexico and

Saudi Arabia, each producing a per capita waste of 105kg. Turkey comes in sixth place with 102kg per capita. Tying for seventh spot are Georgia, Panama, and Kuwait, each producing 101kg of household waste per capita. With a population of 4.8 million, Kuwait wastes over 485 million kilograms of food annually.

At the other end of the spectrum is Bulgaria, the Balkan nation that produces just 26kg of food waste per capita. When you compare this to the country's population of 4.7 million, which is similar to that of Kuwait, Bulgarians produce only a modest 176.28 million kg of food waste annually


James Longley, Managing Director at Utility Bidder commented: "The journey of food from production to the plate is a long one; even before food produce leaves the farm, emissions from the farm, land use, and animal feed account for 269.17kg of carbon dioxide equivalent (CO2eq) per kilogram produced.

"Farming is the stage of production that causes the most emissions. Across all the food types, 172.59 kg of CO2eq per kg is produced from this production stage. On the other hand, just 4 kg of CO2eq is produced at the retail stage.

"Emissions from farming, land use, and animal feed, along with emissions from lost produce, account for the top four most costly food production related processes for emissions. This also shows that there are environmental repercussions before and after production.

"Unsurprisingly, meat and fish ranks as the overall food group producing the most average emissions. Beef and Lamb are the most significant contributors, but shrimp, fish, pork meat and poultry all produce a considerably large amount of carbon emissions.

"Beef production has the most significant impact on the environment of any food type, as almost 100kg of CO2eq is produced for every kg of beef produced. The average cow has around 250kg of beef, and as a result, each beef cow produces almost 25,000kg of CO2eq."




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UNHCR, IOM hold forum with MoI officials on migrant protection

• Nisreen Rubaian, the UNHCR representative in Kuwait, stated that the role of the organization extends beyond fundraising and mobilizing resources for humanitarian response in collaboration with donor countries and the private sector.

• Kuwait is a state with effective institutions, both in policy and practice. It has a clear system and responsibilities, operating at the highest levels of training and readiness, said Dr. Samer Haddadin, an expert in international law.

United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and the International Organization for Migration (IOM) hosted a three-day discussion at the United Nations House in Kuwait, in cooperation with the Ministries of Interior and Defense, focusing on the protection of migrants and those seeking international protection.

The discussion session was attended by participants from relevant government agencies, including officials responsible for border crossings, law enforcement, residency investigations, and deportations.

The sessions introduced several fundamental principles of international refugee and migration law, as well as international human rights and humanitarian law, such as the principle of non-refoulement, international solidarity in burden-sharing, voluntary return to the country of origin, durable solutions, and principles related to detention and legal procedures concerning migrants and persons in need of international protection. UNHCR presented the legal foundations of international protection and emphasized the principle of non-refoulement as a cornerstone of international law. Additionally, IOM covered international migration law and the main guidelines for protecting victims of trafficking and smuggling.

Both UN agencies discussed the challenges and opportunities for improving the implementation of relevant guidelines and principles to prevent human rights violations, foster global solidarity and shared responsibility, and encourage joint collaboration to protect the rights of people on the move globally.

Nisreen Rubaian, the UNHCR representative in Kuwait, highlighted the importance of holding such sessions in Kuwait and stated: "UNHCR's role extends beyond fundraising and mobilizing resources for humanitarian response in collaboration with donor countries and the private sector. It also focuses on raising awareness about the principles of International



Human Rights Law through capacity building for local organizations and policymakers."

She explained that there are distinct mechanisms for dealing with migrants and refugees, each with its own implications. Regarding her work on the situation of expatriate workers in Kuwait, given that Kuwait is not a country of migration or asylum, she expressed her satisfaction with the Ministry of Interior's openness to joint cooperation.

For his part, IOM Chief of Mission in Kuwait, Mazen AboulHosn, emphasized the importance of enhancing international cooperation in migrant protection, saying: "Our collaboration with the Ministry of Interior has been ongoing in Kuwait for many years. We are pleased to organize this discussion session, together with UNHCR, for the National Security College to enhance the understanding and application of international migration law. This session is a testament to our commitment to highlighting protection mechanisms that cover migrants, including temporary contractual workers."

Brigadier General Mishaal Hadi Al-Huweila, Director General of the National Security College, stated that this event is specifically intended for all members of the Ministry of Interior, including male and female police officers from

the rank of Lieutenant Colonel and above. It also includes officials from the National Security College responsible for border crossings, law enforcement, managing residency violations, and overseeing deportation operations.

Meanwhile, Colonel Abdulwahab Ibrahim Al-Najada, Director of the Institute of Strategic Security Studies, emphasized the importance of these discussion sessions. He noted that this is the third collaboration with the UNHCR, involving participants from the Ministry of Interior and various ministries and state agencies. The goal is to develop solutions for various issues, enhance the efficiency of ministry employees in both administrative and field operations, and help them acquire necessary skills. He also expressed hope that participants will gain significant benefits from this discussion session.

For his part, Dr. Samer Haddadin, an expert in international law, emphasized that his participation in this workshop is a crucial part of UNHCR's global activities, including in Kuwait. His focus is on raising awareness, conducting studies, and providing training on refugee protection.

He pointed out that, as the world constantly evolves, Kuwait faces challenges similar to

those encountered by any advanced country, specifically in executing its tasks while adhering to international standards for human rights and dignity, and ensuring the welfare of its citizens and residents.

Regarding IOM's perspective on Kuwait's recent mechanisms for managing expatriate labor, acting-head of the International Organization for Migration, Imam Tarkhan noted that there are areas for development within the Ministry of Interior, which are evident at all levels. These improvements serve the interests of both residents and the state, enhancing several mechanisms and ensuring compliance with international standards for migrant protection and the broader framework of migration..

Regarding Kuwaiti care homes and their alignment with international standards, Tarkhan noted that they have conducted many tours of external shelters to observe practices in developed countries. He pointed out that Kuwait's standards for dealing with violators are very high and, in some cases, surpass those of other regional countries. These standards are in line with international norms and contribute to strengthening the capacities of shelters, which are among the strongest.

IBPC's buyer-seller meet enhances India-Kuwait trade



Indian Business and Professional Council (IBPC), under the patronage of the Embassy of India in Kuwait, successfully hosted the India-Kuwait Buyer Seller Meet in the Food & Agro Sectors in collaboration with the Federation of Indian Export Organisations (FIEO).

Held at the Crowne Plaza Hotel, the event saw an impressive turnout of importers and food and beverage professionals from across Kuwait.

Welcoming the attendees, Vice Chairman of IBPC, Kaizar T Shaker, highlighted the council's ongoing efforts to strengthen Indo-Kuwaiti trade relationship.

Emphasizing the significance of imports from

India, he noted, "According to India's Ministry of Commerce and Industry, Indian exports to Kuwait reached USD 2.1 billion during FY 2023-24, a notable increase from USD 1.6 billion in FY 2022-23. This nearly 30 percent growth demonstrates the immense potential for further economic synergy, and we are confident that future interactions will continue to foster greater cross-sector collaboration."

The event was graced by Indian Ambassador H.E. Adarsh Swaika, who commended IBPC's efforts in bridging the two business communities. He encouraged the Indian delegates to pursue business opportunities diligently, promoting deeper ties with Kuwaiti

counterparts. Also in attendance were Vice President of FIEO, Israr Ahmed, Joint Deputy Director General of FIEO, Prashant Seth, Joint Secretary of IBPC Suresh K P, and IBPC Treasurer, Sunit Arora, The Vote of thanks was delivered by Secretary of IBPC, Soly Mathew.

A key moment of the event was the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between FIEO and IBPC Kuwait, marking the beginning of an exciting new phase of cooperation. Founded in 1965 by India's Ministry of Commerce and Industry, FIEO serves as an apex body promoting Indian exports worldwide.

The event showcased a delegation of 31 Indian

Food and Agriculture companies, offering a wide array of products including fruits, vegetables, rice, millets, meat, spices, tea, coffee, eco-friendly packaging solutions, and more.

These companies presented innovative products and advancements in food processing, packaging, and sustainable agricultural practices, sparking significant interest from Kuwaiti buyers.

Kuwaiti importers were able to engage directly with the Indian businesses, exploring new trends such as alternative proteins, fortified foods, and cutting-edge preservation technologies, which are poised to unlock new market opportunities in Kuwait.

South Korea, Kuwait celebrate six decades of energy partnership

South Korea marked the arrival of its first Kuwaiti crude oil shipment in 1964, marking the beginning of a long-lasting and fruitful relationship based on mutual trust and friendship.

The Times Kuwait Report

South Korea celebrated sixty years of energy cooperation with Kuwait in March, commemorating the arrival of the first shipment of Kuwaiti crude oil to Korean shores in 1964. This milestone signaled the start of a longstanding and fruitful relationship built on mutual trust and friendship, according to Minister Counsellor of the Korean Embassy, Mr. Lee Byoung Gwan.

In a roundtable luncheon discussion with members of the media, Mr. Lee stated that South Korea and Kuwait are collaborating in several areas, including construction, clean energy, medical services, transportation, and technological advancement. He pointed out that South Korea imports nearly 100 million barrels of oil from Kuwait annually, making it the second-largest importer of Kuwaiti crude. Bilateral trade between the two countries has reached \$10 billion.

Expanding on South Korea's role in Kuwait, Economic and Commercial Counsellor Mr. Jinhang Nah mentioned that Korean companies have been involved in Kuwait's infrastructure development since the early seventies.

More recently, he pointed to the Sheikh



Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah Causeway, built by a South Korean company, as well as the Clean Fuel project and Al Zour Refinery. "There are almost sixteen large South Korean companies operating in Kuwait and involved in various development projects," Mr. Nah noted.

He expressed optimism that more projects would be announced in the near future, and that Korean companies were favorably positioned to bid for these projects, provided they meet the required company profiles.

He said that South Korean companies are now more focused on technology, including

renewable energy, smart cities, hospitals, airports, and specialized work, rather than labor-intensive projects such as road maintenance, where they would not have a competitive edge over other countries. Regarding the South Korean company managing the new Al Jahra Hospital, he confirmed that negotiations are still ongoing and he hopes that they will be finalized soon.

South Korean electric wire maker Taihan Cable & Solution completed Kuwait's first fiber optic cable factory this month as part of an offset program investment. The factory, a joint venture with Kuwaiti construction and trade

company Rank, will begin production by the end of the month.

Mr. Nah pointed out that Korean companies are keen and eager to participate in Kuwait's Vision 2035, including the development of the islands and ports. Korean companies are also involved in the petrochemical project and will continue to support various projects, from the Shagaya Solar Project to smart cities and refineries.

Regarding culture and tourism, Mr. Jinkuk Lee, the second secretary, noted that more than 2,000 Kuwaitis visited Korea in the first half of the year, and he sees an immense interest and increase in the number of tourists going to South Korea.

Kuwaiti nationals do not need a visa to visit Korea, only an online authorization, which has also been waived this year due to the Visit Korea Year 2024. There is a huge interest in Korean food, culture, and beauty products in Kuwait among the young generation, including TV programs, he noted. Regarding military cooperation, Korea has been enhancing its collaboration with countries in the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC), such as the UAE and Saudi Arabia. In line with this, Mr. Lee expressed his hope to expand military cooperation with Kuwait in the near future.



IWG brings Hawaiian vibes to Kuwait

The International Women's Group (IWG) Kuwait recently kicked off its 2024/2025 season with a lively Hawaiian Day celebration at the Crowne Plaza Hotel.

The event featured vibrant costumes, traditional Hawaiian dances, and cultural activities, celebrating Hawaiian culture and promoting cross-cultural understanding among its diverse members. The Executive Board member, Aziza Khan, served as the lively MC of the event, welcoming everyone and introducing the diverse program, starting with the new IWG President.

In her opening speech, IWG President Polina Dlamini, warmly greeted the attendees, including the ambassadors of Kenya, H.E. Halima Mohamad; Turkey, H.E. Tuba Nur Sonmez; and Sierra Leone, H.E. Hajalshata Thomas, as well as other distinguished guests and members of the press. She emphasized the importance of embracing Hawaiian culture, stating, "Today is a day for us to embrace the spirit of Aloha, which embodies love, peace, hope, and compassion amongst us."

Mrs. Dlamini expressed her enthusiasm for the upcoming season, highlighting the significance of cultural exchange and solidarity among women from different backgrounds.

She also thanked the IWG Executive Board and her three vice presidents — Baigal Bayantsagaan, Laura Duclaud Vilares, and Rana Abu Shakra. Ad-

ditionally, she expressed her gratitude to everyone who contributed to the event's success, including the Crowne Plaza Hotel for its continued support, and to key contributors such as Lulu Hypermarket, Suma, Lama Company, Al Refai, and BSK.

The Hawaiian Day festivities featured a dazzling display of traditional costumes, with some participants donning vibrant Hawaiian outfits and floral wreaths. The venue included a Hawaiian-themed village, and attendees were encouraged to explore and take pictures at various photo stations set up around the area.

Live music by Kuwaiti guitarist Hassan Joumah and performances of traditional Hawaiian dances delighted all present.

Short films showcased the beauty of natural sites and magnificent tourist destinations. At the elaborate lunch buffet, participants enjoyed a wide array of Hawaiian cuisine, including tropical fruit dishes and refreshing coconut drinks, specially prepared by the chefs at the Crowne Plaza.

To the delight of members and guests, the Hawaiian Day celebration successfully brought together women from across Kuwait, setting the tone for an exciting season ahead. As the season progresses, more cultural events filled with activities aimed at fostering understanding and exchange are anticipated.



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British Ambassador lauds outcome of JSC between UK and Kuwait

The Times Kuwait Report

British Ambassador H E Belinda Lewis hosted a media luncheon where she discussed several issues on UK-Kuwait relations and the several bilateral meetings that were held by JSC Sub-Groups, including the Defense and Political Sub-Groups.

She disclosed that the defense sub-group discussed a range of issues, including common security challenges and how to create more efficient procurement mechanisms between the UK and Kuwait.

She also revealed that the political sub-group discussed how UK and Kuwait can increase cooperation in international development and humanitarian assistance to address crises, including in Gaza, Yemen, and Sudan.

As part of extended talks held under the umbrella of the JSC, Kuwait's Deputy Foreign Minister, Sheikh Jarrah Al Jaber, and the new British Minister for the Middle East, Hamish Falconer, discussed a range of

regional and bilateral issues. The two sides also signed a memorandum of understanding under which the UK government will recommend private training providers to support the training and capacity-building programs provided by the Kuwaiti Civil Service Commission for public sector employees.

Additionally, Minister Falconer and Acting Director General of the Kuwait Fund for Arab Economic Development, Waleed Al-Bahar, signed two memoranda of understanding outlining plans to provide \$6 million to fund UNICEF's efforts to restore clean water supplies in Gaza and provide primary health care services in Yemen. This joint funding is expected to benefit approximately 2.5 million people in total.

The British Ambassador pointed out that Minister Falconer and Sheikh Jarrah also attended the main show of the Kuwait Culture Week in the UK, which was titled 'Rhythms from Kuwait', which was a stunning display of traditional Kuwaiti music and dance. Regarding the situation in

Gaza and the occupied Palestinian territories, Ambassador Lewis stressed the keenness of the British Embassy in Kuwait to work on joint initiatives with Kuwait to support the Palestinian people.

Regarding the number of Kuwaiti students in British universities, Lewis confirmed that her country is the preferred study destination for Kuwaiti students, as there are currently about 10,000 Kuwaiti students studying in UK universities, most of whom are funded through government scholarships. She added, "Kuwaitis study a wide range of courses, with cybersecurity and computer science among the most popular choices for those starting their studies this fall".

Elaborating on the latest developments on the UK-GCC Free Trade Agreement, Ambassador Lewis stressed that completing the Free Trade Agreement is a top priority for the UK government, noting that the GCC is an important market for British companies and skilled professionals. She added, "We expect negotiations

to resume soon to resolve the few remaining issues, stressing both parties' desire to continue negotiations and enhance trade cooperation."

Regarding military cooperation and joint training between the two countries, the British envoy said, "British Ministry of Defense personnel are working with their Kuwaiti counterparts to deliver two major joint exercises to test their readiness to respond to a range of threats. The first exercise is expected to take place in November 2024 and the second in February 2025."

Speaking about celebrations being held to mark 125 years of diplomatic relations between Kuwait and the United Kingdom, Ambassador Lewis stated: "After the success of the Kuwaiti Culture Week in the United Kingdom, the Embassy is looking forward to the

British Culture Week in Kuwait, which begins on 9 November.

She explained that the performances slated to be held at the Jaber Al-Ahmad Center by the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra will be one of the highlights of the British Culture Week. The British envoy also revealed that the Embassy is organizing several other events, including exhibitions showcasing British fashion designers and classic cars, and two British artists will paint murals to celebrate the 125th anniversary of diplomatic relations, adding, "One of the murals will be a collaboration between a British artist and a Kuwaiti artist and will be located in the Gold Souq in Mubarakiya, while the other mural will be a beautiful addition to the public art on display in Al-Shaheed Park, and we hope that these murals will provide lasting souvenirs of this special anniversary year."

Lumbini wins the title of 'NRNA Kuwait Volleyball Cup 2024'



By Raj Malla
Special to The Times Kuwait

The Lumbini Society Nepal Kuwait claimed victory in the "NRNA Kuwait Volleyball Cup 2024" organized by NRNA NCC Kuwait.

The tournament saw participation from 13 teams, including two teams from Bhutan. In a thrilling competition, Kalyankari Nepali Youth Society secured second place, while Nirem Group finished third.



The event was chaired by NRNA NCC Kuwait President Randhwoj Lama. The Chief Guest was Nepal's Ambassador to Kuwait, Ghanashyam Lamsal, with Bhutanese Ambassador Chitem Tenzin attending as the Special Guest. Representatives from both embassies and local community organizations were also present.

The tournament featured the largest cash prize in the history of Kuwaiti volleyball, which greatly motivated the participating players. The event also highlighted the growing interest and popularity of volleyball in the region.

Expressing gratitude to all who contributed to the successful event, NCC Kuwait Vice President and Sports Department Chief, Bikash Singh Thakuri, pledged to continue organizing similar sports activities in the future.

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Antigua and Barbuda plans to open embassy in Kuwait

H. E. Mohammed Al-Zoubi, the ambassador of Antigua and Barbuda to Kuwait, invited Kuwaitis to explore and invest in Antigua and Barbuda, highlighting its rich history, vibrant culture, 365 sun-drenched beaches, lush rainforests, and lively festivals as key attractions.

His Excellency Mohammed Al-Zoubi, the Non-resident Ambassador of Antigua and Barbuda to Kuwait, H.E. Mohammed Al-Zoubi, announced his country's plans to establish an embassy in Kuwait, pending final approvals.

In a media interview last week, Ambassador Al-Zoubi encouraged Kuwaitis to explore the vast potential for investments in his country. He pointed out that the Antigua and Barbuda government has exempted Kuwaiti passport holders of various diplomatic, special, and ordinary types from needing visas to enter its territory.

On bilateral relations with Kuwait, the ambassador revealed that there are five cooperation agreements between the two countries. These include a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on the establishment of bilateral consultations between the Ministries of Foreign Affairs, an Economic Cooperation Agreement, an Agreement on Commercial Cooperation, a Convention on Cultural and Artistic Cooperation, and a Convention on Air Services.

Inviting more Kuwaitis to visit his country, the ambassador described his country as a pair of beautiful Caribbean islands that are known for their rich history and vibrant culture. He added that the two islands are famous for their 365-days-a-year sun-drenched beaches, lush rainforests, lively festivals, and warm atmosphere. He emphasized

that these elements offer a unique experience, whether sailing in azure waters or exploring historical sites such as Nelson's Dockyard.

The ideal time to visit Antigua and Barbuda is during the dry season, particularly from December to early April. The weather during this period is perfect for beach activities, water sports, and exploring the islands' natural and historical landmarks. Additionally, major events such as Antigua Sailing Week and Antigua Carnival take place during these months.

The ambassador explained that Antigua and Barbuda's culture is characterized by its diversity and vitality, blending elements from African, British, and indigenous communities. It is renowned for its live music genres, including calypso, soca, and reggae, as well as its vibrant celebrations like the annual carnival. The culture is also marked by traditional culinary arts and distinctive dishes such as ducana and tagine pepperpot.

Turning to his country's economy, Ambassador Al-Zoubi noted that Antigua and Barbuda's economy relies heavily on tourism, which is the country's main source of income. He also pointed out that the financial services sector is an important component of the economy, providing a tax haven for foreign investors. Additionally, agriculture and fishing contribute a smaller portion to the economy.

Ambassador Al-Zoubi elaborated that

the Citizenship by Investment Program, established in 2013, was designed to fund public sector projects and support innovative entrepreneurs. It allows foreign investors to obtain permanent legal citizenship and a second passport within four to six months. He emphasized that there are two methods for obtaining an Antigua and Barbuda passport through investment: a non-refundable donation to the National Development Fund (NDF) and an investment in real estate within a project approved by the Citizenship by Investment Unit in Antigua and Barbuda.

He also underlined that the Antigua and Barbuda passport ranks 27th globally and allows its holder visa-free access to 160 countries, including those in the Schengen area, as well as the United Kingdom, China, Russia, and India. This provides a high degree of mobility and makes it a highly desirable passport.

The ambassador also pointed out that Antigua and Barbuda is a member of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM), a political and economic union of 15 countries that coordinate voting and discussions at the United Nations.

Ambassador Al-Zoubi explained that Antigua and Barbuda annually welcomes about one and a half million tourists arriving by air and sea, with most of them coming from the United States, Canada, Britain, and many European countries. The country is also ranked among the top five destinations for



wealthy expatriates who choose to invest in real estate, tourism, and the service sector, including notable figures such as Oprah Winfrey, Giorgio Armani, Richard Branson, Eric Clapton, and Robert De Niro. Antigua and Barbuda is known for its commitment to sustainability. The government has banned the use of plastic bags and non-biodegradable polystyrene sheets. Additionally, it has established the Green Corridor, a network of eco-friendly hotels, resorts, and businesses along the southwest coast of Antigua.

Remittances from Filipinos in Kuwait witnesses a fall in 2024

Data from the Central Bank of the Philippines showed remittances from Philippine workers in Kuwait falling by 2.2 percent to USD317.07 million in the first seven months of this year, down from the \$324.03 million during the same period in 2023.

On the other hand, the combined remittances of Filipino workers from the six-nation Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) bloc increased by 4 percent to total \$3.2 billion during the first seven months of 2024, compared to the \$3.08 billion remitted in the same period in 2023.



Saudi Arabia continued to account for the largest share of remittances, amounting to \$1.17 billion in the first seven months of this year, with an annual growth of 4.39 percent, compared to \$1.11

billion in the same period last year. Meanwhile, the lowest Gulf remittances came from Bahrain, totaling \$158.8 million, an annual increase of 3.6 percent from \$153.2 million in the same period in 2023.

According to the Central Bank statistics, Filipino labor remittances from GCC countries accounted for 16.55 percent of the total remittances of \$19.33 billion remitted from all countries during the first seven months of 2024.

The value of remittances arriving in the Philippines from the Middle East amounted to \$3.32 billion, with 96.22 percent coming from GCC countries. The World Bank had predicted that remittances to low- and middle-income countries would grow by up to 2.3 percent in 2024, although this growth is expected to vary across regions.

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Nepali Embassy celebrates country's National Day

Kuwait to open embassy in Nepal soon



Ambassador Samih Johar Hayat, Assistant Secretary of State for Asian Affairs, highlighted that more than 110,000 Nepalis are employed in Kuwait, playing a crucial role in the country's development and reinforcing the strong ties between the two nations.

THE TIMES KUWAIT REPORT

Ambassador of Nepal H.E. Ghana Shyam Lamsal, stated that since establishing diplomatic ties on 27 February 1972, Nepal and Kuwait have maintained and strengthened their friendly relations. "We not only sit side by side in international forums, including at the United Nations, but also work closely and cooperatively on many issues of mutual concern and interest."

The ambassador was speaking during celebrations held to mark his country's National Day, which was attended by Kuwait's Assistant Foreign Minister for Asian Affairs, Samih Johar Hayat, as well as numerous officials and heads of diplomatic missions.

For his part, Samih Johar Hayat commended the swift progress of Kuwait-Nepal relations, and added that the more than 110,000 Nepalis employed in Kuwait play a vital role in the country's development and underscore the strong ties between the two nations. He also revealed the Kuwait plans to open its embassy in Nepal shortly which would further bolster relations between the two countries.



During his address to the gathering at the National Day celebrations, Ambassador Lamsal expressed sincere gratitude to the State of Kuwait for hosting more than 123,000 Nepalis, noting that the contributions of Nepalese citizens working in Kuwait have helped strengthen relations at the grassroots level.

The ambassador also indicated his satisfaction with the steadily growing levels of trade and tourism cooperation between the two countries,

and said, "We believe this will elevate our bilateral relations to a higher level, and we are confident that our ties will continue to expand and deepen, particularly in trade, investment, tourism, culture, and people-to-people relations."

Turning to tourism in Nepal, the country's top envoy in Kuwait emphasized that Nepal's thriving tourism sector offers visitors the opportunity to experience stunning natural landscapes and a rich cultural heritage. He invited Kuwaiti friends and international travelers to discover the natural wonders of his country, from the majestic Himalayas to tranquil valleys, and to enjoy vibrant local cultures, historical sites, and warm hospitality.

The Nepali diplomat further pointed out that with the establishment of his country's new constitution, Nepal is fully prepared to embark on accelerated economic development. "The government is making every effort to create a favorable environment, including implementing necessary political and institutional reforms, to attract foreign investment. We are determined to do more to make our country a better place to do business and unleash the potential of our people."

On 20 September 2015, Nepal's Constituent

Assembly issued the new constitution, marking the successful conclusion of the peace process that began in 2006. On that day, a new chapter in Nepal's history opened. "I am honored to host this reception here in Kuwait to commemorate Constitution Day, which is also Nepal's National Day."

He added that the issuance of the new constitution fulfilled the aspirations of the Nepalese people for a constitution drafted by their elected representatives. It also transformed the country from a centralized system to a federal system, embracing the multi-ethnic, multilingual, religious, cultural, and geographical diversity that characterizes Nepal.

He stressed that the Constitution of Nepal is not only a historic achievement for the Nepalese people but also a progressive law that sets unprecedented standards for guaranteeing the rights of the people in accordance with global norms. It encompasses all the essential features of democratic and inclusive governance. Furthermore, the Constitution envisions the transformation of society through the principle of relative inclusion of all segments of Nepalese society at every level of the governance structure.

Global pact for a better today, a brighter tomorrow

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Kuwait is being represented at the Summit of the Future by the representative of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah. His Highness the Crown Prince will also attend the 79th session of the UN General Assembly scheduled for later in the week.

On arriving in New York, His Highness the Crown Prince voiced hope that the Summit would lay the groundwork and standards for collective and more effective global action in the face of the current and future challenges. He added, "The Summit will provide a chance for UN member states to recommit themselves to the principles and objectives of the UN Charter and international law, and step up reforms to the UN system and global financial institutions."

Success in forging a new global consensus at the high-level conclave will further bolster the intergovernmental action-oriented 'Pact for the Future' that leaders are expected to sign at the Summit of the Future. The latest draft version of the Pact released by the United Nations observes, among others, the following key principles: Maintaining international peace, stability and security, and full respect for international law, as well as resolving conflicts through peaceful means, must be promoted in line with the purposes and principles of the UN Charter,

Investing in building a strong foundation for peace and stability, upholding the rule of law, and respecting human rights and advancing the sustainable development goals are the most effective ways to safeguard the needs and interests of everyone today and in the future.

Undertaking comprehensive and targeted strategies to achieve inclusive economic growth and sustainable development, food security, and eradicating poverty in all its forms and dimensions, including extreme poverty, are needed to achieve global resilience and establish a strong foundation for future generations.

Recognizing that future generations represent all those yet to

be born, and acknowledging the interconnectedness between past, present and future, as well as realizing that decisions, actions, and inactions taken today have an intergenerational multiplier effect, present generations have the responsibility to safeguard the rights and interests of future generations, so as to ensure a more sustainable, just, and equitable world for generations to come.

Prioritizing solutions to adverse impacts of climate change, and addressing critical environmental challenges, as well as implementing measures to reduce disaster risk, build resilience, and reverse degradation of ecosystems, are needed for a clean, healthy and sustainable planet,

Pursuing universal respect for, and observance of, human rights and fundamental freedoms for all, including civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights, must be respected, protected and promoted, without any distinction or discrimination,

Eliminating all forms of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance, as well as achieving racial equality and the empowerment of all people, are required for a prosperous and sustainable future,

Implementing policies and programs to promote opportunities, employment, and empowerment at all levels in all spheres of society for women, as well as eliminating all forms of discrimination against, and abuse of, women and girls, are needed to ensure greater gender parity.

Recognizing that the multilateral system and its institutions, with the United Nations and its Charter at the center, must be strengthened and underpinned by transparency, confidence and trust, to keep pace with a rapidly changing world.

Ensuring multilateral systems remain fit for the present and the future, by restructuring them to be more effective and capable, equitable and democratic, inclusive, interconnected and financially stable, is necessary to make them more representative of today's world and to align them for the needs of ensuing generations.

Harnessing the benefits of existing, new and emerging technologies and mitigating associated risks through effective,

inclusive and equitable governance at all levels, as well as scaling up collaboration, increasing capacity building in the field of science, technology and innovation, and promoting the transfer of technology on mutually agreed terms, are vital to bridge the digital divides within and between developed and developing countries. Strengthening cooperation among states to ensure safe, orderly and regular migration between countries of origin, transit and destination, including through expanding pathways for regular migration, and recognizing the positive contribution of migrants are required for more inclusive growth and sustainable development.

Investing in accessible, safe, inclusive and equitable quality education for all, and promoting opportunities for lifelong learning, technical and vocational training, and digital literacy, allowing for the intergenerational acquisition and transfer of knowledge and skills, help advance the prospects of present and future generations, Protecting the right to enjoy the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health, through universal health coverage, as well as providing equitable access to safe, affordable, effective and quality health products, and resilient health systems, are required to ensure healthy lives of people living today and in the future.

The Summit of the Future is also expected to adopt two annexes to the Pact of the Future, one on a Global Digital Compact (GDC), and the other on a Declaration on Future Generations. In addition, world leaders are scheduled to attend the High-Level Week from 22 to 26 September. Meetings during the High-Level Week are slated to discuss and take action on several issues, including accelerating the pace of progress of many SDGs and addressing the existential threats posed by rising sea-levels, growing antimicrobial resistance, and eliminating nuclear weapons.

The Summit of the Future and ensuing high-level meetings are designed to raise awareness among everyone, not just the leaders and governments, that the challenges that need to be addressed, and the opportunities that lie ahead, can be realized only if we work together with the awareness that ultimately we are all one people with only one planet to live on.

Importance of hosting international courts and organisations

Kuwait can play an important role promoting peace and understanding



By Tareq Yousef AlShumaimry

Hosting international organisations is a powerful tool for foreign policy in an increasingly interconnected and interdependent world, and the role of international organisations in their host countries cannot be overstated.

It facilitates joint diplomatic cooperation, encourages diplomatic solutions and addresses global challenges that transcend national borders. By strengthening cooperation and diplomacy, many global challenges such as climate change, terrorism, epidemics and wars that are difficult for any single country to address alone are addressed.

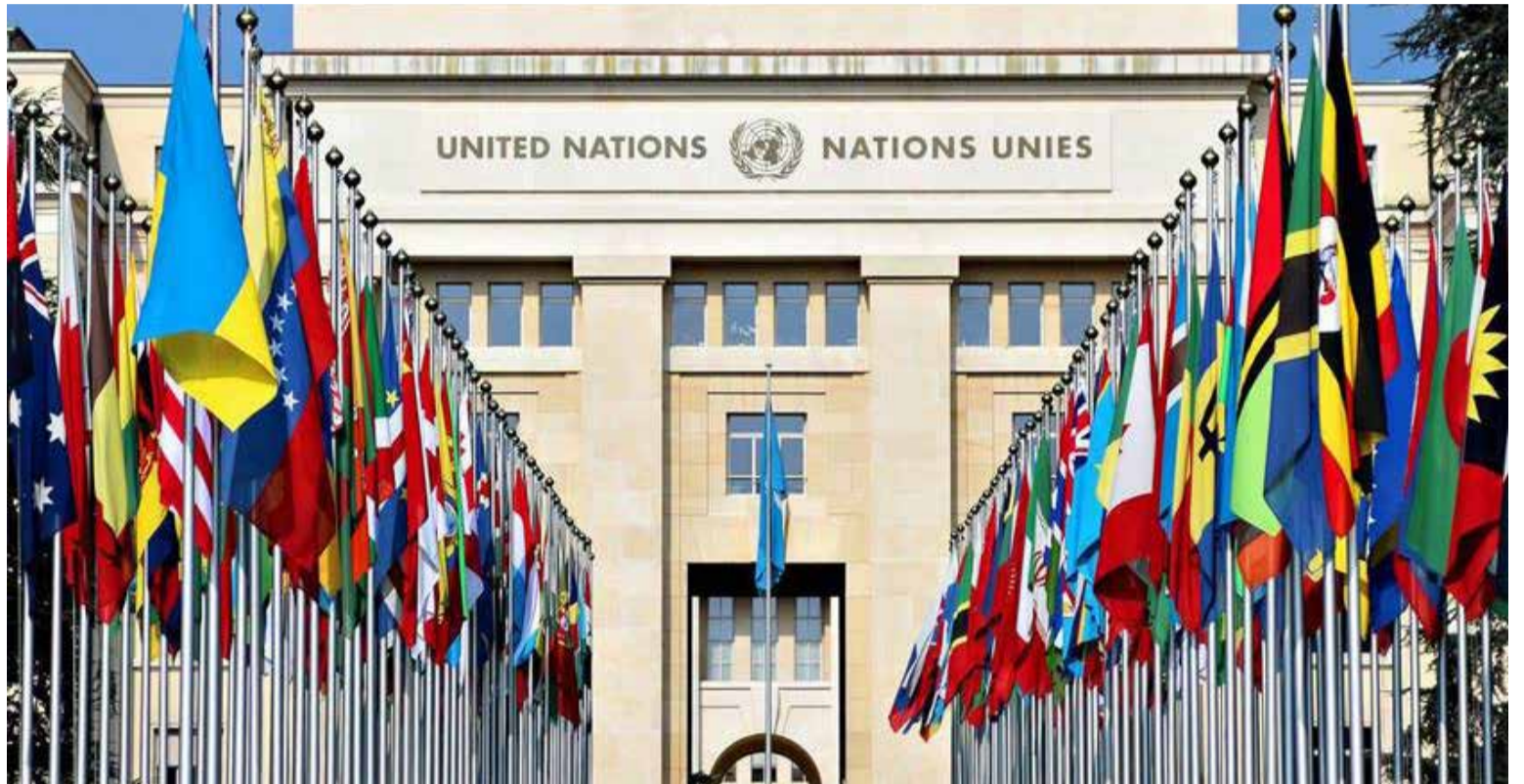
International organisations provide a platform for countries to cooperate, exchange experiences and find common ground through dialogue and negotiation. Countries can also resolve disputes peacefully through international courts. For example, the United Nations acts as a centre for states to express their concerns and seek consensus and work towards common goals.

Countries that have headquarters for international organisations have a comparative advantage in pursuing their political goals in addition to benefitting from human capital. International organisations bring together professionals, scientists, technocrats and diplomats by organising the best human capital from different countries, and they promote decision-making processes.



The Hague, the capital of the Netherlands, is known as the international city of peace and justice. It's a global hub for international law and arbitration and has been a place for countries to gather for international courts and peace conferences for over a century.

The Hague is the home of the United Nations International Court of Justice as well as the Permanent International Court of Arbitration. The Hague is also a leading centre for international conferences on international peace and justice. The Hague hosts



approximately 38 international and regional courts and organisations, making it a centre of great importance and international impact.

The Hague has played an important role by hosting international courts and tribunals, including the International Court of Justice, the Permanent International Court on Control, the International Criminal Court, the Court of Lebanon, the Court of Yugoslavia, as well as organisations such as the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons and some departments of the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe.

Similarly, Geneva in Switzerland is one of the four major offices of the United Nations where numerous different UN agencies



have a joint presence. Some prestigious organisations such as the International Labour Organisation (ILO) the International Organisation for Migration (IOM), the Red Cross (ICRC) and the World Health Organisation (WHO), gives it a pivotal role in the affairs of these organisations as well.

Another shining example is Vienna in Austria. Vienna is one of the four headquarters of the United Nations, along with New York, Geneva and Nairobi.

The Vienna International Centre (VIC),

commonly known in Austria as "UNO City", was opened in 1979 and is leased for a symbolic annual rental sum of one Austrian schilling (equivalent to seven euro cents) to the United Nations for 99 years. Around 5,000 employees from more than 150 countries work for the organizations based in Vienna.

The United Nations Office at Nairobi (UNON) the capital of Kenya, is one of four major United Nations office sites where numerous different UN agencies have a joint presence. Established in 1996, it is the UN's official headquarters in Africa.

The United Nations Office at Nairobi also hosts the global headquarters for two programmes: the United Nations Environmental Programme (UNEP) and the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat).

In November 2004, the United Nations Security Council held a rare session at Nairobi to discuss the armed conflicts in southern and western Sudan that constituted a phase of the Second Sudanese Civil War.

Also part of the UN Secretariat are the Regional Economic Commissions in Addis Ababa, Bangkok, Beirut, Geneva, and Santiago. The Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) supports its 21 member States in their efforts to ensure prosperity and equality. By analysing regional and national economic, social and environmental trends in the light of global United Nations agendas.

ESCWA provides Arab countries with policy recommendations that build on a thorough analysis of facts and commonalities. It also underscores the benefits of integration and creates regional public goods, including knowledge, data, tools and capacity. The shared language, culture and aspirations of the people of the Arab region form a solid foundation to tackle transboundary challenges through collective action at the national, regional and global levels.

Hosting a regional organization like ESCWA can enhance the country's prestige including building the capacities of the local population, improving infrastructure, sharing cultures and educational opportunities. It can develop a talent pool that can greatly contribute to the host nations prosperity.

Kuwait on the other hand has been granted a high international status as a humanitarian centre. Kuwait hosts a number of headquarters

of international and regional organisations, where there are approximately 120 embassies and international organisations in the State of Kuwait, such as the International Committee of the Red Cross, the United Nations organisations, the North Atlantic Treaty, the Asian Cooperation Dialogue, the Arab Fund for Development and the Arab Cities Organisation.

Kuwait has gained a reputation not only for its role as a mediator of peace but also as a neutral country with ingenuity and diplomatic experience.

Kuwait has maintained a policy of dialogue and diplomacy since its independence and is ideally suited to host international organisations that will help promote peace and stability as well as in resolving conflicts and to promote understanding of the role of international organisations and to emphasise their importance.

The presence of international organisations within a country is not only about prestige but also about active participation in global affairs. These international organisations and courts form policies and promote peace and improve life. Whether they are affiliated with the United Nations, the World Bank or specialised agencies their presence contributes to a more interdependent and harmonious world.

These organisations function under the Vienna Convention enabling them to carry out their duty without fear or coercion by the host country.

Cooperation transcends borders. Hosting international courts and organisations is a testament to the state's commitment to collective well-being and respect for international law.

Tareq Yousef AlShumaimry, served as Chairman of the Finance Committee and Chairman of the General Budget Committee of the Permanent Court of Arbitration in The Hague (PCA) and an observer in the Administrative Council of the Court and the Consular at International Court of Justice (ICJ) and the Embassy of the State of Kuwait in the Netherlands during this period from 2013 to 2020. Email: tareq@alshumaimry.com

ICCR to establish Chair of Indian Studies at GUST

• The Gulf University for Science and Technology will host a Chair of Indian Studies, which will focus on teaching the Hindi language and conducting research related to Kuwaiti-Indian relations, said Prof. Bassam Alameddine, President of GUST.

The Times Kuwait Report

Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR) and Gulf University for Science and Technology (GUST) in Kuwait signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) on 12 September to establish ICCR's Chair of Indian Studies for teaching Hindi at GUST.

The MoU was signed on behalf of ICCR by Indian Ambassador H.E. Dr. Adarsh Swaika, and for the university by President of GUST Prof. Bassam Alameddine. Under the terms of the agreement, ICCR, in consultation with GUST, will appoint an expert Indian academician to teach Hindi for a period of up to three years at GUST.

This is ICCR's first-ever Chair of Indian Studies in Kuwait and represents a significant step in promoting the Hindi language and India-related studies in the country. "Our goal is to bring younger generations of India and Kuwait closer together, and the ICCR-GUST agreement signed today is a significant step in cultural interactions between the two countries," said Ambassador Swaika, following the MoU signing. He added, "We want to encourage youth exchanges and are exploring ways to enhance interactions between universities. We are also working on facilitating more Kuwaiti students studying in India."

In a statement to The Times Kuwait on the occasion, Prof. Alameddine emphasized that the relationship between Kuwait and India is historic, and deeply rooted in commercial and cultural exchanges. He added that the Gulf University is eager to strengthen cultural ties between the two friendly nations.

He further explained that the university's Chair of Indian Studies will focus on teaching the Hindi language and conducting research related to Kuwaiti-Indian relations. He also revealed that there is a growing interest from both current students and previous generations



to learn the Hindi language.

In addition, Prof. Alameddine revealed, "This is only the first step in our relations with the Indian Embassy in Kuwait. The next phase will involve further partnerships across various sectors, particularly in the industrial sector, with a focus on information technology and computing, as well as involve collaborations with world-renowned factories and institutions to provide university students with practical training in technical skills."

Speaking to the media on the sidelines of the ICCR-GUST agreement the Indian ambassador highlighted the advantages of the memorandum and emphasized how the initiative will benefit both parties involved.

He added, "I would say this is a significant step in our cultural interactions. Hindi, as you know, is the third most widely spoken language in the world. Starting a Hindi language course at GUST University is an important initiative to popularize the language in Kuwait. You may also be aware that Kuwait National Radio recently launched a Hindi language program, which is broadcast every Sunday on the Kuwait Radio FM channel."

"I am confident that once we have a visiting professor from India at GUST, we will be able

to expand from short learning modules to potentially offering degree programs in the future. We appreciate GUST University for accepting this proposal and supporting this initiative."

On the question of student exchanges between the two countries, India's top envoy in Kuwait said, "We have been in touch with most universities in Kuwait, and you may have noticed that we have established 'India Corners' in the libraries of several prominent institutions, including Kuwait Technical College, Kuwait College of Science and Technology, and soon at Kuwait University. Our goal is to bring the younger generations of both countries closer together."

"Historically, we have had strong people-to-people linkages, with the older generation of Kuwait having cherished memories of their visits to India. We aim to replicate this connection with the younger generation as well. In the next couple of months, we will also be hosting a youth delegation from India to Kuwait and other Gulf countries."

"We want to encourage youth exchanges and are exploring ways to enhance interactions between universities. We are also working on facilitating more Kuwaiti students studying in India. To support this, we are collaborating with

the National Board of Quality Assurance to ensure that Indian universities are recognized, so Kuwaiti students can be confident that their courses will be recognized when they study in India. This is a significant effort on our part to increase youth exchanges, particularly at the university level."

Hindi is one of the most widely spoken languages in the world, with over 600 million speakers, making it the third most spoken language globally. Its influence extends beyond India, as it is spoken by large Indian diasporas in countries such as Mauritius, Fiji, Nepal, and Trinidad & Tobago.

Recognizing Hindi's cultural significance and contribution to global multilingualism, the United Nations (UN) launched Hindi social media accounts on Facebook, X (Twitter), and Instagram, as well as a Hindi website for UN News in 2018. A similar Chair was recently established in Oman in December 2023, marking the first of its kind in the Gulf region.

Additionally, a weekly Hindi radio broadcast was launched on Kuwait National Radio in April 2024. These initiatives underscore the growing importance of the Hindi language in Kuwait and acknowledge the contributions of the large and vibrant Indian diaspora in the country.

Al Muzaini Exchange Company opens its newest branch in Mubarak Al Kabeer



The number one money exchange company in Kuwait, Al-Muzaini Exchange Company recently opened its newest branch in Kuwait in Mubarak Al Kabeer in Salwa Walk Complex, on September 12, 2024. This opening was extremely significant and the rapid expansion reflects the company's endeavor to always be near its customers. It also reinforces the company's commitment to providing the highest quality of financial services such as money transfers, foreign currency exchange and bill payments with convenience, comfort and safety and at the most competitive prices, seven days a week.

The Head of Operations of Al Muzaini

Exchange Company, Mr. Bassam Salah, the company's department managers and various senior personnel inaugurated the new branch in Mubarak Al Kabeer in Salwa Walk Complex and Mr. Salah stated: "We take great pride in strengthening our leading position in the local market and always place focus in ensuring that we provide the best financial services experience to our customers in order to meet all their money transfer needs. We always want to stay true to our mission; to always be near to our customers and to add to their convenience."

In addition to its strong network of branches, Al Muzaini application provides simple and safe financial solutions and offers a variety of features to its customers. Customers can also use Al Muzaini self-service kiosks placed at strategic locations to perform transactions.

Customers can also participate in Al Muzaini's new Transfer to India and Win Campaign. Transfer your money through Al Muzaini and use any of Al Muzaini Exchange services for a chance to win incredible prizes up to 2,000,000 INR. Daily, weekly and monthly prizes are up for grabs with the grand prize being 1,000,000 INR. The campaign lasts from September 15, 2024 to November 15, 2024.



IWG members visit Abdullah Al-Salem Cultural Center

A group of ladies from the International Women's Group (IWG), headed by Polina Dalmini, president of IWG visited the Sheikh Abdullah Al Salem Cultural Center.

The comprehensive tour, conducted in both Arabic and English, included visits to the Ecosystems Museum, Our Planet Earth Museum, the Transport and Robotics Museum, the Human Body Museum, the Museum of Islamic and Arabic Science, and the Space Museum.

The delegation was given the opportunity to explore the main activities organized by

the Center and received an explanation of all the facilities and sections of the museum, as well as the unique exhibits it houses.

The group members expressed their admiration for this remarkable cultural landmark and praised its diversity, which caters to the varied interests and desires of its visitors.

On behalf of the IWG, Mrs. Dalmini, along with members of the Executive Board, presented an honorary shield to the Center to express their gratitude for the outstanding and informative visit.





Discover Hong Kong

A vibrant Blend of Tradition, Innovation, and Adventure

By Nourah Khan
Travel Writer
The Times Kuwait

Hong Kong, a dazzling metropolis that blends East and West, has long been a top destination for travelers worldwide. With its towering skyscrapers, lush green landscapes, bustling markets, and rich cultural heritage, the city offers an exceptional tourism experience. As one of Asia's most iconic hubs, Hong Kong's tourism has played a pivotal role in its economy, attracting millions of visitors every year.

Hong Kong's tourism appeal stems from its unique identity as a meeting point between the ancient and the modern. As a former British colony with deep Chinese roots, the city offers a seamless blend of Eastern traditions and Western influences. Visitors can experience this fusion in its architecture, cuisine, and daily life.

In the heart of the city, towering skyscrapers like the International Commerce Centre and the Bank of China Tower reflect Hong Kong's status as a global financial center. Just a short distance away, however, visitors can find themselves in serene Buddhist temples like the Ten Thousand Buddhas Monastery or amidst the timeless beauty of Victoria Peak, offering panoramic views of the entire city.

Among the iconic attractions of this enchanting city are:

Victoria Peak: The highest point in Hong Kong, Victoria Peak offers breathtaking views of the harbor and city skyline, especially at sunset.



The Peak Tram, a funicular railway, adds to the experience of visiting this iconic spot.

Tsim Sha Tsui Promenade: A walk along this waterfront offers a spectacular view of the city's skyline, especially at night when the Symphony of Lights show illuminates the buildings. This area also hosts the famous Hong Kong Museum of Art and the Hong Kong Cultural Centre.

Disneyland and Ocean Park: Hong Kong Disneyland is one of the most popular tourist spots, attracting families and Disney fans alike. Ocean Park, a marine-themed amusement park, also offers thrilling rides and a glimpse of wildlife, making it ideal for adventure seekers.

Lantau Island: Home to the Po Lin Monastery and the Big Buddha (Tian Tan Buddha), Lantau Island is a must-visit for those seeking spiritual experiences. The Ngong Ping 360 cable car ride provides stunning views of the surrounding landscapes.

Temple Street Night Market: This iconic market offers a vibrant blend of street food, local culture, and bargain shopping. A visit here captures the essence of Hong Kong's street life, where you can explore fortune-telling stalls, enjoy local delicacies, and shop for souvenirs.

One of the biggest draws for tourists in Hong Kong is its food. The city is known as the culinary capital of Asia, with a wide range of cuisines reflecting its cosmopolitan nature. From street food like dim sum and egg tarts to Michelin-starred restaurants, Hong Kong offers an unparalleled dining experience. The local Cha Chaan Teng (tea restaurants) serve affordable and delicious comfort food, offering dishes like milk tea, pineapple buns, and curry fish balls.

Hong Kong is also renowned for being a shopping haven. From high-end luxury brands in Central to bustling street markets in Mong Kok and Causeway Bay, visitors can



find everything from cutting-edge fashion to traditional Chinese crafts. The city's status as a tax-free port further enhances its appeal as a top destination for international shoppers. Also, do not forget to visit Harbor City which is the largest shopping mall in Hong Kong, offering a wide variety of stores, from luxury brands to trendy fashion.

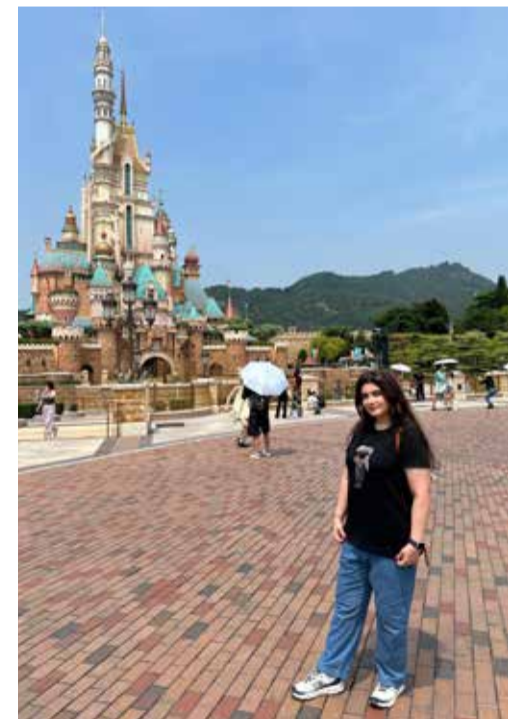
Despite being a bustling modern city, Hong Kong is deeply connected to its cultural heritage. Visitors can explore traditional festivals like the 'Chinese New Year', the 'Mid-Autumn Festival', and the 'Dragon Boat Festival'. These events are marked by lively parades, dragon dances, and elaborate feasts, offering tourists an immersive



experience in Chinese traditions.

Hong Kong's tourism industry took a significant hit due to the COVID-19 pandemic, with strict travel restrictions leading to a dramatic decline in international visitors. However, the city has worked tirelessly to revive its tourism sector. New hygiene and safety measures, along with efforts to promote local attractions, have helped attract tourists back to the city.

Tourism in Hong Kong is a celebration of contrasts — where ancient traditions meet cutting-edge innovation, and where natural



beauty coexists with modern marvels. Whether you are an adventure seeker, a foodie, a shopaholic, or a culture enthusiast, Hong Kong has something for everyone. With its rich history, diverse experiences, and vibrant atmosphere, it remains one of the world's premier travel destinations.

Noura Khan, a travel influencer and content creator, is a Kuwaiti national, holds a degree in law from Kuwait University and has worked as a journalist prior to taking up a position in the government. In 2018 she started blogging on travel and visited more than 57 countries since. She has more than 105k followers on her blog post @nourajtraveller is well appreciated for content and travel information. Noura writes exclusively for The Times Kuwait on her travel



Kuwait's Mohammed Al Aqraa continues to dominate in PFL League

The Times Kuwait Report

The Professional Fighters League (PFL), the fastest-growing and most innovative sports league in the world, took the action to the next level, as the inaugural season of PFL MENA entered the postseason, with fighters in the Bantamweight, Featherweight, Lightweight, and Welterweight divisions clinching their spots in the PFL MENA Championship.

In a thrilling display of grit and technique Kuwait's Mohammad Alaqraa was dominant in every aspect as he outclassed Amir Fazli for all three rounds en route to a unanimous decision win in their Welterweight Semifinal bout. Mohammed maintained his undefeated record of 7 fights securing up his spot in the 2024 PFL MENA championship final to be held in November.

Speaking to The Times Kuwait after his victory Mohammed said he was confident and excited to win the playoff on his path to the finals. He thanked all his fans in Saudi Arabia and Kuwait for the support and encouragement.

Mohammed believes PFL Mena offers him a chance to prove that he is the best mixed martial artist in the Middle East.

In the Featherweight Semifinal main event, Abdelrahman Alyhasat silenced the crowd in Riyadh with a unanimous decision victory over hometown hero Abdullah Al-Qahtani to advance to the 2024 PFL MENA Championships.

In the Welterweight Semifinal co-main event, Omar El Dafrawy stunned the crowd with a first-round TKO over heavy favorite Jarrah Al-Selawe to book his spot in the 2024 PFL MENA Championship.

After a thrilling three-round war, Mohsen



Mohammadseifi earned his place in the 2024 PFL MENA Championship with a unanimous decision win over Souhil Tairi in their Lightweight Semifinal bout.

In the other Bantamweight Semifinal bout, Ali Taleb punched his way into the 2024 PFL MENA Championship with a first round knockout over Jalal Al Daaja.

A major announcement was also made during the card, as it was revealed that Saudi Arabian Light Heavyweight Mostafa Nada will welcome Egypt's Ahmed Sami to the PFL SmartCage at Battle of The Giants: Brace for Impact on Saturday, October 19th at The Mayadeen in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia.

In the first Featherweight Semifinal bout of the night, Islam Reda relied on his high-level grappling skills to earn a unanimous decision victory over Marouane Bellagouit and secure his spot in the 2024 PFL MENA Championship.

Rachid El Hazoume earned his spot in the 2024 PFL MENA Championship with a hard-fought unanimous decision victory over Elias Boudegzame in their Bantamweight Semifinal bout.

Georges Eid was the first fighter to clinch a spot in the 2024 PFL MENA Championship after bulldozing Omar Reguigui with some devastating ground and pound to win by TKO in the opening round of their Lightweight

Semifinal matchup.

In an amateur showcase bout in the Flyweight division, Malik Basahel picked up his eighth-straight win with a dominant showing against Saher Qasmieh, winning by unanimous decision. Kicking off the night's action, Adam Meskini overcame a slow start and put on a strong performance in the final round to defeat Yazeed Hasanain by split decision.

The 2024 PFL MENA Championship matchups are now set:

Bantamweight: Rachid El Hazoume vs. Ali Taleb

Featherweight: Islam Reda vs. Abdelrahman Alyhasat

Lightweight: Georges Eid vs. Mohsen Mohammadseifi

Welterweight: Mohammad Alaqraa vs. Omar El Dafrawy

MMA is a combat sport with no restrictions on the types of techniques used in competition. These techniques can be striking and grappling and can happen both standing and on the ground. This is the nature of modern MMA, which incorporates techniques from traditional martial arts like boxing, Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu, Muay Thai, and wrestling, and this is what makes the sport one of the most challenging in the world. It is also one of the fastest-growing sports in the world, with a fan base that averages 35 years old. According to the IMMAF, MMA has 500 million fans globally.

Last year, Saudi Arabia's Public Investment Fund-owned Surge Sports Investment (SRJ) invested more than \$100 million for a minority stake in PFL to advance the company's global expansion and help develop its Middle East League.





EXCLUSIVE to THE TIMES KUWAIT

Helping Women Adapt to Extreme Heat Helps Us All



Jess Ayers and Helen Mountford

Jess Ayers is CEO of Quadrature Climate Foundation.

Helen Mountford is President and CEO of ClimateWorks Foundation.

Climate shocks, from heat waves to droughts, floods to wildfires, often hit women the hardest. New research published this May in The Lancet found that even in wealthy European countries, women died at nearly twice the rate as men from extreme heat over the last two decades. According to Marcos Quijal, one of the report's authors, the findings "reflect a global trend."

In July, as heat records accumulated, causing even more deaths and economic damage, United Nations Secretary-General António Guterres called for international action to address what he described as our "global boiling." But protecting vulnerable communities from extreme heat requires deep commitment and significant funding, both of which seem to be in short supply.

The flow of climate finance has traditionally been skewed toward emissions-reduction efforts and clean-energy projects, because adaptation measures are viewed as being too location-specific and hard to scale, as well as generating low returns. The UN

Environment Programme's 2023 Adaptation Gap Report found that climate-finance flows in 2021 amounted to only about one-tenth of the estimated \$215-387 billion per year that developing countries need to meet their adaptation needs.

Philanthropic foundations, however, are catalyzing investment by showing that adaptation is more scalable than previously thought. This summer, Climate Resilience for All, a global NGO focused on helping climate-vulnerable women build resilience, partnered with the Self-Employed Women's Association (SEWA), a trade union for informal workers in India, and local insurance companies Swiss Re and ICICI Lombard. These public- and private-

when they could not work, restock their shelves as perishables spoiled faster, and pay for treatment of heat-related injuries and illness. Such an intervention may seem trivial, but it is enough to protect vulnerable individuals from being driven into poverty by climate shocks.

"I enrolled 350 members. When they got ₹400 [just under \$5], they said it was like ₹4000, as it came at a critical time of life. Some women repaid debts, others paid for their children's education and bought fresh goods," reported Sarojben, a grassroots leader of SEWA, adding, "It brings dignity to us."

This pioneering insurance scheme is adaptation at its best: directly reaching those most in need when they need support the

experience. Moreover, many of these solutions can be deployed at scale. But helping millions more women protect their livelihoods and their health in the face of unrelenting heat requires more funding.

Philanthropy is a start. As leaders of two of the world's largest climate foundations, we are keenly aware of the important role it plays in encouraging effective solutions to the climate crisis. Unlike other investors, philanthropies can pursue and test innovative initiatives such as heat insurance and solar-reflective cool roofs. And this type of work is expanding: At the UN Climate Change Conference in Dubai, we came together with other philanthropies to launch the Adaptation and Resilience Funder Collaborative. In July, in response to Guterres's call to action, this group of climate-, development-, and health-focused foundations committed an initial investment of \$50 million to support adaptation measures.

But such an investment, while important, is a drop in the ocean compared to the adaptation-finance gap. All stakeholders, including governments, the private sector, civil-society organizations, and local communities, have a role to play in reducing the risks of extreme heat, protecting human health, and offering economic opportunities for everyone.

Building resilience to extreme heat is no easy feat, especially for the more than 500 million women in the informal economy. Innovative solutions such as heat insurance do exist, but philanthropies, governments, and private investors must work together to scale them up faster to counter the effects of rapidly rising temperatures. The payoff will be worth it, because boosting women's climate resilience benefits us all.

“Women have some of the best ideas for minimizing the effects of climate change, often based on practical experiences. Moreover, many of these solutions can be deployed at scale. But helping millions more women requires more funding.”

sector groups teamed up with philanthropies to buy low-cost heat-wave insurance for 50,000 members across 22 districts. As temperatures soared above 46° Celsius, every woman received a pay-out, averaging \$12.38 per person.

For women with strenuous and precarious jobs, the money was crucial for weathering the extreme heat. It helped them feed their families and pay their children's school fees

most. Moreover, the program is scalable and delivers significant social and economic benefits, enabling women to move up the development ladder and put themselves and their families on firmer financial footing.

Globally, women — including the leaders of SEWA, Climate Resilience for All, and many other organizations— have some of the best ideas for minimizing the effects of climate change, often based on their practical



Thought “ for the week

We suffer more often in
imagination than in reality.

- Seneca

Ghee or Butter Which is Better for You?

Ask Mira : Eating Right to Live Happy & Healthy

In the world of cooking fats, ghee and butter often stand out as popular choices. Both are derived from dairy, yet their nutritional profiles and health benefits vary.

Let us look at both these products in more detail.

Butter is a dairy product that contains about 80 percent fat, while the remaining 20 percent is a mixture of water and milk solids (proteins, sugars, and salts). Butter is known for its creamy texture and rich flavor, used in cooking and baking.



Butter is a rich source of:

- Saturated fats: These fats make up about 63 percent of butter. A recent research suggests that moderate consumption of saturated fats from natural sources like butter may not be as harmful as previously thought.
- Vitamins A, D, E, and K: These fat-soluble vitamins are essential for various bodily functions, including eye health and immune system support.
- Conjugated Linoleic Acid (CLA): Some studies suggest that CLA, found in grass-fed butter, may have potential health benefits, such as supporting weight management and reducing the risk of heart disease.

Ghee, on the other hand, is clarified butter with no water content, lactose, or milk solids, which leaves behind pure butterfat. Originating in South Asia, ghee has been used in Ayurvedic medicine and Indian cuisine for centuries.

Ghee is a dairy product with:

- Higher concentration of fat: Since it is free from milk solids and water, ghee has a higher fat content than butter, making it richer in taste and more calorie-dense.
- Lactose-free: Ghee is a suitable option for people with lactose intolerance or dairy sensitivities, as the milk solids that contain lactose are removed during the clarification process.
- Rich in Butyrate: Butyrate is a fatty acid that plays a role in supporting gut health, reducing inflammation, and improving digestion.

- Higher Smoke Point: Ghee has a smoke point of around 250°C, much higher than butter (177°C). This makes ghee a safer choice for frying and sautéing, as it is less likely to oxidize and form harmful compounds at high temperatures.

Health comparisons:

When comparing ghee and butter from a health perspective, both have benefits, but they suit different needs depending on individual dietary preferences and health goals.

- Lactose Sensitivity: For individuals who are lactose or casein intolerant, ghee is the better option since it's free of both components, whereas butter still contains trace amounts of lactose and casein.
- Gut Health: The butyrate in ghee is known for its potential to support gut health by nourishing the cells lining the gut and promoting healthy digestion. Butter also contains butyrate, but in smaller quantities.
- Weight Management: Both ghee and butter are calorie-dense, so they should be consumed in moderation. However, the higher fat content in ghee might be more satiating, potentially reducing cravings and overeating.

From a culinary perspective, ghee has a high smoke point, which makes it ideal for frying and roasting. On the other hand, butter burns more easily due to its lower smoke point, making it less suitable for high-heat cooking.

So, ghee or butter, which one is best for you? Well, this ultimately comes down to your dietary needs and cooking preferences.

- Lactose intolerance: If you have a sensitivity to lactose or casein, ghee is the winner, as it is free from these components.
- High-heat cooking: For frying at higher temperatures, ghee's higher smoke point makes it a safer option.
- Health considerations: If you prioritize your gut health, the higher butyrate content in ghee might be beneficial.

Both ghee and butter have their merits, and neither is 'better' than the other. Your decision should depend on dietary restrictions, and the type of cooking you do.

Whichever you choose, moderation is key for a balanced and healthy diet.

Eat like Mira
Create healthy habits, not restrictions

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

Rasmalai Modak



Rasmalai is a popular Indian dessert made with milk solids, sugar, and flavorings with added nuts. Modak refers to various sweet dishes that are usually dumpling shaped dishes. This fusion recipe of rasmalai and modak is perfect for any joyous occasion, or as an after-meal delicacy. It is a pure manifestation of delightfulness and deliciousness melded into an impressive treat that promises to make any festive season blissful.

Total time: 30 minutes

Serving: 20 modaks

Ingredients:

- 1 cup malai paneer (grated)
- ¼ cup milk powder
- 1 tbsp ghee
- ½ cup powdered sugar
- ½ tsp cardamom powder
- 1 tbsp pistachios slivered
- ¼ cup saffron milk (1 tsp saffron strands dissolved in ¼ cup lukewarm milk)
- ½ cup powdered sugar
- ¾ tsp rasmalai essence (or rose essence)
- ¼ tsp cardamom powder
- For garnish: Pistachios slices, saffron strands, rose petals



Chef Chhaya Thakker

Instructions:

- Add saffron to hot milk, mix well and let it rest for 10 mins.
- Grind paneer until smooth.
- Heat ghee in a non-stick pan on low flame
- Add paneer, milk powder, powdered sugar to the pan and cook stirring well.
- Once sugar melts add saffron milk and cook while continuously stirring until moisture evaporates, mixture turns granular and starts leaving the sides of the pan.
- Take care to ensure the mixture does not stick to the pan and burn.
- Add cardamom powder, -mix well, remove to a bowl and let it cool down.
- Once the mixture is cool to touch, grind it once again until smooth.
- Add pistachios slices, dried rose petals and rasmalai essence, and knead to form a soft and smooth dough. Do not use any more milk or water to knead the dough.
- Grease the inside of modak mold with some ghee and sprinkle some dried rose petals and pistachios.
- Place mixture inside the mold to form the modaks.
- Serve or store in an air-tight container in the refrigerator.

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

Novel blood test to reveal age-related disease risks

Previous studies using biological aging clocks to understand the mechanism behind biological aging have relied on the DNA methylation process. However, the new study finds that analyzing protein levels could offer a more direct understanding of the aging mechanisms.

Recently published research suggests that the entire collection of proteins produced by an organism, referred to as its proteome, could be a more accurate indicator of a person's biological age. Scientists behind the research aimed to create a 'proteomic aging clock' that could help predict the risk of common age-related diseases.

The study, by researchers at the Massachusetts General Hospital and Harvard Medical School in the United States found that by using proteomics data it is possible to more accurately assess aging by comparing an individual's biological function to what is expected for their chronological age.

To put this study in perspective, we need to understand a few related genetic concepts: Genes found in the DNA of cells contain the information needed to make functional molecules called proteins through a transcription and translation process referred to as gene expression. However, not all genes are active at all times, as cells can employ several mechanisms to control gene expression. One such mechanism is the addition of a small molecule made up of one carbon atom and three hydrogen atoms (CH₃) called a methyl group to the DNA, which then alters gene expression and regulates protein production.

The addition of a methyl group to the DNA is referred to as DNA methylation. Methyl groups can be

added or removed from proteins, which can change how these molecules function in the body. In recent decades, researchers have learned a great deal about DNA methylation, including that it is an important component in numerous cellular processes, such as embryonic development, gene regulation, and maintaining cellular identity. Researchers have also found that errors in methylation can lead to a variety of devastating human diseases.

Previous studies using biological aging clocks to understand the mechanism behind biological aging have relied on the DNA methylation process. However, the new study finds that analyzing protein levels could offer a more direct understanding of the aging mechanisms. Moreover, none of the prior aging clocks have been developed using large, diverse population samples that allow for extensive testing across a broad range of age-related diseases, multimorbidity — the presence of two or more concurrent conditions — and mortality.

For their study, the researchers analyzed a large sample of data from the UK Biobank on 45,441 participants aged 40-70. They then validated this model in two additional biobanks — 3,977 participants aged 30-80 from the China Kadoorie Biobank and 1,990 participants aged 20-80 from the FinnGen biobank in Finland.

The study identified 204 proteins



that accurately predict chronological age. The researchers were also able to pinpoint a set of 20 aging-related proteins that retained 91 percent of the age prediction accuracy from the larger model.

In addition they found that their assessment of proteomic aging could be linked to the onset of 18 major chronic diseases, including heart, liver, kidney, and lung diseases, diabetes, neurodegenerative conditions like Alzheimer's, cancer, as well as multimorbidity and all-cause mortality risk. Proteomic aging was also found to be

correlated with various age-related biological, physical and cognitive measures such as telomere length, frailty index and performance on cognitive tests.

The proteomic age clock gives more nuanced information about how a body is functioning biologically compared with what we would expect given the person's chronological age. Although the proteomic age model was developed using data from the UK Biobank, the model was found to be just as accurate in predicting morbidity and mortality among participants in

China and Finland, who vary widely from UK participants in terms of genetics, geography, age ranges and disease profiles.

The validation in independent and diverse participants is crucial to demonstrate that the tools and models work for everyone and not just niche pockets of the global population. The study demonstrates how technology and the expanding use of artificial intelligence (AI) can be harnessed to help people better understand their health and possible outcomes of health choices. The study also highlighted that proteomic clocks hold promise as biomarkers to assess the effectiveness of preventive interventions aimed at aging and multimorbidity.

Although the tool is still under development and has not yet been approved for healthcare use, in the near future it may be possible to use a single test to help evaluate the risk of significant cardiovascular, liver, kidney, and neurologic diseases. With a baseline test that informs people about their future health trajectory, it is possible for them to work with their physician to take necessary steps to improve their health. Later when they take a second proteomic age test, any improvements or decline in their health will be reflected in new results. This could also shift the focus from treating diseases after they occur to predicting and preventing them before they start.



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