



LOCAL

7

Expatriate engineers face uncertain future due to professional conditions

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FESTIVAL

11

Nowruz: A celebration of the New Year

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150 Fils

Kuwait-Philippines labour dispute resolved

New terms are being put in place

Staff Report

A long awaited deal on regulating the recruitment of Filipino domestic helpers to Kuwait was inked in Manila. The draft deal on hiring Filipino domestic workers and their treatment

in Kuwait was signed between officials of Manila government and a Kuwaiti ministerial delegation currently on a visit to the Philippines.

Revealing this to local media, the Undersecretary for Consulate Affairs at the Foreign Ministry in Kuwait, Sami

Al-Hamad said the deal, which was signed on Friday, came about at the end of extensive talks held by the two sides in Manila.

The new deal was necessitated after Philippines President Rodrigo Duterte ordered a ban on the deployment of Filipino workers due to several reported cases of physical abuse and murder of Philippines' citizens in Kuwait. In his media statement, Undersecretary Al-Hamad said the deal was designed to protect the rights of both, the employers and employees. He also revealed that the Kuwaiti side had requested that the doors for labor recruitment would be re-opened for Kuwaiti agencies, especially the government-backed Al-Durra company.

Noting that those interested in employing domestic workers would now be able to do so by paying the required reasonable fees, Al-Hamad added that while employers would have the right to refuse transferring of their domestic helpers to another employer, they would not have the right to retain the passports of their employees.

Continued on Page 8



Orange-hued sky as dust-storm, rain sweeps over Kuwait

On Friday, Kuwait was struck by a dust-storm accompanied by rumbling thunder and heavy rain. The heavy shower mixed with dust in the air left large swathes of the country covered in a muddy brown layer, and an overcast, orange colored sky.



Growth to gather pace, debts to cover deficits

The year 2018 could be an economic inflection point for nations in the Middle-East, as oil exporters in the region leave behind consecutive years of low oil price environment and move up a growth path, while oil importers benefit from an upswing in the global economy and relative improvements in regional political stability, says a new report on the region.

The study, by the Institute of Chartered Accountants in England

and Wales (ICAEW) and global advisory firm Oxford Economics, shows that the past couple of years have been difficult for oil exporting countries in the region, including the six-nation Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) states, as well as Iran and Iraq. The fall in oil prices in mid-2014 led to a sharp economic downturn in the region, straining government finances and exacerbating fiscal and external vulnerabilities.

Continued on Page 10

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PAM says absconding cases total over 23,000

The Public Authority for Manpower (PAM) has announced that the labor relations departments in different governorates have so far registered 23,500 absconding complaints. Director of Public Relations and Information Department and Official Spokesperson of the authority Aseel Al-Mazeedi disclosed that 50 cases have benefited from the grace period for

withdrawing absconding complaints which began on 11 March.

Al-Mazeedi explained the authority is reviewing applications to withdraw absconding complaints filed after 4 January, 2016 in accordance with the agreed procedures and regulations. She said the conditions include the employer's agreement to withdraw the complaint, transfer approval from



the concerned department and proof that the complaint is malicious.

She affirmed this step is taken in coordination with the Ministry of Interior in a bid to correct the status of expatriate private sector workers who violated the Residency Law. She called on all those concerned to apply for withdrawal of their absconding cases until 22 April, 2018.



Ambassador of Peru visits The Times, Kuwait

Ambassador of Peru to Kuwait H.E. Francisco Rivarola visited The Times Kuwait offices recently and met with Managing Editor Reaven D'Souza. Several topics of mutual interest and collaboration

were discussed during the meeting. Ambassador Rivarola, a veteran diplomat arrived in Kuwait a few months ago and expressed great pleasure in his new posting in Kuwait.

UAE Exchange conducts Anti Money Laundering Training



UAE Exchange Centre Kuwait, one of the leading Remittance and Foreign Exchange brands in Kuwait, AML Training has been held for both new and existing employees of UAE Exchange Kuwait with emphasis on the law of Central Bank of Kuwait (Law 106 /2013 and Decision No : 5 / 2014). The training was conducted by the Australian College of Kuwait (ACK) with

insight into the current scenarios of AML and CTF norms. Further discussion was conducted on practical applications of these laws and how these laws can be implemented on day to day operations. AML and CTF Training has become a mandatory topic of discussion and implementation both in the Exchange companies and Banks in a statutory and Operational Prospect.

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Farewell reception held for Somalia Ambassador

The Dean of Diplomatic Corps H.E. Abdou Lahad Mbacke, Ambassador of Senegal held a farewell reception, on 11 March at the Palms Hotel, in honor of H.E. Abdulkader Amin Shaikh, Ambassador of Somalia to Kuwait.

Ambassador Amin completed an amazing 30 years as his country's ambassador in Kuwait and was also the dean of Arab diplomats in



the country. He played a very positive and constructive role during his 30 year tenure in the country.

In his farewell speech, Ambassador Amin thanked the Kuwaiti leadership for their regular support and assistance to him and his country during his tenure.

He applauded the Kuwaiti government and people for their help to his country, which had been through testing times. He also specially thanked H.H. the Amir for his continuous humanitarian gestures to the Somali people who have been victims of war and natural



calamities.

Ambassador Mbacke in his speech noted the significant role played by Ambassador Amin in the development and progress of relations between Kuwait and Somalia, pointing out that he managed to build bridges of friendship and cooperation in various fields between the two nations.

A large gathering of diplomats and media attended the reception and a memento was presented to Ambassador Amin as a token of remembrance on his completion of a successful tenure.

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5 & ABOUT

Thought for The Week

For publication of your announcements, upcoming activities or local events please email us at editor@timeskuwait.com
To publish images kindly send pictures in high resolution.

20 March



Caricature Sculpting Workshop: A three day workshop for art enthusiasts will be held on 20, 21 and 22 March, at Sirdab Lab from 5:30pm to 8:30pm. The workshop will introduce one to the art of sculpting, transforming a block of clay into an expressive caricature head. Applicants 14 years and above can participate. For more information and to register: Visit, www.sirdab-lab.com.

20 March



Spartan Gear Personal Trainer Course: A 10 days intensive course for becoming a professional personal trainer, Spartan Gear Personal Trainer Course will be held at Al Salmiya Sports Club, Block 3, Street 8, TFW Kuwait Dojo. Certificates will be awarded upon completion. For more information and to register: Visit, <http://www.tfwkuwait.com/> or call, 50133525.



Spring Exhibition 2018: The British School of Kuwait (BSK) will be hosting their annual Spring Exhibition 2018 Art, Design and Technology at the Euston Gallery on the BSK campus at 6pm. The school will present prizes to the winning students of the competition that design the best works. Parents and students alike are welcome to the exhibit. For more information: Visit, www.bsk.edu.kw.

22 March:

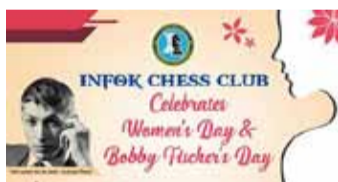


Study in Canada: Glinks International will be offering unique opportunities to interact with officials of top Canadian and New Zealand schools, colleges and universities at the Study in Canada event which will be held at Courtyard by Marriott, Al Shuhada Street, Kuwait City, from 12pm to 4pm. Applications will be provided on the spot. Students are requested to carry their passport copies, academic mark sheets and laptops. The event is free of cost. For more information: Call, **6555 3128** or Email, apply4@glinksgroup.com

23 March:



Sports marathon: Public Authority for Sports Marathon will be organizing a race from Souq Sharq on the Gulf Road to Kuwait Towers at 8:30am. The race distance is 5km. Registrations are free of cost and open to all. For more information and to register: Visit, www.events.pro-vision.com.



Rapid Chess Tournament: Indian Nurses Federation of Kuwait (INFOK) Chess Club, a professional organization registered with Indian Embassy Kuwait, will mark International Women's Day that was celebrated on 8 March, and Bobby Fischer's Day with an Open Rapid Chess Tournament 2018. Women and children up to the age of 14 years can participate in the tournament. There are attractive cash prizes with trophies for the winners.

24 March:



Lady Soft Run: A 6-km run exclusively for women, Lady Soft Run will be held at Boulevard, Salmiya from 8am. The entry fee is set at KD5. Further information will be available upon registration. To register: Visit, www.events.pro-vision.com.

25 March:



Intermediate Writing Workshop: A two-hour writing workshop by Razan Al-Sharikh will be held at Al Shaheed Park, Soor Street, from 25 March to 22 April (Sundays only) from 7pm to 9pm. This workshop is intended for those who have tried their hand at writing in the past and are now interested in digging deeper. The event is free of charge and for adults only. Applicants are requested to submit a sample of their fiction writing (no less than 1000 words) by 15 March. Limited seats available. For more information and to register: Visit, www.eventbrite.com.

27 March:

Kuwait Yacht Show: The biggest sea event of the year, Kuwait Yacht Show 2018 will be held from 27 to 30 March, at Marina Crescent, from 4:30pm to 9pm. For further updates: Visit, www.kuwaityachtshow.com.

27 March:

Fundraising Concert: Ahmadi Music Group (AMG) will organizing a fundraising concert at the residence of H.E the German Ambassador, Mishref block 5, street 8, lane 1, house 10 at 7:30pm. The concert will have the Messilah Chamber Ensemble play the Dvorak Piano Quintet, a towering triumph of the romantic period. This will be followed by dinner in the garden. For more information and to book your tickets: Visit: www.eventat.com or call, 5063 8435.

“Progress is impossible without change, and those who cannot change their minds cannot change anything.”

George Bernard Shaw
Playwright


LIC CEO on three-day visit to Kuwait

Rajesh Kandwal, CEO & CMD of LIC (International) B.S.C, an offshore subsidiary of Life Insurance Corporation of India, visited Kuwait on a three-day tour. During his visit, he met the Ambassador of India to Kuwait H.E. K Jeeva Sagar and discussed the services offered by LIC (International) to the Indian community in Kuwait. He also met with Anwar Al Sabej, CEO of Warba Insurance company and the local chief agent of LIC International, where discussions were held on different matters of mutual interest, future plans and business development.




During the course of the departmental meeting, he shared the various efforts taken by the company to extend state of the art services to LIC customers

like the introduction of a mobile-app, a revamped website among others. On 7 February, he attended the seminar organized by KPMG on VAT as a guest speaker.



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Conditions make VAT an unsuitable revenue source for Kuwait

Implementation of the tax system requires a rich business environment that provides sufficient tax revenues, but this environment does not exist in the country, said Supreme Council for Planning Member and former Board Chairman of Gulf Bank Ali Rashid Al-Badr.

Al-Badr warned the consumers will bear the consequences once the value added tax (VAT) is implemented. He said most citizens depend on

salaries and pensions, so it is expected that they will demand for salary increment. He asserted such demands will be endorsed by lawmakers who will put pressure on the government to grant the increase. Eventually, the government will succumb to pressure and the salary increment will eat up tax revenues, he added. He argued the implementation of tax will increase the government's expenditures due to the need to hire a large number of accountants,

auditors and lawyers. He stressed the State controls 75 percent of the economy and it has no intention to give up its huge share in favor of the private sector just to develop the business environment. He said the government floated tenders which are not attractive for investors because the expected return is very low.

He added most of the projects are nothing more than covered borrowing; in other words, the government floats tenders for the private sector

to implement projects instead of asking for loans directly. He also criticized the Build- Operate- Transfer (BOT) system as it kills investments.

He pointed out many investors want to be involved in permanent projects which can be developed and handed over to their successors, while the BOT system gives investors the opportunity to manage projects within a certain period but these projects will eventually go back to the State.

TEF – 2018 organizes second Technical Seminar

Tamilnadu Engineers Forum (TEF)-2018 organized its 2nd Technical Seminar on 12 March at Safir Hotel, Fintas. Engr. Ashok welcomed the TEF gathering and guests speakers to the second Technical seminar of the year 2018 and reminded the audience about the forthcoming TEF's flagship program 'Curtain Raiser Event' for TICE and EEA scheduled on 29 March at the Radisson Blu Hotel, Kuwait.

Two guest speakers from M/s OMICRON Electronics Middle East shared their expertise on 'Innovative Testing and Diagnostic solutions in the Electrical Industry'.

Engr. Fadi Al-Zatari (Regional Application Specialist, M/s OMICRON) and Engr. Abdulla Hakeem (Sales Manager-M/s OMICRON), gave an interesting presentation on 'Introduction & Basics of Model-Based Testing and Case Study on Current Transformer Testing & Calibration using CT Analyzer'.



National Coach with Kuwait Cricket officials and owner of Empower 31 Empower Gym



Appointed National Coach Herschelle Gibbs and Kuwait Cricket Director General Sajid Ashraf with Owner of Empower 31 Empower Gym - Abdul Razzaq Al Ghanim and Senior Coach Henry Barlett. Kuwait Cricket, the official governing body for Cricket in Kuwait, officials would like to thank #Empower31 for their partnership and support in preparation for the ICC - International Cricket Council World Cup Qualifiers. Kuwait Cricket recommends Empower 31 to all its registered teams and players for strengthening and conditioning as it is an excellent place to get back in shape.

The 19th Cape Town International Jazz Festival

The 19th Cape Town International Jazz Festival will be held on 23 and 24 March at the Cape Town International Convention Centre in Cape Town, South Africa. This proudly South African produced event is hosted at the Cape Town International Convention Centre (CTICC) each year on the last weekend of March or the first weekend of April.

The Cape Town International Jazz Festival (CTIJF) is the flagship event for the leading events management and production company espAfrica, which has staged and produced several world-renowned events.

Affectionately referred to as 'Africa's Grandest Gathering', the Cape Town International Jazz Festival (CTIJF) is the largest music event in sub-Saharan Africa. The festival, now preparing for its 19th year, is an annual event famous for delivering a star-studded line up of some of the Best South African and International Jazz artists. The programming - unique to



the CTIJF is made up of a 50/50 split between South African artists and international artists respectively.

The festival annually boasts 5 stages with more than 40 artists performing over 2 nights. The festival hosts in excess of 37,000 music lovers over the 2 show days.

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Preparing

Marinara Sauce

Marinara is an Italian tomato sauce made with tomatoes, garlic, herbs, and onions and exists in many variations through addition of other ingredients such as capers, olives and spices. It is easy to prepare at home and tastes immeasurably better than its supermarket counterpart. So the next time you find yourself in a supermarket standing before a jar of sugar-spiked tomato sauce, consider this: If you have twenty minutes, you can easily cook this dish. Here is how:

How to prepare marinara sauce in 20 minutes

Finely chop your garlic. Let the size of your cloves and how much you like the flavor of garlic be your guide.

Locally grown tomatoes are a better option, but you can also opt for store-brought variety. If your tomatoes are thick-skinned, give them a quick blanch in boiling water before peeling and dicing them.

If using canned tomatoes, splurge



on an excellent brand, preferably with little or no salt and no added herbs, packed in their own juices (not tomato sauce). Drain canned tomatoes and reserve the liquid, so as to avoid an overly watery sauce. If you are using whole tomatoes, squeeze with your hands to create small chunks. Warning: this can turn out to be messy because tomatoes will squirt, so make sure you have your apron on. Diced canned tomatoes can be used as is.

Coat your pan with olive oil and sauté the garlic over low heat. (If you are serving pasta, now is the time to put your salted water on to boil.) When the garlic is soft and fragrant, add prepped tomatoes to your pan.

Turn up the heat and let the tomatoes reduce and thicken slightly. Add in some fresh herbs such as basil and parsley, and let them poach in the sauce.

If your marinara is looking too thick, add some reserved tomato water or pasta water. Add salt and a grind or two of black pepper until flavors taste balanced. Remove herb stalks and leaves from sauce. Your marinara sauce is now ready to serve.

How to use it

If you have a basic marinara in your pantry, you have the building blocks

for many delicious dinners. You can use it to top homemade pizza, stuff calzones, and to make fantastic chicken and eggplant parmigiana. A spoonful or two transforms risotto into something special. But it is pretty delicious just on its own, served with pasta (fresh or dried), frozen ravioli, or even cooked farro. If you are serving with pasta or farro, combine preferably in a skillet over medium heat, so that sauce and pasta can marry together.

Variations

Marinara has a beautiful simplicity, but when a straight marinara just will not do, there are some easy ways to fancy it up.

Make a quick puttanesca: If you have any anchovies, chop one or two up and add them to your sautéed garlic before you begin reducing your tomatoes. Add a spoonful of chopped



capers and a handful of chopped, pitted olives to the sauce during the last five minutes of cooking.

Make a vegetable ragu: Sauté half of your minced garlic along with a chopped onion or leek. Add whatever vegetables you have in your fridge, cut into bite-sized pieces, such as fennel, asparagus stalks, tender chard stems, blanched fava beans, or mushrooms. When vegetables are just fork tender, remove from pan and add them back in the last five minutes of cooking. Fresh or frozen peas, asparagus tips, or julienned Swiss chard can also be added at this point.

RECIPE



For the sauce

1 kilogram fresh, ripe tomatoes or two cups canned Italian tomatoes cut up with their juice
5 tbsp. butter
1 medium onion, peeled and cut in half
Salt to taste

Making fresh tomatoes ready for the sauce

If you decide to opt for fresh tomatoes rather than canned ones, here is how to prepare them for the sauce.

The blanching method: Plunge the tomatoes in boiling water for a minute or less. Drain them and, as soon as they are cool enough to handle, skin and cut them into coarse pieces.

The freezing method: Freeze tomatoes on a baking sheet until hard. Thaw again, either on the counter or under running water. Skin and cut them into coarse pieces. The food mill method: Wash the tomatoes in cold water, cut them lengthwise in half, and put them in a covered saucepan. Turn on the heat to medium and cook for 10 minutes. Set a food mill fitted with the disk with the largest holes over a bowl. Transfer the tomatoes with any of their juices to the mill and puree.

Preparation

Put either the prepared fresh tomatoes or the canned in a saucepan, add the butter, onion, and salt, and cook uncovered at a very slow, but steady simmer for about 45 minutes, or until it is thickened to your liking and the fat floats free from the tomato.

Stir from time to time, mashing up any large pieces of tomato with the back of a wooden spoon.

Taste and correct for salt. Before tossing with pasta, you may remove the onion and save for another use. Serve with freshly grated parmigiano-reggiano cheese for the table.

Expatriate engineers face uncertain future due to professional conditions

Engineers especially expatriates who work in the engineering sector may face a tough time in the future in obtaining approval to practice their professions due to the possibility of further problems and complicated conditions.

This will particularly affect holders of engineering qualifications from universities that are not accredited by Ministry of Higher Education and not included in Kuwait Engineers Society's list of accredited universities.

The fate of tens of people who



have been working in the engineering sector, some for over 15 years, is unknown, particularly holders of various diplomas and certificates from little-known institutions.

This news, which sent shockwaves, follows a decision issued by Public Authority for Manpower last month, as per which no work permit will be issued to engineering practitioners

except after they present a to-whom-it may-concern letter issued by Kuwait Engineers Society.

Officials of Public Authority for Manpower explained that the decision is not new as it has been in effect for a long time.

However, it was circulated for further scrutiny and audit of the certificates by attaching a letter issued by Kuwait Engineers Society to it. The letter from the society is a prerequisite for the approval of engineers to get work permits.



Indian embassy to hold 'Made in India' Exhibition

The Embassy of India, Kuwait is organizing a 'Made in India Exhibition' on Wednesday, 21 March from 10:00 am to 8:30 pm at Al Dana Ball Room, Hotel Holiday Inn, Salmiya. The Exhibition will help further expand India-Kuwait economic and trade relations, and promote Indian products for the benefit of business people and industrialists from both countries.

In the Expo, a variety of Indian products representing different sectors including Food & Food Processing, Automobiles, Electrical & Electronics, Security, Home Appliances, Machinery, Agriculture & Animal Husbandry, Textiles, Carpets, Handicrafts, Pharmaceuticals & Herbal Medicines, Civil Construction & Building Materials, Telecommunications, Software, Oil Field Equipments, among others, will be showcased. More than fifty reputed Indian brands will be on display in the exhibition.

The Exhibition is open to all. The Indian Embassy also takes this opportunity to invite business people, media representatives, and the general public to visit the Expo and get a rich experience of Indian products of various ranges showcased in the Expo.

For more information, if required, kindly contact the Commercial Wing, Embassy of India, Kuwait on Tel: 2257 1193 (Direct), 2253 0600 / 612 / 613 / 614 Ext: 211/ 226, Fax 2252 5811 Email: commercial@indembkwt.org or sscm@indembkwt.org

Sheikh Abdullah Al Salem Cultural Center opens to public



Kuwait's latest cultural icon, the state-of-the-art Sheikh Abdullah Al Salem Cultural Center, has now been officially opened to the public.

The Center houses, among other attractions, four large museums: Space Museum, Natural History Museum, Science and Technology Museum,



and Arabic Islamic Science Museum, and includes 22 display halls with a total exhibit area of 22,000 square meters making it one of the largest museum projects in the world. Additionally, it also has over 1,100 exhibits.

The 13-hectare project also consists of a Center for fine arts, a theater, public spaces that include



outdoor exhibits, cafes and restaurants, gift shops, beautiful gardens, water fountains, and parking lots.

Using leading-edge technology, immersive environments, large-scale models and compelling interactivity across all four museums, the Center provides an exciting range of attractions as well as a fresh learning approach for visitors.

The Center, which is open to public six days a week (Sundays off), will provide visitors with up-to-date information on museums and events. Information on other facilities such as wheelchair rental and baby stroller lockers, are also available at the center.

Entry tickets are priced at KD2 for children and

teenagers (2 years to 17 years), KD3 for 18 years and above and free for children below the age of 2 years. People with special needs will be charged KD1.5 and free entry for those accompanying them.



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Kuwait is chief contributor to global welfare

Under the wise leadership of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, Kuwait had solidified its status as a small country with huge contributions to global welfare, said an official on Friday.

In a ceremony honoring charitable Kuwaiti figures held at the British House of Lords, the undersecretary for ruling family affairs at the Kuwaiti Amiri Diwan Sheikh Sabah Nasser Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah said that holding the event at such esteemed place was a great indication of the UK recognition of Kuwait's charitable efforts.

Sheikh Sabah Nasser Al-Sabah thanked House member Lord Mohamed Sheikh for allowing him the opportunity to deliver a speech on Kuwait's charitable efforts.

The 2014 UN honoring of Kuwait as an international humanitarian center and H.H. the Amir Sheikh Sabah as a humanitarian leader are great indications of Kuwait's grand global status, said Sheikh Sabah Nasser Al-Sabah, adding that the current event adds to his country's reputation.

Under His Highness the Amir's leadership, Kuwaiti charitable societies have spread their efforts globally to reach all those who in need, said the official. He affirmed that the current status

quo had lead Kuwaiti to increase its humanitarian efforts in parts of the world devastate by war and mayhem, noting that the Gulf nation had hosted several conferences and events to help other world countries to withstand suffering and destruction caused by crises whether natural or manmade.

In 2010, Kuwait hosted a reconstruction conference for eastern Sudan, which managed to gather US\$ 3.5 billion, said Sheikh Sabah Nasser Al-Sabah who noted that his country donated US\$ 550 million for the cause. The Non-Government Organizations' (NGO) contributions was at US\$ 120 million, the Kuwaiti official indicated.

He also touched on the three conference for Syria and nearby countries in Kuwait, which gathered US\$ eight billion for the cause. He added that Kuwait also co-organized the fourth conference in the UK, which gathered US\$10 billion for Syria. Of which, Kuwait donated US\$ 1.6 billion, he said. Sheikh Sabah Nasser Al-Sabah said that the parallel four NGOs conferences for Syria, hosted by Kuwait had also contributed US\$1.6 billion.

Last February, the Kuwait International Conference for the Reconstruction of Iraq managed to conjure up US\$ 30 billion, indicated Sheikh Sabah Nasser Al-Sabah, adding that Kuwait contributed



a sum of US\$ two billion for the conference while NGOs donated US\$337 million.

On his part, Lord Sheikh deemed Kuwait as a 'super power' within the domain of humanitarian efforts and charity, lauding His Highness the Amir for his generosity, which is befitting of the UN global humanitarian leader.

Lord Sheikh commended the distinguished Kuwaiti-British relations, saying that Kuwait is one of the UK's main partners and allies. The British House of Lords member also praised Kuwait's strong economy, commending steps by the Kuwaiti government to diversify its economic resources and

output. He noted that the Islamic banking sector, which Kuwait is known for, would have a great impact on world economy in the upcoming years. Meanwhile, Head of the Al-Babtain Foundation for Poetic Creativity, Abdulaziz Al-Babtain said that the Kuwaiti public and popular stance had always favored providing a helping hand in accordance with the tenets of the Islamic faith. Al-Babtain said that the strong relations linking Kuwait and Britain was reflective on the humanitarian domain with the UK allowing Kuwaiti charitable societies to operate in the country without restriction.

Also delivering his speech to the event was Ambassador of Kuwait to the UK Khaled Al-Duwaisan, who lauded his country's gracious gesture towards all who suffer around the globe.

The ceremony for Kuwaiti charitable figures saw the honoring of Sheikh Dr. Khaled Al-Mathkour, the late Abdurrahman Al-Sumait, Dr. Adel Al-Youssefi, the late Jassem Al-Kharafi, the late Mubarak Al-Hasawi, the late Abdullah Al-Muttawa, Ma'ali Al-Asousi, and Hanan Al-Qattan.

The ceremony also saw the honoring of Najat charitable society, the Kuwaiti society for humanitarian work, and Al-Rahma international society.

ASEAN Community in Kuwait holds 6th Futsal tournament

Ricky Laxa
Staff Writer

The 6th Futsal Tournament, held at the indoor court of Kazma Club on Friday, witnessed the participation of the embassies of Brunei, Myanmar, Cambodia, Malaysia, Philippines, Thailand, China, Japan, South Korea, Laos and was under the chairmanship of Indonesia. The six-hour event ended with the Green Team comprised of

diplomats from Vietnam, Laos and China winning the championship round.

"I am very thankful with the support of the other embassies for taking time and spending their busy hours to come and enjoy the matches. I also thank each embassy for their wonderful contribution for making the event successful and fun. We have more activities in store for the year and we hope to see everyone participate in them," said Ambassador of Indonesia to Kuwait H.E.



Tatang Budie Razak, and present chairperson of the ASEAN Community in Kuwait (ACK).

The event kicked off with the opening remarks by the host of the event followed by the opening remarks by the Indonesian Envoy. Ambassador Razak also delivered a successful kick-off ceremony to mark the opening of the tournament. The White Team: Indonesia, Japan and South Korea faced off against the Green team: Vietnam, Laos and China followed by the Black Team: Thailand, Myanmar and Malaysia against the Yellow Team: Philippines, Brunei and Cambodia. The final results

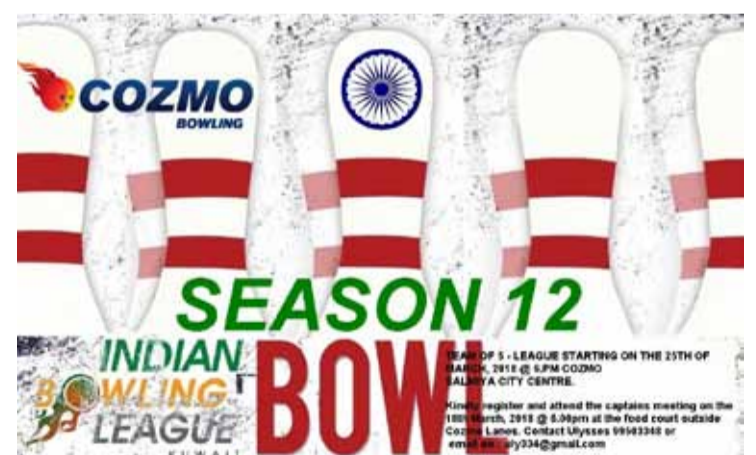
of the tournament were as follows: Champion – Green team, Second Place – Yellow team, Third place – Blue team, and Fourth Place – Black Team. Trophies and medals were awarded to the winners. Each embassy also prepared food and refreshment for everyone.

The event was part of the series of activities organized under the leadership of Indonesian envoy. These types of activities help to strengthen the relationship among ASEAN countries and partners, as well as establishes stronger ties among the ASEAN community in the host country.

IBL opens registration for new team

Indian Bowling League (IBL), Kuwait will soon commence the registration for a new team on 25 March, at Cozmo Salmiya City Centre, at 6pm. Interested participants can register and attend the captains meetings on 18 March at the food court outside Cozmo lanes at 6pm.

For more information: Call: Ulysses at 99503348 or Email, uly334@gmail.com.



Kuwait-Philippines labour dispute resolved

Continued from Page 1

The Undersecretary also disclosed that a request from the Filipino side, to obtain the criminal records that a potential employer might have, was turned down, as Kuwait already had a regulatory mechanism to ensure that those with criminal records could not recruit domestic helpers. It will be recalled that the ban on deployment of Filipino workers to Kuwait, resulted in an immediate shortage of domestic helpers and increased the demand for those already in the country. There are an estimated 250,000 Filipinos in Kuwait, with over 170,000 of them working as domestic helpers. With an estimated 2.3 million Filipinos working abroad,

the country is one of the primary sources of global migrant workers, including to the Middle East. Their regular remittances back home, calculated to total over US\$2 billion, are a significant component of the Philippines economy.

On another note related to expatriate workers, in January, Kuwait had declared a one-month grace period for expatriates to resolve their residency status without payment of hefty fines and forced deportation. The grace period was further extended for another two months until April 22 in a bid to solve the residency issues of more than 100,000 expatriates. Figures show that to-date 45,000 people have benefited from the ministerial decision.

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EXCLUSIVE to THE TIMES KUWAIT

The UN's Crimes of Omission



Nabil Fahmy
Nabil Fahmy is a former foreign minister of Egypt.

When the United Nations was founded, its primary goals, as stated in its Charter's preamble, included saving future generations from "the scourge of war" and reaffirming "faith in fundamental human rights." More than 70 years later, the world has more – and more advanced – weapons than ever, and armed conflicts are raging worldwide, resulting in large-scale death and suffering of combatants and civilians alike.

Among the most widely discussed conflict is that in Syria, which, according to United Nations sources, has left an estimated 500,000 dead and injured, and displaced millions more. In Myanmar, the Rohingya, a Muslim minority in an overwhelmingly Buddhist country, have experienced an assault that the UN itself has labeled ethnic cleansing. Yemen has become the site of a devastating proxy war, producing large numbers of casualties. Conflicts also rage in Burundi and the Democratic Republic of Congo.

For all of its supposed influence, the UN has proved glaringly ineffective in stopping the violence. Here, the UN secretary-general must shoulder significant responsibility. After all, the secretary-general is the ultimate symbol of the UN and, in a sense, the moral compass of the international community. The secretary-general's mandate is delivered by the entire world, which is especially true of the incumbent, António Guterres, who was selected through a revised process that included a more prominent role for the General Assembly, the "world congress." He is thus duty-bound to lead us toward a less



violent, more humane future. At the start of 2018, Guterres issued a "red alert" for the world, declaring that, "we can settle conflicts, overcome hatred, and defend shared values. But we can only do that together." This was a good first step. But to fulfill the responsibilities of his post, he must do far more.

For starters, Guterres must use the bully pulpit of his office to the fullest extent, in order to invoke the moral rectitude and values of the organization. He should also personally and actively support the efforts of the UN's envoys both publicly and privately, by engaging at the highest level, in order to help find ways to defuse ongoing conflicts. Finally, he must make clear to the Security Council, in no uncertain terms, that its inaction or complacency is inconsistent with the UN Charter and constitutes a crime of omission.

The Security Council has the primary responsibility within the UN for maintaining peace and security. It can engage in diplomacy to resolve conflicts and end hostilities, and it can opt for enforcement measures.

Yet the Council has failed to perform this role to

the fullest possible extent, largely because its five permanent members (P5) – China, France, Russia, the United Kingdom, and the United States – have so often acted on the basis of their own interests, using or threatening to use their veto power. But the veto power was intended as a means to facilitate cooperation, thereby enabling the P5 to fulfill their responsibility to help maintain global peace and security.

The one limit on the permanent members' veto power – the requirement that a party to a dispute must abstain from voting – underscores the importance of maintaining some semblance of neutrality when making decisions in the Security Council. Yet, for the P5, neither violations of international law nor large-scale human suffering trump Realpolitik or "geopolitical considerations." They even pursue policies that directly undermine the UN, its Charter, and the rules-based world order more broadly.

The P5's failure to end conflicts – and, in some cases, its members' contribution to aggravating or prolonging hostilities – amounts, at the very least, to condoning violence and suffering, which

disproportionately affects small and medium-size countries. More fundamentally, it has undermined faith in the UN and international law and increased the world's tolerance of inhumanity. This opens the way for even more death, destruction, and suffering, while discrediting the world order to which we solemnly committed when the UN was established.

The US and Russia bear particular responsibility for the P5's failures. Instead of using their political influence and military capacities to check and defuse conflicts – working, of course, with regional actors – they have been resuming a strategic competition that, as history shows, is likely to lead only to more disorder and misery.

None of this absolves the other three P5 members of their responsibility to fight for the Security Council to fulfill its role in supporting international peace and security. At the very least, they must step up and act as catalysts for collective action by the Security Council.

All P5 members must fulfill their responsibility not just to uphold the world order that they played central roles in developing, but also to renew faith in that order, including by pursuing needed reforms. That means showing the rest of the world that they will wield their veto power responsibly, by placing a higher priority on shared interests and common values.

Here, a simple rule to follow would be to refrain from vetoing a resolution that a majority of Security Council members support, unless at least two of the P5 oppose it. While this will not eliminate the problem completely, it should make the Security Council more effective, by encouraging more effective discussions in which all Council members, not just the powerful P5, are heard. International actors must respect individual countries' sovereignty. But in the face of conflicts that are producing widespread death and destruction, the UN and its power players have a responsibility – as stated in the UN Charter – to do everything possible to restore peace. They have exercised power without responsibility for too long.

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EXCLUSIVE to THE TIMES KUWAIT

When Shall We Overcome?



Joseph E. Stiglitz

Winner of the 2001 Nobel Memorial Prize in Economic Sciences, his most recent book is *Globalization and its Discontents Revisited: Anti-Globalization in the Era of Trump*.

In 1967, riots erupted in cities throughout the United States, from Newark, New Jersey, to Detroit and Minneapolis in the Midwest – all two years after the Watts neighborhood of Los Angeles exploded in violence. In response, President Lyndon B. Johnson appointed a commission, headed by Illinois Governor Otto Kerner, to investigate the causes and propose measures to address them. Fifty years ago, the National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders (more widely known as the Kerner Commission), issued its report, providing a stark account of the conditions in America that had led to the disorders.

The Kerner Commission described a country in which African-Americans faced systematic discrimination, suffered from inadequate education and housing, and lacked access to economic opportunities. For them, there was no American dream. The root cause was “the racial attitude and behavior of white Americans toward black Americans. Race prejudice has shaped our history decisively; it now threatens to affect our future.”

I was part of a group convened by the Eisenhower Foundation to assess what progress had been made in the subsequent half-century. Sadly, the Kerner Commission report’s most famous line, ‘Our Nation is moving toward two societies, one black, one white – separate and unequal’, still rings true.

The just-published book based on our efforts, ‘Healing Our Divided Society: Investing in America Fifty Years after the Kerner Report’, edited by Fred Harris and Alan Curtis, makes for bleak reading. As I wrote in my chapter, “Some problematic areas identified in the Kerner Report have gotten better (participation in politics and government by black Americans – symbolized by the election of a black president), some have stayed the same (education and employment disparities), and some have gotten worse (wealth and income inequality).” Other



chapters discuss one of the most disturbing aspects of America’s racial inequality: inequality in securing access to justice, reinforced by a system of mass incarceration largely targeted at African-Americans.

There is no doubt that the civil rights movement of a half-century ago made a difference. A variety of overt forms of discrimination were made illegal. Societal norms changed.

But rooting out deep-seated and institutional racism has proven difficult. Worse, President Donald Trump has exploited this racism and fanned the flames of bigotry.

The core message of the new report reflects the great insight of the civil rights leader Martin Luther King, Jr.: achieving economic justice for African-Americans cannot be separated from achieving economic opportunities for all Americans. King called his August 1963 march on Washington, which I joined and at which he delivered his ringing, unforgettable ‘I Have a Dream’ speech, a march for jobs and freedom. And yet the economic divide in the US has grown much wider, with devastating effects on those without a college education, a group that includes almost three-quarters of African-Americans.

Beyond this, discrimination is rampant, if often hidden. America’s financial sector targeted African-Americans for exploitation, especially in the years before the financial crisis, selling them volatile products with high fees that

could, and did, explode. Thousands lost their homes, and in the end, the disparity in wealth, already large, increased even more. One leading bank, Wells Fargo, paid huge fines for charging higher interest rates to African-American and Latino borrowers; but no one was really held accountable for the many other abuses. Almost a half-century after the enactment of anti-

“
The core message of the new report reflects the great insight of the civil rights leader Martin Luther King, Jr.: achieving economic justice for African-Americans cannot be separated from achieving economic opportunities for all Americans
”

discrimination laws, racism, greed, and market power still work together to the disadvantage of African-Americans.

There are, however, several reasons for hope. First, our understanding of discrimination is far better. Back then, the Nobel laureate economist Gary Becker could write that in a competitive market, discrimination was impossible; the market would bid up the wage of anyone who was underpaid. Today, we understand

that the market is rife with imperfections – including imperfections of information and competition – that provide ample opportunity for discrimination and exploitation.

Moreover, we now recognize that the US is paying a high price for inequality, and an especially high price for its racial inequality. A society marked by such divisions will not be a beacon to the world, and its economy will not flourish. The real strength of the US is not its military power but its soft power, which has been badly eroded not just by Trump, but also by persistent racial discrimination. Everyone will lose if it is not addressed.

The most promising sign is the outpouring of activism, especially from young people, who realize that it is high time that the US lives up to its ideals, so nobly expressed in its Declaration of Independence, that all men are created equal. A century and a half after the abolition of slavery, the legacy of that system lingers. It took a century to enact legislation ensuring equal rights; but today, Republican-controlled courts and politicians often renege on that commitment.

As I concluded my chapter, “An alternative world is possible. But 50 years of struggle has shown us how difficult it is to achieve that alternative vision.” Further progress will require determination, sustained by the faith expressed in the immortal words of the spiritual that became the hymn of the civil rights movement: “We shall overcome.”

Growth to gather pace, debts to cover deficits

Continued from Page 1

Economic growth in the region slowed down to an 8-year low in 2017, growing by just 1.1 percent. The report estimates that GCC states grew by only 0.1 percent last year, the slowest since 2009, while Iraq’s economy contracted by 0.3 percent in 2017.

Low oil prices and limited hydrocarbon output due to the production cuts – agreed to by Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) along with several non-OPEC member states – together with various fiscal consolidation measures and sustained political challenges have impacted the economies of regional oil exporters in 2017. But this year could mark a turning point with growth in GDP of the GCC states, Iran and Iraq now projected to be 2.4 percent, 4.1 percent and 2.5 percent respectively this year. Regional growth this year is also expected to average 2.9 percent, underpinned by rising oil prices, expansionary fiscal policy and relative improvements in the overall security conditions, said the report’s authors.

The spew of financial and economic reforms undertaken by GCC countries in the last few years have also helped in trimming their budget deficits by nearly a third in 2017, from around US\$150 billion in 2016 to close to \$100 billion last year.

The aggregate GCC fiscal deficit in 2018 is now projected to be around \$74 billion. However, in the last couple of years, GCC states have been very successful in financing budget deficits by borrowing on international debt markets. The issuances have helped ease close to 50 percent of government financing needs and has been eagerly sought after by international investors. The taste of this early success has now led to a healthy appetite for bond issuances in the region and more issuances are expected in 2018.

Last year, gross GCC issuance (public and private) crossed \$100 billion for the second year in a row, supported by largely by robust sovereign activity. Of all the new debt in 2017, public sector debt issuance accounted for \$84 billion of which \$50 billion was international sovereign debt. Private sector issuance was down by \$4 billion last year, but remained strong on the back of robust non-financial sector activity and touched \$16 billion.

Total outstanding debt of all GCC states increased by 16 percent in 2017 and reached a record \$436 billion, attesting to the attractiveness of GCC debt on international markets. Nevertheless, analysts caution that the gradual tightening of global monetary policy and the volatility of oil prices could weigh negatively on regional funding

conditions that could be further exacerbated by any worsening of geopolitical uncertainty in the region. For instance, ongoing conflicts in Syria and Yemen that could further escalate the simmering tension between Saudi Arabia and Iran, or the continued boycott of Qatar by its immediate neighbors, Bahrain, Saudi Arabia and the UAE, that have weakened traditional GCC unity and undermined the organization’s relevance, could impact international borrowings.

Meanwhile, in its country assessment of Kuwait, the global rating agency Standard and Poor’s noted that in line with other oil-exporters in the region, the year gone had been challenging for Kuwait. The agency reported that Kuwait’s “undiversified” economy, which derives about 60 percent of its GDP, more than 90 percent of exports, and about 90 percent of fiscal receipts from hydrocarbon products, saw its GDP fall by 2.3 percent in 2017 against a bland oil price backdrop.

However, the rating agency added that the picture for 2018 was more positive and it expected growth to rise 2.5 percent this year, and to climb higher in 2019 as hydrocarbon prices rise and OPEC’s oil production cuts start to phase out. Accordingly, in late February, the agency reaffirmed the country’s stable rating of ‘AA/A-1+’.

“The stable outlook reflects our expectation that Kuwait’s public and external balance sheets will remain strong over the forecast horizon, backed by a significant stock of financial assets. We expect these strengths to offset risks related to lower oil prices, Kuwait’s undiversified economy, and rising geopolitical tensions in the region,” said S&P.

As part of Kuwait government’s continued push for economic reforms in a bid to wean the country away from its over-dependence on oil, and encourage greater private sector participation in the economy, it has been reported that the local stock exchange, Boursa Kuwait, will come up for sale later this year.

According to Mishaal Al-Usaimi, vice-chairman of the Capital Markets Authority (CMA), which regulates the stock exchange and other capital markets in the country, the CMA is currently conducting market studies to launch an initial public offering (IPO) for Boursa Kuwait, sometime later this year.

Notably, Kuwait’s benchmark index, which has 156 members many of whom have shown no activity since 2006, rose 11 percent last year. This was the highest rise since 2013, and marked the first time, after several consecutive years of losses, that the index notched an annual profit of KD3.5 million.

NOWRUZ

.....
A CELEBRATION
OF THE
NEW YEAR
.....

Nowruz, a festival dating back to at least the 6th century BCE and celebrated on 21 March, ushers in spring and marks the New Year among many communities and countries that lie along the old Silk Road, including in Afghanistan, Azerbaijan, India, Iran, Iraq, Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan, Pakistan, Tajikistan, Turkey, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan.



Nowruz is also associated with a great variety of local traditions, including the legend of Jamshid, a king in Persian mythology. To this day in Iran, Nowruz celebrations are sometimes known as Nowruze Jamshidi. According to the myth, Jamshid was carried through the air in a chariot, a feat that so amazed his subjects that they established a festival on that day. Similar mythological narratives exist in Indian and Turkish traditions, while the legend of Amoo Nowrouz is popular in the countries of Central Asia.

Although the traditions and customs that accompany the celebration of Nowruz vary from country to country, there are many unifying features. In most regions, symbolic preparations of fire and water take place before the festival, and ritual dances involving leaping over fires and streams are performed. In Iran, these dances take place on the last Wednesday before Nowruz, known as Chārshanbeh Sūrī or Chārshanbeh-e Ātash; in Azerbaijan, this practice is carried out over the four Wednesdays preceding the celebrations. In many places, households fill up their supplies of water on the last Wednesday of the year, and in Kyrgyzstan, all vessels in the house are to be filled on Nowruz Eve, in the hope

that this will bring abundance in the New Year and keep away misfortune. It is also customary across most regions to visit cemeteries before the Nowruz celebrations begin, with visitors bringing candles and offerings to remember the dead. Two candles are commonly placed at the door to the house on Nowruz Eve in Kazakhstan. In Azerbaijan, the dead are commemorated on the second day of Nowruz, known as the 'Day of Fathers'.

On the day of Nowruz, there is much feasting, visiting family members and friends, and exchanging gifts. A wide range of cultural performances and traditions also take place. Children are often given small toys, and play with colorfully painted eggs. Families share a symbolic meal, often consisting of cooked rice and vegetables combined with many local ingredients. In Kyrgyzstan, this meal is a public ceremony, with designated areas set aside in towns for the preparation of Nooruz Kedje or Chon Kedje, a type of soup made from bull's meat.

One widespread tradition is the preparation of a Nowruz table, on which a number of symbolic objects are placed. While these tables differ slightly from region to region, the most common objects featured on the table are water, candles, dishes of green sprouts (or Sabzeh), a traditional dish made

out of crushed wheat sprouts, mirrors, eggs, and various fruits. These objects symbolize purity, brightness, abundance, happiness and fertility for the New Year. In Iran, the table is referred to as the 'Sofreh-ye Haft Sin', and displays seven objects, each starting with the letter 'S'. A similar table is set in areas of India.

Nowruz is also the occasion for traditional cultural activities, combining common practices with local customs. Poetry is a popular feature of Nowruz celebrations, with 'Nowruzi poems' being written, published and recited around the time of the festival. Music is also very important, and many of the countries that celebrate Nowruz have their own traditional folk songs specifically for the festival.

Open air festivities such as the game of Kopkari, wrestling and horse racing often take place to celebrate Nowruz in Uzbekistan, and similarly, in Kyrgyzstan traditional horsemanship is displayed as part of the festivities, with communities coming together to enjoy horse racing, Kyz Kuumay (a race in which men chase after women on horseback), Enish (wrestling on horseback), and Jamby Atuu (shooting from horseback). Other Nowruz traditions include local street performances, tightrope walking, called Band Bāzi, in Iran, and the sport of Buz Kashī, in which horse-riders compete for an object representing the head of a calf, in Afghanistan.

These annual traditions to welcome the spring have been passed on from generation to generation, and Nowruz provides an opportunity not only to enjoy ancient cultural customs and traditional songs, music, dancing, rituals, foods and story-telling, but also to promote peace and solidarity within towns and communities and to strengthen deep-rooted bonds of friendship and kinship.

In recognition of the importance of this ancient festival, Nowruz was inscribed on UNESCO's Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity in 2009. Moreover, in 2010, the United Nations General Assembly proclaimed 21 March International Nowruz Day.



The festival, also known as Novruz, Nowrouz, Nooruz, Navruz, Nauroz or Nevruz, traces its origins to the early Zoroastrian religion and was celebrated as one of the holiest days in the ancient Zoroastrian calendar. The return of the spring was seen to have great spiritual significance, symbolizing the triumph of good over evil and joy over sorrow. According to Zoroastrian tradition, the Spirit of Noon, known as Rapithwina, who was considered to be driven underground by the Spirit of Winter during the cold months, was welcomed back with celebrations at noon on the day of Nowruz.



Mauritius maintains top rank in African economic freedom

Mauritius maintained its first position among nations in sub-Saharan Africa in the latest Index of Economic Freedom published by the Heritage Foundation. Mauritius with a score of 75.1 ranked 21 among 180 countries and was labeled as a 'mostly free' economy.

Mauritius made marginal gains in score in government integrity and property rights indicators from the previous year's ranking, while holding on to its scores in having an efficient and transparent regulatory environment that supported relatively broad-based economic development, its competitive tax rates, prudent banking practices and a fairly flexible labor code that facilitated private-

sector growth. According to the 2018 Index, in Sub-Saharan Africa most of the 47 graded nations are "mostly unfree", and more than half of the world's 'repressed' economies, 12 out of 21, are in Sub-Saharan Africa.

The Index of Economic Freedom launched in 1995 studies economies throughout the world and provides in-depth analysis of each country's political and economic developments. The Index groups the world's countries into five regions: America, Asia-Pacific, Europe, Middle East/North Africa and Sub-Saharan Africa.

It measures economic freedom on 12 quantitative and qualitative factors, grouped into four broad categories: Rule of Law (property



rights, government integrity, judicial effectiveness); Government Size (government spending, tax burden, fiscal health); Regulatory Efficiency (business freedom, labor freedom, monetary freedom); and Open

Markets (trade freedom, investment freedom, financial freedom). The Index measures the scores on a scale of 100 points classified as "free" (combined scores of 80 or higher); "mostly free" (70-79.9); "moderately free" (60-69.9); "mostly unfree" (50-59.9); or "repressed" (under 50).

Among the 180 countries ranked, scores improved for 102 countries and declined for 75. According to the Index, Hong Kong and Singapore each logged increases in their Index scores, finishing first and second in the rankings for the 24th consecutive year. Three other frequent top finishers, New Zealand 3rd globally, Switzerland 4th and the United Kingdom 8th also witnessed a rise in their scores.

Coffee tourism gaining ground in Ethiopia



No other country in the world probably has a culture so intricately interwoven with coffee production and coffee making as Ethiopia. Coffee has been an integral part of the country's culture for centuries as is the place from where Coffee arabica is believed to have originated.

Though Ethiopia accounts for only around 3 percent of the global coffee market, coffee is critical to the country's economy as it is responsible for bringing in around 60 percent of the foreign income, and an estimated 15 million Ethiopians relying on some aspect of coffee production for their livelihood.

Even though Ethiopia is well known for being the origin of coffee Arabica, and the majority of Ethiopia's exports meet the criteria for specialty coffee, the country has lacked a 'coffee-nation' brand image. Last week, the US Secretary of State Rex Tillerson helped rectify this to some extent when he paid a high profile visit to the Yirgacheffe Coffee Farmers Cooperative Union, which started with USAID assistance 16 years ago. The aid has helped more than 120,000 smallholders coffee growers to increase production, sales, and earn nearly \$28 million.

Now, one person is attempting to take coffee to the next level by making the unique Ethiopian coffee tradition a tourist attraction. Dagmawi Eyasu, the research and production development manager at Ya-Coffee Roasters Company, is the brain behind the idea of promoting coffee tourism.

He holds the view that tourism in Ethiopia has been growing significantly and now is the time to promote coffee and the coffee making ceremony as yet another tourism potential of the country. "Coffee has even more value than an export commodity." He stressed. He aims to promote and develop coffee tourism in twenty cities and towns across the country that have biosphere sites with jungles around each of them. "Ethiopia has more than five million farmers who produce coffee. Each and every step of the production is unique. We also have a coffee ceremony tradition, only one of its kinds. The roasting, the grinding and making procedures are so unique that they have power to impress us, let alone tourists," said Mr. Eyasu.

His project aims to provide tourists with the chance to witness all these processes of coffee production within a single trip. He added, "We can build a successful tourism brand using our unique coffee tradition. There are other countries that are well known for their own wine or beer culture. So, they have created a wine tourism. And we can do that through our unique organic coffee and unique ceremony of making it."

Africa needs to effectively utilize renewable energy



Africa needs to intensify efforts to improve the transmission grid in order to effectively develop renewable energy on the continent, said Nigeria's Director of Renewable and Rural Power Access Department in the Ministry of Power, Works and Housing, Farouk Yusuf.

The director was addressing the two-day conference on Renewable Energy Development organized by the Centre for Petroleum, Energy Economics and Law (CEPEEL) of the University of Ibadan.

As a committed member of the United Nations, African Union and ECOWAS, Nigeria has adopted several international treaties and policies which promote the use of renewable energy, said the director. This, he said, was in line with the national

vision to provide incremental power, and then steady and uninterrupted power.

The minister said that the Federal Government recently approved an integrated energy mix target under its Electricity Vision 30:30:30 which targets generation of 30 GW in 2030, with 30 percent from renewable energy sources.

"Africa has trillions of cubic feet of natural gas reserves, billions of barrels of crude oil reserves and billions of tonnes of coal. But Africa has an even greater abundance of renewable energy resources. Unfortunately, of the nearly 1.5 billion people estimated to lack electricity supply world over, half live in Africa.

"Nigeria alone is estimated to have over 90 million people living without electricity

supply, according to the World Bank," Mr. Yusuf said. The director, who was addressing the conference on behalf of the Minister of Works, Power and Housing, Babatunde Raji Fashola, also revealed that Nigeria's power generation capacity at the moment stood at 7,000MW and the country had recently inaugurated several renewable energy projects.

Among the renewable energy projects that came online recently were the 10MW Katsina Wind Farm and the 40MW Kashimbilla Hydro-power project. He also disclosed that larger projects such as the 3050 MW Mambilla Hydro-power and 700 MW Zungeru Hydro-power initiatives as well as the 14 Solar IPPs were expected to come on stream in the near future.

Mineral exports boost Rwanda's economic upswing

Total value of Rwandan exports grew from US\$589.7 million in 2016 to \$943.5 in 2017, a growth of 57.6 percent, said the country Finance and Economic Planning Minister Claver Gatete while tabling a draft law for the revised 2017/18 fiscal year budget in Parliament.

The minister further disclosed that a significant portion of the export growth came from the increase in mineral exports, which grew by over 210 percent to \$248.5 million in 2017 against the \$80.1 million a year earlier.

Reforms to the mining sector, including the establishment of the Mines, Petroleum, and Gas Board, a specialized agency to provide oversight on mining



and mineral resources, has given a new impetus to the sector. Among the recent significant developments in the sector are exploratory mining studies, ridding the sector of middlemen and bringing in investors with modern mining technology.

While the main increase in exports was largely from receipts of mineral exports, there were other major drivers of export growth, including receipts from coffee and tea exports, which grew at 9.6 percent and 32.9 percent respectively, due to the recovery of prices for commodities on the international market, said the planning minister.

Rwanda's imports value also shrank by 0.4 percent in 2017 consequently leading to a significant reduction in the trade deficit. "Due to the increase of exports and decrease of imports, trade deficit went down by 21.7 percent from \$1624.6 million in 2016 to \$1271.9 million in 2017," said Mr. Gatete.

Standing on the shoulders of a giant

World mourns death of legendary physicist Stephen Hawking

"The greatest enemy of knowledge is not ignorance, it is the illusion of knowledge." Stephen Hawking

The death on 13 March of Stephen Hawking brought to an end the life of one of the most brilliant theoretical physicists in history. Though more well-known for his work on general relativity and the origins and structure of the universe, from the Big Bang to black holes, he often stepped outside his own field of research and used his fame and recognition to highlight what he believed were major challenges and existential threats that could loom in front of humanity in the years ahead.

Born in England on 8 January, 1942 — 300 years to the day after the death of renowned astronomer Galileo Galilei, Hawking attended University College, Oxford, where he studied physics, despite his father's urging to focus on medicine. Hawking went on to Cambridge to research cosmology, the study of the universe as a whole.

In early 1963, just shy of his 21st birthday, Hawking was diagnosed with motor neuron disease, more commonly known as Lou Gehrig's disease or amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS). He was not expected to live more than two years. Completing his doctorate did not appear likely. Yet, Hawking defied the odds, not



only attaining his Ph.D. but also forging new roads into the understanding of the universe in the decades since. As the disease spread, Hawking became less mobile and began using a wheelchair. Talking grew more challenging and, in 1985, an emergency tracheotomy caused his total loss of speech. A speech-generating device constructed at Cambridge, combined with a software program, served as his electronic voice, allowing Hawking to select his words by moving the muscles in his cheek. Just before his diagnosis, Hawking met Jane Wilde, and the two were married in 1965. The couple had three children before separating. Hawking remarried in 1995 but divorced in 2006.

Hawking continued at Cambridge after his

graduation, serving as a research fellow and later as a professional fellow. In 1974, he was inducted into the Royal Society, a worldwide fellowship of scientists. In 1979, he was appointed Lucasian Professor of Mathematics at Cambridge, the most famous academic chair in the world (the second holder was Sir Isaac Newton, also a member of the Royal Society). Hawking was a popular writer. His first book, 'A Brief History of Time' was first published in 1988 and became an international best seller. In it, Hawking aimed to communicate questions about the birth and death of the universe to the layperson.

Hawking went on to write other nonfiction books aimed at nonscientists. These include 'A Briefer History of Time', 'The Universe in a Nutshell', 'The Grand Design' and 'On the Shoulders of Giants'. His pronouncements, often controversial and viewed with skepticism by the scientific community, were nevertheless attractive fodder for global media.

Hawking was clearly troubled that humanity was relying overwhelmingly on the Earth being able to support lifeforms for eons more; he clearly advocated for humans to begin the process of building and permanently settling new colonies in space or on other planets and moons. Hawking's rationale was that humankind would eventually fall victim to an extinction-level catastrophe - perhaps sooner rather than later. What worried him were so-called low-

probability, high impact events - a large asteroid striking our planet is the classic example. But Hawking perceived a host of other potential threats: artificial intelligence, climate change, GM viruses and nuclear war to name a few.

Hawking regarded global warming as one of the biggest threats to life on the planet. The Cambridge physicist was particularly fearful of a so-called tipping point, where global warming would become irreversible.

The media attention gave him an unprecedented platform. But some in the scientific community were occasionally less enthusiastic about the resulting headlines than the journalists who wrote them. A major downside of his iconic status was that his comments attracted exaggerated attention even on topics where he had no special expertise - for instance philosophy, or the dangers from aliens or from intelligent machines."

But many would also argue that, beyond individual statements or headlines, Hawking had a unique ability to connect with the public and that we should focus on a greater good - his ability to bring science to the attention of people who might otherwise never have given it a second thought.

Testament to his success as a communicator was evident from the outpouring of global mourning on news of the demise of this champion of rational thinking.

The International Day of Francophonie

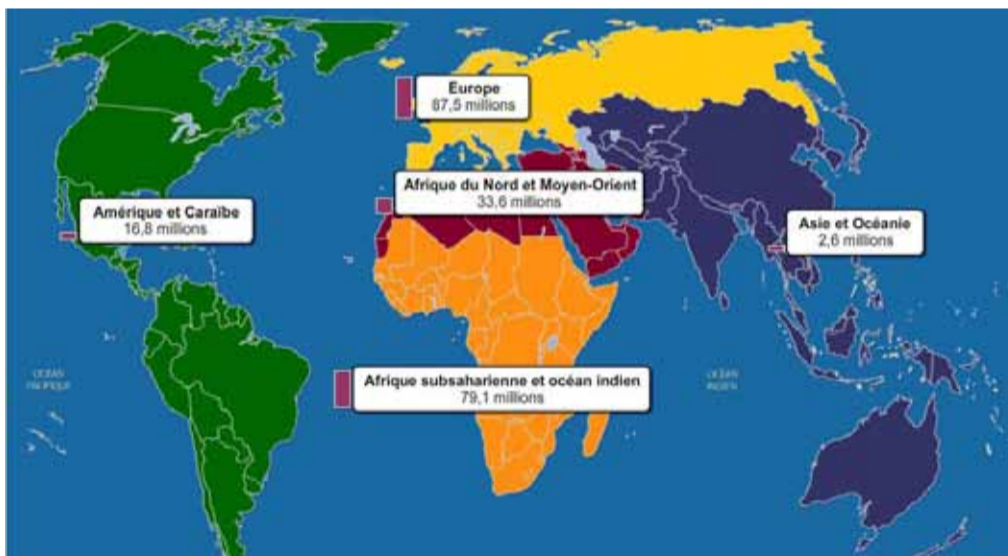
The International Day of Francophonie is held annually on 20 March and celebrated by francophones (speakers of the French language) and francophiles (lovers of France) to show appreciation for the French language and culture.

The International Day of La Francophonie was founded in 1988 to commemorate the establishment of the institution of La Francophonie, an organization representing the francophone community, on 20 March, 1970. Many regard the Day as an opportunity to encourage camaraderie among French speakers and deem it an opportunity to felicitate the French language. On the occasion, the humanist values shared by members of La Francophonie are given due respect, particularly the ideals and values of peace and democracy, respect for human rights, cultural diversity, solidarity, sustainable development and economic growth.

La Francophonie member countries include the former French colonies in Asia, Africa and the Pacific islands. By the early-1960s, most of these former French colonies had been decolonized,



often peacefully, but also sometimes forcibly. In the late-1960s, there arose calls for greater cooperation and collaboration among these former colonies and with France with which they continued to share linguistic, geographic, political or militaristic connections. The need for an organization, on the lines of the British Commonwealth, to enhance cooperation among French-speaking nations and to represent them more effectively on the international stage led to the creation on 20 March, 1970 of Agence de



Coopération Culturelle et Technique (Agency for Cultural and Technical Cooperation).

Over the years, the Agency evolved in form and function to eventually transform itself in 2005 into the Organization Internationale de La Francophonie (OIF), or La Francophonie for short. The OIF has the dual mandate of serving as a platform for solidarity and cooperation among its members based on common values and a shared language, as well as to be an effective actor on the international scene.

Today, with 84 States and participating governments (58 members and 26 observers) the OIF represents nearly a billion people spread over five continents and accounting for nearly 19 percent of the world's trade in goods. The OIF is also one of the biggest linguistic zones in the world, with nearly 275 million French speakers and 32 member states where French is either the official language, or one of the official languages.

Michaëlle Jean, the former Governor General of Canada, is the incumbent Secretary-General of the organization. She was elected in 2015 and will serve a four-year term. As Secretary-General she heads the OIF's political activities and represents La Francophonie at the international level and at the biannual Conference of the Heads of State and participating governments (Summit). The Summit brings together leaders of the organization for a summit every two years. The last summit was held in Madagascar in 2016; the next is in Armenia in October 2018

and then in Tunisia in 2020.

The 58 Member States and Governments are: Albania, Principality of Andorra, Armenia, Kingdom of Belgium, French Community of Belgium, Benin, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cambodia, Cameroon, Canada, Canada New-

Brunswick, Canada-Quebec, Cape Verde, Central African Republic, Chad, Comoros, Congo, Cyprus, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Djibouti, Dominica, Egypt, Equatorial Guinea, France, Gabon, Ghana, Greece, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Haiti, Ivory Coast, Laos, Lebanon, Luxembourg, former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Madagascar, Mali, Morocco, Mauritius, Mauritania, Moldova, Monaco, Niger, Qatar, Romania, Rwanda, Saint Lucia, São Tomé and Príncipe, Senegal, Seychelles, Switzerland, Togo, Tunisia, Vanuatu, Vietnam.

The 23 Observers are: Austria, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Costa Rica, Croatia, Czech Republic, Dominican Republic, Estonia, Georgia, Hungary, Kosovo, Latvia, Lithuania, Mexico, Montenegro, Mozambique, Poland, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Thailand, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates and Uruguay.

On the occasion of International Day of Francophonie, under the auspices of the embassies, ministries, or French-promoting organizations, a variety of cultural events are organized to highlight the linguistic and cultural diversity of the French-speaking countries.

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Bukhara

Ark Fortress, the symbol of the state power

Ark-Citadel is a residence of Bukhara Khans that has lasted since the 4 century BC. For many years of construction, a 20 meter high artificial hill was formed; its upper layers were built over the time of the last bokharan emirs. Unfortunately, the wooden part of the Ark building was burnt down during the fire of 1920.

The general planning is being reestablished by historical documents. The Ark included the whole city, consisted of closely accreted houses; courts and yards with state institutions, the Amir, his wives, relatives and officials lodgings. Inside the trapeziform outlines of the citadel walls, the planning was right-angled with traditional cruciform crossing of main streets.

The Ark included the Amir lodging, the throne-room, the police department, stables, stores of clothes, carpets, utensils, treasures, armory, jail, jeweler's and other workshops, mint place, mosques, mazars and other buildings. At first, you can see the massive fortress gates of the Ark, a portal with two-story towers by the sides with an arch aperture and latticed architecture gallery on top. Behind it, there is a musical pavilion, built in the 17 century, two-colored audience chamber, surrounded by a gallery. During the day, a series of makoms – a musical work was performed through which people could know the time (it is tradition left from zoroastrizm time).

From ayvan, tsarevitches looked at solemnities and executions that occurred at Registan Square that was situated before the Ark. Through the citadel inside leads from the Ark gates to the gloomy, arched and raising up passage-dalon. At its side, there can be seen 12 niches that pointed the way to damp dungeons, where prisoners languished in awful cells that were built under bridge of planks and Ark gates towers.

Lyabi-Khauz: The architectural ensemble Lyabi-Khauz means 'at reservoir' and is formed with three large monumental buildings: Kukeldash Madrasah in the north, Khanaka and Nodir Divan-begi in the west and in the east. On the west side of Laybi-khauz is one more architectural monument, called the Nadir Divan-Begi Khanaka (1619 - 1620). It is a great multi-celled building with a central cupola hall and the building corners are living hydjas. On the eastern side of Khauz, you can see curious architectural building – Nadir Divan-Begi Madrasah.

Samanids Mausoleum: Of all the medieval buildings in Bukhara, the Samanids Mausoleum is of special interest. This world-famous architectural masterpiece was built at the close of the ninth century. The mausoleum was erected as a family crypt immediately after the death of Ismail Samani's father. The Samanids Mausoleum reveals



Samanids Mausoleum

the genius of a plain design, as is visible in its composition and the balanced design of its facades and interiors. The core is characterized by regular kiln-dried bricks, forming horizontal, vertical, and diagonal patterns on the walls. There are also separate details in the shape of disks or rosettes. Analysis shows that all elements in the Mausoleum are based on squares and diagonals: the elements form geometrically digressive lines. The same unification is seen in the architectural forms and kiln-dried brickwork in the interiors. The architectural design of the mausoleum is entirely unique. It owes much to pre-Islamic Soghdian architecture, which used four-arch domed compositions and diminished forms on the top of buildings, including disks and rosettes on decoration columns (as can also be seen in the section between the dome and the drum of the interior). Although this building is connected with pre-Islamic architecture, it also anticipates the emergence of a new architectural style with comparatively small dimensions; the Samanids Mausoleum is full of magnificence.

Poi-Kalyan ensemble: It is the main ensemble in Bukhara center, situated on the way to trade crossing of 'four bazars' and Poi-Kalyan means 'the pedestal of the Great'. The ensemble consists of 4 monuments: Kalyan mosque and Miri-Arab Madrasah – facing each other with main fronts; between them is Kalyan minaret; to the south of Miri-Arab there is small Amir-Allimkhan Madrasah.

Kalyan Minaret is a great vertical pillar, rising above the city while the Kalyan Madrasah is considered a architecture masterpiece; a monument of the 5th century, raised from the ruins during the years of Soviet power.

Miri-Arab Madrasah: There are two big blue domes of the Miri-

Arab madrasah towering above the surrounding buildings in the center of Bukhara. Along with the Kalyan mosque and minaret, this religious educational establishment forms the whole ensemble Poi-Kalyan that is the spiritual center of the city.

This building boasts of traditional national architecture – a square yard, surrounded with two floors of cells, two big domed halls in the left and right corners. There are two-store loggias adjoining the main façade in the center highlighted with a portal. The inner yard is adorned with composed carved mosaic. In the center of the madrasah, there is a shrine of Ubaydulla – Amir of Bukhara, who had ruled the city in the period of 1533-1540.

The décor of the Miri-Arab Madrasah is dominated by different stone mosaics of exquisite work of geometric, vegetation and calligraphic writings and patterns. Miri-Arab madrasah was the only spiritual educational establishment in the USSR that had begun to function after the WWII. All leading imams of those times had graduated from this religious center. The décor and architecture of the building are done in an exquisite oriental style.

Chor-Minor Madrasah 'Four Minarets': Regarded as one of Bukhara's unusual monuments, it is located right behind Lyabi-Khauz, in the open space. The corners of the square-rectangular madrasah building are decorated with four small minarets crowned with blue domes, different in decors from each other.

The towers' décor elements reflect the religious-philosophical understanding of the world's four religions. In front of the madrasah building there is a patio, with a centrally occupied small basin – hauz, lined with stone blocks, and several hujrs adjacent to the madrasah sides.



Ark-Citadel



Miri-Arab Madrasah

Samsung Galaxy S9 and S9+ launches in Kuwait

Samsung Gulf Electronics Co. launched the Samsung Galaxy S9 and S9+ at an event on 13 March at the Four Seasons Hotel, Kuwait at Burj AlShaya. Made for an age in which consumers increasingly communicate and express themselves more with images, videos and emojis, the Galaxy S9 and S9+ drive innovation with Samsung's advanced camera. Redesigned with a new Dual Aperture lens that powers an innovative low light camera, Super Slow-mo video capabilities and personalized AR Emoji, the Galaxy S9 and S9+ ensure

Gulf. "The Galaxy S9 and S9+ enable consumers to shoot great photos and videos anywhere, it's a smartphone that's designed to help them connect with others and express themselves in a way that's unique and personal to them; we have reimagined the smartphone camera for today's generation and the way they communicate, helping them unlock powerful experiences and share



make the Samsung experience a fuller and richer one.

Users in Kuwait who purchase the Samsung Galaxy S9 and S9+ will be able to enjoy many exclusive offers and benefits, all of which are available through the Samsung Members app. Users will be able to save 20 percent off the best available rates at 170 participating Marriott International Hotels across the Middle East & Africa, in addition to 20 percent off at 370 restaurants and 70 spas.

The Galaxy S9 and S9+ will be available across major retailers and Samsung brand shops in Kuwait starting 16 March and will be offered in Midnight Black, Titanium Gray and

stereo speakers tuned by AKG. The Galaxy S9 and S9+ audio experience is complemented by Samsung's revolutionary Infinity Display. Samsung sets the gold standard for smartphones with IP68 water and dust resistance and wireless charging and goes a step beyond with the Galaxy S9 and S9+. The devices now support expandable memory of up to 400GB with a Micro SD Card and are equipped with the latest premium application processors offering powerful performance and sophisticated image processing.

In addition, the Galaxy S9 and S9+ give users the peace of mind knowing that their phone is protected by Knox 3.1, Samsung's latest defense-grade security platform. The Galaxy S9 and S9+ support three different biometric authentication options - iris, fingerprint, and facial recognition - so users can choose the way they want to protect their device and applications.

The Samsung Galaxy S9 and S9+



phones come fully loaded with the all-new Samsung Members app. The all-in-one app is designed to help users unlock the full potential of their Galaxy device through unrivaled exclusive lifestyle and service rewards available and regularly updated throughout the year, from exclusive event invitations to discounts on services, and specialized customer care services, all of which

a new hue, Lilac Purple. The price for both smartphones will be dependent on memory size: For the Galaxy S9, the price points are S9 (64GB) for KD255, S9 (128GB) for KD270 and S9 (256GB) for KD285. On Galaxy S9+, the price points include S9+ (64GB) for KD285.00, S9+ (128GB) for KD300.00 and S9+ (256GB) for KD315.



users do not miss a moment and make their everyday epic.

The Galaxy S9 and S9+ deliver an enhanced entertainment experience with powerful stereo speakers tuned by AKG, immersive audio with Dolby Atmos® and a refined edge-to-edge Infinity Display - a key staple in Samsung's design heritage.

"The way we use our smartphones has changed as communication and self-expression have evolved," said Tarek Sabbagh, Head of IT and Mobile (IM) Division at Samsung Electronics



them effortlessly," he added.

The Galaxy S9 and S9+ cameras are built with these consumers in mind, with a Super Speed Dual Pixel sensor with dedicated processing power and memory to take amazing shots with high photo quality.

Smartphones are often our go-to choice for entertainment, which is why Samsung created a device that offers premium sound experiences with

Zain Life, a new portfolio of digital solutions for a smarter way of living



Zain, the leading telecommunications company in Kuwait, announced the launch of Zain Life, a new brand that offers customers a portfolio of innovative and flexible digital services and solutions in the areas of Smart Homes, Digital Entertainment, and Customer Experience.

The announcement was made during a press conference held at Zain's main headquarters in Shuwaikh, which witnessed the attendance of Zain Kuwait's Chief Executive Officer Eaman Al Roudhan, Zain Kuwait's Chief Technical Officer Nawaf Al Gharabally, Zain Kuwait's Chief Enterprise Business Officer Hamad Al Marzouq, Zain Kuwait's Marketing Director Moataz Elsayed, and Zain Kuwait's Corporate Communications and Relations Director Waleed Al Khashti. The conference was accompanied by a live demo of the announced services and solutions.

The launch of Zain Life comes under the umbrella of Zain's strategic vision to reinforce its digital transformation leadership, offering unparalleled services and solutions in the fields of Smart Homes through a number of security devices designed to revolutionize home security, as well as digital entertainment solutions through the PlayStation VR device.

The new brand also offers new solutions in the Customer Experience sector through the all new Zain Smart Branch - the first of its kind self-service machine launched by a telecommunications company in Kuwait.

Eaman Al Roudhan, Zain Kuwait's CEO,

commented, "Today we launch the all-new Zain Life brand, which consists of a portfolio of flexible digital services that include an array of innovative packages, further enriching Zain's leadership in offering the latest digital transformation applications.

Our customers, from both the consumer and business segments, are well informed and always aspire to try the latest smart solutions available. For that, we were keen on designing the first packages of Zain Life with digital transformation applications such as smart home solutions and more, as well as enhancing our customers' experience, making it easier and more flexible".

The Zain Life brand offers a smart home security kit, which solutions include a smart camera, motion sensor, door/window sensors, and smart smoke detector, which all can be controlled and managed through a single smartphone app.

Zain Life's Digital Entertainment offering offers digital gaming via virtual reality applications provided by Sony's PlayStation VR.

Zain's Smart Branch offers Zain customers new service options such as the advanced face recognition feature, the SIM card replacement feature, among a variety of other services including recharging lines, bill payment, managing accounts, and buying devices from Zain's Online Store.

Zain Life's Smart Home Starter Kit is available for KD2.5/month and requires an active data plan of at least KD10/month. For more information, please visit kw.zain.com/life.

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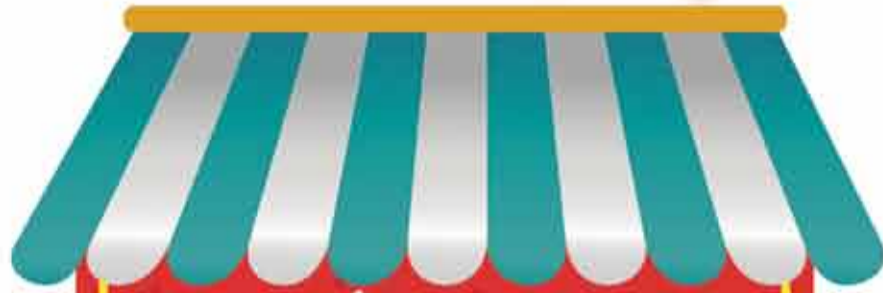
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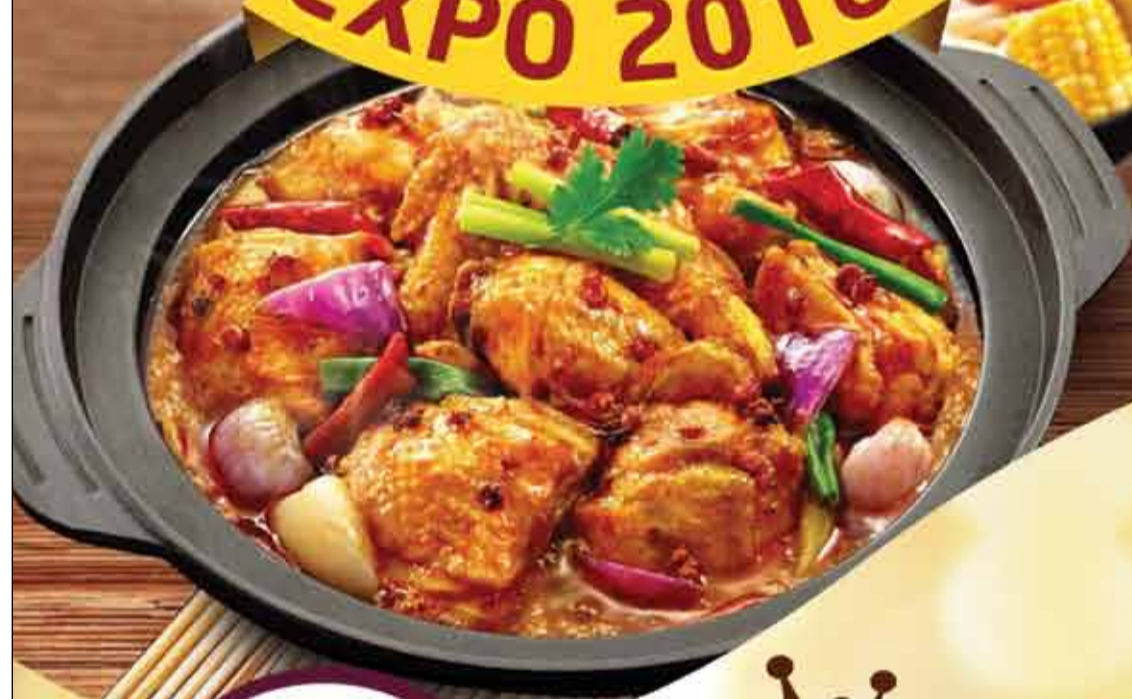
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22 March 10am (Qurain Outlet)

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22 March 6pm (Dhajej Outlet)

Autograph Signing Session with Chef VICKY
22 March 8pm -9pm (Al Rai Outlet)

Chit Chat with the Master Chef VICKY
23 March 10am -12pm (Salmiya Outlet)

Biggest Orange Cake - 2 mtr
23 March 10am -12pm (Salmiya Outlet)

Longest Kebab Sandwich -20mtr
23 March 6pm (Egaila Outlet)

Longest Shawarma

24 March 6.30pm (Jahra Outlet)

Pizza Mountain

24 March 7.30pm (Qurain Outlet)

Longest Basboosa - 20 mtrs
27 March (Egaila Outlet)

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31 March 7pm - 9pm (Al Rai Outlet)



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