



Kuwait declares June 16-18 Eid holidays

Work resumes Wednesday

KUWAIT CITY, June 11, (KUNA): The Kuwaiti Cabinet on Tuesday decided to suspend work at all ministries, state bodies, and public institutions between Sunday (June 16) and Tuesday (June 18) as an official holiday nationwide marking Eid Al-Adha.



PM Diwan photo
His Highness the Prime Minister chairs the weekly Cabinet meeting.

The decision was made during the Cabinet's weekly meeting. Public servants and employees will thus be back to work on Wednesday (June 19). Earlier, Head of the Local Affairs Sector and Government Spokesman Amer Al-Ajmi on Tuesday denied circulating rumors on social media platforms in regards to Arafat and Eid Al-Adha holiday.

Al-Ajmi told KUNA that the weekly Cabinet meeting is still ongoing and called for all to seek accuracy and credibility as well as verify news through official sources.

Opinion

HH Amir's acute triangle restores Kuwait's glory

By Ahmed Al-Jarallah

Editor-in-Chief, the Arab Times

ERNESTO 'Che' Guevara said: "If you can convince a fly that flowers are better than garbage, then you can convince traitors that the nation is more valuable than money." This is because a fly will always be a fly, and the same applies to the corrupt.

This phenomenon cannot be eradicated unless the State, any State, has access to a figure that is able to decide with firm resolve, and works for the sake of the country and its people.

Realistically, the decline that has taken hold of the country hurts a lot. This is the result of choices regarding quotas, nepotism, tribal and sectarian zeal, as well as the prioritization of personal interests over the future of the nation, over the past three decades.

All these made Kuwait go through many crises due to the poor selection of officials whose only concern was to win a share of public wealth or gain prestige, even if it was in ruins.

Therefore, we saw the greatest corruption in appointments through bribery or 'wasta' (influence). This is the reason why the institutions were like farms for many officials who did not have mercy on their country and the people; while the honest and experienced people were prevented from reaching positions where they could improve the situation and work with honor and honesty.

Consequently, we heard about the scandal of officials every day. All this happened openly and no one took action until Kuwait became famous in international reports as being among the top 10 in terms of corruption.

Cheating prevailed in all of its sectors, even education -- the greatest corruption that can destroy the largest countries; because if a student is raised from an early age to cheat, he will not be trustworthy in his job. The doctor will not fulfill his oath, so the patient will die. The killer will not be held accountable for his action, because of a corrupt judge.

Here, we return to the story of the Great Wall of China. Perhaps, we can derive a lesson from it. The wall was built in the hope that other people would not invade the country. The Chinese believed that no one could climb over it due to its height and strength.

However, in the first hundred years after its construction, the country was invaded three times. Each time, the enemy did not need to penetrate or climb the wall. Rather, he bribed the guard and he entered through the gate.

So, take this as an example of building man before walls, which happened to us. For countries that benefited from the past, the first thing they did was pay attention to education and they spent a lot on it. The teacher's salary in these countries is higher than that of any official, because the teacher builds generations and trains them about responsibility and national honesty.

At this point, we remember the story of Allah's Prophet Musa (PBUH) when he escaped from the Pharaohs and went

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Newswatch

BAGHDAD: Kuwaiti Ambassador to Iraq Tariq Al-Faraj, Tuesday, discussed with Iraqi Minister of Interior Abdul Amir Al-Shammari ways to boost bilateral cooperation and coordination in security matters and prepare for the latter's soon visit to Kuwait.

In a statement to KUNA, Al-Faraj said that they addressed the importance of exerting more efforts to promote cooperation in securing joint borders, combating narcotics and organized crime.

The two sides discussed exchanging information between the two countries, in addition to arranging the awaited visit of the Iraqi Minister to Kuwait next July. (KUNA)

tions on Tuesday called on all Arab countries to work in unison in a bid to provide the necessary protection and social justice to everyone, chiefly Palestinian children.

The call was made by the Arab League, Arab Labor Organization, and Arab Council for Childhood and Development in a joint statement, marking the World Day Against Child Labour, which falls on June 12.

The Arab bodies vehemently denounced the crimes committed by Israeli occupation forces against childhood and humanity in the war-torn Gaza Strip in a flagrant breach of human rights, billing such violations as a stigma to the international community and human rights organizations. (KUNA)

Kuwait's Crown Prince begins official visit to Saudi



Crown Prince Diwan photo
His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah and Saudi Crown Prince and Prime Minister Prince Mohammad bin Salman Al-Saud at Al-Salam Palace in Jeddah.

Kuwaiti, Saudi relations ... 130 years of exceptional shared bonds

JEDDAH, June 11, (KUNA): His Highness the Crown Prince of the State of Kuwait, Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah, accompanied by an official delegation, arrived in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia on Tuesday, starting an official visit. His Highness the Crown Prince, along with his entourage, was received at the airport by the Saudi Crown Prince and Prime Minister Mohammad bin Salman bin Abdulaziz, the Saudi Ambassador to Kuwait Prince Sultan bin Saad bin Khaled Al-Saud, the Kuwaiti Ambassador to Saudi Arabia Sheikh Sabah Nasser Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, and the Kuwaiti General Consul in Jeddah Mohammad Al-Mutairi.

His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah held talks with Saudi Crown Prince and Prime Minister Prince Mohammad bin Salman Al-Saud at Al-Salam Palace in Jeddah on Tuesday. They discussed the deep-rooted fraternal ties between the two nations and mechanisms of boosting bilateral relations, issues of common interest, and the latest developments on regional and international fronts. Attending the talks were His Highness the Crown Prince's accompanying delegation and senior Saudi officials.

Crown Prince and Prime Minister of Saudi Arabia Prince Mohammad bin Salman

Al-Saud hosted a lunch banquet at Al-Salam Palace on Tuesday in honor of His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah and his accompanying delegation, on the occasion of their official visit.

His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah and his accompanying delegation departed Saudi Arabia on Tuesday after an official visit. Bidding His Highness the Crown Prince farewell at the airport were Deputy Prince of Makkah Saud bin Meshal Al-Saud, Saudi Ambassador to Kuwait Prince Sultan bin Saad Al-Saud, Minister Turki bin Mohammad Al-Saud, and Kuwaiti General Consul in Jeddah Mohammad Al-Mutairi.

His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah's visit to Saudi Arabia on Tuesday -- his first official visit since his appointment as the Crown Prince -- is reflective of the strong bonds and ties between the two countries.

His Highness the Crown Prince has a track record of achievements spanning nearly four decades during which he was able to strengthen Kuwait's position regionally and internationally and advance its developments.

On June 1, an Amiri decree by His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah was issued nominating His Highness Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah as Crown Prince, and on June 2, he was appointed as Crown Prince by another Amiri decree.

The political life of His Highness the Crown Prince witnessed significant milestones and remarkable achievements that greatly contributed to shaping Kuwaiti diplomatic work and

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Day by Day

LIVING by deceit ultimately leads to ruin. This is proven by the downfall of scammers who trade in illusions and find themselves incarcerated.

The scandals of former prime ministers and senior officials have eventually come to light, albeit belatedly. They now face the shame of being exposed, unable to hide their faces from their own children. Wee to them all.

... Yet tomorrow is another day.

Zahed Matar

FM in Jordan

Kuwait lauds UN's Gaza ceasefire call

KUWAIT CITY, June 11, (Agencies): The State of Kuwait welcomed on Tuesday the UNSC resolution calling for a comprehensive ceasefire in the Gaza Strip and the withdrawal of the Israeli occupation forces from the region.

In a statement by the Foreign Ministry, Kuwait also commended the resolution, which called for the return of the forcibly displaced Palestinians and securing the return of humanitarian relief aid into the Gaza Strip.

The statement affirmed that adopting this resolution was a crucial and pivotal step towards ending the Israeli systematic aggression on the Gaza Strip and Palestinian civilians, adding that the international community must take responsibility to ensure the decision's implementation.

Elsewhere, the international conference for emergency humanitarian response in Gaza began on Tuesday in the Dead Sea, with the participation of the representative of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah and the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Abdullah Al-Yahya.

The conference was held upon the invitation of King Abdullah II of Jordan, the Egyptian President Abdulfattah El-Sisi and the Secretary General of the United Nations Antonio Guterres, and at the level of heads of states, government leaders, and heads of international humanitarian and relief organizations.

The conference aimed to identify ways to enhance the international community's re-

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Amnesty drive in final stretch

KUWAIT CITY, June 11: Assistant Director General of Jahra Residency Department in the Ministry of Interior Colonel Mohammad Al-Dousari has affirmed that Kuwait will be free of Residency Law violators by June 17, reports Al-Shahed daily.

Al-Dousari warned that tough penalties will be imposed on whoever harbors violators, adding that intensive nationwide campaigns will be launched by the end of the grace period granted to violators to legalize their status by either paying the fine or leaving the country. He said a violator arrested after the grace period will be subjected to legal action and will be banned from returning to Kuwait. He confirmed that a violator who leaves Kuwait during

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Crown Prince Diwan photo
His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah is received by the Saudi Crown Prince and Prime Minister Mohammad bin Salman bin Abdulaziz.

Kuwait highlights UN resolution on missing persons, civilian protection

KUWAIT CITY, June 11, (KUNA): The State of Kuwait has affirmed great significance of the UN resolution addressing the issues of missing persons and civilians' protection in armed strife.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs, in a statement released on Tuesday, stated, "On the fifth anniversary of the UN Security Council's issuance of the Resolution 2474/2019 regarding persons missing in armed strife, unanimously adopted on June 11, 2019, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs expresses the State of Kuwait's affirmation of the great importance of this humanitarian resolution.

"It is considered a legal reference for international action to tackle issues of the missing persons in armed conflicts and protecting the civilians in strife."

The State of Kuwait, on this occasion, values efforts at the local, regional and international levels to tackle the questions of the missing people in the armed strife and disclose their destiny, the ministry statement said.

It has also affirmed necessity that efforts be doubled, that stakeholders adhere to the international, humanitarian and human rights' as well the UNSC resolutions, namely Resolution 2474.

Prayer Timings

Fajr 03:13 Asr 15:21
 Sunrise .. 04:48 Maghrib .. 18:47
 Zohr 11:47 Isha 20:19

Local

Expected weather for next 24 hrs:

By Day: Very hot with light to moderate northerly wind to north-westerly wind, with speeds of 08-32 km/h.
By Night: Hot to rather hot with

Weather

light to moderate northwesterly wind to light variable wind, with speeds of 06-32 km/h.

Station	Max Exp	Min Rec
Kuwait City	46	33

Kuwait Airport	48	31
Abdaly	48	31
Jahra	50	32
Salmyyah	38	31
Nuwaisib	47	30
Wafra	48	30

BIOMETRIC/FINGERPRINT APPOINTMENT: <https://meta.e.gov.kw/En/>



Above: His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled being received at the Bayan Palace.

His Highness meets Al-Sabah family at Bayan Palace

Crown Prince recalls Kuwaiti rulers, loyal citizens of past

KUWAIT CITY, June 11, (KUNA): His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah met Monday evening with Al-Sabah family at Bayan Palace and recalled during a speech Kuwaiti rulers and loyal citizens throughout the years.

During a speech on the occasion, His Highness Sheikh Sabah recalled various stands of Kuwaiti rulers in the past and its loyal citizens, which has set the most wonderful examples in confronting the most difficult circumstances and challenges to the homeland.

His Highness the Crown Prince remembered values that of fathers and grandfathers which had instilled in the most severe situations that required the solidarity and cohesion from all, and until the dear homeland crossed those difficult circumstances

and sailed its ship to safety.

His Highness Sheikh Sabah stressed the need to continue with such leadership journey towards further progress and prosperity for the nation under the wise leadership of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-

Jaber Al-Sabah.

His Highness Sheikh Sabah called on Al-Sabah family members to be the best supporters for His Highness the Amir, and to embody the best example of good morals and adherence to the law.

His Highness Sheikh Sabah stressed that the rule of the law will be respected and will be upheld for everyone without discrimination or exception, wishing them continued success and prosperity for the benefit and good of their country.



KUNA photo

Kuwait Amir's Rep. Abdullah Al-Yahya meeting with Jordanian FM.

Kuwait Amir's Rep. meets Jordanian FM

Representative of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, Minister of Foreign Affairs Abdullah Al-Yahya met in Jordan on Monday with Jordanian Foreign Minister Ayman Safadi.

The minister is to lead Kuwait's delegation partaking in an emergency humanitarian response conference for the Gaza Strip due at the Dead Sea on

Tuesday.

During their meeting, Al-Yahya and Safadi tackled bilateral relations, and the latest developments in the region, mainly the emergency aid conference to Gaza Strip.

The two ministers also discussed regional and international efforts to end the suffering of the Palestinian people. (KUNA)

Kuwait expresses deep concern for humanitarian crisis in Gaza

FM Al-Yahya participates in 160th Ministerial Council meet of GCC

KUWAIT CITY, Jun 11: Foreign Affairs Minister Abdullah Al-Yahya has expressed Kuwait's deep concern for the humanitarian catastrophe in the Gaza Strip; particularly the brutal war, which led to the death of thousands of defenseless civilians including children, women and the elderly, reports Al-Qabas daily.

In a statement to Kuwait News Agency (KUNA) on the sidelines of the 160th Ministerial Council meeting of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) in Doha, Qatar recently; Al-Yahya confirmed that Kuwait is keen on strengthening coordination with other GCC countries in various fields to overcome the challenges that the whole world is currently witnessing, especially the situation in the Gaza Strip and the occupied Palestinian territories. He stressed the need to stop the war in Gaza.

He also highlighted the importance of the Ministerial Council meeting, indicating two other meetings were held on the sidelines -- Gulf-Yemeni and Gulf-Turkish meetings.

He said Kuwait remains committed to support Yemen in political, economic and humanitarian fields; as well as to achieve peace and stability for Yemenis in accordance with the Gulf Initiative -- the outcome of the Comprehensive National Dialogue Conference and United Nations Resolution 2216.

He affirmed that Kuwait is also keen on strengthening bilateral relations with Turkiye, particularly in the economic and investment fields, for further economic and developmental growth, which reflects positively on both sides; indicating that the Gulf countries and Turkiye have distinguished relations in various sectors.

He expressed his gratitude and appreciation to the State of Qatar for the good reception and organization of these ministerial meetings, which will enhance cooperation and integration between the Gulf states as per the vision and directives of the GCC leaders.

Al-Yahya also met with HH the Prime Minister and Foreign Affairs Minister of Qatar Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman Al-Thani. They discussed the strong ties between their countries, regional and international issues, latest developments in the war on Gaza, and the Palestinian cause.



KUNA photo

Part of the Kuwaiti-European political dialogue meeting.

Both sides discuss bilateral cooperation

MoFA hosts Kuwaiti-European political dialogue

KUWAIT CITY, June 11, (KUNA): Kuwait's Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MoFA) held on Tuesday the Kuwaiti-European political dialogue meeting, headed by Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Jarrah Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-

Sabah, and Deputy Secretary-General of the External Action Service for Political Affairs in the European Union, Enrique Mora.

The ministry stated that the meeting is considered a continuation of the fourth round of the

senior officials' meeting between Kuwait and the European Union.

The statement added that both sides discussed bilateral cooperation, and exchanged views on the most prominent regional and international issues of common interest.



KFH team seeing off Hajj pilgrims at the Kuwait International Airport.

As part of the bank's social responsibility

KFH sees off Hajj pilgrims at Kuwait Int'l Airport

KUWAIT CITY, June 11: Kuwait Finance House (KFH) saw off pilgrims departing for the pilgrimage to Makkah at Kuwait International Airport. This initiative reflects KFH's commitment to social responsibility and its efforts to participate in all social, religious, and national events of importance to the community.

The KFH public relations team, in collaboration with Kuwait Civil Aviation, warmly welcomed and bade farewell to the Hajj pilgrims. They wished them a successful Hajj pilgrimage, their acts of worship accepted and a safe return home. KFH also provided them with thoughtful souvenirs that would be useful during the Hajj

season. This kind initiative was greatly appreciated by the pilgrims, who expressed their thanks and gratitude to KFH.

KFH's presence at the airport strengthens its commitment to fulfilling its corporate social responsibility. This presence also reflects its collaborative efforts with relevant authorities.

KUNA center holds training program in collaboration with the US Embassy

KUWAIT CITY, June 11, (KUNA): KUNA Media Development Center wrapped up on Tuesday a program titled (Responsible Journalism) that was conducted in collaboration with US Embassy's Public Affairs.

The program saw the participation of KUNA journalists along with other news journalists.

After the training, Public Affairs Counselor at the U.S. Embassy, Dr. Farid Mohamed, thanked KUNA for their cooperation and highlighted potential areas for further collaboration, especially in training journalists on verifying news sources and identifying disinformation.

He emphasized the embassy's commitment to training Kuwait-based journalists through various programs both in the United States and in Kuwait. This training,

conducted by U.S. public diplomacy expert Akram Elias, focused on analyzing news sources to distinguish between credible and less credible information.

On his part, Elias praised KUNA's initiative in creating this opportunity and gathering journalists from different outlets to participate in this program where they focused on the main components of being a responsible journalist, especially in this day in age where disinformation is much easier to come across.

He also pointed to the fact that everything discussed had a theoretical aspect and some had practical applications as well.

KUNA Media Development Center was established in 1995 to train media personnel and elevate their skills.



Dr Mohamed



Elias

CAPT okays MPW's contract request

KGAC launches electronic link with MoFA

By Mohammed Ghanem
 Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, June 11: Kuwait General Administration of Customs (KGAC) has announced the launching of its electronic link with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs for companies and individuals to submit and authenticate documents electronically, reports Al-Anba daily.

KGAC pointed out that individuals and companies can send and authenticate documents electronically through the link without the hassle of going to the concerned institution to complete such transactions. It affirmed this is part of ongoing efforts to improve services to facilitate the movement of goods.

Director General of KGAC Abdullah Al-Sharhan revealed that the link is aimed at eliminating the manual authentication

process, which requires the presence of the concerned party.

Meanwhile, the Central Agency for Public Tenders (CAPT) has approved the request of the Ministry of Public Works to award the contract for the construction and maintenance of a culvert to drain rainwater in South Abdullah Al-Mubarak to the company with the lowest bid and met the conditions and specifications for a total price of KD 4.488 million.

Sources from the ministry said this culvert will absorb rainwater during winter, especially during heavy rainfall that causes flood in the area.

On the other hand, the Ministry of Public Works organized a training workshop for its officials on applying and activating institutional governance under the supervision of the Civil Service Commission (CSC).

Kuwait pledges support for Arab disability rights



KUNA photo
Dr. Amthal Al-Huwailah – Minister of Social Affairs, Family, Childhood, and Minister of Youth, during her speech at the United Nations Arab Group meeting.

Minister outlines plans at UN meet

NEW YORK, June 11, (KUNA): Minister of Social Affairs, Family, Childhood, and Minister of Youth Dr. Amthal Al-Huwailah affirmed that Kuwait would provide all its capabilities to monitor the implementation of the second Arab Decade of disabled persons' agreement.

This came during Dr. Al-Huwailah's speech at the United Nations Arab Group meeting on the sideline of the 17th Conference of State Parties to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (COSP), which was held on Monday.

Dr. Al-Huwailah highlighted the capabilities of the Kuwait Public Authority for Disability Affairs, based on the national strategy and sustainable development plan, which aimed at achieving Kuwait's new vision to en-

sure equal opportunities "for our disabled citizens, numbering up to 65,000 by the first half of 2024."

She also mentioned Kuwait's support by adopting policies for social, health, and educational integration standards and provide job opportunities for them.

Minister Dr. Al-Huwailah affirmed Kuwait's commitment to achieving the highest level of social security and empowerment for independent living for persons with disabilities through governmental and civil partnership supported by the UN system.

She reaffirmed that this environment would provide digital access requirement for people with disabilities, through the Authority's website and the government application "Sahel" as well.

The Minister of Social Affairs and Labor emphasized Kuwait's keenness to support Arab efforts in international forums, as well as Kuwait's readiness to achieve and create an inclusive and comprehensive Arab society that guarantees the rights for everyone.

Reza Doust's art celebrates cultural ties

Canadian ambassador commends depth of Kuwaiti-Canadian relations across spheres

By Paul Francis X. Fernandes
Arab Times/Al-Seyassah Staff

KUWAIT CITY, June 11: The Contemporary Art Platform gallery in co-operation with the Embassy of Canada in Kuwait organized the Keep it Fresh 'Nature and Nostalgia' solo exhibition by artist Reza Doust curated by Maryam Nia.

In her remarks during the inauguration of the exhibition, the Canadian Ambassador to Kuwait, HE Aliya Mawani underscored the deep cultural ties between Kuwait and Canada. She emphasized how these ties contribute to fostering closer bonds between people and civilizations, facilitating constructive dialogue.

The Canadian envoy highlighted Canada's status as a nation of immigrants, emphasizing its multicultural and multiethnic fabric. She noted how this diversity enriches society while preserving its identity and heritage, allowing for the exploration of innovative ideas without forsaking tradition and reverence for history.

Expressing her delight in participating in the opening of Doust's exhibition, Mawani noted her country's support for Canadian talents. She stressed the importance of cultural convergence in building the future and coexisting in the present, citing examples of Kuwaiti doctors studying in Canada and Canadians working in Kuwait, which enhances relations between the two nations.

Mawani asserted her embassy's full support for promoting Canadian culture, exemplified by Doust's exhibition, which embodies the preservation of natural freshness and nostalgia. She appreciated the distinctiveness of Doust's work, noting his previous successful exhibitions in Kuwait and the admiration they garnered from visitors.

For his part Doust expressed his



Canadian Ambassador to Kuwait, HE Aliya Mawani, (3rd left), with artist Reza Doust pose for a group photo during the exhibit.



Photos by Samer Shaqir

Left to right: Artist Reza Doust with guests during the inauguration of his solo exhibition.

happiness at being in Kuwait and organizing such an exhibition, describing it as presenting new and different ideas.

He highlighted his longstanding relationship with Kuwait, having held numerous exhibitions over the years, and noted his innate talent for drawing since childhood.

Doust emphasized the Persian identity of the exhibition, given his Iranian roots and Canadian citizenship.

He commended his embassy's support for his work, recalling his first exhibition in Kuwait in 1994. Doust praised Kuwaitis for their interest in and encouragement of his exhibitions, expressing pride in this support, which

motivates him to organize further exhibitions in Kuwait.

He went on to say, "For years, I've always traveled with some of my sketches, snippets of photos, and a few sugar cubes. These items serve as the foundation for my work. As I sip bitter tea with a sugar cube melting in my mouth.

Defying odds and embracing dreams

Triumph over determination & inspiration: Ahmed Fawaz Al-Hasban's inspiring journey

KUWAIT CITY, June 11: Despite grappling with the formidable challenges of triple disability – visual impairment, hearing loss, and autism – Ahmed Fawaz Al-Hasban stands tall as a beacon of unwavering resolve and remarkable determination, reports Al-Qabas daily.

His awe-inspiring journey of surmounting obstacles not only defies the odds but also radiates hope in the sphere of disability.

From his very birth, Ahmed's life was marked by adversity, with limited educational opportunities available in Kuwait for someone with his unique set of challenges.

Recognizing the need for specialized care and education, Ahmed's father, Fawaz Al-Hasban, made the monumental decision to seek refuge at the prestigious Perkins School in Boston, US. There, amidst a nurturing environment tailored to his needs, Ahmed embarked on a transformative academic journey, buoyed by unwavering support.

Despite the barriers of communication, Ahmed's profound passion for aviation shone brightly through the language of signs and touch. His dream of joining Kuwait Airways and assisting travelers in reclaiming misplaced luggage became his guiding star.

Fawaz Al-Hasban, reflecting on their arduous journey, recounted the initial struggles in Kuwait and the pivotal role of Perkins School in shaping Ahmed's aspirations. Ahmed's innate talent for aviation blossomed early on, evidenced by his exceptional memory for airport intricacies and aircraft details.



Ahmed Fawaz Al-Hasban (right)

Seeking to refine his skills further, he underwent specialized training at the Aeronautical Museum in New York, poised to embark on his professional odyssey.

A poignant visit to Kuwait Airways symbolized a significant stride towards Ahmed's aspirations, fueled by his earnest desire to contribute meaningfully to society while pursuing his personal dreams.

Fawaz Al-Hasban underscored the indispensable role of familial support in nurturing children's talents and fostering their growth, highlighting the stark contrast between families that embrace versus those that shun their children's disabilities.

Ahmed Fawaz Al-Hasban's remarkable journey serves as a testament to the indomitable power of determination, resilience, and unwavering familial support in transcending adversities and realizing one's dreams. His story resonates as an inspiration to countless individuals, illuminating a path of hope and possibility amidst life's challenges.

Market innovations proposal submitted

Municipal Council member proposes to create new road access in South Khaitan

By Inaas Awadh

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, June 11: Municipal Council member Walid Khaled Al-Dagher has submitted a proposal to create an entrance and exit in South Khaitan directly on the Sixth Ring Road between Blocks One and Two, extension of Ibrahim bin Adham Street.

In the preamble of his proposal, Al-Dagher stressed the need to contact the competent authority to do the necessary work and to consider this an urgent matter, given the constant congestion at the entrances and exits in the area and its population density, and to facilitate the entry and exit movements to better serve the citizens.

Also, council member Fahad Al-Khanin submitted a proposal to change the use of mezzanines in cooperative societies into central markets affiliated with the cooperatives. He pointed out that the council had earlier decided to regulate the activities of various cooperative societies and their branches. This decision stipulated that mezzanines would be licensed as shops according to the permitted activities, such as a shopping complex.

He argued that in reality, there is an abundance of activities related to shops and stores; while there is an urgent need for a central market in cooperatives.

MoH officials run check on dental center project

By Marwa Al-Bahrawi

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, June 11: Ibrahim Al-Nahham, the Assistant Undersecretary of the Ministry of Health for Engineering Affairs and Projects, conducted an inspection of the Nasser Al-Saeed Specialized Dental Center project in the Abdullah Al-Salem suburb, accompanied by Dr. Ahmed Asad, the Assistant Undersecretary for Dental Affairs.

During the visit, Al-Nahham assessed the progress of engineering works at the site, ensuring compliance with safety protocols, adherence to the highest quality standards, and adherence to the established timeline.

Dr. Asad commended the center's state-of-the-art equipment, highlighting its incorporation of the latest medical technologies.

He emphasized that this reflects the Ministry's dedication to offering a cutting-edge treatment environment that caters to the needs of patients, demonstrating its commitment to enhancing the quality of health-care services available to citizens and residents.

EID AL ADHA

Special Promotion

Room Promotion

From June 12th - 22nd of June 2024

Book for One-night (Inclusive of breakfast)	Queen Cabana (2 persons)	BHD 76.230
	2 Bedroom Chalet (4 persons)	BHD 170.247
Book for Two nights and get 10% discount (Inclusive of breakfast) (Non-refundable/Non-Cancellable)	Queen Cabana (2 persons) per night.	BHD 69.000 net
	2 Bedroom Chalet (4 persons) per night	BHD 153.222
Book for Three nights and get 20% discount (Inclusive of breakfast) (Non-refundable/Non-Cancellable)	Queen Cabana (2 persons) per night.	BHD 61.000 net
	2 Bedroom Chalet (4 persons) per night	BHD 136.198

Food & Beverage Promotion

- First three days of Eid, at the **Fish Market Restaurant** warmly welcomes everyone to enjoy a **15% discount**.
- 15% discount on Room Service
- First three days of Eid, lunch Buffet will be served at **Café Marisol Restaurant** with price of **BD6,500 per person**. Starts from 12:30 PM to 16:00 PM.

Terms and conditions apply

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oil surges

The price of Kuwaiti oil went up by 12 cents to USD 82.56 per barrel on Monday from USD 82.44 pb last Friday, said the Kuwait Petroleum Corporation (KPC) on Tuesday.

The price of the Brent crude at the global markets went up by USD 2.01 to USD 81.36 per barrel, the same occurred with the West Texas Intermediate, which went up by USD 2.21 to USD 77.74 pb. (KUNA)

global markets show mixed performance in May, reports Al-Shall

A report by Al-Shall highlights a mixed performance among global markets in May following a predominantly negative trend in April, while the month of May saw a slight improvement with 8 markets showing gains compared to 6 incurring losses, contrasting the end of April's figures, reports Al-Jarida daily.

Expanding the scope to the first five months of the year, the overall performance appears more positive. Out of 14 markets, 10 recorded gains, while 4 Gulf markets struggled, showing losses compared to year-end indicators. The standout performer for May was the German market, posting a 3.2% increase, maintaining its position as the second-highest gainer since the year's onset, with a total gain of approximately 10.4%.

The US market, represented by the Dow Jones Index, followed suit with a 2.3% gain in May, accumulating a 2.6% increase over the year. The British market saw a 1.6% rise in May, pushing its gains for the year to about 7.0%. The Muscat and Bahrain Stock Exchanges recorded gains of 1.3% and 0.5%, respectively.

The Japanese market experienced marginal gains of 0.2% in May, retaining its position as the top gainer since the year's commencement, with gains of about 15.0%. The French market saw a minimal increase of 0.1%.

Conversely, the Kuwait Stock Exchange had the lowest gains in May, with its general index rising by about 0.01%, stabilizing its gains since the year's start at 3.4%.

May's biggest loser was the Saudi market, witnessing a -7.2% decline, pushing it into negative territory for the year with losses of approximately -3.9%. Dubai's market followed with losses of about -4.4%, similarly entering negative territory for the year at -2.2%.

The Qatar Stock Exchange continued its downward trend with losses of -4.2%, retaining its position as the biggest loser for the year at about -14.0%. Abu Dhabi's market recorded losses of -2.3%, totaling -7.5% for the year.

In May, the Indian market saw losses of -0.7%, while the Chinese market incurred minimal losses of -0.6%, insufficient to push them into the negative for the year.

Market Movements

11-06-2024

	Change	Closing pts		Change	Closing pts
DUBAI	-	DFMGI	+35.41	4,008.93	
JAPAN	-	Nikkei 225	+96.63	39,134.79	
EGYPT	-	EGX 30	+185.73	26,082.29	
SAUDI	-	TASI	-78.35	11,775.47	
PHILIPPINES	-	PSEi	-48.57	6,410.07	
PAKISTAN	-	KSE 100	-493.47	72,735.13	

Business

First Bursa Kuwait listing since 2022

Beyout Investment Group Holding Company K.S.C. commences trading on Bursa Kuwait

KUWAIT CITY, June 11: Beyout Investment Group Holding ("Beyout Investment Group" or "BIG Holding" or "BIG" the "Company"), the regional pioneer in providing comprehensive human resources and project life cycle support complemented by real estate services, has been admitted to trading on the Bursa Kuwait's 'Premier Market' today, following the successful completion of its private secondary offering (the "Offering"). Beyout Investment Group is now traded under the symbol "BEY-OUT" and ISIN "KW0EQ0210082".

The offering was composed of a total of 90,000,000 ordinary shares, representing 30% of BIG Holding's issued share capital and generated approximately 45m KWD of gross proceeds for the selling shareholders. The final offer price was set at 500 Fils per share, at the top of the price range, and saw strong investor demand oversubscribed at a rate of ~17x. The total cumulative demand for BIG Holding shares amounted to c. 771m KWD. The Company has an implied market capitalisation of approximately 150m KWD (c. 488m USD) at the time of listing.

Speaking at the Bursa Kuwait listing ceremony, Abdulrahman Al Khannah, Chief Executive Officer of Beyout Investment Group, commented:

"Today is a proud and historic moment for Beyout Investment Group and its subsidiaries Kuwait Resources House, Real Estate House, and Boroj Real Estate Investment, as the Company begins a new chapter as a listed business. The Company is deeply rooted within



Bursa Kuwait hosts bell-ringing ceremony for BIG's listing.

Kuwait and is also a well-known name across the wider GCC; this listing is truly the culmination of the efforts of many involved parties. I would like to personally thank our employees for their hard work and dedication, our clients for their long-standing trust, and our many advisors who have supported us along the way to get us to this landmark moment. Naturally, I would also like to thank our new shareholders for their trust in our business and vision. Let us unleash BIG's potential, together.

Al Khannah added: "We now look ahead and will focus on driving BIG's growth strategy, with continued emphasis on growing the core business and expanding and diversifying its service offering across the GCC. Over the coming years, we look to identify more opportunities for synergies and alignment between BIG and our subsidiaries – to maximise opportunities and create shareholder value."

Details of the Offering and the final Offering Memorandum are available in both English and Arabic language under the Key Documents section on www.big-holding.com/big-holding-private-placement/. For further details you can contact ir@bigholding.com.

National Investments Company K.S.C.P. and EFG-Hermes UAE Limited (acting in conjunction with EFG Hermes UAE LLC) have been appointed as Joint Global Coordinators and Joint Bookrunners. National Investments Company K.S.C.P. has been appointed as investment and listing advisor.

Bank financing for construction sector rises annually by \$400m

Govt bank deposits fall by 32m dinars in April

By Mahmoud Shendi
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, June 11: In April, the bank financing balance for the construction sector witnessed a significant annual increase of \$400 million.

However, local bank financing to the construction sector experienced a decline on a monthly basis, decreasing by 164.3 million dinars or 54.4%, reaching 137.4 million dinars compared to about 301.7 million dinars in March.

According to the monthly statistics issued by the Central Bank of Kuwait for April, financing for the construction sector increased by 2.4 million dinars or 2.4% annually totaling 135 million dinars in April 2023.

The total financing provided by banks to the construction sector during the first four months of the year amounted to approximately 971.1 million dinars.

The accumulated balance of construction financing provided by local banks witnessed a slight monthly increase of 0.07%, totaling two million dinars from 2,820 billion dinars in March to 2,822 billion dinars in April. Additionally, the balance increased annually by 400 million dinars or 16.5% compared to April 2023 when it was 2,422 billion dinars.

Throughout 2023, construction financing fluctuated, with notable increases and decreases. The sector faced challenges such as a decline in project offerings, delayed payments to contractors, and rising construction costs due to labor shortages. The real estate market also experienced a decrease in both the quantity and quality of available labor, leading to a significant increase in daily wages for construction workers.

On the other hand, private sector deposits in local banks increased by 0.8% in dinars, reaching 36.5 billion dinars (about 119.1 billion dollars) in April. Private sector deposits in foreign currencies rose by 0.9% to reach 1.9 billion dinars (about 6.1 billion dollars).

Meanwhile, government deposits in banks declined by 32 million dinars to reach 4.616 billion dinars compared to 4.648 billion dinars in March.

Overall, the statistics indicate a slight increase in the total assets of local banks and a decrease in net foreign assets. The total balance of credit facilities for residents and non-residents increased to 54.873 billion dinars in April, compared to 54.521 billion dinars in March.

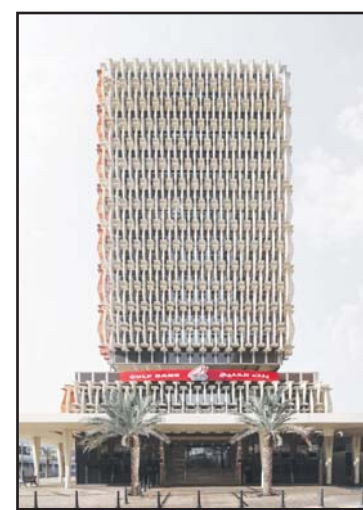


Chairman Bader Nasser Al-Kharafi

Gulf Bank gets cenbank nod for Islamic conversion study

KUWAIT CITY, June 11: Gulf Bank announced that it obtained no objection from the Central Bank of Kuwait to study conversion to a bank compliant with the Islamic shariaa. The Board of Directors has assigned an international consultant to carry out a feasibility study for the conversion, the bank said in a statement.

The bank said in a disclosure signed by Chairman Bader Nasser Al-Kharafi and published on Bursa Kuwait's website that it obtained the Central Bank's no objection to carry out the feasibility study. The bank will disclose the results of the study once it is concluded, it added.



Gulf Bank headquarters

'Strong capital adequacy'

Kuwait reinsurance company's A-level rating reaffirmed by S&P

KUWAIT CITY, June 11: Standard & Poor's Rating Agency has reaffirmed the Kuwait Reinsurance Company's financial strength rating at A level, with a stable outlook, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

According to the company's statement to the Bursa Kuwait, the agency expects the company to maintain a capital adequacy ratio above the required level by 99.99%, based on the agency's risk-adjusted capital adequacy model, which is considered one of the main reasons for the strength of the rating.

The agency expects this ratio to increase in the coming years, based on

the anticipated increase in the company's profit reserves. It also anticipates the company to maintain strong operational performance in the coming years, as the company has delivered excellent performance in both reinsurance operations and investment activities, ensuring liquidity.

The agency predicts the continuation of the company's conservative investment policy, with a very high level of the company's investment assets deposited with local banks in Kuwait. Only 13% of the company's investment portfolio is allocated to assets with higher risk levels such as stocks and real estate.

UAE tops American car imports

Institutional sector dominates Boursa Kuwait activity in 2024

KUWAIT CITY, June 11: The Al-Shall's report, based on data from the Kuwait Clearing Company, provides insights into trading activities on the Bursa Kuwait from January 1st to May 31st, 2024, focusing on the nationality and category of traders, reports Al-Jarida daily.

The institutional and corporate sector emerged as the largest contribu-

tor to market activity, with its share increasing to 59.1% of total shares purchased and 58.3% of shares sold, reflecting a significant rise from the same period in 2023. This sector demonstrated net buying, with shares worth 3.434 billion dinars purchased and 3.387 billion dinars sold.

Individual investors constituted the second-largest segment, with their



WHO and KGBC visit NBK headquarters for Green Building tour.

Bank promotes health & well-being through green design

NBK hosts delegation from WHO & Kuwait Green Building Council

KUWAIT CITY, June 11: Marking World Environment Day, a delegation from the World Health Organization (WHO) Kuwait Country Office, and Kuwait Green Building Council (KGBC) paid a visit to National Bank of Kuwait (NBK's) headquarters to tour the building which stands out as a notable example of environmentally sustainable practices that promote health and well-being.

The tour aimed to showcase environmentally sustainable building practices and advocate for the links between the built environment and good health.

It featured a group of decision-makers and specialists in urban sustainability, including members of the Municipal Council, representatives of Environment Public Authority (EPA), the Ministry of Health, and WHO Healthy Cities Initiative, in addition to researchers specialized in sustainable building from Kuwait University and the Kuwait Institute for Scientific Research (KISR), and representatives of UN agencies in Kuwait.

The tour, which saw the participation of 22 officials and specialists, aimed to highlight environmentally sustainable urban practices that have a positive impact on human health.

The participants discussed the best ways to promote green building practices among institutions and individuals for good health and well-being.

Dalal Al-Hashash, the General Manager of the Kuwait Green Building Council, stated, "This tour aimed to highlight an outstanding example of green buildings in Kuwait and to spark meaningful discussions among stakeholders. Our focus is on shaping policies and actions that support sustainable development, promote environmentally friendly practices, and prioritize human health in urban planning."

"There is often a lot of focus on the impact of the natural environment on health and wellbeing, sometimes stakeholders and communities forget about the impact of the built environment. This collaboration with the National Bank of Kuwait and Kuwait Green Building Council is an important opportunity to highlight the critical links

between infrastructure and health. By convening policy-makers and civil society from across sectors in Kuwait, we are ensuring that good practices, data, and technical expertise come together to further improve the policy landscape for infrastructure that bolsters health and well-being of the community in Kuwait" said Dr. Assad Hafeez, WHO Representative to the State of Kuwait.

This visit underscores NBK's dedication to adopting the highest sustainability standards, endeavors to reduce our environmental footprint, and setting an exemplary model for eco-friendly construction practices in Kuwait.

As part of its strides to embrace modern architecture of green buildings, NBK designed its headquarters in a way that ensures harmony with the surrounding environment and reduces any negative environmental impact by using low-emission materials, including the paints, coatings and adhesives, in addition to a construction and building operations waste segregation and management system.

In line with its sustainability agenda, NBK strongly supports the global trend of transitioning to a low-carbon economy and mitigating climate change risks. In this context, NBK headquarters is the first LEED Gold-certified building in Kuwait under the LEED v2009 Certificate for Building Design and Construction granted by USGBC. It was also named "Commercial Property Project of the Year", in MEED's Project Awards for the MENA region for 2021.

The benefits of green buildings extend beyond cost reduction and efficient construction methods; they also offer a healthy and safe living environment. The NBK headquarters' design focuses on employee health and well-being by ensuring superior indoor air quality, utilizing the use of safe materials, and minimizing exposure to toxic and hazardous substances. Advanced air filtration systems maintain air purity, especially in dusty conditions, by removing harmful particulates from indoor air. The building promotes physical health through amenities such as a gym and an on-site medical clinic open to all staff. Mental health is also prioritized with open spaces that encourage social interaction, green areas, and access to natural sunlight.

What's On

'Ultimate off-road experience arrives in Kuwait'

Abdulmohsen Abdulaziz Al Babtain opens official INEOS Grenadier showroom in Kuwait

KUWAIT CITY, June 11: Abdulmohsen Abdulaziz Al Babtain Co. (AABC), the exclusive retailer for INEOS Grenadier cars in Kuwait, is thrilled to announce their official showroom opening of the exclusive retailer for the highly anticipated INEOS Grenadier 4x4 in Al-Rai, Kuwait. This exciting partnership brings a new level of off-road capability and driving experience to adventurers and vehicle enthusiasts in Kuwait. And now it's even more exciting with the inauguration of the first brand showroom.

The official opening of the INEOS Grenadier showroom took place amidst a gathering of Al Babtain management, media representatives, social media influencers, and esteemed VIP customers. All in a well-curated event that lives up to the reputation of Al Babtain and the excitement of the long-awaited opening of the first ever INEOS Grenadier in Al-Rai in Kuwait and in the Middle East.

This opening is considered as a remarkable step in the history of Al Babtain Co. in terms of providing the customers with the full experience to buy and see the car in detail, as well as providing them with all the information on ground. And for the customers who reserved the Grenadier can now prepare themselves to



Al Babtain celebrates inauguration of first INEOS Grenadier showroom.

go in an ultimate journey with their all-new vehicle.

The INEOS Grenadier is the versatile choice for discerning drivers.

Combining rugged British spirit and design with German engineering rigor, the INEOS Grenadier 4x4 is a tough, go-anywhere vehicle with best-in-class off-road capability that features the modern comfort, refinement and quality standards ex-

pected by today's drivers.

The brainchild of INEOS Group is Chairman Sir Jim Ratcliffe, the Grenadier is powered by a BMW 3.0-liter inline six-cylinder gasoline engine, with a ladder frame chassis, permanent four-wheel drive, up to three differential locks and solid beam axles.

The Grenadier has won multiple awards around the world, including from Overland 4x4 magazine in the

UK and Gear Junkie in the US.

The Grenadier range starts with the Station Wagon and a blank canvas ready to be configured for the exact needs of customers.

The Grenadier Trialmaster Edition is built with extreme off-road driving in mind, prioritizing go-anywhere capability and versatility. The Trialmaster includes a raised air intake, exterior utility belt and auxiliary

battery. The Trialmaster comes with front and rear differential locks and BFGoodrich All-Terrain T/A KO2 tires as standard, designed to handle the harshest of conditions.

The Grenadier Fieldmaster Edition is designed for those with an adventurous lifestyle who need their vehicle to get them and their kit to wherever they want to go. It includes full-grain leather seats, a

premium sound system and carpet floor mats. It also comes standard with Safari Windows in the roof that can be tilted for ventilation or removed completely.

Ghazi Saleh Al Babtain, the Chief Development Officer in Al Babtain Group, said: "We are incredibly proud to welcome the INEOS Grenadier to Al Babtain automotive family, and with the inauguration of the first official showroom, we are excited to invite all the customers to visit the showroom and enjoy the full experience and try the great 4x4 vehicle. This marks a momentous occasion for us as we forge a rewarding partnership with a remarkable brand that stays true to our promise of overall-most 80 years - to deliver optimal experiences through innovation and passion."

We invite all interested customers and off-road enthusiasts to visit our showroom and discover the outstanding capabilities of the INEOS Grenadier in our official showroom in Al-Rai. And to witness a remarkable step for the prestigious journey of Al Babtain full of achievements with almost 80 years of unwavering dedication and success. For more information, customers can visit the INEOS Grenadier showroom in Al-Rai or they contact the customer service at 1804888.



Photos during the event.

Photos by Samer Shaqir

PBC commemorates Portugal's National Day with a vibrant cultural extravaganza

By Paul Francis X. Fernandes
Arab Times/Al-Seyassah Staff

KUWAIT CITY, June 11: The Portuguese Business Council in Kuwait celebrated Portugal's National Day with a vibrant cultural event, showcasing the richness and diversity of Portuguese art and music.

Held at the Contemporary Art Platform (CAP) and organized in collaboration with the National Council for Culture, Arts and Letters (NCCAL) and Bahrain Gallery, the event received widespread acclaim.

A focal point of the celebration was "The Hyperbaroque," an exhibition featuring sculptures by renowned Portuguese contemporary artist Miguel Rodrigues.

His works, characterized by their theatricality, draw inspiration from contemporary society's hyper-realities, commerce, and propaganda. Using gold as a motif, Rodrigues challenges notions of luxury and power, prompting viewers to reconsider value and aesthetics.

Another highlight of the event was "Loving Minho," a captivating photographic display by Manuel Correia, showcasing traditional folk costumes of Northern Portugal.

With a global exhibition history, Correia captures urban and rural life with an imaginative lens, portraying diverse cultures and people.

The cultural immersion culminated in a live concert featuring the enchanting melodies of the Braguesa, a traditional Portuguese guitar, skillfully performed by João Diogo Leitão. Renowned as one of the most gifted guitarists of his generation, Leitão has performed on prestigious stages across Portugal and Europe, releasing his debut solo album

in 2020.

António Campos, President of the Portuguese Business Council, expressed his elation at the event's success, stating, "It brings immense joy to collaborate with CAP and witness the overwhelming support from our community. We aspire for this celebration to catalyze greater artistic collaboration between Portugal and Kuwait, fostering mutual understanding."

Campos also outlined his vision for broader cooperation between Portugal and Kuwait, extending beyond the arts to encompass energy, digital industries, and healthcare. He emphasized the potential for synergy in these sectors to strengthen bilateral economic relations.

The inaugural event drew a sizable crowd, underscoring the robust interest and endorsement for cultural exchange between Portugal and Kuwait.

The exhibitions will continue until July 10th, providing ample opportunity for visitors to immerse themselves in Portuguese artistry.

Under the auspices of the National Council for Culture, Arts and Letters (NCCAL), two workshops on photography and sculpture were hosted at the Museum of Modern Art. Manuel Correia and Miguel Rodrigues engaged with eager audiences, sharing insights into their artistic journeys and the imperative of creativity.

The Portuguese Business Council extends heartfelt gratitude to its sponsors -- UPS, Blue Aviation, Fundação GDA, Hub2Energy, Ventilaqua, Otiima, AGM, and Câmara Municipal de Braga. Their generous support facilitated this celebration, bringing the splendor of Portuguese art and music to Kuwait.

Employees & executives partner for blood drive

Zain contributes to World Blood Donor Day

KUWAIT CITY, June 11: Zain has renewed its collaboration with the Central Blood Bank of Kuwait to host a special blood drive at its headquarters in Shuwaikh. The move coincided with the upcoming World Blood Donor Day, which is globally celebrated on 14 June of every year.

Nearly 100 employees and executives from various departments participated in the blood drive to help save lives and bolster Kuwait's strategic blood reserve. Additionally, participants benefited from the many health advantages gained by periodically donating blood.

Zain frequently launches initiatives and programs to support the local healthcare system, partnering with organizations like the Central Blood Bank and the Ministry of Health. The company also aims to raise awareness about the life-saving importance of blood donation.

As usual, Zain's blood drive campaign was well-received by employees eager to donate, and the entire process was supervised and managed by the Central Blood Bank's medical team. The company is proud of the great turnout by employees to make this initiative a success, reflecting the values of its brand: Zain: A Wonderful World.

World Blood Donor Day is celebrated around the globe on June 14 of every year. The initiative was organized for the first time in 2004 by four core international organizations: the World Health Organization (WHO), the Inter-



A group photo of Zain and Central Blood Bank teams.



Zain employees were eager to contribute to the initiative's success.

national Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC); the International Federation of Blood Donor Organizations (IFBDO), and the International Society of Blood Transfusion (ISBT).

The annual campaign aims to raise

awareness of the need for blood and blood products, as well as the importance of having a strategic and sustainable blood reserve. The initiative also highlights the vital role donors play by thanking them for their voluntary, life-saving contributions.



Group photo during the meeting.

Writers' Forum Kuwait holds monthly meeting

KUWAIT CITY, June 11: "Let me not pray to be sheltered from dangers, but to be fearless in facing them. Let me not beg for the stilling of my pain, but for the heart to conquer it." The author of this famous quote, Rabindranath Tagore was remembered at the monthly meeting

of the Writers' Forum Kuwait held on Friday, 31st May at the house of Mrs Maimuna Chougale.

The meeting was a special one where the members remembered two great poets and writers, Rabindranath Tagore during his birth anniversary month and Dr Mirza Umair Beg on his

sad demise.

The meeting was also special as the Forum unanimously chose veteran Urdu poet and senior member Saeed Nazar Kadpawi as the Vice President of the Forum. The presence of Forum's patron Mr Ali Chougale made the meeting a special one to be reminisced forever.

The meeting started with the President of the Forum and host Mrs Maimuna Chougale welcoming all. The general secretary Ms Nazneen Ali then invited Sabir Omer as President and Aamir Diwan as the Chief Guest of the evening.

The meeting incepted with two very enlightening articles on Rabindranath Tagore and Dr Mirza Umair Beg, both authored by Mrs Maimuna Chougale. The articles were well complemented by another beautifully crafted article on the reality of life penned by Yajuvendra Chandrakar. The meeting then continued into its melodious and soothing poetry session where each rendition was unique, captivating and meaningful.

While Ms. Nazneen Ali, Ms Sabiha Bilgrami, Ibrahim Qasid, Dr Rajesh Gupta, Shabih Ahmed, Saeed Nazar and Sabir Omer were the flag-bearers of Urdu, Ms. Anupama Chaturvedi, Ms Sangeeta Choubey, Vinod Kumar and Aamir Diwan were representatives of Hindi language. Pankaj Pawan was the ambassador of Punjabi ghazal. The presence of Mr Sanjay Choubey was the icing on the cake.

Successful conclusion of Kuwait Codes and Academy X's first cohort

Agility funds coding education for 1,300+ aspiring programmers

KUWAIT CITY, June 11: Agility, a supply chain services, infrastructure and innovation company, announced the successful conclusion of Kuwait Codes and Academy X's first cohort, Agility is sponsoring two coding programs and bootcamps this year for over 1,300 students as part of the company's commitment to advancing tech education in Kuwait.

Agility has renewed support for CODED, a local tech training organization in Kuwait that provides bootcamp-style software development training. As a strategic sponsor of CODED, Agility is funding two programs:

□ Kuwait Codes aims to provide crucial programming skills to more than 1,000 high school students. Kuwait Codes provides students with the fundamentals of programming across diverse coding languages and

for different in-demand applications, including app building, web development, gaming, information security, and others. The course also serves as a foundation for those taking advanced

training programs.

□ Agility is also supporting CODED's Academy X, which is designed to introduce 300 female students to coding and inspire a new generation of female

tech innovators. Academy X was piloted last year by 100 young female students and is now in its first full-run. Academy X teaches modern programming basics. The curriculum includes building ap-

plications using AI, lessons on leveraging technology in entrepreneurship, and other vital skills that equip students for the job market.

Both initiatives started last month and provide free training in modern programming languages and techniques.

"Our continued investment in capacity-building programs reflects Agility's commitment to Kuwait's youth. We want to help equip them with the essential skills needed for today's job market. We are proud to have made a positive impact on more than 7,000 students, over half of whom are young women ready to launch their careers. Our support for Kuwait Codes 2024 and the launch of Academy X underscores our commitment to the next generation of tech talent in Kuwait," said Henadi Al Saleh, Chairperson of Agility.



Kuwait Codes equips high school students with programming skills.

Disney's first Black princess ride replaces racist film theme

ORLANDO, Fla., June 11. (AP) — A new attraction starring the first Black Disney princess is opening at the company's US theme park resorts, and some Disney followers see it as a fitting replacement to a former ride based on a movie that contained racist tropes.

The new theme park attraction updates Tiana's storyline from the 2009 animated film, "The Princess and the Frog" and is opening this year in the space previously occupied by Splash Mountain. The water ride had been themed to "Song of the South," a 1946 Disney movie filled with racist clichés about African Americans and plantation life.

Tiana's Bayou Adventure keeps Splash Mountain's DNA as a log-flume ride, but it's infused with music, scenery and animatronic characters inspired by the film set in 1920s New Orleans. It opens to the public later this month at Walt Disney World in Florida and at Disneyland in California later this year.

"For little Black girls, Tiana has meant a lot. When a little child can see somebody who looks like them, that matters," said Neal Lester, an English professor at Arizona State University, who has written about Tiana.

Disney's announcement that it would transform its longstanding Splash Mountain ride into Tiana's Bayou Adventure was made in June 2020 following the social justice protests sparked by the murder of George Floyd in Minneapolis police custody. At the time, Disney said the change had already been in the works. But it came as companies across the U.S. were reconsidering or renaming decades-old brands amid worldwide protests.

The "Song of the South" film is a mix of live action, cartoons and music featuring an older Black man who works at a plantation and tells fables

about talking animals to a white city boy. The film has been criticized for its racist stereotypes, and hasn't been released in theaters in decades and isn't available on the company's streaming service Disney+.

Disney has been criticized for racist tropes in films made in earlier decades. The crow characters from the 1941 film, "Dumbo" and the King Louie character from 1967's "The Jungle Book" were viewed as African American caricatures.

Depiction

The depiction of Native Americans in the 1953 movie, "Peter Pan," and the Siamese cats - often deemed as Asian stereotypes - from the 1955 film, "Lady and the Tramp," also have been derided.

Not everyone is sold on the belief that opening a ride based on Tiana's story solves Disney's past problematic racial depictions.

By refurbishing Splash Mountain into Tiana's Bayou Adventure instead of dismantling the attraction completely, Disney has linked "Song of the South" with "The Princess and the Frog." Both are fantasies that are silent, for the most part, on the racial realities of the segregated eras they depict, said Katie Kapurch, an English professor at Texas State University who has written widely about Disney.

"We might see the impulse to replace rather than dismantle or build anew as a metaphor for structural racism, too," Kapurch said. "Again, this is unintentional on Disney's part, but the observation gets to the heart of how Disney reflects America back to itself."

Imagineers who design the Disney rides are always attempting to look at the attractions with fresh eyes and ways to tell new stories "so that everybody feels included," said Carmen Smith, a senior vice presi-

dent for Disney Parks, Experiences and Products.

"We never want to perpetuate stereotypes or misconceptions," Smith said Monday. "Our intention is to tell great stories."

It's also important for the Imagineers to tell a variety of stories for its global audience, said Charita Carter, a senior creative producer at Walt Disney Imagineering.

"Society does change, and we develop different sensibilities," Carter said. "We focus our stories differently depending what our society needs."

The transformation from Splash Mountain to Tiana's Bayou Adventure is one of several recalibrations at the entertainment giant's theme parks for rides whose storylines are considered antiquated or offensive.

In 2021, Disney announced it would remodel Jungle Cruise, one of the original Disney parks' rides, which had been criticized in years past for being racially insensitive because of its depiction of animatronic Indigenous people as savages or headhunters. Three years before that, Disney eliminated a "Bride Auction" scene, deemed offensive since it depicted women lining up for auction, from its "Pirates of the Caribbean" ride.

It's a positive step for Disney to have a ride based on a character from a background not seen in previous versions of Disney princesses replacing an attraction from a film steeped in racist tropes since "representation matters," Lester said.

"Disney is first and foremost about money and getting people into the park, and you can make money, still have representation and be aware of social justice history and make everyone feel like they belong there," Lester said.

Disney

Variety

Features

ARABIC TIMES

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This image released by O&M/DKC shows Sarah Pidgeon, (from left), Juliana Canfield and Tom Pecinka during a performance of 'Stereophonic'. (AP)

Stage

The soundtrack of a generation

Butler rocks Broadway's 'Stereophonic'

NEW YORK, June 11. (AP) — The assignment was daunting: Write a song for an onstage moment of transcendence. Make it kind of funny and exciting and for a five-piece band. Write it so it justifies an audience sitting in their seats for two hours before they hear it. And, oh, it must plausibly be a rock hit in 1976.

That was the job facing singer-songwriter Will Butler and the music arrangers for just one of the songs that stud the Tony Award-nominated play "Stereophonic," a leading contender at the June 16 Tony Awards.

"It's like, 'OK, that is a lot of things to think about, but let's just try it out and we just tried it out,'" says Butler, who left Arcade Fire in 2022 and has a new band, Sister Squares.

"Stereophonic" is playwright David Adjmi's story of a Fleetwood Mac-like band in the mid-'70s recording music over a life-changing year, with personal rifts opening and closing and then reopening.

The music that accompanies the drama includes full-on rockers like "Masquerade" and "Drive" but also fragments and demos as the band reworks tunes. It is a wonderful slice of funky, classic rock for a fictional band that became a real one onstage.

"I was trying to get in their heads. I was also a lot of the time just trying to make a great song, which is a hard enough task. And then hopefully a great song can support many interpretations - that's the dream."

Butler was connected with Adjmi by a mutual friend, and they first met at a diner about 10 years ago. Butler had just moved to New York and writing for theater intrigued him. It was a relaxed meeting and they hit it off: The two talked about "Moby Dick" for an hour.

Adjmi hadn't yet written a word of "Stereophonic." He had the title, a vague concept and wanted it set in a recording studio. Butler over the next five

years would submit "random" demos, like a song that someone might write if they listened to Phil Spector all day or one inspired by Sylvester in 1973 in San Francisco.

Once a script appeared, Adjmi leaned on Butler to fill in the song gaps. One moment had Diana, a young singer-songwriter, nervously play a new tune to her controlling boyfriend, the band's de facto leader and guitarist.

What would it sound like? It could have been a Stevie Nicks-inspired I'm-looking-at-you takedown, more a Joni Mitchell-ish mystical journey or a Neil Young "Heart of Glass"-like approach. Butler wrote lots of options, some which ended up on his new band's 2023 self-titled debut.

He tried to give the musicians a sonic backstory. They likely listened to Nina Simone and girl groups growing up. They likely heard Glenn Gould and folk music change from Peter, Paul and Mary into Bob Dylan.

Nominations

Butler credits the whole team - Adjmi, sound designer Ryan Rumery, orchestrator and musical director Justin Craig and director Daniel Aukin - for refining and refining the songs. All have Tony nominations.

"The music that I've always made is just a very deep collaborative art form. And theater, by its nature, is deeply collaborative," says Butler. "We were all just going to have each other's backs, and there wasn't going to be a hierarchy. We were just going to dig in on this and work on it until it was good."

Butler was also able to help the cast understand what long hours in the recording booth are like and helped with technical details - like that it might take an engineer 15 seconds to rewind a piece of music - but left the writing alone.

"The emotional world is completely accurate to my experience. I was in a band with my brother for

20 years and his wife for 20 years, and I'm in a band now with my wife and her sister," he says.

"It's just like you watch it and you're like, 'I hate this play!' This is too real. So, the emotional landscape is completely accurate."

Assembling a cast of actors who could become a rock band was an entirely different task. The show needed a real drummer, since even a year's worth of lessons wouldn't be enough. They found a drummer-actor in Chris Stack.

They found a competent bassist in Will Brill and a good guitarist in Tom Pecinka. For the two female band members they lucked out on Julian Canfield and Sarah Pidgeon, who both played piano as kids and had lovely, raw voices.

"We really lucked into our voices. Day one in rehearsal, Tom Pecinka and Juliana Canfield and Sarah Pidgeon sang together, and I was just like, 'OK, it's going to work out.' It sounded like they'd been singing together for a decade, and it was just beautiful."

Pidgeon says the experience has been bonding, and the actors now feel like a band, rehearsing every day and watching their egos drop away. The band was even asked to play at Butler's most recent album drop party.

"I feel kind of like an athlete every every night, like a trick snowboarder where I'm trying to do flips and spins and get my highest score and I need to stick the landing."

Butler, who has a Grammy for Arcade Fire's "The Suburbs" and an Oscar nomination for working on Spike Jonze's film "Her," now finds himself the toast of New York theater. He admits he was a little skeptical after the show debuted off-Broadway at Playwrights Horizons when producers wanted to take it to Broadway.

"I didn't say this in the room at the time, but in my brain, I was like, it's your money," he says, laughing. "For it to be a hit is very absurdly pleasing, like pleasing and absurd. Just madness."

lack of racial diversity and allegations about some nominees' behavior. Foundation officials vowed to improve ethical standards and be more "reflective of the industry." (AP)

BRATISLAVA, Slovakia: Employees of Slovakia's public radio and television broadcaster staged a three-hour walkout on Monday to



Rafidi



Fico

protest a contentious overhaul of their services, a move that critics say would result in the government taking full control of the media.

The coalition government of populist Prime Minister Robert Fico approved the measure on April 24, and it's currently being debated in parliament.

The plan has been widely criticized by President Zuzana

Čaputová, local journalists, the opposition, international media organizations and the European Union.

Director-general Ľuboš Machaj said that he respected the right of the staffers to protest.

"Our suggestions (about the plan) haven't been respected," Machaj said. The proposed changes would mean the public broadcaster known as RTVS

would cease to exist and be replaced by a new organization.

The protesters marched through the city to rally in front of the Culture Ministry. They demand that the current RTVS system has to remain in place, and that the broadcaster has the finances to effectively function and its journalists aren't under attack from politicians and others. (AP)

