

## Local

**Kuwait Times**  
Established 1961  
The First Daily in The Arabian Gulf

THE LEADING INDEPENDENT  
DAILY IN THE ARABIAN GULF  
ESTABLISHED 1961

Founder and Publisher  
**YOUSUF S. AL-ALYAN**

Editor-in-Chief  
**ABD AL-RAHMAN AL-ALYAN**

EDITORIAL : 24833199-24833358-24833432  
ADVERTISING : 24835616/7  
FAX : 24835620/1  
CIRCULATION : 24833199 Extn. 163  
ACCOUNTS : 24833199 Extn. 125  
COMMERCIAL : 24835618

P.O.Box 1301 Safat, 13014 Kuwait.  
Email: info@kuwaittimes.com  
Website: www.kuwaittimes.net

# NCCAL and Indian Embassy sign cultural cooperation agreement

## Celebrations to mark 60th anniversary of Kuwait-India relations



KUWAIT: NCCAL Secretary General Kamel Abdul Jalil and Indian Ambassador to Kuwait Sibi George shake hands after signing a cultural agreement at Kuwait National Library yesterday. — Photos by Yasser Al-Zayyat



Kamel Abdul Jalil presents a memento to Sibi George.

By Sajeev K Peter

**KUWAIT:** The National Council of Culture, Arts and Letters (NCCAL) and the Embassy of India yesterday signed an agreement on cultural cooperation on the occasion of the 60th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between Kuwait and India. NCCAL Secretary General Kamel Abdul Jalil and Indian Ambassador to Kuwait Sibi George signed the agreement at a ceremony held at the Kuwait National Library.

Announcing the yearlong celebrations, Abdul Jalil said a series of joint events have been scheduled, covering the entire spectrum of culture, art and letters to mark the milestone year. "This anniversary year is very important for both countries and the joint celebrations are to mark an important milestone in the shared history of the bilateral relations of our two countries," he said. He also highlighted the excellent bilateral relations between Kuwait and

India, especially the age-old people-to-people connection, civilizational affinities and mutual aims. He expressed his desire to bolster cultural exchanges between the two countries.

In his remarks, George said India-Kuwait relations are time-tested. "They have been built over strong foundations by our peoples over centuries based on mutual trust and respect. Over time, the partnership has blossomed into a forward-looking dynamic partnership," he said, adding the new India-Kuwait partnership will connect the visions of the leaderships of the two countries for mutual development and progress of the peoples of the two countries.

"The leadership of India has given us a roadmap to rekindle the India-Kuwait relationship and take it to a new level of partnership. Every step that we undertake, including this joint collaborative year-long celebration by NCCAL and the embassy, is part of this roadmap," the ambassador said.

The series of celebrations will commence with a joint musical program on Dec 2, 2021. This will be followed by a cultural week, when a seminar on historical relations between India and Kuwait will be presented by well-known writer Hind Al-Harbi and an Indian resident-writer. The cultural week will also witness events such as screening of Indian movies, stage performances, seminar on wellness tourism opportunities, joint musical evenings, joint activities on antiquities and maritime trade routes, clothing exhibition, pottery exhibition, symposium on the connect between Indian and Kuwaiti cuisines, and currency and jewelry exhibitions, among others. A closing ceremony will be held on July 3, 2022.

George said more details of the celebrations will be announced in the coming weeks. "Our objective is to involve all our Kuwaiti friends and the Indian community in these celebrations and make it a memorable year in our relationship," he affirmed.

### Views on gender equality

This year's survey observes a notable shift in sentiment on gender equality. Last year, 64 percent of female respondents said they had the same rights as men. However, this year, just over half (51 percent) believe so. Young women in Lebanon appear particularly disadvantaged compared to men, with only 44 percent saying they have the same rights as men, down from 60 percent in 2020.

Female progress within the workplace has also stalled, with only 46 percent of young Arab women saying they have the same professional opportunities as men, compared to 52 percent last year. Worryingly, 44 percent of young females also said that men have better access to professional opportunities nowadays, up from just over a third (35 percent) last year.

### Fewer consider emigration

Lack of economic opportunity continues to be the main driver of emigration, with a third of young Arabs (33 percent) saying they were either considering or had tried to leave their home country. However, this is a substantial drop from the 42 percent of Arab youth who said they wanted to migrate in 2020. The desire to emigrate is lowest among Kuwaiti youth with just 8 percent saying they have considered moving out of their home-country.

### Hope for the future

"As one of the region's largest communications consultancies, with a rich heritage stretching back 21 years, ASDA' A BCW has been committed to giving young Arab men and women in MENA a voice through our annual Arab Youth Survey," said Sunil John, President, MENA, BCW and Founder of ASDA' A BCW. "That voice has become more emphatic as we have expanded our research over the years, from nine countries in 2008 when we launched the survey, to 17 Arab states and territories today, charting along the way youth insights in the wake of the global economic downturn, before and after the Arab Spring, and during the COVID-19 pandemic."

"Inevitably, this year's research has illustrated many of the pandemic's extremely damaging effects, as well as the work required to meet the future hopes of Arab youth. However, at the same time, it has shone new light on the deep reserves of optimism and pragmatism among our young people. Such positivity is hugely encouraging and a strong platform on which policymakers can build a better and prosperous future," John concluded.

"Many details of this sports complex were seen, as it is one of many sports facilities that were constructed in support of sport and athletes, as well as in contribution to the advancement of Kuwait sport," he pointed out. "As much as we were pleased with this honor, we find ourselves facing a challenge that compels us all to continue working and exerting extra efforts to achieve the sought-after goal to take Kuwait sport to a higher level and win championships in the name of Kuwait at the continental and international levels."



Sheikh Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah

## Kuwaiti youth most optimistic of future in Arab world, survey says

**KUWAIT:** Despite the COVID-19 pandemic, ongoing conflicts and record economic decline, most young Arabs in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) believe their best days lie ahead of them, but they look up to their governments to tackle nepotism and corruption, and provide more support in starting their own businesses. This optimism is highest among Kuwaiti youth, with an overwhelming 92 percent stating 'our best days are ahead of us.'

These are some of the top findings of the 13th Annual ASDA' A BCW Arab Youth Survey, released yesterday by ASDA' A BCW, the leading public relations consultancy in MENA, which revealed the astonishing resilience and hopefulness of young Arab men and women across the region, but also their growing frustrations about increasing unemployment, access to quality higher education and rising living expenses.

Now in its 13th year, the largest study of MENA's largest demographic, its 200 million plus youth, polled 3,400 Arab citizens aged between 18 and 24 in 50 cities and territories in 17 countries from June 6-30, 2021. The survey was conducted for ASDA' A BCW by PSB Insights, the global strategic research and analytics specialist, amongst a cohort equally split between men and women.

### Optimism for a better life

The pandemic cost MENA economies an estimated \$227 billion last year, pushing some countries to the brink of bankruptcy. However, when asked whether they believed their best days were either ahead of them or behind them, an astonishing 60 percent of young Arabs, expressed optimism in the future - the highest level of positivity in five years.

The survey report, themed 'Hope for the Future', based on the findings, further highlight the optimism of young Arabs with nearly half (48 percent) also saying they 'will lead a better life than their parents,' the highest percentage in



Sunil John

three years. In addition, half of respondents said their country's economy was heading in the right direction and most expected a full economic recovery by 2022.

The encouraging findings do not diminish the scale of the challenge facing regional policymakers, with 89 percent of young Arabs saying they are very concerned about the rising cost of living. More than eight in 10 were also concerned about unemployment and the quality of higher education, while over a third (37 percent) said they were struggling to meet their expenses. Another one-third (33 percent) said either they or a family member had lost their job due to COVID-19.

Young Arabs identify three strategies to boost job creation, saying their top priorities include: Tackling corruption and nepotism, providing more information on the job opportunities available, and education reform. They also say they expect governments to help them start their own businesses by providing more access to affordable financing and reducing red tape.

### Increased trust in government

Today, more young Arabs trust their government to address their priorities, according to the survey. Nearly three-quarters (72 percent) of young Arabs said their voice matters to their country's leadership - a view held by an overwhelming 90 percent of Kuwaiti youth. Even in North Africa and the Levant region, which witnessed significant social unrest in recent years, many young Arabs now believe their opinions matter to their governments.

### US has most influence

In other key findings, Egypt, Saudi Arabia and the UAE are widely considered to be the region's strongest allies, with more than eight out of 10 young Arabs describing them as a strong ally or somewhat of an ally of their country. China and Russia are the region's fourth and fifth strongest allies, according to Arab youth, while the UK and the US rank eighth and ninth, respectively. Arab youth continue to feel the presence of the US in regional affairs, with over two-thirds (69 percent) of Kuwaiti youth saying that the country has the most influence over the Arab world.

## Cabinet visit to tennis complex 'source of pride'

**KUWAIT:** Kuwait Tennis Federation President Sheikh Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Abdullah Al-Jaber Al-Sabah expressed appreciation to the Cabinet for its recent visit to the Jaber International Tennis Complex, reiterating that the facility stands an example of successful cooperation between the public and private sectors.

"Kuwait sports and Kuwait Tennis Federation were honored by a unique and unprecedented event, when Sheikh Jaber Al-Abdullah Al-Jaber Al-Sabah

International Tennis Complex hosted the extraordinary meeting of the Cabinet, chaired by H.H. the Prime Minister Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah," Sheikh Ahmad said in a statement yesterday. "This is considered a matter of pride for Kuwait sport in general and Kuwait Tennis Federation in particular, especially after receiving the confidence of the political leadership."

"Maybe what distinguishes this meeting from others, and away from what was discussed on the agenda, is the presence of the entire Cabinet inside a sports facility that matches and competes with international facilities," he indicated. "It also proved beyond any shadow of doubt the true success of partnership between the government and private sectors in managing sports projects, in a way that serves the public interest of the state."

## stc Masters' grand finale open to viewers through live stream

**KUWAIT:** Kuwait Telecommunications Company - stc, a world-class digital leader providing innovative services and platforms to customers, enabling the digital transformation in Kuwait, announced that it will be live streaming the grand finale of the stc Masters tournament on masters.stc.com.kw, the stc Masters page on stc's website. Viewers will get to witness the winning champions of the gaming competition organized in collaboration with Zawayya Gaming.

stc issued a statement welcoming all viewers interested in watching the live stream finale to tune in this upcoming Friday and Saturday, 15-16 October 2021, to watch 176 finalists battle it out for the winning titles. The gaming competition consists of four games (FIFA, Call of Duty, PUBG, Fortnite), where finalists got a chance to qualify for the grand finale through weekly tournaments held over the past four months.

Chief Consumer Officer (CCO) of stc, Engineer Amer Atoui, said, "The number of gamers participating in the first season of stc Masters is a testament to the level of demand for such gaming competitions in Kuwait. We are proud to host the upcoming grand finale on October 15 and 16, where we will crown the first champions of stc Masters. Having said that, we welcome all gamers and those interested in watching some of the top gamers in Kuwait battle it out for the ultimate cash prize."

Atoui added, "The successful outcome of the first season of stc Masters reflects our vision of becoming the preferred eSports hub in Kuwait. Season 1 will only serve as a steppingstone in stc's journey into the online gaming industry. We find it essential to enhance the lifestyles of our customers and will continue to introduce new concepts that aim to transform the local market across various industries."

stc Masters provides gamers with a chance to compete for a large prize pool amounting to over USD 50,000 awarded to winners throughout the season. Players who qualified across four gaming titles held over 16 tournaments will be eligible to participate in the grand finale. Following the end of the first season, stc Masters will launch a longer and more extensive season that will maintain the same caliber and consistency of challenging local gamers to prove they are the best in Kuwait. More information on the upcoming seasons will be displayed on masters.stc.com.kw, the stc Masters page on stc's website providing updates and news on the gaming competition.



Amer Atoui

### News in brief

#### Road maintenance firm prosecuted after deadly crash

**KUWAIT:** Minister of Public Works Dr Rana Al-Fares yesterday ordered referring the company responsible for the Fahheel Highway maintenance to the public prosecution in the wake of a tragic accident in which a motorist died after a manhole cover moved from its place and crashed into the windshield of his vehicle. The minister also gave orders to suspend and terminate the general director of the Public Authority for Roads and Transportation and suspend the director of the authority's highways maintenance department.

#### Kuwait highlights pan-Gulf drills

**KUWAIT:** Kuwait's interior ministry said that joint military drills among Gulf Arab states are key to deal with security challenges facing the region. Such exercises also provide a platform for the exchange of military knowhow, Interior Ministry Undersecretary Sheikh Faisal Nawaf Al-Sabah was cited as saying in a statement, ahead of pan-Gulf military drills in Saudi Arabia. He expressed his satisfaction over the level of military cooperation between Gulf Cooperation Council member states, saying more frequent joint drills would lead to even greater military coordination.

#### Kuwait, Italy sports cooperation

**KUWAIT:** Kuwaiti Ambassador to Italy Sheikh Azzam Mubarak Al-Sabah held yesterday a meeting with the President of the Italian Football Federation Gabriele Gravina. During the meeting, the two sides discussed and agreed on having friendly football matches between Kuwaiti and Italian teams during Kuwaiti national festivals, said the Kuwaiti Embassy in a press release.