



OVERSEAS NEWS AND EMPLOYMENT

PASSPORT TO GLOBAL JOB OPPORTUNITIES



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Prime Minister Narendra Modi with Sheikha-Shaikha AJ Al-Sabah, who has been honoured with the prestigious "Padma Shri" award. She is the first Kuwaiti national to receive a Padma award and among the select eight international recipients of Padma Shri this year.

Yoga practitioner from Kuwait honoured with Padma Shri

NEW DELHI: A Yoga practitioner from Kuwait --- Shaikha AJ Al Sabah -- and travel blogger couple Hugh and Colleen Gantzer from Uttarakhand will be conferred with a Padma Shri award.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi had recently met Yoga expert Shaikha AJ Al-Sabah founder of the first licensed yoga studio "Daratma" in Kuwait. "Met HH Shaikha AJ Al-Sabah in Kuwait. She has distinguished herself for her passion towards Yoga and fit-

ness. She has established her own Yoga and wellness studio, which is quite popular in Kuwait. We talked about ways to make Yoga more popular among the youth," Modi had posted on X. They discussed ways to further popularise yoga, especially among the youth, the prime minister's office said.

Shaikha, a 48-year-old yoga practitioner, who founded Daratma -- Kuwait's first licensed yoga studio -- was conferred with the third

(Cont. on page-2)



Saudi HR Minister Ahmad bin Sulaiman Al-Rajhi addressing the Global Labour Market Conference in Riyadh.

GLOBAL LABOUR MARKET CONFERENCE IN RIYADH Nations should tap labour market potential, says Saudi HR Minister

RIYADH: Stronger working between governments, the private sector and international organisations is needed to address the global unemployment crisis, according to Saudi HR minister.

During the opening remarks of the Global Labour Market Conference taking place in Riyadh, the Kingdom's Minister

of Human Resources and Social Development Ahmad bin Sulaiman Al-Rajhi highlighted that with 67 million young people unemployed across the world — and over 20pc of youth in some regions outside of education, employment or training — targeted policies are urgently needed to tap into this labour market poten-

tial.

Global employment grew in 2024, along with the expanding labour force, keeping the unemployment rate steady at five per cent, the same as in 2023. However, the growth in employment was too weak to address the ongoing global shortage of decent work,

(Cont. on page-2)

Time-tested India-Kuwait partnership India marches ahead on all fronts



By H.E. Dr. Adarsh Swaika (Ambassador of India to Kuwait)

On the joyous occasion of the 76th Republic Day of India, I extend my warm greetings to all Indian nationals and persons

of Indian origin in the friendly State of Kuwait.

I take this opportunity to express my profound gratitude to His Highness the Amir of the State of Kuwait Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah and His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah for their patronage and support for a strong India-Kuwait partnership.

We feel proud of India's many achievements. Equitable development has been the corner stone

of socio-economic policies of India. Democracy, pluralism and unity in diversity are the traditional ethos of Indian society. India believes in its ancient philosophy of "Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam" (the world is one family). This belief guides our foreign policy as well.

India today is a land of billion opportunities. Our collective resolve has ensured that the Indian economy is today the fifth largest economy in the world. And it is going to be the third largest global economy

(Cont. on page-2)

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PASSPORT TO GLOBAL JOB OPPORTUNITIES

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Budget expectations

With only hours left for the presentation of the Union budget for 2025-26, various speculative reports on fresh taxes, new tax slabs, reliefs etc are hitting the headlines. A lot is expected from the budget, in terms of measures to push for growth in consumption and investment. While there may be limited flexibility in planning the budget as almost all revenue components are important, government will do its best to provide incentives and support.

A more detailed look at the expenditure would be in order given that the government is well on the path of lowering the fiscal deficit ratio. That the economy is doing well is an advantage as no emergency measures are required and the focus can be on the medium term

So, what can one expect from the budget? Budget 2025 is expected to reflect the Centre's commitment to fiscal consolidation with the government setting a target of reducing the fiscal deficit to below 4.5pc of GDP by next March.

On the revenue front, two areas need attention. Since consumption has been hit in the last fiscal due to inflation, lowering tax rates will be a welcome step. Providing relief only at the lower income levels may not lift the overall consumption. This can be delivered in the new tax system by raising the tax slabs, including the basic exemption limit. Ideally these slabs should be adjusted with inflation. Such a cover will help protect real tax slabs.

On the expenditure side, while capital expenditure (capex) will be the primary tool to drive investment, diversification across ministries can be considered. In the last few budgets which witnessed spikes in capex, the three sectors that have benefited are defence, roads and railways. Getting agriculture into the fold will help at the national level.

Also, the production-linked incentive scheme should be extended for micro, small and medium enterprises. Industries like auto parts, chemicals, textiles, handicrafts etc would benefit and are important components of the exports sector. For industry, the Centre could add an employment condition along with turnover. There can be a case for shifting social welfare spending to health and education. Budgets have concentrated on subsidies and cash transfers to vulnerable sections, improving living conditions. To make money work better by creating more social capital, the focus can also be on creating more joint ventures.

The robust tax collection, mainly driven by direct taxes, has given the government some space to carry out additional current expenditures while capital expenditures have remained muted thus far. In terms of tax collection, gross tax revenue is projected to grow by 10.4 pc in FY25-26 while direct tax collections might face headwinds due to anticipated tax relief and corporate tax collections are estimated to show improvement. GST collections are expected to grow at 11pc this fiscal and 11.4pc in FY26. Excise duty collections are expected to remain subdued.

High expectations are on the artificial intelligence (AI) and electric vehicles (EV) sectors, which are new. Also, the budget may place greater emphasis on digital transformation.

At the end of the day, the immediate concern is President Trump's move to stop immigration and impose tariffs and even to end aid to countries, including India.

LIPSYNCH

"Becoming rich is difficult. Staying broke is hard. Choose your way" – Eric Worre

Time-tested India-Kuwait... India marches ahead on all fronts

(Cont. from page-1)

in the next couple of years. India is moving ahead with the spirit of "Make in India, Make for the World". The massive business friendly reforms and policies have contributed in unleashing the true potential of the country. The new India has made tremendous strides in science and technology; is one of the leading centers of innovation and Information Technology globally; is the "Pharmacy of the World"; has world class production and manufacturing capabilities; and is a leading global partner to address new age challenges facing the humanity. Today, we are on the right

Yoga practitioner...



Shaikha AJ Al Sabah

(Cont. from page-1)

highest civilian award for her contribution towards yoga. She promoted yoga practice in the Gulf region with unique traditional techniques. She has also spearheaded Yomnak lil Yaman in 2021, a fundraiser for Yemeni refugees and internally displaced people in the war-torn region.

Hugh and Colleen, the husband and wife duo from Uttarakhand, have been recognised for their contribution to Indian travel journalism for over five decades. The couple have authored over 30 books about Indian tourism. Besides promoting tourism, their work has created awareness about the preservation of local communities and cultural heritage. Colleen, who died in November 2024, will receive the award posthumously.

track to build an Atmanirbhar Bharat (Self-Reliant India) with the goal of becoming a developed country by 2047.

World peace

In the international arena, India has been playing a significant role in contributing to world peace, stability and prosperity. India has championed many global initiatives with like-minded countries in recent years, including the International Solar Alliance, Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure, Global Bio-Fuels Alliance etc to foster pro-planet action. India has a multi-vector foreign policy that is designed to continuously strengthen its independence, freedom of choice and pursuit of national interest. India believes that dialogue and diplomacy is the only way to resolve disputes and conflicts. In the region, India's relations with GCC countries have been growing rapidly with major economic, energy, diaspora, security and political stakes. We are confident that India-GCC relations will be further strengthened under Kuwait's GCC Presidency.

The historic and successful visit of Hon'ble Prime Minister of India Shri Narendra Modi to Kuwait in December 2024 has opened a new chapter in our bilateral relations with Kuwait. The conferment of the highest national award of Kuwait "The Order of Mubarak Al-Kabeer"

on Hon'ble Prime Minister of India is a matter of pride for every Indian. The leadership of both countries attach utmost importance to relations with each other's country. This was evident from the exceptional gestures and hospitality accorded by the leadership of Kuwait to Hon'ble Prime Minister during his recent visit. Our bilateral relations have been elevated to that of a "Strategic Partnership". This is expected to be reflected in various domains of co-operation. We look forward to greater engagement with Kuwait, both at government and people-to-people level, in the coming times. The large Indian community in Kuwait remains a living and vital bridge of our bilateral relations.

The embassy places highest priority to the welfare and well-being of the Indian community in Kuwait. I thank all the community associations, professional bodies, cultural groups and members of the Indian community for joining hands with the embassy, where required, for the welfare of the community in Kuwait and contribute to the strengthening of our relations with Kuwait.

Once again, I convey my best wishes to every Indian in Kuwait and all friends of India in Kuwait for their continued success, happiness and goodhealth.

GLOBAL LABOUR MARKET CONFERENCE...

Nations should tap...

(Cont. from page-1)

according to the International Labour Organisation.

"While the challenges may vary, the solutions require collaboration between governments, the private sector and international organisations. By working together, we develop strategies that benefit everyone," Al-Rajhi said.

"The numbers are concerning, and the urgency is clear. These figures are not just statistics, they represent untapped potential in all of our labour markets," the official added, stressing that addressing youth unemployment with the right strategies is essential for driving economic growth and social progress worldwide.

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Euro	90.89	89.19
Japanese Yen	0.56	0.55
Swiss Franc (CHF)	96.37	94.47
Canadian Dollar	60.56	59.35
Australian Dollar	54.42	53.34
Norwegian Krone	7.71	7.56
Swedish Krona	7.93	7.77
New Zealand Dollar	49.27	48.38
Hong Kong Dollar	11.22	11.00
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Singapore Dollar	64.71	63.39
Saudi Arabian Riyal	23.31	22.86
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ASST DUCTMAN	40	850+ 250 (Food)+OT
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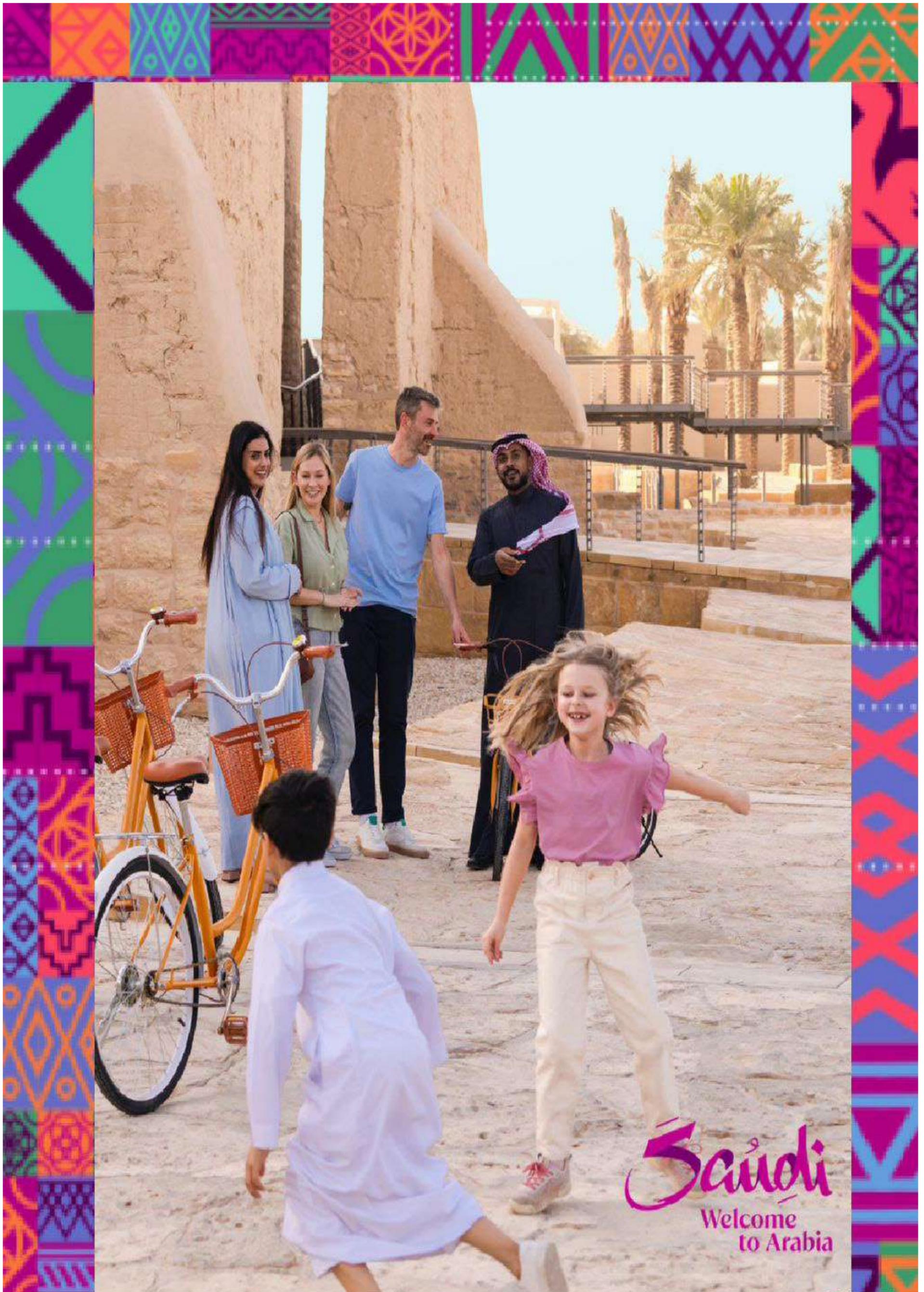
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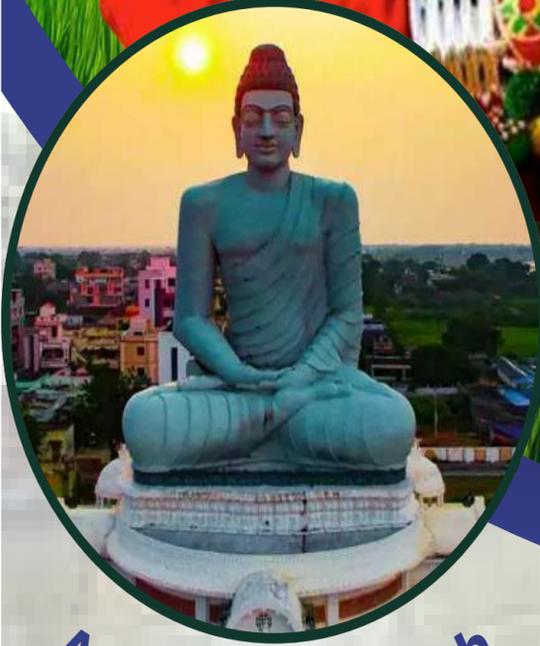
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GULF FAQs

Dh1 lakh fine for selling defective cars

I recently bought a secondhand car listed on a website. Nevertheless, multiple technical issues have developed. My mechanic says the seller had hid the problems before selling the car to me. The seller was not a dealer, but someone who owned the vehicle. I called him, but he said it was not his problem. What are my legal options in this case?

It is assumed that the seller who sold you the secondhand car has provided you with a warranty for a certain period from the date of purchase.

In the UAE, a seller is required to provide the right description

of a product to a consumer and should not mislead the consumer while selling a product. This is under Article 17 of the Federal Law No. 15 of 2020 on Consumer Protection amended by Federal Decree-Law No. 5 of 2023 and Article-8 of the Cabinet Decision No. 66 of 2023 Concerning the Executive Regulation of the Federal Law No. 15 of 2020 Concerning Consumer Protection. The provisions of the law as mentioned earlier are as below:

Article-17 of the UAE Consumer Law says: "The Advertiser, the Supplier and the commercial agent are prohibited from describing the good or service in a manner that contains

incorrect data and from making any misleading advertisement in connection therewith."

Article-8 of the Cabinet Decision No. 66 of 2023 says: "A description, advertisement or offering of a commodity or a service shall be deemed deceptive, if the same contains a misleading claim whenever it may directly or indirectly create false or misleading impression to the consumer, in particular if the claim includes one or more of the following elements:

1. Nature, composition, substantial description, constituent elements, quantity, shape or appearance of commodity.

2. Source, individuali-

ty, authenticity, way of manufacture, production date, expiry date, terms of use, warnings of use, weight, size, number, quantity, measurement, calibration, capacity, benchmark or any other standards.

3. Country of origin, country of export or the commodity producer.

4. Terms and procedures of contracting including after-sale service, warranty, and price and way of payment.

5. Awards, certification or quality marks.

6. Trademarks, statements or logos.

7. Characters of commodity or service and the expected results of their use."

Furthermore, while a seller is selling a secondhand product, he or she needs to mention the condition of the said product and the advertisement should not be misleading to a consumer.

This is by Article-7 of the Cabinet Decision No. 66 of 2023, which states: "The supplier offering used, renovated or defective commodities that do not result in any harm to health or safety of the consumer, shall apparently advertise the condition of the commodity on the commodity, as well as at the place where the supplier's activity is practised, in a way that shall not create a false or misleading impression to the consumer. The condition of the commodity shall be described in the concluded contract or the issued invoice."

Moreover, in the event a seller offers a product with a warranty for a specific period, such a warranty should contain various particulars as mentioned in Article-12 of the Cabinet Decision No. 66 of 2023. In addition, Article 13 of the

Cabinet Decision No. 66 of 2023 mentions the supply obligations related to the implementation of warranty.

Additionally, a consumer may have the right to claim compensation from a seller if the product sold by a seller is defective. This is by Article-24 (1) of the UAE Consumer Law, which states: "The consumer shall have the right to claim compensation for personal or material damages sustained by him as a result of using the Good or Service, by the legislation in force in the state and any agreement to the contrary shall be null and void."

The UAE Ministry of Economy or a competent authority in each emirate is authorised to receive complaints from consumers. This is in accordance with Article-35 of the Cabinet Decision No. 66 of 2023.

Furthermore, Addendum No. 2 of Cabinet Decision No. 66 of 2023 related to the Table of Financial Penalties imposed on a seller states that a seller may be imposed with a penalty of Dh100,000 for offering defective used or renovated products.

Based on the aforementioned provision of law, you may file a complaint with competent authority in the emirate which has jurisdiction against the individual who has sold you his secondhand car because he misled you by not disclosing to you the condition of the car. However, if you have a warranty for the said car issued by the seller then you may only claim for warranty with the seller if there is a defect or breakdown in the car during the warranty period.



At the Republic Day reception at the Indian embassy in Kuwait Ambassador Dr Adarsh Swaika and Chief Guest His Excellency Dr Mahmoud Abdulaziz Bushahri, Kuwait's Minister for Electricity, cutting the cake.



A section of the audience.

Kuwait taking rapid steps to become a tourism hub

KUWAIT CITY: Kuwait is taking agile strides on the path toward substantial development of the tourism sector as part of the broad development strategy. Relevant authorities, already developing the tourist facilities, plan new projects of promising investments, in addition to updating the sector's infrastructure and working out policies to back up the businesses of travel, entertainment and culture.

Kuwait has recently established partnerships with local and foreign tourist and entertainment companies, some fruits of which materialised with the launch of the Winter Wonderland entertainment complex, opening Al-Sabahiya Park and developing "Shatea Al-Blajjat" (the beach area) in the Salmiya district. Authorities are preparing to diversify activities during the coming national occasions to draw tourists from the Gulf region.

For example, the "Ya Hala" shopping festival that kicked off on January 21 (due until March 31) had been planned as part of the new approach to boost the sector, along with the commercial sphere. The Permanent Committee for Celebrating Eids and National Occasions plans to increase tourist expenditures during the festival by 15-25pc compared with

corresponding period in 2024, when it reached KD 170.1 million. The festival is also aimed at serving other objectives at this level: trimming spending on travel and external tourism that had soared to KD 4.39 billion in 2023.

In tandem with the approach for tourism development, Kuwait has also drawn up schemes to improve the business environment and the service economy competitiveness in the Gulf. Kuwait posted a 41.9pc growth of international tourism (foreign tourists) in 2019 with a value estimated at \$1.7 billion, while the number of tourists from the GCC countries reached 20,000. The third "mekashat" (leisure sites), inaugurated on Nov 16, drew some 1.5 lakh visitors, including GCC countries' citizens.

Saudi road mishap claims lives of nine NRIs

RIYADH: At least nine Indians are among the 15 dead in a road accident near Jizan in Saudi Arabia. The Indian consulate in Jeddah is offering support to families and has shared helpline numbers for further assistance.

In an unfortunate incident, 15 people, including nine Indian nationals, were killed in a road accident near Jizan in western Saudi Arabia on Wednesday.

The information was shared by the Indian mis-

Saudi's changing labour market

RIYADH: Countries around the world can take lessons from the transformation of Saudi Arabia's labor market, a former Swedish employment minister has insisted.

Speaking to a TV channel, on the sidelines of the Global Labour Market Conference in Riyadh, Sven Otto Littorin praised the Kingdom's progress since the launch of Vision 2030, which has seen female workforce participation doubling in nearly six years.

The changes have seen Saudi Arabia emerge as a global leader in addressing labour market challenges, skill development and workforce prequalification, as highlighted in the inaugural GLMC report in Dec.

The findings align with Vision 2030's goal to reduce unemployment from 11.6pc in 2017 to seven per cent by the end of the decade.

"I would go as far as to say that most other coun-



Sven Otto Littorin

tries could learn a thing or two from Saudi Arabia. The transformation of the Saudi labour market since the start of Vision 2030 is truly nothing less than spectacular. The Kingdom has made so much progress in such a short time it is hard to choose," said Littorin, who is also an international business and policymaking expert.

He praised the significant increase in female workforce participation, noting that Saudi Arabia achieved a two-fold rise in just six years, a feat that took Sweden 40 years to accomplish.

"Roughly 35pc of women in the workforce have leadership positions and I saw an opinion poll recently that stated that over 75pc of Saudi men saw this as very favorable to family life," he added. The Kingdom's labour market reforms align with Vision 2030 goals, as recent data from Saudi Arabia's General Authority for Statistics shows the overall unemployment rate fell to 3.7pc in the third quarter of 2024, a 0.5 percentage point drop from the previous year.

Unemployment among Saudi nationals was 7.8pc, while female participation reached 36.2pc. Littorin emphasised the broader societal impact of these changes, saying: "As a foreigner, I have to say that it is so gratifying to see these women in the labour market, earning their own money, contributing to their families and to the growth of the country with their productivity, their grit and ambition."

US freezes foreign aid for all countries including India

WASHINGTON: The United States has announced the suspension of all foreign aid and ordered the review of American financial assistance to other countries, to ensure they are efficient and consistent with its foreign policy under the America First agenda.

In 2023, US Agency for International Development (USAID) had distributed nearly \$45 billion in foreign aid to 158 countries. This included \$400 million to

Bangladesh, \$231 million to Pakistan, \$1 billion to Afghanistan, \$175 million to India, \$118 million to Nepal and \$123 million to Sri Lanka.

The move comes after President Donald Trump signed an executive order in this regard.

State Department spokesperson Tammy Bruce said: "President Trump stated clearly that the US is no longer going to blindly dole out money with no return for the

American people. Reviewing and realigning foreign assistance on behalf of hardworking taxpayers is not just the right thing to do. She said Secretary of State Marco Rubio has paused all US foreign assistance funded by or through the State Department and USAID for review.

"He is initiating a review of all foreign assistance programmes to ensure they are efficient and consistent with US foreign policy under the America First agen-

da," Bruce said. She added that the secretary is proud to protect America's investment with a deliberate and judicious review of how to spend foreign assistance dollars overseas.

"The mandate from the American people was clear -- we must refocus on American national interests. The Department and USAID take their role as stewards of taxpayer dollars very seriously," State Department spokesperson said.

The implementation of Trump's Executive Order in this regard and the secretary's direction furthers that mission, she added.

Bruce reminded reporters that Rubio has said, "Every dollar we spend, every programme we fund and every policy we pursue must be justified with the answer to three simple questions: Does it make America safer? Does it make America stronger? Does it make America more prosperous?"