

Business

Taiba Hospital reaccredited by Joint Commission International

JCIA reaffirms Taiba's standards of excellence in healthcare for fourth term in a row

KUWAIT: Taiba Hospital announced yesterday that it is awarded the Joint Commission International Accreditation (JCI) for the fourth term in a row, reaffirming its standards of excellence in healthcare and continued investment in its medical services at par with international levels of quality in the field. Taiba Hospital was first accredited by JCI in 2010 and has successfully maintained this accreditation throughout the past decade.

JCI is the recognized global leader in Healthcare Accreditation, measuring the quality of care provided, safety of patients, management and the approach in providing a streamlined medical service. JCI provide an independent, objective assessment of quality achievement, patient care and safety in a hospital setup.

Taiba Hospital Chief Executive Officer, Eng. Lama Al-Fadala, said: "JCI has been a supporting force in this journey towards excellence. I am proud to be part of a relentless team of Caregivers putting our patients first and ensuring

our patients receive the best of our healthy operations." Al-Fadala added: "Our resilient Caregivers efficiently conducted the virtual survey, following a cycle of local and International governance, delivering best practices and standards, to continue to align our policies and procedures with data driven decision making.

Chief Quality Officer at Taiba Hospital, Dr Aysha John, who has led the hospital during the last four JCI surveys said, "This sustained achievement is the result of hard work and the consistent endeavor of our caregivers and a visionary management. She congratulated the entire workforce in completing a decade as a JCI Accredited hospital". The Orthopedic department of Taiba Hospital also got recertified by JCI for a second term as Center of Excellence in "Total Knee Replacement and Lumbar Decompression and Fixation", recognizing the highest quality of care ensured by the Orthopedic Department, headed by Dr Waleed Altnaib and Dr Huthayfah Bin Nekhi.



Dr Aysha said 'the hospital achieved an overall compliance rate of 98 percent in JCI Hospital standards survey and specially thanked Dr Jamil A J Qaddoumi, Medical Director and Carlo A Perino, CNO and the entire workforce of Taiba Hospital for maintaining such high standards even during this difficult phase of COVID-19 pandemic. She concluded saying, "JCI Accreditation is a journey and not a destination. In that journey, Taiba Hospital will continue to deliver quality care and excellence to our patients and plans to maintain all its recognitions including 'JCI Accreditation', 'CAP Accreditation', 'Baby Friendly Hospital Award' and will strive for center of excellence programs in other specialties as well in the next decade.



Trucker, fisherman, scientist... the voices of Brexit

LONDON: Britain left the EU on January 31, 2020, but ties between the bloc and its former member remained unchanged during a so-called transition period while both sides tried to work out a new trading relationship. With that standstill period coming to an end on December 31, the realities of Brexit will arguably become tangible for both Britons and their counterparts on mainland Europe for the first time. AFP has spoken to six people whose lives will be directly affected by Britain's departure from the EU, the single market and the customs union.

Dimitar Velinov, lorry driver

A truck driver with many years of experience under his belt, Bulgarian Dimitar Velinov, 74, says he is expecting long queues at the UK border from January 1. "To me, Brexit means logistical chaos, which will hinder our work," he explains in the garage of his employer Eurospeed, based in the outskirts of Sofia which employs more than 300 drivers. "I transport goods across the European Union and for me it is important to be able to do my job without problems, without having to wait at borders for one or two days," Velinov says.

Crossing the Channel was already difficult as for years migrants have tried to stow away illegally in lorries heading to Britain. But Brexit will make it even more so, the driver says, complaining that he gets no sleep at all while waiting to embark from the French port of Calais to avoid heavy fines for those found carrying stowaways.

Sam Crow, fisherman

"We want to leave, 90 percent of fishermen want to leave," says 26-year-old Sam Crow from Scarborough in the north of England. "I still do feel like we are left in the dark a lot for what we do. The fish that we land and the scallops and the shrimps, all that is the freshest food on this planet and we're not praised enough for what we do," he says. Crow, who principally catches crab in the North Sea for export to Europe and China, says he has been heartened to see UK politicians fighting for the fishing sector in negotiations. As talks came down to the wire, European access to UK waters was a key sticking point. "I've heard that they've been fighting for our quotas and obviously I am grateful for that," he says.

The fisherman feels the UK fishing industry will be given a new lease of life following changes

expected to quotas that came with EU membership. Fishing communities, like Scarborough where Crow's family have fished for generations, have been in decline for decades. They hope Brexit will bring about a regeneration of their way of life.

"Back in the day the harbor was full of people to welcome in the lads and help out," Crow says. "It's just not like that now. Nobody's interested."

Greg McDonald, entrepreneur

"Brexit was never good news for the British economy," Greg McDonald the chief executive of Goodfish, a small company that produces plastic parts for the automotive, medical and electronics industries, tells AFP. "I closed a factory in March because our American customer closed their operation in the UK," he says. McDonald's company is located in the heart of England's Midlands in Cannock, not far from Birmingham. It is also highly dependent on the EU and exports a large part of its output to the bloc.

"It's probably cost us half a million pounds (548,000 euros, \$668,000) and 20 jobs" out of a total workforce of 110, he says. The entrepreneur slams Brexit as a "political project driven by nationalist and populist governments" and questions whether those who had voted in favor of leaving will ever benefit from it. McDonald says he had hoped for "minimum tariffs or no tariffs" when Britain left the EU and he complains of "more paperwork" and likely "problems at ports" after December 31.

Pascal Aussenac, restaurateur

"I have become a British citizen, but the company to which I have dedicated two decades of my life is no longer safe here and I am afraid of the future," says Pascal Aussenac, a French chef who has lived in London for 22 years and co-owns six premises, including a Michelin-starred restaurant and a cocktail bar. "2021 could turn out to be worse than 2020. Are we going to survive? That's the big question," he says. Over the course of the year, he has already suffered the shock of the coronavirus pandemic and was forced to close for months.

He is also already feeling the effects of Brexit, which has already sparked a drain on the European employees needed in kitchens and restaurants. British people don't work in the hospitality sector," Aussenac says. The ability to continue to source the local produce from France on which he has built his reputation remains uncertain. "I have no idea how long it will take to deliver" after January 1, he says.

Neuroscientist Tara Spire-Jones, from the University of Edinburgh, is concerned about international collaboration between laboratories, which she says was "very easy" with membership of the European Union. "The changes of regulation, if it diverges from the EU, will be more difficult to

talks, and the deal sees EU fishing vessels steadily give up part of current quotas.

"Fishermen and wholesalers will be able to benefit from a flat-rate aid of up to 30,000 euros depending on their dependence on products caught in British waters," the French fisheries ministry said in a statement.

"The government will soon present its complete plan to support French fishermen," Minister Annick Girardin said. The plan provides for compensation over a limited period for part of the turnover losses of companies dependent on British waters.

Other measures include investment aid under a recovery plan and "fleet exit plan" will be available

government spokesman Katsunobu Kato told a regular briefing. Japan, which is a signatory to the Paris climate deal, has been seen as reluctant to reduce its reliance on fossil fuel, despite its self-professed pride as a nation of energy-saving technologies.

The country was the sixth-biggest contributor to global greenhouse emissions in 2017, according to the International Energy Agency. The world's third largest economy still relies heavily on coal and liquefied natural gas, with most of its nuclear reactors offline since the 2011 Fukushima disaster.

Japan expects demand for electricity to surge 30-50 percent by 2050, but the nation's conservative ruling party has so far stayed lukewarm about renewable energy, though Suga has shifted the tone in recent weeks. Under the plans to boost renewables, officials are placing a new focus on offshore wind generation, with the goal of producing up to 45 gigawatts within the coming decades.

Japan also wants to use nuclear and thermal power plants with carbon capture technology to



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share things like brain tissues and living cells," says the academic who is also the director of the British Dementia Research Institute.

"From day one, we will have more difficulties with ordering things, such as equipment," she cautions. The researcher explains the end of the Brexit transition period will pose a "big problem" for British research funding, which is heavily subsidized by the EU. "In our university, something between 20 and 30 percent of our research funding is coming from Europe," she says, noting there were no plans to replace this funding at the moment. Though "no one will be fired on day one because of Brexit," some of the contracts of the 10 people she employs will not be renewable. "It's a real threat," she says, warning there would also be an inevitable brain drain as European students stay away from Britain.

Wendy Williams, homeowner in Greece

Wendy Williams, a 62-year-old Briton, says she feels her "EU citizenship was stolen" by the Brexit vote. As of January 1, she and her husband will not be able to travel as freely as before to their house on the Greek island of Kefalonia, bought in 2018 with all their savings, in anticipation of a retirement in the sun. Unless they have a residence permit or a long-term visa, British citizens will now only be able to visit the European Union for a total of 90 days over a six-month period.

"We will have to calculate the days, and include any days spent elsewhere in the EU," she says. "We had planned to spend longer periods in Greece," Williams says, but now they will only be able to spend a quarter of their time there. While she continues to work in the UK, where her elderly father is also based, Williams said she will not embark on the process of obtaining a two-year visa for her family, a process she describes as "complicated" and "expensive." —AFP

for vessels dependent on British waters that want to stop activity.

Britain had insisted it wanted to take back full control of its waters while EU coastal states sought guarantees their fleets could keep fishing in UK waters.

The two sides reached a compromise that will see European boats gradually relinquish 25 percent of their current quotas during a five-and-a-half year transition period.

After that there will be annual negotiations on the amount of fish EU vessels can take from British waters—and if Brussels is not satisfied it can impose economic measures against the UK. —AFP

cover 30-40 percent of the nation's electricity demand.

Ammonia and hydrogen technologies are expected to fulfil about 10 percent of the nation's power needs. By the mid-2030s, the government also wants to end the sale of new passenger vehicles that are solely powered by gasoline.

Japan plans to replace them with hybrids, electric cars and cars fitted with fuel-cell engines, while bringing down the cost of batteries for those vehicles. But while officials say the new plan is ambitious, some critics believe it falls short. Mika Ohbayashi, director of the Renewable Energy Institute, said the figures were "a poor starting point for discussions and (showed) a lack of ambition."

Japan should aim for renewable energy to cover 50-60 percent of national electricity needs by 2030, rather than wait until 2050, the think tank said. The institution also voiced its skepticism about whether carbon capture technology will become widely available in the coming decades—an assumption made by Japan as well as other nations in their carbon-neutral plans. —AFP

European businesses hopeful of China-EU investment deal

BEIJING: European businesses in China are hopeful of an EU-China investment deal by end of the year, the head of the European Chamber of Commerce in China said on Saturday, although Beijing has declined to commit to a deadline.

The China-EU Comprehensive Agreement on Investment has been in the works for seven years, and is expected to pave the way for European businesses to invest in financial services, telecommunications, electric vehicles and other sectors that are gradually being opened up for foreign investment in China. But the deal is facing opposition from some European members of parliament and the incoming US administration of President-elect Joe Biden, who say it does not address concerns about the use of forced labor by Chinese manufacturers, especially in the restive north-western region of Xinjiang.

"The next few days will be interesting. My sense is that there is a serious push to get this past the finishing line," Joerg Wuttke, head of the European Chamber of Commerce in China, told AFP.

"It's not a perfect deal, far from it, but it's a big step forward." China's commerce ministry has refrained from committing to a year-end deadline and appears prepared for an extension of discussions. "In order to preserve its security and development interests, China will conduct the negotiations at its own pace and strive to reach a comprehensive, balanced and ambitious investment agreement with the EU," it said in a statement late Thursday.

"The China-EU investment agreement is aimed at providing more investment opportunities and sound institutional guarantees for the two sides, but to reach it requires joint efforts and to meet each other halfway," it added.

In an interview with Le Monde on Wednesday, France's junior trade minister Franck Riester said Beijing needed to address the issue of forced labor if Paris was to agree to the deal. Human rights organizations have raised concerns about labor practices in Xinjiang where Uighurs and members of other Muslim-minority ethnic groups have reportedly been forced to pick cotton under a coercive state-run scheme. Beijing rejects the accusations.

Other critics of the deal say it might undermine Biden's efforts to mend bridges with European allies, following Donald Trump's divisive tenure. "There is nothing in the agreement that would be at the disadvantage of the US," Wuttke insisted.

But Biden's camp has been nervous about Brussels moving closer to Beijing.

Jake Sullivan, who has been tipped as National Security Advisor, tweeted on Tuesday that: "The Biden-Harris administration would welcome early consultations with our European partners on our common concerns about China's economic practices."

The investment deal aims to create an equal playing field for European businesses in China that have long complained about preferential terms enjoyed by domestic firms.

The treaty will also strengthen intellectual property protections for European companies and ban forced technology transfers. —AFP

France offers fishermen aid after trade deal

PARIS: The French government announced measures to support fishermen and fishmongers, including up to 30,000 euros in individual aid, after the European Union and the UK reached a post-Brexit trade agreement. Access to Britain's rich fishing waters was a major sticking point in the post-Brexit

Japan unveils green growth plan for 2050 carbon-neutral goal

TOKYO: Japan unveiled plans to boost renewable energy, phase out gasoline-powered cars and reduce battery costs as part of a bid to reach an ambitious 2050 carbon-neutral goal.

Prime Minister Yoshihide Suga announced the new 2050 goal in November, significantly moving up Japan's timeline for carbon-neutrality. On Friday, his government laid out for the first time what meeting that target will involve, including setting a provisional goal of generating more than half of the country's electricity from renewable sources by 2050.

"The government's actions on the environment reflect our belief that a significant change of mindset is required and that these are not constraints for growth, rather they are drivers of growth," top



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