

4-day week boosts employee wellbeing



Sixty-one organizations in the UK committed to a 20 percent reduction in working hours for all staff, with no fall in wages, for a six-month period starting in June 2022. The vast majority of companies also retained full-time productivity targets.

Now, results from the world's largest trial of a four-day working week reveal significantly reduced rates of stress and illness in the workforce – with 71 percent of employees self-reporting lower levels of "burnout," and 39 percent saying they were less stressed, compared to the start of the trial, according to SciTech Daily.

There was a 65 percent reduction in sick days, and a 57 percent fall in the number of staff leaving participating companies, compared to the same period the previous year. Company revenue barely changed during the trial period – even increasing marginally by 1.4 percent on average.

In a report of the findings presented to UK lawmakers, some 92 percent of companies that took part in the UK pilot program (56 out of 61) say they intend to continue with the four-day working week, with 18 companies confirming the change as permanent.

Research for the UK trials was conducted by a team of social scientists from the University of Cambridge, working with academics from Boston College in the US and the think tank Autonomy. The trial was organized by 4 Day Week Global in conjunction with the UK's 4 Day Week Campaign.

Companies from across the UK took part, with around 2,900 employees dropping a day of work. Organizations involved in the trial ranged from online retailers and financial service providers to animation studios and a local fish-and-chip shop.

Other industries represented include consultancy, housing, IT, skincare, recruitment, hospitality, marketing, and healthcare.

Researchers surveyed employees throughout the trial to gauge the effects of having an extra day of free time. Self-reported levels of anxiety and fatigue decreased across workforces, while mental and physical health improved.

Two historic accounts of Mid-Sha'ban celebrations



Qahraman-Mirza Salvar,
Ayn al-Saltaneh



Mohammad-Ali Minabi
Bandar-Abbasi,
Sadid al-Saltaneh Kababi

National Desk

EXCLUSIVE

The Eid of Mid-Sha'ban has a special place in Shia Islam and, consequently, Iranian culture. People of Iran decorate their houses, shops, and neighborhoods for the occasion, and invite passersby to a serving of sherbet and confectionaries.

The Mid-Sha'ban celebrations also have a long history in Iran, dating back to the time of the Safavid dynasty. Following you'll find two accounts of such celebrations.

The first one belongs to the Qajar-era diplomat Qahraman-Mirza Salvar, titled Ayn al-Saltaneh, kept journals which later turned into a great asset for any researcher of Iranian history.

On October 4, 1906, he wrote: "It's an auspicious day. Last night, Tehran and Shemiran were drowned out in light. The whole of Iran tries its best for this specific Eid to celebrate. And the whole country is illuminated. Caravanserai – big and small – and the whole of bazaar and the streets are unprecedentedly illuminated. What I mean is, this is a nationwide tradition. Especially last night; inside the mansions of some of the businessmen, in some small caravanserais and on some streets; people were invited and were served with sherbets and pastries. It was an out-and-



ISNA

out glorious ceremony." The second account – which consists of two parts speaking of two different Mid-Sha'ban celebrations – belongs to Mohammad-Ali Minabi Bandar-Abbasi, titled Sadid al-Saltaneh Kababi, who was a late Qajar, early Pahlavi-era poet, author, and historian.

On Tuesday, January 19, 1897, he wrote: "After

lunch, we went to Sadat Akhavi mansion. Sadat Akhavi is a family of several brothers, the eldest of whom is named Seyyed Ali. Each year, they hold a public feast at their mansion for the occasion of the birth of Imam Mahdi (AS) on 14th and 15th of Sha'ban. People from all walks of life go there for a serving of hookah and tea and maybe some pastries.

Some people, after much insistence, accept two silver coins as a token of consecration.

[Later;] Whoever is still present for dinner will be served. All of the great ulema and politicians and businessmen go there for consecration, and everybody, each to the extent of their financial ability, sends a gift for the Sadat. Last year, on this occasion,

the King [Nasser al-Din Shah] had gone there." Thirty-four years later, he wrote: "Today, I was walking past bazaar, and [saw that] most of the shops were decorated in honor of Imam Mahdi (AS) [...] Sadat Akhavi family is a family of Tehran's noblemen who celebrate this Eid every year and go the whole hog. This year is their 49th time."

Japan will 'disappear' without action on births: PM's Aide

Japan will cease to exist if it can't slow a fall in its birth rate that threatens to wreck the social safety net and economy, according to an adviser to Prime Minister Fumio Kishida.

"If we go on like this, the country will disappear," Masako Mori said in an interview in Tokyo after Japan announced on Feb. 28 the number of babies born last year slumped to a record low, Bloomberg reported.

"It's the people who have to live through the process of disappearance who will face enormous harm. It's a terrible disease that will afflict those children," she added.

Last year, about twice as many people died as were born in Japan, with fewer than 800,000 births and



about 1.58 million deaths. An alarmed Kishida has vowed to double spending on children and families in a bid to control the slide, which is progressing even faster than forecast.

The population has fallen to 124.6 million from a peak of just over 128 million reached in 2008, and the pace of decline is increasing. Meanwhile the proportion of people 65 or over rose to more than 29% last year. While South Korea has a lower fertility rate, Japan's population is shrinking faster.

PIC OF THE DAY



REZA ABESH AHMADLOU/IRAN DAILY

People and marketers of the Grand Bazaar of Tabriz are getting ready to celebrate the 15th of Sha'ban which is the birthday of Imam Mahdi, the twelfth and the last Imam of Shia Muslims.

Every year streets and neighborhoods across Iran are illuminated on the 15th of the month of Sha'ban in the lunar calendar. Also, special ceremonies are held in Iran's traditional trading centers. The Grand Bazaar of Tabriz in northwestern Iranian province of East Azarbaijan, which is considered the largest covered bazaar in the world and the oldest bazaar of the Middle East.

United Nations
@UN

Each of us has a role to play in protecting our ecosystems, which all of humanity depends on for survival. Yet, nature is in crisis. Take @UNEP's quiz and see how much you know about nature loss & how it impacts us all.

5:32 PM · Mar 6, 2023 · 17.5K Views



ICRC Syria
@ICRC.sy

One month on the #earthquake in #Syria. Some of what we've done so far with @SYRedCrescent: 57,000 people benefited from health assistance. 6 shelters were provided with clean & safe water. 30,000 people received food and essential items.

4:30 PM · Mar 6, 2023 · 2,929 Views

UNICEF
@UNICEF

"The needs are huge and continued support is vital." One month on from the catastrophic earthquakes in southern Türkiye and Syria, @AdeleKhodr and @AfshanKhan_ reflect on our work for children including water, winter clothes and psychosocial support.

12:53 PM · Mar 6, 2023 · 14.2K Views

