

TUESDAY, JULY 16, 2019

## Business

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# Zain receives M&O Data Center Certification from Uptime Institute

First telecom in Kuwait to receive this prestigious certification



Zain Kuwait's CEO Eaman Al Roudhan with the company's team

**KUWAIT:** Zain, the leading digital service provider in Kuwait, received the M&O (Management and Operation) Data Center Certification by Uptime Institute - the IT industry's most trusted and adopted global standard for the proper design, build and operation of data centers, making it the first telecom operator in Kuwait and the third in the region to receive this prestigious certification.

Zain's certification by one of the world's leading advisory organizations comes to demonstrate the company's leadership and commitment in adopting the highest international standards for its data center, which ultimately reflects on the quality and efficiency of its services targeted at the Enterprise Segment within the Kuwaiti market.

Zain's reception of this certification makes it the first telecom operator in the Kuwaiti market and the third across the region to receive this prestigious certification. This achievement will improve Zain's positioning in the Enterprise Segment by proving that its data center is the most efficient and sustainable in the market. This accomplishment also comes in line with the company's digital transformation strategy that aims at empowering a more efficient business sector.

The M&O (Management and Operation) Data Center Certification - issued by Uptime Institute for over 1000 data centers around the world - certifies that Zain's data center is up to the highest international standards in regards to its service reliability and consistency, as well as its operational

excellence. Zain's data center was evaluated based on a number of standards and criteria, including its reliability as a service, up to date equipment, low risk, low human error, reduced downtime, operational efficiency, and more.

Zain stressed that it follows strict procedures when it comes to implementing international standards within all its operations. In line with maintaining and adapting high international standards, Zain Kuwait also has been awarded with ISO certificates on Quality (9001:2015), Environmental (14001:2015) and Information Security (27001:2013) which ensure that the organization meets the requirements for standardization and quality assurance in those fields.

Receiving such international certifications affirms the company's efforts in imple-

menting effective policies and procedures to ensure its systems and operations are up to the best standards. Zain's commitment in implementing such standards reflects its keenness on offering the most efficient services to the Enterprise Segment as well as continuously developing its services in line with its digital transformation strategy.

Uptime Institute is an unbiased advisory organization focused on improving the performance, efficiency, and reliability of business critical infrastructure through innovation, collaboration, and independent certifications. Uptime Institute serves all stakeholders responsible for IT service availability through industry leading standards, education, peer-to-peer networking, consulting, and award programs delivered to enterprise organizations and third-party

operators, manufacturers, and providers. Uptime Institute is recognized globally for the creation and administration of the Tier Standards & Certifications for Data Center Design, Construction, and Operational Sustainability along with its Management & Operations reviews, FORCSS(r) methodology, accredited training programs and the Efficient IT Stamp of Approval.

Through its globally respected Tier Standards and other program offerings, Uptime Institute have helped enterprise and vendor organizations around the globe build and maintain business-critical infrastructure to optimize performance, reliability, and efficiency. It has awarded over 1000 Tier Certifications in over 80 countries and trained thousands of professionals with its Accredited Tier Training programs.

## China Q2 GDP growth slows to 27-year low as trade war bites

**BEIJING:** China's economic growth slowed to 6.2 percent in the second quarter, its weakest pace in at least 27 years, as demand at home and abroad faltered in the face of mounting US trade pressure. While more upbeat June factory output and retail sales offered signs of improvement, some analysts cautioned the gains may not be sustainable, and expect Beijing will continue to roll out more support measures in coming months.

China's trading partners and financial markets are closely watching the health of the world's second-largest economy as the Sino-US trade war gets longer and costlier, fuelling worries of a global recession.

Yesterday's growth data marked a loss of momentum for the economy from the first quarter's 6.4 percent, adding to expectations that Beijing needs to do more to boost consumption and investment and restore business confidence. The April-June pace, in line with analysts' expectations, was the slowest since the first quarter of 1992, the earliest quarterly data on record.

"China's growth could slow to 6 percent to 6.1 percent in the second half," said Nie Wen, an economist at Hwabao Trust. That would test the lower end of Beijing's 2019 target range of 6-6.5 percent.

Cutting banks' reserve requirement ratios (RRR) "is still very likely as the authorities want to support the real economy in the long run," he said, predicting the economy would continue to slow before stabilizing around mid-2020. China has already slashed RRR six times since early 2018 to free up more funds for lending, and analysts polled by Reuters forecast two more cuts by the end of this year.



BEIJING: Vendors selling fruits wait for customers at a market in Beijing yesterday. — AFP

Beijing has leaned largely on fiscal stimulus to underpin growth this year, announcing massive tax cuts worth nearly 2 trillion yuan (\$291 billion) and a quota of 2.15 trillion yuan for special bond issuance by local governments aimed at boosting infrastructure construction. The economy has been slow to respond, however, and business sentiment remains cautious.

Trade pressures have intensified since Washington sharply raised tariffs on Chinese goods in May. While the two sides have since agreed to resume trade talks and hold off on further punitive action, they remain at odds over significant issues needed for an agreement. US President Donald Trump in a tweet linked China's slowing growth to the US tariffs.

"The United States Tariffs are having a major effect on companies wanting to leave China for non-tariffed countries," Trump wrote. "These Tariffs are paid for by China devaluing & pumping, not by the US taxpayer!" Despite the trade dispute, Chinese net exports accounted for a striking 20.7 percent of the first-half GDP growth, as exporters had rushed to sell ahead of higher US tariffs and imports had weakened more sharply amid sagging domestic demand. — Reuters

## Tech tax set to dominate G7 finance chiefs' meeting

**PARIS:** A row over taxing tech giants is set to dominate a meeting of G7 finance ministers near Paris this week, with the world's leading industrialised nations already riven by disruptive US trade policies.

During the meetings tomorrow and Thursday in Chantilly, ministers are set to discuss making taxation fairer as part of wider plans by G7 leaders to address rising inequality when they gather next month in the southern French city of Biarritz. An international effort to update rules so as to rein in multinationals gaming the system by paying in low-tax rate countries has been plodding along.

But France and Britain gave the process a jolt last week when they moved forward with plans to apply sales taxes to digital giants, mostly American companies. France became the first major economy to impose such a tax when legislators gave their final approval while Britain unveiled legislation. The French measure does not specifically target US internet giants, but it is commonly called the GAFA tax, an acronym for Google, Amazon, Facebook and Apple. French Finance Minister Bruno Le Maire will meet separately with his US counterpart Steven Mnuchin, with the tax measure expected to feature prominently in their discussions.

### 21st century tax rules

Even before the final vote by French lawmakers, the US announced it was opening a so-called Section 301 investigation into the measure. A Section 301 investigation was used by the Trump administration to justify tariffs on China. Washington and Beijing have lashed out at

each other with punitive tariffs on about \$360 billion in goods in a trade dispute that has roiled global financial markets and undermined business confidence. "We will urge Mnuchin to accelerate efforts to define tax rules for the 21st century rather than threaten us with Section 301, sanctions, retaliatory measures, which aren't really the best actions for allies to use on one another," a French government official told AFP on condition of anonymity.

"We need 21st century tax rules for a 21st century economy," said the official. French and British officials have indicated their preference for an overarching deal, which is being negotiated via the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) and the G20, and they would abandon tech taxes if an agreement is reached.

The French government official said the US supports the tax reform effort, but played down the possibility of a breakthrough, such as an agreement on a minimum tax rate, one way to discourage so-called tax optimization by firms. "It won't be possible to set a rate at this meeting," said the official. "It's premature. We need to get agreement on the principle first."

### Libra not liked

A number of other thorny issues await ministers, including plans by Facebook to launch a virtual currency called Libra, which has stoked concerns by regulators in numerous countries about regulation and market oversight. "We'll reiterate our intention not to allow a private company to acquire the elements of monetary sovereignty," said the French official. Le Maire has publicly voiced his concerns about Libra, a virtual currency to be backed with a basket of real-world currencies that Facebook says will facilitate online financial transactions. The ministers are also expected to discuss who will take over at the International Monetary Fund after Frenchwoman Christine Lagarde was named to head the European Central Bank. The IMF post has traditionally been held by a European. — AFP