

## Business

# Digital transformation is not a choice but a must: Al-Roshood

## KFH is a success partner with SMEs and entrepreneurs

**KUWAIT:** In an interview with Entrepreneur Magazine, Abdulwahab Al-Roshood, Acting Group Chief Executive Officer at KFH said that since 1980s KFH has been a pioneer in supporting the youth and the small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). He added that KFH is a success partner with SMEs and entrepreneurs, where several companies started their relationship with KFH with a credit facility of KD50k, and now the credit facility surged to reach KD3mn. This underlines the significant role of KFH in improving these businesses and transforming them into larger companies.

Al-Roshood said "the SMEs unit in KFH serves the needs of SMEs and Micro business and provides more attention, assistance, and financial consultation for the SMEs. This comes in line with KFH's social responsibility and the stimulus plan that CBK launched in 2020 where SMEs was a main league among the segments. In respect of opportunities and trends, industries are expected to rise in the months ahead, something which Kuwaiti entrepreneurs should take advantage of. Al-Roshood said that technology has short- and long-term positive outlook; however, he advised entrepreneurs to

consider the fast changes happening in this specific sector.

Meanwhile, Al-Roshood indicated that as entrepreneurs face unprecedented challenges, patience, agility and ability to adopt to change are important qualities they should have, in addition to proper management of cash flows, capital raising, good marketing and communication strategies and learning from competitors.

He added that entrepreneurs should also have clear visions while realizing the importance of perseverance, initiative, and responsiveness, and most importantly they should have strong belief and confidence in themselves.

### Advice to entrepreneurs

Al-Roshood said that Kuwait and the banking sector have always been supportive to entrepreneurs and the SMEs sector, as this segment plays an instrumental role in boosting the economy and paving the way to larger projects and more advanced and innovative businesses, while creating jobs for the youth and achieving prosperity and development. He advised entrepreneurs to remain in customers minds as the preferable choice,



Abdulwahab Al-Roshood

and to protect assets, secure smart financing with proper budgeting and consider digital transformation through innovation, readiness and agility.

### Lessons learned

Al-Roshood said that despite the ravages of the COVID-19 pandemic, 2020 has taught us great lessons about the importance of adapting to change, coping with crisis, having different attitudes to risk and redesign priorities. Most importantly, it taught us that digital transformation is not a choice, but a must. "We learned that what matters most for businesses is to offer customers uninterrupted services under all circumstances. This is possible through having a stronger digital presence with adaptive systems and multiple channels both physical and virtual, along with rigid controls

to defend the interests of both customers and shareholders," He added.

Al-Roshood emphasized the role of KFH in supporting SMEs, saying that it is one of the main sectors that are targeted to receive support from the government, and subsequently from the banks, to achieve Kuwait 2035 vision. He added that KFH is considered the first bank in Kuwait to designate a financing department for SMEs sector.

Al-Roshood said that the growth of SMEs segment was going in acceptable direction, however, during 2020, SMEs sector has faced a huge challenge due to COVID-19 pandemic as it is considered the most affected sector by economic instability due to its size, structure and nature.

He pointed out that KFH was considerate towards the situation and circumstances of the SMEs which were hit by the COVID-19 pandemic and its economic repercussions. KFH worked closely with the SMEs sector and provided them with varied and flexible solutions through restructuring and deferring debts until they recovered and resumed business activity.



## Incheon Airport Services obtains ISO certificates

**KUWAIT:** The New Chief Executive Jung June Ahn of Incheon Korea for Airport Services in a statement to the newspaper or media announced they obtained the ISO (9001:2015) certificate in the quality management system, the ISO (14001:2015) certificate in the envi-

ronmental management system, and the ISO (10002:2018) certificate in the customer satisfaction system in quality management to deal with complaints in institutions, from Royalcert, Germany.

After the auditing all of Incheon Korea for Airport Services' technical and administrative departments, the standards fulfilled the requirements for quality management system and excellent in their service. The ISO certificate in quality system management contributes to achieving an internationally acclaimed standard in their administrative processes. These standards will boost both citizens and passengers' confidence in Terminal 4, a very important gateway between Kuwait and the world.

## India Pavilion at Expo 2020 Dubai to showcase resurgent India

**DUBAI:** The India Pavilion in Expo 2020 Dubai starting October 1 is set to showcase a resurgent India's march to becoming a \$5 trillion economy in the post-COVID world. The Pavilion which is a technology marvel will not only capture the vibrant Indian culture and its past but also the capabilities and opportunities that it presents as a global economic hub to the domestic as well as the foreign investors.

Outlining the overarching theme of India's participation at the six-month Expo 2020 Dubai running up to March 2022, B V R Subrahmanyam, Secretary, Ministry of Commerce and Industry, government of India said that: "India Pavilion at Expo 2020 Dubai will showcase resurgent India's march to becoming a \$5 trillion economy. India's exceptional fightback against COVID-19 and the country's emergence as a global business hub presenting huge opportunities for the world will be the overarching theme of India's participation at Expo 2020 Dubai."

The India pavilion will see participation from number of Indian states who will be displaying their culture, tradition and tremendous business opportunities along with the top corporate groups from India, and the public sector companies. Large number of prominent government ministers, officials, celebrities are set to visit India pavilion during the six months of Expo 2020, which will also host number of cultural events.

Subrahmanyam said, "At Expo 2020 Dubai, the India Pavilion is ready to showcase the face of an India rising on the pillar of sustainability along with opportunity and mobility - a nation ready to lead the world's future." The Pavilion will exhibit the country's cultural diversity, ancient treasures, achievements, and leading opportunities with cutting-edge technologies. One of the largest pavilions at the Expo 2020 Dubai, India Pavilion will feature an innovative kinetic facade made up of 600 individual colorful blocks. It is developed as a mosaic of rotating panels that will depict different themes as they rotate on their axis. It represents the theme of 'India on the move' and is a unique amalgam of the rich heritage and technological advances of the nation.

As India celebrates 75 years of its independence, the India Pavilion will mirror the celebrations of Amrit Mahotsav, which was launched by the Prime Minister of India and will bring to the world the New India through many activities and cultural extravaganzas.

The entire four-storey structure is divided into two parts. The zones are identified based on 11 primary themes - Climate and Biodiversity, Space, Urban and Rural Development, Tolerance and Inclusivity, Golden Jubilee, Knowledge and Learning, Travel and Connectivity, Global Goals, Health and Wellness, Food

Agriculture and Livelihoods and Water.

The India Pavilion will also be hosting and co-creating leadership discussions, international trade conferences, and seminars to explore opportunities to partner with other participating nations.

At the India Pavilion, the visitors will also get the chance to witness star-studded nights, multiple cultural shows, Indian festivals celebration and relish the Indian delicacies. The specially designed logo of India's participation has been created to give a new holistic global brand experience to India's participation at Expo 2020 Dubai. The logo's circular form represents unity, commitment and the community which forms the central pillars of India; and signifies continuity and evolving lifecycles in one of the world's most vibrant democracies and fastest-growing business centers.

The logo design showcases the chakra (wheel), which reflects strength, courage and progressive movement. The colors have been taken from the Indian flag, where Saffron symbolizes strength and courage; White indicates peace and truth; and Green represents fertility, growth, and auspiciousness.

It will be used in all the official communications and stationery during Expo 2020 Dubai.

## Burgan Bank announces winner of Al-Thuraya Salary Account draw

**KUWAIT:** Burgan Bank, announced yesterday Mohammed Mohammed Al-Feqi as the lucky winner of the draw prize of Al-Thuraya Salary Account monthly draw. The draw rewards new and existing customers who transfer their salary to Burgan Bank by offering them a chance to win KD 10,000 every month. Each account holder has one chance to enter the draw.

The Al-Thuraya account holders have the option to hold money in Kuwaiti Dinar and other major currencies and can access account-related services such as standing orders, loans and credit cards, and benefit from the discounts and offers throughout the year.

## Gulf Bank announces 10 winners of Al-Danah monthly draw for Aug

**KUWAIT:** Gulf Bank held its monthly Al-Danah draw on Sunday, to announce the winners for August. The 10 lucky winners received cash prizes of KD 1,000 each. The winners are:

Omar Ashraf Ismail Morsy Gomaa  
Hasan Ali Makki Jawad  
Samera Tahir Mohammed Hasan Alattar  
Ehsan Younes Alasemi  
Mahde Zuber Jawad Reda/minor  
Chan Soo Kim  
Huda Mustafa Wazzan  
Saad Jassim Eyadah Sulaiman  
Hameeda Sayed Taama Zadah  
Kholoud Waleed Khaled Zi-Zahar

The Al-Danah account is one of the most rewarding savings accounts in Kuwait, with its periodic draws that award valuable prizes and multiple benefits for account holders. Gulf Bank's Al-Danah account offers monthly opportunities to win KD 1,000 to ten lucky winners, in addition to two quarterly draws with KD 100,000 prizes each, a semi-annual draw prize of KD 1,000,000 and a grand draw prize of KD 1,500,000.

### Numerous benefits

The Al-Danah account is the only account that

rewards customers for their loyalty by providing loyalty chances. Loyalty chances are the total chances gained in the previous year, which are then transferred to the current year to reward customers for their loyalty to the Bank.

Accordingly, all chances gained by existing Al-Danah customers in 2020 (from January 1 to December 31, 2020) have been transferred to the 2021 draws. It is also worth noting that all account draws are attended by a representative from the Ministry of Commerce and Industry, with the quarterly and annual draws also reviewed by Ernst & Young.

### Annual grand prize

To increase their chances of winning, account holders must either keep their account with a minimum deposit amount of KD 200, or increase their Al-Danah savings - the more deposits into an account, the more chances accumulated over time. Gulf Bank's Al-Danah account holders also have the opportunity to enter and win cash prizes all year long through monthly, quarterly and annual draws.

### Opening an Al-Danah Account

To enter the upcoming draws, Gulf Bank customers can open an Al-Danah account today with only KD 200. To open an Al-Danah account, existing Gulf Bank customers can apply through Gulf Bank's online and mobile banking services, or book an appointment at their nearest branch by using the new "Visit Gulf Bank" app for a faster and more convenient branch visit. New customers can also open an Al-Danah account by visiting their nearest Gulf Bank branch or by scheduling an appointment through the app.



AMSTERDAM: Europe's leading banks each year book 20 billion euros (\$24 billion), or 14 percent of their total profits, in 17 territories with particularly favorable tax regimes, said a report by the EU Tax Observatory.

## European banks active in tax havens despite scandals

**BRUSSELS:** European banks have not reduced their presence in tax havens, despite several scandals that have revealed the dubious practices multinationals use to avoid taxes, according to a study published yesterday. Europe's leading banks each year book 20 billion euros (\$24 billion), or 14 percent of their total profits, in 17 territories with particularly favorable tax regimes, said a report by the EU Tax Observatory, which is housed at the Paris School of Economics.

That percentage has remained stable since 2014 when a wave of revelations, such as Lux Leaks and Panama Papers, exposed the tax practices used by companies and high-wealth individuals to avoid tax.

"Despite the growing importance of these issues in the public debate and in the political world, European banks have not significantly reduced their use of tax havens," the report said. The Observatory, which is headed by Berkeley University professor and tax expert Gabriel Zucman, reviewed data published by 36 financial institutions over the 2014-2020 period, with a special focus on big banks HSBC, Deutsche Bank, and Societe Generale.

"We observe a diversity of situations: for HSBC, the bulk of haven profits come from just one haven (Hong Kong), while in other cases multiple tax havens are involved," it said.

### Hong Kong banks

HSBC was tipped as a leader of these practices with more than 62 percent of its pre-tax profits booked in tax havens between 2018 and 2020, com-

pared to 49.8 percent for Italy's Monte dei Paschi, which came in second place. Standard Chartered rounded out the podium. To be sure, both HSBC and Standard Chartered are while domiciled in London-leading Hong Kong retail and commercial banks. HSBC derives the vast majority of its profit in Asia, with China and Hong Kong the major drivers.

Hong Kong, a major global financial center with a 16.5 percent corporate tax rate, is also where Standard Chartered's biggest business is. "We are a global business and have substantial commercial operations in both high tax and low tax jurisdictions," the bank said in an emailed response to AFP's inquiries. "We do not artificially divert profits to low tax jurisdictions," it said, adding: "We only engage in tax planning that supports a genuine commercial activity."

Germany's Deutsche Bank and NordLB come in fourth and fifth. The report identifies 17 states and territories as preferred destinations, including the Bahamas, the British Virgin Islands, the Cayman Islands, Jersey and Guernsey, Gibraltar, Hong Kong, Macau, Panama and the EU member states of Malta and Luxembourg. "Profits booked by banks in tax havens are abnormally high: 238,000 euros per employee, as opposed to around 65,000 euros in non-haven countries," the report said.

"This suggests that the profits booked in tax havens are primarily shifted out of other countries where service production occurs," it added.

Expectations have been high for financial institutions to change their practices in the wake of a series of international financial scandals revealed in the major investigations that became known in the press as Lux Leaks and the Panama Papers. The study landed as countries are the final stretch of negotiating an international framework for the taxation of multinationals, which is backed by the G20 and the OECD. The plan would introduce a tax floor of 15 percent on the profits of the largest international firms, though the financial sector could be excluded in the final compromise. —AFP