

S&P GCC Composite Index edges up by 1.37% during November

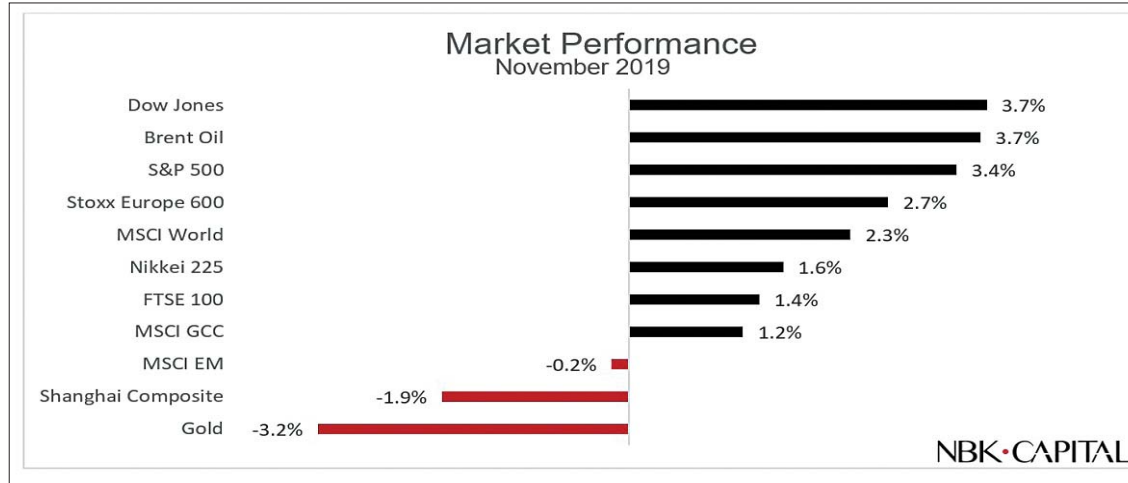
# Boursa Kuwait the best performing Gulf markets in 2019

Report prepared by NBK Capital

The GCC markets showed some strength in November after four months of weak and negative performance. The S&P GCC Composite Index edged up by 1.37% during the month supported by a strong performance in Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, and Oman. The Index' performance since the beginning of the year is now 1.87% but still negative at 1.33% for the fourth quarter.

Leading the GCC markets upwards was Kuwait with the All Share Index up 3.69% and the Premier Market Index up 4.96%. Kuwait's Indices are up 16.7% and 23.8% on a year to date basis as at the end of November respectively, making Kuwait the best GCC performer this year. The Saudi Tadawul All Share index added 1.48% returning marginally to positive territory for the year at 0.41%. The Omani market, on the other hand, came in third in term of performance with a gain of 1.61% narrowing its loss for the year to 6.0%. On the negative side, both UAE equity markets closed in the red, with Dubai's DFM General Index down 2.48% and Abu Dhabi's ADX General Index down 1.51%. The wider S&P Pan Arab index slightly underperformed its GCC counterpart with a gain of 1.11% weighted down by a 4.87% decline in Egypt's EGX 30.

After a strong performance in October, Emerging markets generally underperformed in November dragged by



the weak performance of Asian markets. The MSCI EM was down -0.19% for the month sending its year-to-date performance down to 7.7%. The MSCI Asia-ex-Japan added a marginal 0.19% as the Shanghai Composite lost 1.95%. Elsewhere, notable emerging markets gainers included Turkey's Borsa Istanbul 100 Index which added 8.57% in November, increasing its year-to-date performance to 17.13%. Russia Stock Exchange added 1.43% for the month, while India's Nifty 50 and Taiwan Stock Exchange increased by 1.50% and 1.15% respectively.

Cautious optimism regarding a successful conclusion of a phase one trade deal between China and the US pro-

vided support for global markets during November. An agreement, however, that was initially expected to be signed by end of November may not take place until the new year as some sticky remain to be resolved as China seems to be demanding a rollback of existing tariffs on Chinese goods, and not only planned ones, to be part of a phase one deal. In the meantime, a more reassuring view of the economy in the United States boosted the US markets which led the performance of global markets during the month. The MSCI AC World Index added 2.30% in November pushing its year-to-date performance to 20%. The index' performance was clearly driven by the

US markets as the MSCI EAFE Index, which represents the performance of developed markets outside the US and Canada, underperformed adding 0.97% for the month resulting in a year-to-date return of 14.8%.

In the US, third quarter GDP was revised upward to 2.1% from a previous estimate of 1.9% and compared to a second quarter growth of 2.0%. This alleviated recession fears and helped prop up the markets. Inflation stayed subdued with the revised numbers of Core Personal Consumption Expenditures (PCE) for the third quarter coming in at 2.1% compared to an initial estimate of 2.2% and a Q2 figure of 1.9%. Industrial activity, on the other

hand, remained weak with the ISM Manufacturing PMI coming in at 48.1 in November down from 48.3 in October and undershooting expectations of 49.2.

In the meantime, US Indices continued to lead international markets and record new highs. The S&P 500 added 3.40% during November, while the Dow Jones Industrial Average (DJIA) outperformed with a gain of 3.72%. The tech-heavy Nasdaq, on the other hand, recorded a gain of 4.50%. With one month left to the end of the year, all major indices are on track to close at record levels. The Nasdaq Composite tops the list with a 30.6% gain since the beginning of the year. It is followed by the S&P 500 with a gain of 25.3% and the DJIA with 20.3%. Yields on the 10-year treasury regained some ground advancing to 1.78% at the end of November from a closing of 1.69% in October after reaching an intra-day high of 1.97% during the month. The 2-year yield, on the other hand, advanced to 1.61% at the end of the month up from 1.52% at the end of October.

In Europe, GDP figures for the third quarter were revised up marginally to 1.2%, unchanged from the second quarter. Inflation remained stable in November with the core Consumer Price Index (CPI) unchanged at 1.1%. Manufacturing activity edged marginally higher as the Markit Manufacturing PMI increased to 46.6 in November from a revised reading of 45.9 in

October. German economic indicators, although still weak, seem to be ticking marginally to the upside. Preliminary German GDP for the third quarter showed a significant improvement growing at 1.0% year-on-year up from a revised -0.1% in the second quarter. Markit's Manufacturing PMI also showed an increase to 44.1 in November from a revised 42.1 for the previous month, while the unemployment rate remained unchanged at 5%.

Against this backdrop, European markets fared well during the month, although underperforming their US peers. The Stoxx Europe 600 managed a gain 2.69% in November for a year-to-date gain of 20.67%. The German DAX and French CAC40 added 2.87% and 3.06% for the month. So far this year, the indices of the two major European economies added 25.36% and 24.83% respectively.

After a sizable decline of 2.16% in October, the UK's FTSE 100 managed to end the month of November in the green increasing by 1.35% and accumulating a gain of 9.2% for the year. Manufacturing activity remains weak with the Markit Manufacturing PMI coming in at 48.9 beating consensus estimates of 48.3 but below the previous month's reading of 49.6. Inflation, on the other hand, weakened in October as headline CPI numbers declined to 1.5% year-on-year for October from 1.7% for the previous month, while the Core measure of CPI remained stable at 1.7% over the same period.

Part of Private Banking & Priority Banking experience

## Gulf Bank offers exclusive services for its Wealth Management clients

KUWAIT CITY, Dec 8: As part of its continuous efforts to maximize customer satisfaction and highlight exclusive service offerings, Gulf Bank is offering new services to its Wealth Management clients. Gulf Bank's Private and Priority Banking clients can now benefit from additional services designed to add even more ease and comfort to their daily banking transactions.

Wealth Management services are available to Gulf Bank's Priority Banking clients, offering them access to a suite of banking and investment products and services designed to meet their daily banking needs. As a part of the Priority Banking experience, Gulf Bank assigns clients experienced and dedicated Relationship Managers, who take the time to understand their clients' financial needs and manage all their banking requirements. Relationship Managers also offer clients banking and investment solutions with the aim of protecting and growing their wealth.

Gulf Bank Priority Banking is available at select branches in Fahad Al-Salem, Mubarak Al Kaber (Head Office), Jabriya, Audailiya, Shaab, Fahaeel, Sharq, Mansouriya, Salmiya Main, Dahiyat Abdullah Al Salem, Bayan, Mishref, Hawalli, Shuwaikh Main, Ghazali, Farwaniya, Adan, Ahmadi, Daiya, and Jahra. Alternatively, clients also have the option of scheduling a meeting with their Gulf Bank Relationship Manager at home or at the office. Priority Banking services are available to customers with an account balance of KD 50,000 up to KD 500,000 in cash or investable assets, or a monthly salary transfer of KD 3,500 and more.

Wealth Management services are also available for Gulf Bank's Private Banking clients, who are assigned dedicated and highly experienced Private Bankers. Private Bankers understand their clients' individual financial needs, providing them with tailored solutions designed to preserve and grow their clients' wealth, while identifying unique investment opportunities that are in line with their clients' financial ambitions.

As a part of the Private Banking experience, clients also have the option of meeting with their Private Banker at home or at the office for added convenience. Gulf Bank's dedicated Private Banking branches are available at Nuzha, Mubarak Al Kaber (Head Office) Dahiyat Abdullah Al-Salem, Adailiya, and Jabriya. Gulf Bank Private Banking is available to clients with an account balance of KD 500,000 or more in cash or investable assets.

Commenting on Gulf Bank's Wealth Management services, Ahmad Al-Amir, Assistant General Manager of External Communications at Gulf Bank, said: "At Gulf Bank, we are constantly striving to create new levels of comfort and



Zain and CODED officials with the Hackathon participants

## Zain Strategic Partner of 'CODED' Hackathon

KUWAIT CITY, Dec 8: Zain, the leading digital service provider in Kuwait, concluded its Strategic Partnership of the CODED Hackathon, a 24-hour coding challenge that aimed at boosting participants' coding skills in a unique academic and social setting.

Zain's extended Strategic Partnership with CODED comes in line with its Corporate Sustainability strategy towards the Education sector, through which the company is keen on contributing to the development and advancement of the tech innovation ecosystem within all age groups to boost their coding and technology skills, as such skills are essential for the modern digital world.

Zain took part in awarding the winners of the CODED Hackathon, which mainly aimed at offering a competitive social environment for the participants throughout 24 continuous hours. The participants had to design innovative solutions to coding challenges within a limited time frame and with limited resources at hand, which boosted their teamwork, problem-solving, leadership and coding skills.

In July, Zain strategically partnered with the CODED Fresh Grad Boot Camp, which aimed at training fresh university graduates on 7 essential programming languages to make them job ready as programmers and developers. 20 graduates were selected from over 560 applicants from across various universities, and they spent 12 intensive weeks of seminars and workshops supervised by CODED's team.

Through supporting this unique convenience for our customers' daily banking transactions. This is especially true for our Wealth Management clients, who often have unique banking and investment needs that require tailor-made services and solutions. We are now working to introduce even more services designed to enhance and facilitate our Wealth Management clients' banking experience, which we will announce soon."

Wealth Management clients receive several benefits, including a debit card that allows: access to airport lounges, offers discounts when booking tickets and hotels from cleartrip.com, offers discounts when using the Careem transportation service, and offers a more secure online shopping experience designed to protect cardholders' online purchases

from fraud. Clients are also eligible to apply for a Gulf Bank credit cards (Visa Infinite or World Mastercard), granting them a host of benefits including: comprehensive accident and travel insurance, complimentary access to airport lounges worldwide, discounts at over 200 restaurants globally as part of the Dine & Fly service, a global concierge service, a car rental service, access to the Gulf Points program.

To learn more about Gulf Bank's Wealth Management services, customers can visit one of Gulf Bank's 58 branches or log on to www.gulfbank.com. Customers can also contact the Customer Contact Center by calling 1805805 or direct their queries through the WhatsApp service on 65805805 for assistance and guidance.



Ahmad Al-Amir

# ABK-Egypt net operating profit rises 32 pct for 9M

Net interest income climbs 35% to EGP 1.02bn

KUWAIT CITY, Dec 8: Al Ahli Bank of Kuwait - Egypt (ABK-Egypt), one of Egypt's fastest growing banks, maintained its positive momentum in the first nine months of 2019, with Net Operating Profit advancing 32% from the same period a year earlier to reach EGP 712 million. Net interest income climbed 35% to EGP 1.02 billion, while customer deposits grew 18% to reach EGP 28.41 billion.

Total assets also increased 18% in the period, exceeding EGP 33 billion, while the bank's gross loan portfolio grew 21% to over EGP 19 billion.

Ali Ibrahim Marafi, Chairman of ABK Egypt said: "ABK-Egypt continues to go from strength to strength, as we expand our footprint in the Egyptian market, and deliver on our promise of providing a 'Simpler Banking' experi-



Ali Marafi, Chairman of ABK-Egypt.



Khaled El-Salawy, CEO and Managing Director.

ence to our customers. Our capital base remains robust, and we continue to bring innovative offerings to the market, so we are well positioned to continue this upward momentum."

Khaled El Salawy, CEO & Managing Director said: "These positive results are a reflection of the effort and commitment of ABK-Egypt team to deliver superior experiences to our customers, and the strength and agility of our leadership team to drive our business strategy. We will continue our focus on training and empowering our human capital to help drive further

growth while ensuring service excellence. Moving forward, we will introduce more innovative digital offerings that meet our customers' ever-evolving needs."

ABK-Egypt was recently named "Most Innovative Bank - Egypt" by The European magazine in its Global Business Awards, which recognize excellence in the global banking and finance community. It was also recognised as "Fastest Growing Bank in Egypt" by International Finance Magazine, reflecting the Bank's strong performance since entering the Egyptian market.



Photo from the ASMEK press conference held at VIVA's headquarters.

## VIVA main sponsor of B2B 4 SME forum for 2nd year in a row

VIVA, a world-class digital leader providing innovative services and platforms to customers and enabling the digital transformation in Kuwait, and a subsidiary of STC Group, announced its main sponsorship of the B2B 4 SME forum for the second year in a row, that will take place on Monday, December 9th at Al-Shaheed Park 2 (new extension) from 10 am to 10 pm. A press conference was held at VIVA's headquarters on the occasion, organized by the Association of Small and Medium enterprise of Kuwait (ASMEK), in the presence of VIVA's management where Ahmed Al-Nowait from the Corporate Communications

team represented VIVA on the panel. VIVA will participate in this event through a special booth for VIVA business to showcase the latest enterprise solutions for SMEs, including technical, voice and digital solutions, which help them grow and develop their projects and businesses and facilitate their transactions.

Danah Faisal AlJasem, General Manager of Corporate Communications at VIVA commented: "Our sponsorship of this event is part of the Corporate Social Responsibility agenda at VIVA that strives to support different initiatives in the fields of health, education, sports, environment and

entrepreneurship. We are always eager to support the SMEs who are the building blocks of the future through advanced corporate solutions that contribute to the development of their business."

This event is the first of its kind at a regional level, aiming to create a platform for interaction and highlighting the commercial exchange between owners of the SMEs and leading companies in the private sector, and the SMEs amongst themselves, which is a main factor that is bridging both parties and encouraging them to exchange knowledge and provide best offers to the project owners.

## Gulf Insurance Group sponsors the 'New Kuwait Summit 2019'

KUWAIT CITY, Dec 8: Gulf Insurance Group, one of the leading insurance service provider in the Middle East and North Africa region, a subsidiary of Kuwait Projects Company (Holding) KIPCO proudly took the opportunity in becoming the Diamond Sponsor of the New Kuwait Summit 2019. The event, held under the auspices of HH the Prime Minister Sheikh Sabah Al Khaled Al Sabah, will take place on Dec 10-11.

The New Kuwait Summit 2019 will deliver Kuwait with a global platform and window to the world with which to attract insightful debate and information into the seven pillars identified by the Kuwait National Development Plan (KNDP): Global Position, Human

Capital, Public Administration, Infrastructure, Healthcare, Economy and Living Environment.

Khaled Saoud Al Hasan, GIG Group CEO, said: "Gulf Insurance Group is proud to be taking part at this event as it is for the benefit of our Kuwait's future generations. We are eager to come together at the New Kuwait Summit to help achieve goals and objectives for our country's benefit. The Government along with the private sector have the opportunity to network, engage and create partnerships, to help move Kuwait forward towards recognizing its potential. GIG as a private sector helps lead the economy, creating competition and promoting production efficiency."



Khaled Al Hasan, GIG Group CEO