

Prayer Timings

Fajr	04:37	Asr	14:42
Sunrise ..	05:57	Maghrib ..	17:07
Zohr	11:32	Isha	18:24

Local

VACCINE REGISTRATION WEBSITE: https://cov19vaccine.moh.gov.kw/SPCMS/CVD_19_Vaccine_Registration.aspx

Facebook

Continued from Page 2

Facebook said in a statement that it fields takedown requests from governments no differently from those from rights organizations or community members, although it may restrict access to content based on local laws.

"Any suggestion that we remove content solely under pressure from the Israeli government is completely inaccurate," it said.

Syrian journalists and activists reporting on the country's opposition also have complained of censorship, with electronic armies supporting embattled President Bashar Assad aggressively flagging dissident content for removal.

Raed, a former reporter at the Aleppo Media Center, a group of antigovernment activists and citizen journalists in Syria, said Facebook erased most of his documentation of Syrian government shelling on neighborhoods and hospitals, citing graphic content.

"Facebook always tells us we break the rules, but no one tells us what the rules are," he added, giving only his first name for fear of reprisals.

In Afghanistan, many users literally cannot understand Facebook's rules. According to an internal report in January, Facebook did not translate the site's hate speech and misinformation pages into Dari and Pashto, the two most common languages in Afghanistan, where English is not widely understood.

When Afghan users try to flag posts as hate speech, the drop-down menus appear only in English. So does the Community Standards page. The site also doesn't have a bank of hate speech terms, slurs and code words in Afghanistan used to moderate Dari and Pashto content, as is typical elsewhere. Without this local word bank, Facebook can't build the automated filters that catch the worst violations in the country.

When it came to looking into the abuse of domestic workers in the Middle East, internal Facebook documents acknowledged that engineers primarily focused on posts and messages written in English. The flagged-words list did not include Tagalog, the major language of the Philippines, where many of the region's housemaids and other domestic workers come from.

In much of the Arab world, the opposite is true - the company over-relies on artificial-intelligence filters that make mistakes, leading to "a lot of false positives and a media backlash," one document reads. Largely unskilled human moderators, in over their heads, tend to passively field takedown requests instead of screening proactively.

Sophie Zhang, a former Facebook employee-turned-whistleblower who worked at the company for nearly three years before being fired last year, said contractors in Facebook's Ireland office complained to her they had to depend on Google Translate because the company did not assign them content based on what languages they knew.

Facebook outsources most content moderation to giant companies that enlist workers far afield, from Casablanca, Morocco, to Essen, Germany. The firms don't sponsor work visas for the Arabic teams, limiting the pool to local hires in precarious conditions - mostly Moroccans who seem to have overstated their linguistic capabilities. They often get lost in the translation of Arabic's 30-odd dialects, flagging inoffensive Arabic posts as terrorist content 77% of the time, one document said.

"These reps should not be fielding content from non-Maghreb region, however right now it is commonplace," another document reads, referring to the region of North Africa that includes Morocco. The file goes on to say that the Casablanca office falsely claimed in a survey it could handle "every dialect" of Arabic. But in one case, reviewers incorrectly flagged a set of Egyptian dialect content 90% of the time, a report said.

Iraq ranks highest in the region for its reported volume of hate speech on Facebook. But among reviewers, knowledge of Iraqi dialect is "close to non-existent," one document said.

"Journalists are trying to expose human rights abuses, but we just get banned," said one Baghdad-based press freedom activist, who spoke on condition of anonymity for fear of reprisals. "We understand Facebook tries to limit the influence of militias, but it's not working."

Linguists described Facebook's system as flawed for a region with a vast diversity of colloquial dialects that Arabic speakers transcribe in different ways.

"The stereotype that Arabic is one entity is a major problem," said Enam al-Wer, professor of Arabic linguistics at the University of Essex, citing the language's "huge variations" not only between countries but class, gender, religion and ethnicity.

Despite these problems, moderators are on the front lines of what makes Facebook a powerful arbiter of political expression in a tumultuous region.

Although the documents from Haugen predate this year's Gaza war, episodes from that 11-day conflict show how little has been done to address the problems flagged in Facebook's own internal reports.

Activists in Gaza and the West Bank lost their ability to livestream. Whole archives of the conflict vanished from newsfeeds, a primary portal of information for many users. Influencers accustomed to tens of thousands of likes on their posts saw their outreach plummet when they posted about Palestinians.

"This has restrained me and prevented me from feeling free to publish what I want for fear of losing my account," said Soliman Hijji, a Gaza-based journalist whose aerials of the Mediterranean Sea garnered tens of thousands more views than his images of Israeli bombs - a common phenomenon when photos are flagged for violating community standards.

During the war, Palestinian advocates submitted hundreds of complaints to Facebook, often leading the company to concede error and reinstate posts and accounts.

In the internal documents, Facebook reported it had erred in nearly half of all Arabic language takedown requests submitted for appeal.

"The repetition of false positives creates a huge drain of resources," it said.

In announcing the reversal of one such Palestinian post removal last month, Facebook's semi-independent oversight board urged an impartial investigation into the company's Arabic and Hebrew content moderation. It called for improvement in its broad terrorism blacklist to "increase understanding of the exceptions for neutral discussion, condemnation and news reporting," according to the board's policy advisory statement.

Facebook's internal documents also stressed the need to "enhance" algorithms, enlist more Arab moderators from less-represented countries and restrict them to where they have appropriate dialect expertise.

"With the size of the Arabic user base and potential severity of offline harm ... it is surely of the highest importance to put more resources to the task to improving Arabic systems," said the report.

But the company also lamented that "there is not one clear mitigation strategy."

Meanwhile, many across the Middle East worry the stakes of Facebook's failings are exceptionally high, with potential to widen long-standing inequality, chill civic activism and stoke violence in the region.

"We told Facebook: Do you want people to convey their experiences on social platforms, or do you want to shut them down?" said Husam Zomlot, the Palestinian envoy to the United Kingdom, who recently discussed Arabic content suppression with Facebook officials in London. "If you take away people's voices, the alternatives will be uglier." (AP)

Weather

Expected weather for the next 24 hours:

By Day: Rather hot and clouds will increase gradually with light variable wind to light to moderate south easterly wind later on with speeds of 08-30 km/h.

By Night: Fair and partly

cloudy with light variable wind to light to moderate south easterly wind with speeds of 06-30 km/h with a chance for scattered light rain with a chance for mist forming over some areas.

Station Max Exp Min Rec
Kuwait City 32 23

Kuwait Airport	33	16
Abdaly	34	17
Jahra	35	19
Salimiyah	28	25
Ahmadi	29	24
Wafra	33	15
Salmya	33	16
Jal Aliyah	33	18

Humansoft Holding sprints 20 fils, Zain slips

Kuwait index edges up, volume hits year's top mark

By John Mathews
Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 26: Kuwait plodded higher on Tuesday as it resumed its ascent following last session's downtick. The All Shares Index rose 6.26 points to 6,999.16 pts paced by some of the heavyweights and mid-caps even as broader sentiment remained mixed.

The Premier Market edged 3.76 points to 7,561.82 pts taking the month's gains to 12.21 pts. The BK Main 50 climbed 18.08 pts to 6,091.84 points. The volume turnover meanwhile soared past the 742 million market to hit year's highest mark. Over 742 million shares changed hands - a 41 pct surge from the day before.

The sectors closed mostly in green turf. Technology outshone the rest with 3.09 percent gain whereas Consumer Services shed 0.53 pct, the worst performer of the day. Volume wise, Real Estate topped with 256 million shares while Banking sector dominated in value with KD 73.13 million.

In the individual shares, Gulf Bank rallied 5 fils to 244 fils on back of 35.4 million shares while Boubyan Bank scaled 6 fils to close at 780 fils. Humansoft Holding sprinted 20 fils to KD 3.349 extending Monday's gains. Sultan Centre sprinted 10 fils to 203 fils after pushing over 3 million shares and NAFESCO soared 35 fils to 830 fils. Kuwait National Cinema Co jumped 40 fils to 890 fils.

Zain fell 3 fils to 594 fils with a volume

of 5.8 million shares whereas Ooredoo dialed up 2 fils, stc took in 1 fil while logistics major Agility sprinted 9 fils to 981 fils on back of over 4 million shares and has rallied 205 fils year-to-date. National Investment Co and KIPCO trimmed 1 fil each while Al Intiaz Investment dialed down 2 fils after pushing 27.9 million shares.

Mabane Co slipped 5 fils to 784 fils. National Industries Group rose 4 fils to 257 fils on back of 8.7 million shares whereas Gulf Cable gave up 4 fils. Boubyan Petrochemical Co fell 3 fils to 914 fils and Al Qurain Petrochemical Co clipped 2 fils. Jazeera Airways saw a 14 fils lift which took it to KD 1.010 on back of 1.4 million shares whereas ALAFCO closed 2 fils in red. Advanced Technology Co jumped 20 fils to 510 fils.

The market opened firm and headed north in early trade. The main index continued to climb amid buying spurt in some of the counters and plateaued off almost an hour into the session. It peaked at 7,012 points past the mid-session and gave up some of its gains in the final minutes before ending with modest gains.

Top gainer of the day, MENA soared 29.9 percent to 93.4 fils while Salbookh Trading sprinted 19.49 pct to stand next. Wethaq Takaful skidded 6.44 percent, the steepest decliner of the day while MENA also topped the volume with 83.7 million.

Mirroring the day's tame finish, the market spread was almost even. 63 stocks advanced while 67 closed lower. Of the 145 counters active on Tuesday, 15 closed flat.

22,055 deals worth KD 98.83 million were transacted during the session.

In the banking sector, sector bellwether National Bank of Kuwait took in 1 fil on back of over 13 million shares and Burgan Bank followed suit to close at 236 fils. Kuwait International Bank paused at 223 fils whereas Kuwait Finance House gave up 3 fils. Ahli United Bank BSC was unchanged at 291 fils and Warba Bank clipped 2 fils. Commercial Bank stood pat at 500 fils.

Kuwait Cement Co inched 1 fil higher to 254 fils whereas Kuwait Portland Cement gave up 4 fils. HEISC slipped 5 fils to 480 fils while Metal and Recycling Co added 3 fils. Kuwait Foundry Co dropped 6 fils to 380 fils and ACICO Industries stood pat at 126 fils. Hilal Cement eased 1 fil to 160 fils whereas NICBM paced 3 fils. Equipment Holding trimmed 1.5 fils.

Educational Holding Co dipped 14 fils to 800 fils whereas NCCI dialed down 2 fils. Salbookh Trading rallied 10.6 fils on back of over 30 million shares and Warba Capital clipped 1 fil. Arabi Group Holding took in 1 fil while Automated Systems Co added 3 fils. KCPC gave up 2 fils and IFA Hotels and Resorts crept 0.3 fil in green. Mashaer Holding ticked 0.1 fil while OSOS Holding paused at 125 fils.

Burgan Company For Well Drilling eased 1 fil to 162 fils and Combined Group Contracting Co erased 3 fils. PAPCO rose 3.2 fils to 75.4 fils whereas Oula Fuel Marketing and Kuwait Resorts dialed down 1 fil each. Egypt Kuwait Holding dropped 5 fils to 425 fils and Inovest BSC slipped 2

▲	US\$/KD 0.30160/70
▼	Euro/KD 0.3496
■	Yen/KD 0.0026
■	British £/KD 0.4153
■	Indian Rs/KD 0.0040
■	Philippines Peso/KD 0.0059
▲	FTSE +54.80 pts at 18:50 Oct 26
▲	Nikkei +505.60 pts at closing Oct 26
▲	Gold \$1,801.90 per oz (London)
▲	NYMEX crude \$84.61 per barrel
▲	Brent crude \$86.39 per barrel
▲	LIBOR rate 0.13450%

with brisk trading. Land United Real Estate Co sprinted 10.5 fils to 110 fils.

The market has been largely upbeat so far during the week scaling 22 points in last three sessions. It has gained 133 points from start of the month and is up 1451 points year-to-date.



KUNA photo
His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah during the opening of the Summit of the Green Middle East Initiative.

HH Crown Prince back from Riyadh

His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah and his accompanying delegation returned home late Monday after attending the Middle East Green Initiative Summit held in the Saudi Capital, Riyadh.

Upon arrival, His Highness the Crown Prince was received at the airport by National Assembly Speaker Marzouq al-Ghanim, His Highness Sheikh Nasser Al-Mo-

hammad Al-Sabah, His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah and senior State officials.

His Highness Sheikh Mishal sent on Monday a cable to Saudi Crown Prince, Deputy Prime Minister and Defense Minister Prince Mohammad bin Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud.

In the cable, His Highness the Crown Prince thanked Crown Prince

Mohammad bin Salman for good hospitality and warm reception during his official visit to the Kingdom to take part in the first Middle East Green Initiative Summit held in the Saudi Capital, Riyadh.

His Highness the Crown Prince commended this important summit, which will contribute to enhancing dependence on clean energy, public health and combating environmental challenges. (KUNA)

Security issues top meeting agenda

'GCC must join forces to battle crime'

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 26, (KUNA): Undersecretary of the Ministry of Interior Lieutenant-General Sheikh Faisal Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah stressed the importance of unifying efforts between the security sectors in the Gulf Cooperation Council through coordination and communication to confront all forms of crime.

This came in a press statement issued by the Ministry's General Department of Relations and Security Media, following the preparatory meeting for the undersecretaries of the Interior Ministries of the Cooperation Council for the Arab States of the Gulf on Monday, via video communication technology.

Sheikh Faisal Al-Nawaf expressed his appreciation and thanks to the

General Secretariat of the Gulf Cooperation Council for their great efforts to push forward the joint Gulf security coordination and cooperation.

During the meeting, Lieutenant General Sheikh Faisal Al-Nawaf conveyed to the attendees the greetings and wishes of the Minister of Interior Sheikh Thamer Ali Sabah Al-Salem Al-Sabah for success and fulfillment of the aspirations of the Gulf citizen and the consolidation of the security system in all GCC countries, stressing the depth of security relations between the Gulf states through their keenness on continuous coordination among them to reach to the desired security integration.

In the meeting, the agents discussed a number of files on the agenda, which would contribute to strengthening the

process of joint security cooperation. They also discussed the latest developments in the region and the coordination of efforts and goals according to the requirements of the current stage.

Accordingly, a number of recommendations were developed that were submitted to the Ministers of Interior in Gulf Cooperation Council countries.

The meeting was attended by the Assistant Undersecretary for Legal Affairs of the Ministry of Interior, Major General Hoqqi Majed Al-Majed, and the Acting Director General of the General Department for follow-up on the Affairs of Ministerial Councils and Committees, Colonel Hoqqi Adel Al-Suwaid, and the Director of International Relations, Colonel Muhammad Al-Ajmi.

'Kuwait always backs UNRWA'

'Nations should decide own fate'

NEW YORK, Oct 26, (KUNA): Nations should be allowed to "decide their own fate" based on principles and values embedded in UN resolutions, a Kuwaiti diplomat said on Tuesday, saying such rights are legitimate and cannot be taken away.

Citing the Palestinians as a case in point, Kuwait's deputy permanent delegate to the UN Bader Al-Munaikhi told a UN general assembly session that the Palestinians have "full-fledged" political rights to determine their own fate.

He lamented that the UN Relief and Works Agency for Palestinian Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) has been exposed to a "political attack" that imperils its core objectives, in addition to the COVID pandemic, which impeded most of the aid agency's work.

UNRWA will always have Kuwait's firm backing, the diplomat highlighted, mentioning a USD 20 million grant deal signed between both sides to keep the UN agency's aid programs for the Palestinians afloat, ahead of Belgium-hosted talks over the matter next month.

He reiterated calls for the Palestinians'

inalienable right to an independent state with East Jerusalem as its capital, based on 1967 borders, as supported by relevant UN resolutions, which back a two-state solution as the only way for peace in the Middle East.

Request turned down: The Central Agency for Public Tenders (CAPT) has postponed the request of the Ministry of Electricity and Water (MEW) to float the tender No. 7308/2021 for the supply of smart electricity and water meters (Phase II) in order to make some amendments and complete some procedures regarding the tender, reports Al-Jarida daily.

MEW sources indicated the second phase will include the supply and installation of 400,000 electricity meters and 200,000 water meters, and the ministry aims, through its plan, to replace all old meters during the next 3 years, as it has already started supplying 200,000 smart meters as a first stage.

In a separate context, MEW announced the completion of emergency works on the water network on the Fahahel Expressway adjacent to the Al-Masayel area.




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