

Saudi, Kuwait, UAE reiterate support for Bahrain's fiscal programme

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● The ministers met with Bahrain's finance minister on Oct. 19

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efforts made by the government of Bahrain in implementing the Fiscal Balance Programme and the progress made by the government despite the challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic", the three countries said in a joint statement.

"The Ministers affirmed their support to the Kingdom of Bahrain's efforts in pursuing further reforms to enhance fiscal stability and strengthen sustainable economic growth."

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Last month Bahrain said that

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due to the coronavirus crisis last year, it had postponed the target

year for a balanced budget to 2024 and announced plans to hike a value-added tax to boost state coffers.

The fiscal balance programme - a set of reforms aimed at balancing the budget - was linked to the pledged \$10 billion.

The ministers met with Bahrain's finance minister on Oct. 19. They discussed the progress made by the government of Bahrain made concerted efforts in raising revenues while enhancing the efficiency and rationalisation of spending.

The Arab Monetary Fund attended the meeting as an advisory body providing an assessment of the programme's achievements.

S&P forecasts Bahrain's budget deficit, which was 16.8% of GDP last year, to average 5% between 2021 and 2024, excluding the impact of a possible hike in value-added tax.

The Arab Monetary Fund assessed the fiscal programme achievements, the statement said.

Silah Gulf represents Bahrain's ICT sector at GITEX 2021



The Bahraini National pavilion has Government and private sector organisations from ICT sector

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Silah Gulf, an award-winning business process outsourcing provider specialising in innovative Customer Experience solutions, demonstrated its skills in cloud-based call centre solutions at the GITEX technology Expo hosted at the World Trade Center in Dubai this week.

The Bahraini National pavilion has Government and private sector organisations from its ICT sector, with the Economic Development Board and major sponsorships from Alba and Batelco. Over 1,200 firms from across the world representing almost a hundred nations were present, with attendees projected to surpass 100,000.

Feras Ahmed, CEO of Silah Gulf, noted that Bahrain's national pavilion in GITEX year

after year reflects the positive outcomes achieved by the ICT sector through the years.

He emphasised that while Silah Gulf's focus will be on highlighting its cloud-based solutions, it will also be showcase products like Artificial Intelligence, Automation, Cloud Computing, CRM Solutions, Robotics, Security, Software and Virtualisation.

"Our participation is part of our efforts to demonstrate Silah Gulf's experience as Bahrain's top supplier of business and technology outsourcing services that has empowered organisations across the region with the tools required to deliver quality customer experience. Our efforts will also promote Bahrain as a viable business outsourcing destination in the Middle East and showcase its strengths as a business-friendly nation."

Nogaholding, Aramco discuss strengthening cooperation

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National Oil and Gas Holding Company and Saudi Aramco officials yesterday discussed strengthening energy cooperation.

Discussions focused on future joint technical initiatives to advance the oil and gas sector and achieve aspirations aimed at the growth and prosperity of the two companies.

Dr Mohamed bin Mubarak Bin Daina, the Special Envoy for Climate Affairs and Chief Executive of the Supreme Council for Environment, Acting Managing Director of the National Oil and Gas Holding Company, and Amin bin Hassan Al Nasser, the President and CEO of Saudi Aramco, took part in the



In pictures, Nogaholding and Saudi Aramco officials during a meeting

Bahrain's delegation visited the Exploration and Petroleum Engineering Centre, where they were briefed on Saudi Ar-

amco's latest digital technologies to enhance exploration, drilling, field development, asset reliability, and operational efficiency.

Faisal Al Mahroos, Nogaholding Board of Director, Mark Thomas, Group CEO of Nogaholding, Dr Abdul Rahman Jawahery, President of GPIC, and Mazen Matar, CEO of ASRY, were also present.

Mark Thomas praised the capabilities and expertise of Aramco and their rapid progress in digitising their oil and gas assets. The meeting follows the October 11th meeting between His Highness Shaikh Nasser bin Hamad Al Khalifa, His Majesty the King's Representative for Humanitarian Work and Youth Affairs, and Chairman of the Board of Directors of Nogaholding and His Royal Highness Prince Abdulaziz bin Salman Al Saud, Minister of Energy for Saudi Arabia.

Gift of Gold - Get guaranteed gold coins with Malabar Gold & Diamonds

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In a run up to the festive season, Malabar Gold & Diamonds, one among the largest jewellery retailers globally with a strong retail network of over 260 outlets spread across 10 countries, has announced attractive in-store offers. The latest campaign from the brand gives customers the opportunity to get guaranteed gold coins on purchase of gold and diamond jewellery. As part of the festive season, Malabar Gold & Diamonds has also unveiled the Festive Jewellery collection, featuring the most eye-catching and unique trends in gold and diamond jewellery, bound to captivate jewellery lovers at the best price. An exclusive jewellery collection in the name of 'Artistry Edition' has also been launched; exquisite designs in diamonds, studded with precious stones including rubies, sapphires, pearls etc... giving a



splendid look at special occasions. These pieces are intricately crafted by master artisans and are rare designs that can be treasured as a family heirloom and will be available at selected stores of Malabar Gold & Diamonds.

Through the latest offer announced by Malabar Gold & Diamonds, customers can get guaranteed gold coins on purchase of gold or diamond jewellery from 21st October to 02nd November.

"The next 6 months are all about festivities and celebrations. With the ease of restric-

tions and tourists returning, we have started experiencing a significant transformation in the market. And now with the festive season soon approaching, we are expecting an increase in footfall across our stores in the coming weeks as well. It is to add more value to our customers' shopping experience that we have created this campaign, wherein they can get the best designs at the best prices, while getting guaranteed gold coins," said Shamlal Ahamed, Managing Director - International Operations, Malabar Gold & Diamonds. He also added that on Dhanteras day, all their stores will have extended working hours, to ensure that customers get to safeguard their beliefs and purchase their favourite jewellery.

Malabar Gold & Diamonds also gives customers the opportunity to avail the gold rate protection offer, designed in such a way that they are protected

from any increase in gold rate and if the rate reduces during purchase, they get the lower rate. They can just pay 10% of the value as advance and get gold rate protection until November 2nd, 2021. So, customers do not have to worry about the volatility of the gold price. To ease the payment process, the brand has also enabled an online payment option through their APP, which can be downloaded via App store or Play store. This will allow customers to pay & block the gold rates online.

Apart from the Festive collection and Artistry edition, Malabar Gold & Diamonds has also launched several other collections to meet the diverse tastes of their customers. This includes the 'Bella' Collection - Beautiful designs in 22K gold jewellery to match every woman's unique style and 'Enigma' - exclusive jewellery range studded with precious diamonds to mark any special occasion.

Ahli United Bank brings Apple Pay to customers



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Ahli United Bank, the Middle East's leading financial services group, today announced launching Apple Pay. Apple Pay, AUB said, is a safer, more secure and private way that helps customers avoid handing their payment card to someone else, touching physical buttons or exchanging cash - and uses the power of the iPhone to protect every transaction.

Customers can hold their iPhone or Apple Watch near a payment terminal to make a contactless payment. Every Apple Pay purchase is secured with Face ID, Touch ID, or device passcode, as well as a one-time unique dynamic security code. Apple Pay is accepted in grocery stores, pharmacies, taxis, restaurants, coffee shops, retail stores, and many more places.

Customers can also use Apple Pay on iPhone, iPad, and Mac to make faster and more convenient purchases in apps or on the web in Safari without having to create accounts or repeatedly type in shipping and billing information. Apple Pay makes it easier to pay for food and grocery deliveries, online shopping, transporta-

tion, and parking, among other things. Apple Pay can also be used to make payments in apps on Apple Watch.

When customers use a credit or debit card with Apple Pay, the actual card numbers are not stored on the device, nor on Apple servers. Instead, a unique Device Account Number is assigned, encrypted, and securely stored in the Secure Element, an industry-standard, certified chip designed to store the payment information safely on the device.

Apple Pay is easy to set up. On iPhone, open the Wallet app, tap +, and follow the steps to add Ahli United Bank's credit or debit cards. Once a customer adds a card to iPhone, Apple Watch, iPad, and Mac, they can start using Apple Pay on that device right away. Customers will continue to receive all of the rewards and benefits offered by AUB's cards.

"The shift towards cashless transactions has accelerated greatly and the launch of Apple Pay will surely boost this transition. AUB is working ceaselessly to provide the solutions that will help enhance the rapidly changing lifestyles of its customers," said Suvrat Saigal, Deputy Group Chief Executive Officer - Retail Banking at Ahli United Bank.