

## Business

# Ooredoo Kuwait launches smart solutions for firms for Phase 2

## Al-Babtain: Our priority remains to protect employees and customers

KUWAIT: Ooredoo Telecom, the first to introduce innovative digital services in Kuwait, is offering an array of smart solutions to companies in the country in preparation for phase two of the gradual return to life. The smart solutions offered by the company include multipurpose thermal cameras, walk through thermal detectors, sanitizer gates equipped with thermal detectors, facial recognition and contactless attendance systems and social distancing solutions with AI Analytics. These smart solutions reiterate

Ooredoo's commitment to being a pioneer of digitalization in Kuwait, and as part of its commitment to keeping up with the latest trends in the tech world and ensuring the safety and well-being of its customers' employees.

Commenting on this, Chief Business Officer at Ooredoo Kuwait Abdulaziz Al-Babtain stressed Ooredoo's pioneering role in digital transformation in Kuwait and how digitalization is the heart of the company's response to COVID-19; which spurred Ooredoo to offer companies in the country with smart solutions. Al-Babtain said, "Ooredoo is committed to ensuring the safety of all employees reporting back to work in the next phase, and for this reason, we are providing a number of smart solutions customized for companies". Al-Babtain added, "The world has changed since the onset of COVID-19, and we must adapt to the 'new normal'. It is our duty to protect the nation by ensuring the availability of smart solutions to control the spread of COVID-19".



Abdulaziz Al-Babtain

Al-Babtain further elaborated, "Ooredoo provides a number of smart solutions used by our enterprises customers to prepare for phase two in which employees will gradually report back to work. These smart solutions include multipurpose thermal cameras used to monitor employees' temperatures and report high temperatures".

Al-Babtain also revealed the utilization of Artificial Intelligence (AI) for facial recognition and contactless attendance to optimize safety and COVID-19 prevention.

Al-Babtain added that Ooredoo is also providing companies with AI tools to enforce social distancing

measures. Line crossing analytics will place virtual lines between employees to keep them within their own working area and will track compliance with health guidelines which also include wearing facemasks.

Ooredoo is also providing other smart solutions such as walk-through thermal detectors, sanitizer gates with thermal detection, occupancy measurement to better manage social distancing and occupancy restrictions to keep in line with the 30% occupancy percentage enforced by the government; in addition to facemask and personal protection equipment detection which informs enterprises of employees not wearing facemasks in real time.

Al-Babtain concluded, "Ooredoo is keen to ensuring the safety and well-being of the employees and customers of its clients, and we will continue to provide our clients and the government with all their needs during this phase and we ask God to protect this great nation and its people from all harm".



### Preparing for the gradual return to life

## NBK serves its customers through 27 branches

KUWAIT: National Bank of Kuwait strives to meet its customers' needs while adhering to the instructions of concerned health authorities regarding safety standards and social distancing rules to ensure the safety of both customers and employees. In this context, NBK has re-opened 8 additional branches in coordination with the Central Bank of Kuwait and Kuwait Banking Association, bringing the total number of operating branches as of today (Sunday 21st June), to 27 branches serving customers from 8:30 AM to 1:00 PM.

NBK abides by safety measures, including checking customers' temperature before entering the branch, asking them to wear medical masks and gloves, and implementing social distancing rules to protect both customers and employees.

And in order to cater to the needs of customers from all segments, NBK has assigned branches to serve individuals and Corporate Banking Customers and Al-Amil Package based on the following governorates:

- Capital Governorate (a total of 10 branches): Rawda, Daiya, Dahiyat Abdullah Al-Salem, Shamiya, Kaifan, Surra, Abdullah Al-Ahmad (Previously Head Office), Ahmed Al-Jaber, Sharq and Ghazali
- Hawalli Governorate (a total of 5 branches): Bayan, South Surra, Salwa, Cinema Al-Salmiya and Al-Salam Mall, Salmiya
- Farwaniya Governorate (a total of 3 branches): Sabah Al-Nasser, Ardiya and Al-Andalus
- Hadiya Governorate: (a total of 5 branches): Hadiya, Sabahiya, Riqqa, Ahmadi and Fintas
- Mubarak Al Kabere Governorate (a total of 3 branches): Mubarak Al-Kabeer, Sabah Al-Salem and Sabhan
- Al-Jahra Governorate (a total of 1 branch): Jahra

Commenting on the re-opening of additional branches, Ali Al-Mulla, Head of Domestic Branches, National Bank of Kuwait, said: "We have re-opened



Ali Al-Mulla

8 additional branches after coordinating with the Central Bank of Kuwait and Kuwait Banking Association to meet our customers' needs, as part of our constant efforts to provide them with the most convenient services since the beginning of coronavirus pandemic outbreak. Our main concern has always been to provide our customers with an integrated banking experience while keeping them safe through full compliance with all the instructions of the concerned authorities as well as precautionary measures."

He added: "We are always keen to stay closer to our customers despite the exceptional circumstances. Throughout this crisis, we have continued to provide our services around the clock through our various digital banking channels, which we continue to develop by adding more services and upgrades, in addition to the exceptional services including the mobile branch."

Al-Mulla stressed that NBK provides an outstanding example in crisis management with a proactive strategy to deal with exceptional circumstances through quick and comprehensive actions to minimize the impact and to ensure the continuation of providing our services with the same efficiency to all customers.

"NBK's team, led by our front-liners, have always demonstrated their commitment especially during these exceptional circumstances, by saving no effort to ensure the continuation of the bank's success journey, and these efforts are highly appreciated by all parties," Al-Mulla concluded.

NBK provides its banking services through NBK ATMs and CDMs for cash deposit and withdrawal available all over the country, comprising 327 ATMs, including more than 100 CDMs. Customers can also reach the bank through multiple channels including, NBK Contact Center on 1801801 and NBK WhatsApp on the same number, or through the bank's social media platforms, where all inquiries are answered.

## Enjoy latest from Huawei with stc 5G post-paid plans

KUWAIT: Kuwait Telecommunications Company - stc, a world-class digital leader providing innovative services and platforms to customers enabling the digital transformation in Kuwait, announced the launch of Huawei's latest series of P40 5G smartphones. The series includes the Huawei P40 5G and the Huawei P40 Pro 5G, two revolutionary devices available through stc's 5G postpaid plans with a special internet capacity that offers 5 times the GBs.

stc is offering the devices to customers under its 5G postpaid plans starting at KD27, including the Huawei P40 5G smartphone, 500 local minutes, and a 250GB internet package (instead of 50GB). Customers interested in purchasing the Huawei P40 Pro 5G can do so with a monthly package starting at KD29, also including 500 local minutes, a 250GB internet package, and will receive an additional month for free.

Commenting on the exclusive offer, Chief Consumer Officer (CCO) of stc, Haneen Ibrahim Al-Fulaij, said, "stc aims to offer its customers in Kuwait with exclusive deals on the latest smartphone devices and the fastest broadband connection to meet and exceed the growing demand of its diverse customer base. We strive to enrich our customers' experience through advanced products that are capable of utilizing the 5G technology to its fullest, providing an unrivaled online service that is faster than ever."

Al-Fulaij added, "Through this exclusive offer, we reaffirm our commitment to continue providing our customers with the latest revolutionary products and services available in the market to keep pace with the rapidly developing digital world. This follows our sustainable strategic approach to enable digital transformation and integrate digital solutions to contribute towards enhancing our customers' lifestyles beyond traditional telecom services."

### Huawei's Icon

Huawei's P40 5G series pushes boundaries with limitless potential. The devices are each equipped with the cutting-edge Kirin 990 5G chipset delivering ultra-fast speeds for a real experience. The high processing performance embraces the Ultra Vision Leica Triple Camera's ability to effortlessly capture immaculate photos and videos in any condition thanks to its upgraded AI capability.

The series offer fluent 4K livestream capabilities, a



HUAWEI P40 Pro 5G

The innovative CPU architecture promotes high power efficiency allowing the AI mechanism to make the best use of the 3800mAh battery to achieve optimal performance and longer working time.

The series is designed with a matte finish and solid colors revealing elegance from the inside out. Inspired by the beauty and form of flowing water, the Quad-Curve Overflow Display is innovated to dissolve the barriers of vision and imagination on every edge. With the 90 Hz refresh rate, users can enjoy an immersive view over the entire fluid screen. The mounting middle frame and protective round corners enhance the harmonious feel from your eyes to your hand.

The Huawei P40 Pro+ features a refreshed back design using advanced Nano-tech ceramic, polished to be gentle, smooth, and tough, reaching a perfect balance in look and feel. The iconic camera stage and flawless ceramic back are integrated into a consistent design, bringing an inclusive harmony of nature.

The 50MP Ultra Vision camera includes a 16MP Ultra-Wide-Angle camera on the Huawei P40, and a 40MP Ultra-Wide-Angle camera on the Huawei P40 Pro. The Huawei P40 features a 8MP Telephoto camera with 3x Optical Zoom, 5x Hybrid Zoom and 30x Max Zoom, while the Huawei P40 Pro features a 12MP Telephoto Camera with 3x Optical Zoom, 5x Hybrid Zoom and 30x Max Zoom.

Huawei's smartphones also include a multi-spectrum color temperature sensor with a AI AWB algorithm, a 32 MP front camera for beautiful and natural selfies, an AI motion algorithm to detect postures and expressions, AI capability of Gallery Edit to remove passer-by's and specific layers, ultra-fast speeds with the world's first integrated 5G SoC, the Kirin 990 5G chipset, 3800 mAh battery, 22.5 W Huawei SuperCharger, as well as face and fingerprint security lock features.

## Burgan Bank launches new appointment booking service

KUWAIT: Burgan Bank announces the launch of its new appointment booking service to benefit its retail banking customers. Accessible through Burgan Bank's official website, online portal and mobile banking application, the service will now save time as well as provide added convenience by avoiding branch visits to make appointments and ensuring customers have a flexible schedule.

Customers can select a branch and appointment time of their choice. With the real-time online booking service, customers are allowed to book face-to-face appointments and visit the branch at the appointed time. Appointments can be booked for the same day and up to five days in advance. Additionally, the appointment booking service will be further enhanced with new features in the coming months.

Naser Al-Qaisi - Burgan Bank's Chief Retail Banking Officer said, "The new online appointment booking service will give our customers convenient access to our branches, particularly in these times as maintaining social distancing is vital. Through our customer-centric business model, we have adopted technology that will improve our banking processes while addressing our customers varying needs. We have brought to life our multi-channel offerings of which online appointment bookings are just one of the many tools developed to strengthen our services."

Al-Qaisi added, "At Burgan Bank, we are placing a high priority on focusing on progression, technology, and safety. By transforming our retail services in unprecedented times, we aim to accommodate our customers with guaranteed security and deliver an optimal customer experience."

## Lagarde urges quick EU recovery plan

BRUSSELS: European Central Bank head Christine Lagarde urged European Union leaders on Friday to quickly agree on a recovery package that would pull the economy from a "dramatic fall" or risk a change in sentiment on markets, which were expecting a deal soon. Lagarde addressed EU leaders, meeting by videoconference to wrangle over how to engineer a recovery from the deep recession caused by three months of coronavirus lockdowns in most European countries.

"(The) EU economy is experiencing a dramatic fall," she told the gathering, according to officials.

"Decisive and effective action by both national governments and European actors has proven its worth: they paved the way for a rebound towards year-end and helped to buy some time. This is reflected in market sentiment, but failure to deliver could lead to a change in that sentiment," she said.

Lagarde reiterated the ECB's forecasts that the eurozone economy would shrink 13 percent in the second quarter from the first, and contract 8.7 percent overall in 2020, before rebounding by 5.2 percent in 2021. She said the worst impact of the pandemic on labor markets was still to come, and that unemployment, now at 7.3 percent of the workforce, could rise to 10 percent, hitting young people particularly hard.

"It's in our own hands to forge the recovery we want to see," she said. "The recovery package should be far, fast, flexible and firmly anchored in economic reforms. The faster the package is agreed, the better for the EU economy," she said, according to officials. Almost half of so-called "green bonds" issued last year were in euros, the European Central Bank said Tuesday, highlighting an opportunity for the single currency to gain importance on the global stage. "EU residents are the largest issuers of green bonds. —Reuters

## Google loses appeal against \$50m French fine

PARIS: France's highest administrative authority on Friday dismissed a challenge by Google against a fine of 50 million euros (\$56 million) for failing to provide adequate information on its data consent policies. The fine was imposed in 2019 by France's data watchdog, the CNIL.

It found at the time that Google made it too difficult for users to understand and manage preferences on how their personal information is used, in particular with regards to targeted advertising. Its ruling applied principles enshrined in the EU's strict new General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). Google then appealed. But on Friday, the Council of State, a French government body that is also the court of last resort for matters of administrative justice, confirmed the CNIL ruling.

It agreed the information that Google provided to users "does not meet the requirements of clarity and accessibility required by the GDPR" even when the nature and volume of data collected was "particularly intrusive."

The council said the CNIL's record fine was not disproportionate "given the particular seriousness of the breaches committed, their continuous nature and duration, the ceilings provided for by the GDPR (up to four percent of turnover) and Google's financial situation."

In a statement sent to AFP, the American giant said it would "now examine the changes we need to make".



A logo is pictured above the entrance to the offices of Google in London. — AFP

The matter was brought to the CNIL by two advocacy groups shortly after the landmark GDPR directive came into effect. One was filed on behalf of some 10,000 signatories by France's Quadrature du Net group, and the other by None Of Your Business, created by the Austrian privacy activist Max Schrems.

Schrems had accused Google of securing "forced consent" via its Android mobile operating software through the use of pop-up boxes online or on its apps which imply that its services will not be available unless the conditions of use are accepted.

The CNIL noted in its ruling that details on how long a person's data can be kept and what it is used for were spread over several different web pages.

Modifying a user's data preferences required clicking through a variety of pages such as "More Options", and often the choices to accept Google's terms were pre-checked by default. It was not the first time the regulator had taken Google to task.—AFP