The Business

In association with www.tradearabia.com TradeArabia

Firms to showcase new water desalination model

By AVINASH SAXENA

MANAMA: A new water desalination technology that delivers energy and cost savings and reduces environmental impact will be introduced in Bahrain on Wednesday, the promoters of the system said yesterday.

Bahrain-based MIT International and British chemical firm Genesys will showcase 'Genairclean' during a technical seminar on "Reducing the cost and optimising the performance of reverse osmosis desalination systems", which is being held at the Gulf Hotel from 10am to 1pm.

Speaking at a Press conference at the Ramada Palace in Gudaibiya, officials from the two companies said Genairclean is an enhanced reverse osmosis membrane cleaning system.

"The technique combines multiple cleaning mechanisms – chemistry, effervescence, direct osmosis and micro-bubbles – to improve the removal of deposits from membranes," Genesys International's David Golding told the *GDN*.

"Membrane systems will periodically experience fouling from biological growth, inorganic scale deposits or suspended colloidal matter, particularly when the source water is recycled from processes such as effluent treatment," he said.

"Such fouling is often difficult to remove and the industry has been striving for better cleaning techniques to improve the degree of cleaning and extend the system's time in service."

According to him, with the launch of Genairclean, Genesys was advancing the art of cleaning and providing a mechanism to deal with difficult to remove foulants.

Mr Golding said reverse osmosis is an increasingly common method of desalination because of its relatively low energy consumption.

"Because no heating or phase changes are needed, energy requirements are low in comparison to other processes of desalination.

"Up to 50 per cent of the sea water input can be recovered as fresh water unlike conventional thermal evaporation and condensation systems that delivered only 10pc efficiency," he said.

Mr Golding said Genesys worked globally through a network of distributors in countries where water desalination and purification were prime requirements, both for industrialisation and often, life itself.

MIT International's managing director Muhammed P K said the company is the authorised distributor for Genesys in Bahrain.

avinash@gdn.com.bh

■ ***At the Press conference are Mr Golding, second from left, and Mr Muhammed, second from right, with other officials***

Sabb net profit surges 20pc to $260 million

RIYADH: Saudi British Bank (Sabb), Saudi Arabia's fourth-largest listed bank, said its fourth-quarter net profit rose 20 per cent over the same period of 2012, beating analyst expectations.

The lender, an affiliate of HSBC Holdings, said it made 976 million riyals ($260m) in the three months to December 31, compared to 815m riyals in the corresponding period of 2012.

Eight analysts surveyed by *Reuters* had forecast it would earn a net profit of 924.5m riyals in the quarter.

Sabb attributed its profit rise only to higher operating income, without elaborating.

Net profit for full-year 2013 advanced 16.5pc to 3.77 billion riyals.

Saudi companies issue brief earnings statements early in the reporting period before publishing more detailed results later.

Sabb's loans portfolio climbed 10pc to 106bn riyals over the end of 2012, and deposits grew 15pc over the same timeframe to 139bn riyals.

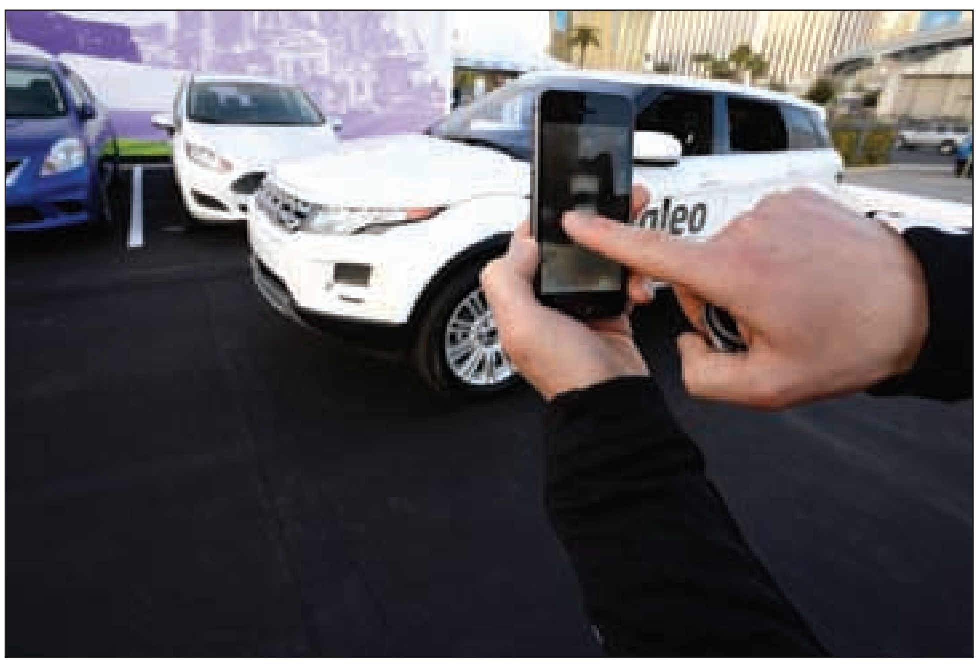
Sabb managing director David Dew had earlier said that the bank was finalising a three-year strategic plan based on an assumption that government spending will continue to grow and that Saudi bank lending levels to the private sector are sustainable in the mid teens for the next two-three years.

Saudi banks have benefited from rising lending, deposits and deal activity in an economy buoyed by years of high state spending which is backed by strong oil prices and record government surpluses.

The kingdom's budget for 2014, while the smallest increase for a decade at 4.3pc, is still another record amount, and bank lending to the private sector grew at 13.8pc year-on-year in November, up 0.3pc from the previous month's 17-month low.

Total operating income for the quarter rose 12.6pc year-on-year to 5.82bn riyals, and profit from special commissions grew 13.9pc over the corresponding period of 2012 to 3.72bn riyals.

Sabb said last month its board had recommended a cash dividend of one riyal per share for 2013, up from 0.92 riyals in 2012.



■ ***A Valeo representative swipes his finger across an iPhone to initiate a self parking demonstration at the 2014 International CES in Las Vegas, US. The car, a Range Rover Evoque with Valeo self-parking technology, is equipped with 12 ultrasonic sensors, six in back and six in front, a laser scanner mounted in the grille, and four cameras.***

Record global sales for Jaguar

LONDON: Jaguar Land Rover (JLR), the largest car manufacturer in Britain, achieved record global sales in 2013, the Indian-owned luxury carmaker said yesterday.

JLR said it sold 425,006 vehicles in 2013 – up 19 per cent on 2012 – setting new sales records in 38 international markets.

Land Rover four-wheel-drive vehicles notched up 348,338 sales in 2013, a rise of 15pc.

Meanwhile, international sales of the luxury Jaguar increased by 42pc to 76,668 over the last 12 months.

JLR, which is owned by India's Tata Motors, claimed Jaguar was the fastest-growing brand in the US, Germany and India.

Sales rose by 30pc in the Asia-Pacific and China region; 21pc in North America; 14pc in Britain; 6pc in the rest of Europe and 23pc in other markets outside Britain.

"2013 has proven to be a very positive year for JLR thanks to continuing strong demand for vehicles across the range," said chief executive Ralf Speth.

"Our unrelenting focus on design, technology, innovation and quality has seen JLR reach global consumers in more markets than ever before thanks to its most desirable product line-up."

Tata Motors bought Jaguar and Land Rover from Ford Motor in 2008 for $2.3 billion as part of plans to expand its reach beyond Asia.

Iraq threatens to cut funds for Kurdistan over oil row

BAGHDAD: **Iraqi Prime Minister Nuri Al Maliki threatened yesterday to cut central government funding for Iraq's autonomous Kurdistan region if the Kurds pursued a drive to pipe oil exports to Turkey without Baghdad's approval.**

The Kurdistan Regional Government said last week that crude had begun to flow to Turkey and exports were expected to start at the end of this month and then rise in February and March.

"This is a constitutional violation which we will never allow, not for the (Kurdistan) region nor for the Turkish government," Maliki said in an interview.

He reiterated Baghdad's insistence that only the central government has the authority to manage Iraq's energy resources.

"Turkey must not interfere in an issue that harms Iraqi sovereignty," Maliki said.

The central government and the Kurds differ over how to interpret the constitution's references to oil and how revenues should be shared. The Kurdish share was set at 17 per cent after the US-led invasion in 2003, although the Kurds frequently complain that they get less than that.

Maliki said the Kurds had not met their budgeted commitment to export 250,000 barrels per day of oil, with the revenue going to the national treasury, but so far the government had not retaliated by reducing their share of the budget.

"We did not do that as we did not want to affect the Kurdish people and we were looking to find acceptable solutions... that would preserve national unity and the national wealth, but this year the situation looks difficult," Maliki declared.

Referring to a dispute over the costs of oil companies operating in Iraqi Kurdistan, he said: "We have been telling these companies... give us the oil and we will pay your costs, but they did not deliver, so there will be no payments."

Maliki said it was unfair to expect Baghdad to pay the oil firms' costs, plus the Kurds' 17pc budget share, when the oil revenue was not being channelled through the government.

In October 2012, the Kurds agreed to export an average of 250,000 bpd in 2013 if Baghdad paid the operators in the region.

As the wrangling went on, the Kurds stopped pumping oil via the Baghdad-controlled pipeline to Turkey, instead exporting smaller quantities by truck and taking the revenue directly.