

# NBB participates in CPISP candidacy programme 2025

Manama

The National Bank of Bahrain (NBB) recently participated in the 2025 Candidacy Programme of the Crown Prince's International Scholarship Programme (CPISP), held at the Bahrain Institute of Banking and Finance (BIBF) Auditorium.

Representing the Bank, Maram Buallay, Acting Group Chief Human Resources Officer, and Donya Alansari, HR Assistant Manager, engaged with 100 students competing for the prestigious scholarship, providing them with a comprehensive overview of specialised majors within the banking and financial services industry. The session also highlighted essential employability skills designed to enhance their readiness for future career opportunities.

Maram Buallay, Acting Group Chief Human Resources Officer of NBB, said, "Early engagement with aspiring candidates is essential to shaping a workforce that is prepared for the demands of tomorrow's economy.



By introducing students to the financial services sector and the skills it demands, we aim to broaden their perspective on what a future-ready career in this domain can look like. Initiatives like these are critical to nurturing a talent pipeline that supports individual ambition and contributes towards building national economic resilience."

The attendees were encouraged to explore trending and niche disciplines to strengthen their competitiveness in the evolving job market, with an emphasis on aligning academic pathways with the market's talent demand. NBB was also presented as an employer of choice that offers a structured internship programme to support students' ambitions and help bridge the gap between academic learning and professional practice.

The session further offered an introduction to NBB's growth strategy, which is driven by investments in advanced technologies and regional expansion while maintaining a strong market position in Bahrain through consistent profitability and customer service excellence.

By engaging with the CPISP candidates, the Bank reaffirmed its commitment to supporting national initiatives that nurture the next generation of leaders and contribute to the Kingdom's long-term economic progress.

## Saudi launches Damascus area reconstruction project

Aid package includes a project to clear more than 75,000 cubic metres of rubble

- Rubble hinders humanitarian efforts and reconstruction
- Since Assad's overthrow in December, Syria's new authorities have worked to attract investment

AFP | Damascus, Syria

Saudi Arabia announced yesterday humanitarian projects for Syria including the removal of wartime rubble around Damascus, weeks after inking investment deals worth billions to help rebuild the country's infrastructure.



A Syrian coppersmith uses a metallic tool as he makes a large tray, in front of a workshop in Damascus

The kingdom has been a major backer of the new Syrian government, which came to power after an Islamist-led offensive toppled longtime Syrian ruler Bashar al-Assad in December.

At an event yesterday in Damascus, the Saudi state-run King Salman Humanitarian Aid and Relief Centre (KSrelief) announced an aid package that includes a project to clear more than 75,000 cubic metres of rubble from the capital and its surroundings.

The Saudi organisation's president Abdullah Al Rabeeah and Syrian minister for emergencies

and disaster management Raed al-Saleh signed an agreement for the initiative, which includes plans to recycle at least 30,000 cubic metres of debris from destroyed homes and other buildings.

Saleh said the rubble hinders humanitarian efforts and reconstruction, and that unexploded "war remnants threaten the lives of civilians".

Other agreements inked yesterday would see Riyadh support the reconstruction of 34 schools in Syria's Aleppo, Idlib and Homs provinces, as well as provide equipment for 17 hospitals nationwide, help rebuild

some 60 bakeries, and rehabilitate sewage and water infrastructure in Damascus.

KSrelief chief Rabeeah said that the projects seek to "address several high-priority areas of urgent needs" and "alleviate the suffering of affected people".

Since Assad's overthrow in December, Syria's new authorities have worked to attract investment for the reconstruction of infrastructure destroyed in the country's 14-year civil war.

In late July, Riyadh pledged \$6.4 billion in investment and partnership deals with Syria.

## Greek PM calls fraud in EU farm subsidies 'a chronic problem'

AFP | Thessaloniki, Greece

Greece's prime minister said yesterday that alleged fraud of EU agricultural subsidies was "a chronic problem" in his country's farm sector that started before his government's mandate.

"Our government cannot take all the responsibility" in this matter, which is under investigation by the European Union, Prime Minister Kiriakos Mitsotakis told a press conference.

He said that the fraud -- which Greek authorities estimate amounts to at least 23 million euros (\$27 million) -- started in 2016, before he came to power in 2019.

The EU probe, looking into allegations that fraudulent claimants syphoned off the money in massive graft, is mainly investigating the period since Mitsotakis's conservative government took office.

EU investigators three months ago raided the Athens offices of the Greek government agency that handled the payments, OPEKEPE, which has since been closed down.

The EU probe has

shown widespread abuse of funds handed out by OPEKEPE, which according to the government annually disbursed more than three billion euros, mainly in subsidies to 680,000 farmers.

A probe subsequently launched by Greek authorities examined 6,354 aid recipients, of whom 1,036 were determined to have received illegal payments totalling 23 million euros.

EU investigators have not yet given their own estimates of the alleged fraud or the number of suspect claimants.

Mitsotakis, speaking at an event in the northern city of Thessaloniki in which he presented his government's economic plans for next year, admitted that his administration "did not manage to clean up OPEKEPE".

He asserted that the funds wrongly disbursed "have started to be recovered" and that "the government is now on the right path to fix this problem".

Those who illegally claimed EU subsidies mainly did so by making false declarations about agricultural land they claimed to control and false claims about livestock, the premier said



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The war devastated much of Syria's infrastructure, with UN estimates putting the cost of reconstruction at more than \$400 billion.