



Abdullah bin Adel Fakhro, Minister of Industry and Commerce, received Gerd Müller, Director General of the United Nations Industrial Development Organisation (UNIDO), on the sidelines of the 6th World Entrepreneurs Investment Forum (WEIF 2026). The meeting reviewed the exchange of experiences and perspectives on the future of industry, policies supporting advanced and sustainable manufacturing, and initiatives to achieve industrial integration globally.

Alba continues its support for the CPISP



His Excellency Shaikh Mohammed bin Essa Al Khalifa, the Advisor for Political and Economic Affairs at the Court of the Crown Prince, and Board Member and Head of the Financial and Administrative Committee of the Crown Prince's International Scholarship Program (CPISP), received a cheque from Ali Al Baqali, Chief Executive of Aluminum Bahrain (Alba). The cheque is part of Alba's Platinum sponsorship of the CPISP, reflecting its mission to empower Bahraini youth. HE Shaikh Mohammed bin Essa affirmed that the CPISP continues to achieve its goals thanks to the unwavering support of His Royal Highness Prince Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa, the Crown Prince and Prime Minister.

Hope Fund, Industry Ministry announce new identity of HQ Industrial Project



Manama

The Hope Fund, in partnership with the Ministry of Industry and Commerce, announced the launch of the new identity of the HQ Industrial project, which includes a makerspace and an industrial innovation centre. The announcement was made during an official ceremony attended by Abdulla bin Adel Fakhro, Minister of Industry and Commerce; Shaikh Hamad bin Mohammed Al Khalifa, Chairman of the Board of HQ; as well as representatives of the public and private sectors and members

of the industrial community. The event featured a presentation of the project's new visual identity, along with an overview of its launch and operational plans. HQ Industrial offers an integrated industrial infrastructure comprising dedicated manufacturing spaces, operational facilities, and support services, in addition to shared industrial workspaces and areas designated for development and innovation. Additionally, the project aims to enhance the capabilities of industrial entrepreneurs by supporting product development and strengthening competitiveness in local and regional markets.

EU warns Meta it must open up WhatsApp to rival AI chatbots

Brussels, Belgium

The EU executive told Meta yesterday that it must let rival AI chatbots use its WhatsApp platform, after an antitrust probe found the US giant to be in breach of the bloc's competition rules. The European Commission said a change in Meta's terms had "effectively" barred third-party artificial intelligence assistants from connecting to customers via the mes-

saging platform since January. Competition chief Teresa Ribera said the EU was "considering" interim measures to "avoid Meta's new policy irreparably harming competition in Europe". The EU executive sent Meta a warning known as a "statement of objections", a formal step in antitrust probes, and the US giant now has a chance to reply and defend itself.

Al Salam Bank posts financial results for 2025

Recommended a dividend distribution of 15% of the bank's issued and paid-up share capital (8% cash dividends and 7% stock dividends) aggregating to BD 44.1 million (USD 117.0 million)

Manama

Al Salam Bank announced its financial results for 2025, delivering record performance supported by expanded scale and the disciplined execution of strategic initiatives.

Q4 results

During the fourth quarter of 2025, net profit attributable to owners' of the bank reached BD 18.6 million (USD 49.5 million), compared to BD 16.7 million (USD 44.3 million) in Q4 2024, reflecting an increase of 11.8%. The growth in profitability was driven by the improved performance of the group's core banking operations. Rafik Nayed, Group Chief Executive Officer of Al Salam Bank

ations, effective asset liability management, and the implementation of group-wide growth and optimization initiatives. Earnings per share for the quarter stood at 5.4 fils (1.4 US cents), compared to 5.3 fils (1.4 US cents) for the corresponding period in 2024. Total comprehensive income attributable to owners' of the bank increased to BD 5.4 million (USD 14.2 million) in Q4 2025, compared to a loss of BD 4.0 million (loss of USD 10.5 million) in Q4 2024.

Full year results

For the financial year ended 31 December 2025, net profit attributable to owners' of the bank reached BD 18.6 million (USD 49.5 million), compared to BD 16.7 million (USD 44.3 million) in Q4 2024, reflecting an increase of 11.8%.

utable to owners' of the bank increased by 30.2% to BD 76.8 million (USD 203.8 million), up from BD 59.0 million (USD 156.5 million) in 2024. Accordingly, earnings per share (EPS) increased to 22.7 fils (6.0 US cents) in 2025, compared to 19.2 fils (5.1 USD cents) in 2024. Total comprehensive income attributable to owners' of the bank increased by 54.1% to BD 103.4 million (USD 274.3 million) in 2025, compared to BD 67.1 million (USD 178.0 million) in 2024.

Driven by the successful execution of various capital-building initiatives during the year, equity attributable to owners' of the Bank increased by 28.3% from BD 360.5 million (USD 956.2 million) in 2024 to BD 462.4 million (USD 1.23 billion), while group's total owners' equity increased by 26.3% to BD 749.7 million (USD 1.99 billion), up from BD 593.4 million (USD 1.57 billion) in 2024. Accordingly, the consolidated capital adequacy ratio increased from 24.8% in 2024 to 27.2% in 2025. The group's balance sheet continued to expand with total assets closing 2025 at BD 8.05 billion (USD 21.36 billion), compared to BD 7.06 billion (USD 18.73 billion) in 2024, translating to an increase of 14.0%. In line with the group's strategy to accelerate market share acquisition, financing assets increased by 11.1% to BD 4.10 billion (USD 10.79 billion) and customer deposits increased by 7.1% to close the year at BD 5.48 billion (USD 14.54 billion).

Dividend

The Board of Directors recommended a dividend distribution of 15% of the bank's issued and paid-up share capital (8% cash dividends and 7% stock dividends), aggregating to BD 44.1 million (USD 117.0 million). This recommendation is subject to AGM and regulatory approvals. Commenting on the

year-end results, His Excellency Shaikh Khalid bin Mustahail Al Mashani, Chairman of Al Salam Bank, said: "Our performance marks consecutive years of sustained growth in scale and profitability, positioning Al Salam Bank as a leading, diversified financial group in the region. Our focused strategy and consistent execution, underpinned by prudent financial management, accelerated transformation initiatives, and

strong governance, has positioned us to effectively capitalize on growth opportunities, reinforce our leading market positioning, and deliver long-term value to all our stakeholders".

Rafik Nayed, Group Chief Executive Officer of Al Salam Bank, added: "Our results reflect the resilience of our operating model and the effectiveness of our strategic direction as we transition to a new phase of performance and growth. During the year, we remained focused on optimizing the balance sheet, expanding our funding base, and broadening our revenue drivers across key verticals including banking, asset management (ASB Capital), takaful (Solidarity Group), and our network of subsidiaries and associates. Collectively, our strategic initiatives are designed to shape a financial group that is diversified in structure, digital in execution, and disciplined in its pursuit of value".

His Excellency Shaikh Khalid bin Mustahail Al Mashani, Chairman of Al Salam Bank