Efficiency Push Powers Profits

Cost-to-income ratio drops

- Record H1 2025 profit
- Efficiency ratio improves
- Capital base strengthens

Mahir Haneef
TDT| Manama

H.E. Sh. Khalid Al Mashani, Chairman of Al Salam Bank

Rafik Nayed, GCEO of Al Salam Bank

A sharp improvement in efficiency has helped Al Salam Bank deliver record profits for the first half of 2025, strengthening its position among Bahrain's fastest-growing lenders. The cost-to-income ratio fell from 49.9% to 45.3% in just one year, underscoring the bank's drive to get more value out of every dinar spent.

Efficiency push pays off

Net profits attributable to shareholders climbed 30.9% to USD 98.2 million for the six months to June 30, up from USD 75 million a year earlier. Return on equity rose to 16.9% from 15.6%, while earnings per share increased 29.0% to USD 31.8 cents. The bank credited its core banking growth and a series of optimisation initiatives for the results.

The efficiency gains came alongside balance sheet growth. Total assets rose 10.8% to USD 20.76 billion, with financing assets up 8.3% to USD 10.52 billion and customer deposits growing 7.1% to USD 14.07 billion since the end of 2024.

Capital strength supports growth

Shareholders' equity expanded by 11.7% to USD 1.07 billion, bolstered by the record profit and a USD 450 million Additional Tier 1 capital issuance. This pushed the capital adequacy ratio to 25.2% as of June 30, compared with 24.8% last year.

H.E. Shaikh Khalid bin Mustahail Al Mashani, Chairman of Al Salam Bank, said the ability to sustain growth despite volatile global markets was a defining strength, pointing to the role of strong fundamentals and disciplined risk management.

Forward-looking strategy

Group CEO Rafik Nayed said the efficiency drive was part of a broader plan to invest in digital innovation, expand regional capabilities through ASB Capital, and strengthen client relationships. He added that the bank would continue to focus on both banking and asset management for long-term, diversified growth.

The bank's full, reviewed financial statements are available on the Bahrain Bourse and Dubai Financial Market websites.

YOU KNOW WHAT

The cost-to-income ratio shows how efficiently a bank turns revenue into profit; a drop from 49.9% to 45.3% in a year signals a major leap in productivity.

Dubai Toll Operator Raises 2025 Outlook

- Revenue up nearly 40%
- Dividend equals full H1 profit
- 2025 growth forecast raised

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Dubai's exclusive toll gate operator reported a sharp rise in revenue and profit in the first half of 2025, boosted by new gates and the introduction of variable pricing.

Salik Company PJSC said total revenue for the six months to June 30 rose 39.5 per cent year-on-year to AED 1.53 billion, while net profit grew 41.5 per cent to AED 770.9 million. The board has recommended a cash dividend of the same amount, equivalent to 10.278 fils per share, representing 100 per cent of H1 profit.

New pricing boost

The performance was driven by the first full quarter under the variable toll pricing system, introduced on January 31, and the opening of two additional gates in November 2024. Chargeable trips reached 318.4 million in H1, with 160.4 million in the second quarter alone.

Toll usage fees rose 42.3 per cent to AED 1.36 billion, while fines increased 15.7 per cent to AED 134.3 million. Tag activation fees grew 16.2 per cent to AED 22.9 million. Ancillary revenues, including parking payment partnerships and insurance collaborations, brought in AED 8.7 million.

DXB Braces for Passenger Surge

Passenger numbers to hit 3.6m in 12 days

- 3.6m passengers expected
- Busiest day on Friday
- Record-breaking first half

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Dubai International Airport (DXB) is preparing for one of its busiest travel surges yet, with more than 3.6 million passengers expected between 13 and 25 August as families return from summer holidays and students head back for the new academic year.

Peak travel forecast

Daily passenger volumes are projected to average 280,000, with the highest single-day traffic anticipated on Friday, when over 290,000 travellers are forecast to pass through. The back-to-school rush comes on the heels of a record-breaking first half of 2025, which saw Dubai welcome 9.88 million international overnight visitors, up 6 per cent year-on-year, and DXB process more than 46 million passengers.

Operational readiness

Dubai Airports said it is working closely with airlines, control authorities and commercial partners within the oneDXB community to ensure smooth operations during the peak. The airport is advising passengers to keep passports, boarding passes and visas ready, and to use Smart Gates for children over 12 to speed up passport control.

Travel tips for passengers

Passengers are also encouraged to make use of DXB's lounges, dining and duty-free shopping, and to consider public transport such as the Dubai Metro, which has stations at Terminals 1 and 3. Options including Uber, Careem, RTA taxis and car rentals are also available. Enhanced support for People of Determination includes marked accessibility routes, discreet assistance for Sunflower Lanyard wearers, and a dedicated Assisted Travel Lounge in Terminal 2.

DXB remains the world's busiest international airport, a title it has held for years, and continues to expand its operational capacity in line with Dubai's aviation ambitions.

Profits, Backlogs Boost UAE Developers

- Emaar net profit up 34%
- Aldar net profit up 24%
- 52% favour property sector

Mahir Haneef
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YOU KNOW WHAT

The AED 400 million sale at Faya Al Saadiyat set a record for the most expensive residential property ever sold in Abu Dhabi.

Josh Gilbert, Market Analyst at eToro

Emaar Properties and Aldar Properties have reported robust first-half 2025 results, reinforcing the UAE real estate sector's appeal to investors amid rising sales, record backlogs and steady dividends.

Dubai's Emaar posted a 34 per cent increase in net profit to AED 10.4 billion for the period, with sales jumping 46 per cent and its backlog reaching AED 146.3bn. Abu Dhabi's Aldar saw net profit rise 24pc to AED 4.1bn, revenue surge 42pc, and backlog climb to AED 62.3bn.

Both companies' shares have advanced this year, with Emaar up 15pc and Aldar up 29pc, while maintaining dividend payouts that market watchers say are competitive. The figures come against a backdrop of more than 96,000 property transactions worth AED 322bn in the UAE during the first half of 2025.

Luxury momentum

The luxury segment remains buoyant, exemplified by Aldar's record AED 400m sale of a mansion at Faya Al Saadiyat, the most expensive residential property ever sold in Abu Dhabi. This, alongside continued demand for off-plan properties, underscores the strength of the upper-end market.

A recent eToro survey found that 52pc of UAE retail investors see real estate and construction as the most promising sectors over the next 12 months, further highlighting the sector's role as a preferred investment choice.

Talabat Forecast Upgrade Follows Strong Quarter

Mahir Haneef
TDT | Manama

Talabat Holding plc has raised its full-year growth forecasts after a second quarter surge powered by post-IPO expansion and the rapid uptake of its talabat pro loyalty programme across GCC and non-GCC markets.

The Dubai-headquartered delivery platform posted a 32 per cent year-on-year rise in gross merchandise value (GMV) to USD 2.4 billion for the quarter, with revenue up 35pc to USD 982 million. Adjusted EBITDA rose 31pc to USD 166m, maintaining a margin of 6.8pc, while net income climbed 33pc to USD 119m, or 4.9pc of GMV.

Citing continued momentum in customer acquisition and order frequency, the company lifted its GMV growth target for the year to 27-29pc, up from 17-18pc. Revenue growth is now projected at 29-32pc, compared with an earlier 18-20pc. Adjusted EBITDA margin is expected at 6.5pc, net income margin at 5pc, and adjusted free cash flow at 6pc.

Talabat credited its performance to both core GCC markets – including Bahrain, Kuwait, UAE, Qatar and Oman – and faster growth from Egypt, Jordan and Iraq. The UAE remained its largest market, while Kuwait delivered over 20pc growth for both the quarter and first half.

The company also reported robust performance in its Food vertical and faster gains in its Grocery & Retail segment, supported by a higher share of subscription and tMart revenues. The GCC accounted for 83pc of GMV in Q2, with non-GCC markets making up the remaining 17pc.