

BDB names Abdulrahman Buheji as Head of Credit



Abdulrahman Abdulla Buheji

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BDB has announced the appointment of Abdulrahman Abdulla Buheji as Head of Credit, and as a member of the bank's management committee.

Before joining BDB, Abdulrahman held the positions as Acting Chief Credit Officer at BBK BSC, Head of Corporate Banking Analysts at BISB, Area Credit Manager at Bank ABC, and Project & Structured Finance Relationship Manager at GIB. Abdulrahman comes with over 13 years of experience in Credit, Investment, &



Sanjeev Paul

Corporate Banking.

Abdulrahman graduated with an MBA from the University of Manchester – the UK and a Bachelor of Commerce from Concordia University – Canada.

Commenting on the appointment, Sanjeev Paul, BDB Group CEO, said, "Abdulrahman's appointment is in line with our strategy to enrol senior Bahraini talent in key management positions. Abdulrahman is a valuable addition to the management team and will greatly assist the Bank to achieve higher client centricity in its credit function."

HSBC MENAT eyes growth opportunities as GDP, trade rebound



Chris Russell and Martin Tricaud

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HSBC said it has ambitious plans for growth in its business in the Middle East, North Africa and Turkey (MENAT), where a rebound in GDP and international trade will position the region as one of the fastest-growing in the world over the coming decade.

As the nine markets in which the bank operates in the region bounce back from the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, HSBC expects economic growth and international trade in MENAT to outpace the global average and create a raft of new opportunities across the bank's customer spectrum.

"HSBC has ambitious plans for growth in MENAT, which is positioned to be one of the fastest-growing regions of the world over the coming decade," Martin Tricaud, HSBC Group CEO for MENAT and Deputy Chairman of HSBC Bank Middle East Ltd, said.

"We are investing to support the needs of customers across the entire spectrum of our business, from the investment plans of governments, multinationals and fast-growing smaller companies in our wholesale banking portfolio, to the wealth management needs of the millions of customers in our personal banking portfolio," Martin added.

The International Monetary Fund forecasts that the economies of the nine markets in which the bank operates in the region will see the value of gross domestic product (GDP) expand by 34.7% in aggregate by the end of 2025 as nations recover from the sharp downturn triggered by the COVID-19 pandemic. Trade growth could follow a similar path.

Chris Russell, CEO in Bahrain added: "The financial sector plays an important role in the service sector and contributes significantly to the local economy. The leading role that Bahrain is playing in digitizing banking services will drive growth and create opportunities for innovation."

The bank is putting special emphasis on investments in technology, particularly its market leading HSBCnet application for wholesale customers to help them digitise transactional foreign exchange flows and accelerate digital payments, and with enhancements to the range of services on its mobile platform for retail customers.

HSBC is also boosting its capabilities for financing and structuring complex solutions for corporate transactions to support business customers as they invest and expand, as well as rolling out new advisory services for sovereign wealth funds and strengthening its market-leading capabilities in sustainable finance and trade. "MENAT is a dynamic, entrepreneurial region and a return to solid growth for GDP and trade will provide a host of long term, strategic, sustainable growth opportunities for our customers across the nine markets we serve in the region and we are ready to support them as they build back better from the impact of COVID-19," Martin said.

Make BIA a memorable experience: Transport Minister tells airport staff

● Opens workshop on "Enhancing the Passenger Experience"

● Around 1,500 participants will attend the workshops

● New Passenger Terminal Building opens on 28 January

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Preparations to transfer operations to Bahrain International Airport's (BIA) new Passenger Terminal started yesterday with the inauguration of a workshop on "Enhancing the Passenger Experience" by the Minister of Transportation & Telecommunications.

BAC organised the preparatory-workshop for staff to help deliver improved levels of service at the new facility.

Kamal bin Ahmed Mohamed, also the chairman of the Bahrain Airport Company (BAC), told airport employees that they play a vital role in creating a positive first impression for passengers arriving in Bahrain.



BAC organised the preparatory-workshop for staff

"Although the new terminal is four times larger than the existing airport and features enhanced facilities and services, we believe the exceptional customer service is what passengers will remember most fondly," the minister said.

"Since the establishment of the Kingdom's aviation sector, the warm and welcoming nature of airport employees has been the foundation of the travel experience at BIA," he added.

Kamal Ahmed said the Ministry of Transportation and BAC strive to maintain this approach

at the new terminal, which will help position BIA as one of the leading airports in the region and ensure that travellers enjoy a comfortable and memorable experience.

The minister reminded all that the goal is to ensure BIA stand out as a best-in-class airport that reflects the Kingdom's distinct character.

"As Bahraini citizens, we are honoured to represent our beloved country and His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa, and will continue to carry out this noble mission with great

dedication at the new terminal."

Around 1,500 participants will attend the workshops, including representatives from the Ministry of Interior, Immigration and Passport Control, Customs Affairs, Airport Police directorates, BAC, airlines and companies operating out of the airport such as Hala Bahrain, Gulf Air, and Bahrain Airport Services. The transfer of operations to the new Passenger Terminal Building on 28 January is a crucial step towards achieving the Kingdom's ambitious Economic Vision 2030.



Established in 1927, BIA is the Gulf's oldest international airport.



Bahrain International Airport in December 1975

The \$1.1 billion expansion reportedly will boost the airport's passenger capacity to 14 million per year.

The terminal will feature 104 check-in counters, 36 passport control booths and 24 security screening points. Additionally, the building includes two hospitality lounges, one run by Gulf Air and the other by the Bahrain Airport Company.

Trump directs govt to minimize procurement from China

Reuters | Washington

In another action against China days before he leaves office, US President Donald Trump yesterday directed government departments to look at ways to minimize procurement of Chinese goods and services to reduce the risks from espionage, his national security adviser said.

In a statement, Robert O'Brien accused China of targeting the information systems of the US government for personnel records, military plans, and other data through cyber and other means.

"For this reason, the United States must take corresponding actions to protect American interests. We must adjust our regulations and policies and take other necessary actions to reduce the risk of PRC technical and human espionage activities directed at the Federal Government," he said, referring to the People's Republic of China.

He said Trump had directed government bodies to conduct reviews "to minimize the procurement of People's Republic of China (PRC) goods and services by the Federal Government."

O'Brien did not give examples of the procurement he



U.S. President Donald Trump shakes hands with China's President Xi Jinping before starting their bilateral meeting during the G20 leaders summit in Osaka, Japan

referred to, but a senior administration official said a key aim was to push back against Chinese attempts to infiltrate US IT networks.

"Anything having to do with Chinese companies that are going to have kit components in our network could potentially become a vulnerability that could be used to continue China's military-civil fusion strategy," the official said.

"If there's hardware, for example, that would make its way into our networks, that's the sort of stuff that could pose a

potential vulnerability."

The announcement comes less than a week before Trump leaves office to be succeeded by Democrat Joe Biden on Jan. 20. It was the latest in a series of steps targeting China, which analysts see as a bid to lock in a tough approach to Beijing.

Trump has pursued hard-line policies toward China on issues ranging from trade to espionage and the coronavirus. Relations plummeted to their worst level in decades when he ramped up rhetoric in his unsuccessful re-election campaign.

Emirates stops flights to major Australian cities



AFP | Sydney

Emirates has suspended flights to Australia's three largest cities as the country further restricts international arrivals over fears of new virus strains.

The Dubai-based carrier was one of the last to maintain routes into and out of the country's east coast throughout most of the pandemic but on Friday evening told travellers a handful of planned flights next week would be the last.

"Due to operational reasons, Emirates flights to/from Sydney, Brisbane and Melbourne will be suspended until further notice," Emirates said on its website.

The airline will still run two flights a week to Perth, but the cuts are another barrier for tens of thousands of stranded Australians still attempting to return home.

Australia's borders have effectively been closed since March to curb the spread of the virus.