



His Royal Highness Prime Minister Prince Khalifa bin Salman Al Khalifa received at Gudaibiya Palace British Secretary of State for International Trade Dr Liam Fox. He stressed strong relations between Bahrain and the United Kingdom and both countries' keenness on economic, political and commercial development.



The Premier added that the initiatives launched by Prince Mohammed bin Salman have preserved the Saudi economy, and enabled it to turn challenges into opportunities for growth and development. The Prime Minister made the statements while receiving a number of state officials, with whom he reviewed local topics related to the efforts being exerted by the government to ensure the citizens' access to the best levels of decent living within a secure and stable environment.



\$32bn infra boost underway



Diversification of economy remains top priority for government

● The Crown Prince affirmed that citizens will continue to be at the forefront of the Kingdom's development programme, led by HM King Hamad.

Manama

Bahrain is implementing a \$32 billion infrastructure development programme for the overall growth of the nation, said the Crown Prince yesterday.

This came as His Royal Highness Prince Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa, Crown Prince, Deputy Supreme Commander, and First Deputy Prime Minister, visited the majlis of Khalifa bin Ahmed Al Dhahrani, Abdulla bin Hamad Al Noaimi, Al Jishi and Al Khozaei families.

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Kingdom's development programme, led by HM King Hamad.

He noted that, in line with the Kingdom's long-term development goals, Bahrain is implementing a USD 32 billion infrastructure development programme which is expected to help diversify the economy, boost the Kingdom's competitiveness and generate opportunities.

The Crown Prince highlighted that, as the GCC's fastest growing economy, it is important that Bahrain maintains momentum, noting that the Kingdom's economic resilience is a consequence of diversification and fiscal consolidation measures that have yielded high rates of return across all non-oil activities.

The Crown Prince noted the importance of placing citizens at the centre of all initiatives aimed at delivering long term benefits for current and future generations, while ensuring Bahrainis have the opportunity to contribute to the Kingdom's sustainable growth.

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'Qatar not keen on solving crisis'

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Bahrain sees no resolution in sight to a diplomatic row between Qatar and its neighbours, which cut diplomatic and trade ties with Doha nearly a year ago.

"The information in our hands today does not indicate any glimmer of hope for a solution now, as the matter does not happen suddenly," Foreign Minister Shaikh Khalid Bin Ahmad Al Khalifa told Al Sharq Al Awsat newspaper yesterday.

Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates (UAE), Bahrain and Egypt severed travel and trade ties with Qatar last June, accusing it of backing Iran and supporting terrorism.

After initially disrupting Qatar's imports and triggering the withdrawal of billions of dollars from its banks by depositors from the four states, the world's top exporter of liquefied natural gas quickly developed new trade routes and deployed tens of billions of dollars from its sovereign wealth fund to protect its domestic lenders.

The dispute has evaded mediation attempts



Shaikh Khalid

by Kuwait and Washington, which has strong alliances with both sides and fears the split among Sunni US allies could benefit Iran in a decades-old tussle for influence in the Middle East.

Bahrain's foreign minister said Qatar was prolonging the crisis by taking its case to Western allies, instead of dealing with it inside the Gulf Arab bloc.