

Business

Ithmaar Holding reports net profit of \$10.06m for 2018

IB Capital acquires an additional stake in Solidarity Group Holding

KUWAIT: Ithmaar Holding B.S.C., a Bahrain-based financial institution, and its wholly-owned subsidiary, Ithmaar Bank B.S.C. (closed), a Bahrain-based Islamic retail bank, both reported profits as they each announced their financial results for 2018.

The announcement by the Ithmaar Holding Chairman Prince Amr Al-Faisal, who is also the Ithmaar Bank Chairman, follows the review and approval of both Board of Directors of the consolidated financial results for the year ended 31 December 2018.

Ithmaar Holding reported a net profit of \$10.06 million for the year ended 31 December 2018, as compared to a net loss of \$72.40 million for 2017. This included a net loss attributable to equity holders for the year ended 31 December 2018 of \$23.98 million, as compared to the \$84.71 million net loss reported for the same period in 2017. EPS for the year has improved to negative US Cents 0.82 compared from negative US Cents 2.91 for the same period in 2017.

The results included a net loss of \$1.28 million for the three-month period ended 31 December 2018, as compared to a net loss of \$56.2 million for 2017. Net loss attributable to equity holders for the three-month period ended 31 December 2018 was \$26.71 million, a decrease of 53.7 percent as compared to a net loss of \$57.67 million reported for the same period in 2017. EPS for the three-month period ended 31 December 2018 decreased by US Cents 0.92 compared to negative US Cents 1.98 for the same period in 2017.

Also in December 2018, Ithmaar Holding's other wholly-owned subsidiary, IB Capital, acquired, an additional stake in Solidarity Group Holding, one of the largest Takaful Group companies in Bahrain. As a result, Solidarity Group Holding became a subsidiary of IB Capital. During December 2018, Dilmunia Development Fund I L.P., a fund which is managed by Ithmaar's wholly-owned subsidiary, Ithmaar Bank, became subsidiary of Ithmaar Bank after the Bank's shareholding in the company increased to more than 50 percent.

"On behalf of the Ithmaar Holding Board of Directors, I am pleased to announce that, despite increasingly challenging market conditions, the Group is continuing its planned transformation in 2018 and

concluded the year with remarkable achievements," said HRH Prince Amr. "These included improved financial performance, as well as the realization of key growth initiatives," he said.

"The 2018 results show that net income before provision for impairment and overseas taxation for the year ended 31 December 2018 increased to \$43.42 million, a 96.8 percent increase from the \$22.10 million reported for the same period last year," said Prince Amr. This was mainly due to higher share of profit after tax from associates resulting from reclassification from held-for-sale to associate during the period," he said.

"As a result, our operating income for the year ended 31 December 2018 increased to \$259.82 million, a 12.7 percent increase from the \$230.56 million reported for 2017. Operating income for the three-month period ended 31 December 2018 was \$48.34 million, a 2.3 percent decrease from the \$49.48 million reported for the same period in 2017," said Prince Amr.

"Ithmaar's balance sheet decreased marginally by 1.4 percent with total assets at \$8.49 billion as at 31 December 2018, compared to \$8.61 billion as at 31 December 2017," said Prince Amr. Total owners' equity stood at \$116.36 million as at 31 December 2018, a 67.3 percent decrease compared to \$355.33 million as at 31 December 2017, mainly due to the Accounting standard, FAS 30 impact of previous year recognized in equity and the foreign exchange impact of devaluation of Pak rupee during the year recognized in equity," he said.

"On behalf of both Boards of Directors, I take this opportunity to express our sincere thanks and appreciation to our shareholders for their confidence, and to the relevant regulators and other authorities for their guidance and support," said Prince Amr. "In particular, we are grateful to the Central Bank of Bahrain, to the Bahrain Ministry of Industry, Commerce and Tourism, the Bahrain Bourse, Boursa Kuwait and the Dubai Financial Market for their continuous guidance and support," he said.

"I am pleased to inform you that as part of its Digital Strategy, Ithmaar Bank completed a major upgrade during 2018 to its IT infrastructure and systems. The upgrade, which was implemented to help support busi-

ness growth, improve operational efficiency, improve internal controls and enhance customer experience, included a major project of upgrading the Bank's core banking system and implementation of new eBanking system. The new system provides a strong foundation to support growth, allowing for the flexibility of quickly launching new products and services with focus on customer centricity," said Prince Amr.

Ithmaar Holding Chief Executive Officer, Ahmed Abdul Rahim, who is also the Ithmaar Bank Chief Executive Officer, said that performance of both institutions against the challenging market conditions of 2018 further reconfirm that sustained efforts to turn the Group around are indeed paying off.

"Ithmaar Bank's financial results show a net profit of BD14.14 million for the year ended 31 December 2018, an increase of 126.7 percent compared to the net profit of BD6.24 million reported in 2017," said Abdul Rahim. "Net profit attributable to equity holders for the year ended 31 December 2018 was BD1.41 million, a decrease of 10.9 percent compared to the net profit of BD1.58 million reported in 2017," he said.

"The results included a net profit of BD9.38 million of the three-month period ended 31 December 2018, compared to a net loss of BD0.44 million reported in 2017," said Abdul Rahim. "Net loss attributable to equity holders for the three-month period ended remains unchanged at \$0.15 million compared to same period previous year," he said.

"Net income before provision for impairment and overseas taxation for the year ended 31 December 2018 was BD13.70 million, a 28 percent decrease compared to the BD19.03 million reported for 2017," said Abdul Rahim. "Total income remained stable in 2018, with the Bank reporting BD151.7 million for the year ended 31 December 2018," he said.

"Ithmaar Bank's balance sheet decreased marginally by 3.5 percent with total assets at BD3.13 billion as at 31 December 2018, compared to BD3.24 billion as at 31 December 2017," said Abdul Rahim. "Meanwhile, due to market conditions, the equity of unrestricted investment account holders stood at BD1 billion as at 31 December 2018, a decrease of 6.6 percent as compared to BD1.06



Prince Amr Al-Faisal



Ahmed Abdul Rahim

billion as at 31 December 2017. Total owners' equity stood at BD85.39 million as at 31 December 2018, a 44.8 percent decrease compared to BD154.60 million as at 31 December 2017, mainly due to the Accounting standard, FAS 30 impact of previous year recognized in equity and the foreign exchange impact of devaluation of Pak rupee during the year recognized in equity," he said.

"I am also delighted to inform you that Ithmaar Bank's retail banking subsidiary in Pakistan, Faysal Bank Limited, has maintained growth momentum and the Bank's footprint now extends to 455 branches in more than 100 cities across Pakistan, after having added 50 branches during 2018. The Bank aims to have expanded its retail banking network by 100 during 2019 to reach 555 branches by the end of 2019," he said.

Early in 2018, the Bank launched the Ithmaar eQ app, which is a smartphone electronic queuing app designed to significantly reduce and potentially even eliminate customer waiting time altogether. The Ithmaar eQ app allows customers to directly book appointments or issue virtual eTickets for the nearest or most convenient branch, timings and directions, and notifies customers when their turn approaches. The app also provides significant MIS on customer behaviour. Ithmaar Bank operates one of the largest retail banking networks in Bahrain with 16 branches and 45 ATMs in strategic locations around the Kingdom.

Burgan Bank announces new winner of Al-Thuraya draw

KUWAIT: Burgan Bank, announced yesterday Ayman Abd Alrasoul Khalaf Mirza as the lucky winner of the Al-Thuraya Salary Account monthly draw.

The draw rewards new and existing customers who transfer their salary to Burgan Bank by offering them a chance to win a Nissan Patrol SUV every month. With every KD 10 available in the account, the customer receives one chance to enter the draw.

The Al-Thuraya account holders have the option to hold money in Kuwaiti dinar and other major currencies and can access account-related services such as standing orders, loans and credit cards, and benefit from the discounts and offers throughout the year.

Total to move jobs away from London, but says Brexit not to blame

PARIS: French energy giant Total said Friday it will move some of its trading and marketing activities from London to Paris and Geneva, but insisted that Brexit had not influenced the decision. The company said the move, which British media reported will affect 200 jobs, was a result of Total acquiring the LNG (liquid natural gas) portfolio of fellow French energy firm Engie.

"Total plans to consolidate its LNG trading and marketing activities and bring together similar business teams currently split across multiple locations in Europe (London, Paris and Geneva)," the company said in a statement.

"Total's European trading operations will be consolidated in Geneva, the leading commodity trading hub of the continent." The firm's London-based LNG marketing activities meanwhile will be moved to Paris to join the existing team in the French capital.

"Brexit is not at all a factor influencing this project," the firm said.

"This project is the consequence of the necessity to regroup teams split between the locations after the acquisition of Engie assets and teams." Dozens of companies have been reported to have moved or said they would move their operations from Britain to continental Europe ahead of March 29, when Britain is due to leave the European Union.

But with just six weeks to go, British Prime Minister Theresa May is struggling to persuade parliament to back her divorce deal, prompting fears the country could crash out without a deal. —AFP

Turkish Airlines introduces its new The LEGO Movie 2

KUWAIT: Turkish Airlines, flying passengers to more global destinations than any other airline, preparing for a brand new journey set to be started with its move to its new state-of-the-art home base, Istanbul Airport, continues its partnership with The LEGO Movie franchise with the recent digital debut, of a new fun and original safety video. It stars characters from the latest big-screen animated LEGO adventure, The LEGO Movie 2, from Warner Bros. Pictures, in theaters worldwide beginning February 8, 2019.

Back in August 2018, Turkish Airlines debuted the first-ever LEGO passenger safety video, which was also inspired by the LEGO Movie franchise. The video topped the viral charts with 20 million views in just one month and then brought home the gold at the 2018 Clio Entertainment Awards.

In tandem with the release of the eagerly anticipated sequel to the blockbuster hit The LEGO Movie, the Star Alliance airline has now debuted a sequel of their own - a second inflight safety video featuring LEGO characters, which will be shown on all flights starting March 1, 2019. The second video features Emmet, Lucy and others from the cast of The LEGO Movie 2 in starring roles, with

LEGO Batman himself at the helm, as the director of the 4 minute 27 second film.

Alongside the animated leads, the safety video also features some of Turkish Airlines' most exciting and recognizable destinations, bringing some of these 306 destinations - which Turkey's national flag carrier serves - to life, brick by brick. The video journeys across five continents, visiting Bali, Moscow, San Francisco, Rome, Cape Town, Hong Kong and Tokyo, ending finally at Turkish Airlines' iconic new home at Istanbul Airport.

The colorful ensemble from The LEGO Movie franchise can also be seen off screen and in the skies, living up to a specially wrapped narrow body Airbus A321-231 livery, currently serving the European routes of the flag carrier airline.

"With one of the youngest fleets in the world, Turkish Airlines continues to build on its peerless brand experience. We are excited to present our passengers with this new innovative safety video as we prepare to make our move to Istanbul Airport, designed from the ground-up to be an unprecedented experience by itself," said M. Ilker Ayçi, Turkish Airlines' Chairman of the Board and the Executive Committee.

Production on The LEGO Movie 2 safety video lasted for a total of 979 hours over the course of 4 months and among five different countries including Turkey, the USA, the UK, Canada and Australia. There were over 400 people involved in the creative process - 252 of whom were extras, in addition to the six-strong featured cast in the live action end sequence. The live action crew consisted of over 80 people, while the animation team included almost 70.



The new safety video also features 24,000 LEGO minifigures in the crowd for the Super Hero Cape Town match and a whopping 20,330,795 LEGO bricks used to build all the locations in the new video - ten times the amount of bricks

used in the first LEGO Movie-themed safety video. 11 different versions of the new safety video exist, both in English and Turkish, to cover safety particulars of the 28 different airplane models in the Turkish Airlines fleet.

Gulf Bank welcomes winner of yearly salary account draw Fawziya Ali

KUWAIT: Gulf Bank was pleased to welcome Fawziya Mansour Amir Ali, the lucky winner of its Kuwait's largest salary cash prize of KD 250,000. Fawziya received her grand cash prize upon visiting the bank's Head Office on 13th February 2019, where she was welcomed by members of the Bank's senior management.

Fawziya was announced as the 2018 winner of the Salary Account during an exciting live event at Al Murouj, on 7th February, which was broadcast live on 88.8 FM Kuwait Pulse radio. The winner was delighted by the news and expressed her gratitude to Gulf Bank, commenting during her visit, "Gulf Bank's Salary Account provides exciting cash prizes and benefits, and I am delighted to be a winner of Kuwait's largest salary prize. I never expected to win the incredible grand prize and would like to thank Gulf Bank for offering people a chance to change their lives for the better."

Commenting on Fawziya's visit, Ahmad Al-Amir, Assistant General Manager for External Communications, Gulf Bank, said: "We are delighted to congratulate this year's Salary Account winner, and welcome her to the Bank. We look forward to continuing our legacy, of making dreams come true and providing



our customers with exciting offers and benefits across our products."

The salary account gives new customers the opportunity to receive either a KD100 cash gift upon transferring their salaries to Gulf Bank or an interest-free loan of up to KD 10,000. Customers must have a minimum salary of KD500 and will be eligible for the offer following their first salary transfer to Gulf Bank. Customers can also enjoy additional benefits like a free of charge

Visa or MasterCard credit card for a year, as well as a chance to apply for a loan of up to KD70,000, or a consumer loan of up to KD 25,000.

With the new 2019 Kuwaiti salary offer new customers, who transfer their salaries to Gulf Bank are automatically enrolled in the monthly draws, giving them the chance of winning cash prizes of up to 12 times their salary, and a yearly draw of Kuwait's largest salary prize of up to 100 times their salary.