

## Lifestyle

# Boubyan Bank records KD 20.6m in net profits for first quarter of 2023

## Nomo Bank takes regional expansion steps towards further global reach

KUWAIT: Boubyan Bank has announced KD 27.6 million in operating profits for the first quarter of this year, thus recording KD 20.6 million in net profits at a growth rate of 22 percent compared with last year, while the earnings per share amount to 4.4 fils.

Boubyan Bank's Vice-Chairman & Group Chief Executive Officer Adel Al-Majed stated: "Thanks to Almighty Allah, our Q1 profits are good, which is a good start to this year as we hope it would be a good year for everyone. Of course, we had to allocate additional precautionary provisions to support the bank's financial position, and to bolster our ability to face any future repercussions of the regional and international developments."

Al-Majed highlighted the most significant numbers recorded by the bank during Q1, where the bank's assets grew to KD 8 billion at a growth rate of 8 percent compared with last year, while the bank's financing portfolio grew by 5 percent to reach KD 6 billion, and operating income grew by 6 percent to KD 52.6 million, whereas the bank's market share of local financing increased to 11.4 percent.

### The bank's new brand identity

Al-Majed stated: "This year witnessed the launch of the bank's new brand identity titled 'Imagine the possibilities'. The launch is aligned with the bank's success and achievements over the past years as well as its ambitions for the future."

"The rebranding process aimed to keep up with our growth, while expressing the bank's ambition and passion to build a strong relationship with customers, and to refresh our messages to various segments of customers and stakeholders and, thus, we updated our logo, our mission, vision, and Boubyan core values," he added.

This year, Boubyan Bank continued topping the pyramid of customer service in Kuwait, evidenced by earning two awards from Service Hero, the international consumer-driven customer satisfaction index. The bank was named the Best Islamic Bank in Customer Service for the 13th year in a row since 2010, in addition to receiving the First Place Award in Customer Service as a Country Winner across all economic sectors in Kuwait.

Al-Majed stated: "We take pride in this achievement which highlights our commitment in Boubyan Bank to the highest levels of customer satisfaction. We are keen on continuous engagement with our customers to guarantee that we offer them quality banking services and products that meet their expectations and needs, thus raising the bar for offering outstanding service levels that exceed customers' expectations."

He went on to add: "Receiving this award for the 13th year in a row reiterates our customers' trust in our bank and their satisfaction with our level of service, which has not been compromised despite the ongoing increase in our customer base, which always represents a fresh challenge to our employees to maintain the same levels of service."

"Our digital transformation strategy and leadership in offering leading digital services and solutions enhanced customers' satisfaction with our services, contributed to their successful banking experience, and proved the necessity of investment in digital services and expansion of the same. Boubyan is always engaged with customers through studies, surveys, and data analysis to ensure reaching the highest levels of satisfaction, and implementation of the same as per international standards," Al-Majed highlighted.

### Nomo - A distinctive mark in Islamic digital banking sector and a GCC expansion

During the past period, Nomo Bank, the Digital Bank of the Bank of London and the Middle East "BLME", a subsidiary of Boubyan Bank Group, launched unique products and services that put it on par with top financial institutions. This aligns with its strategy that focuses on enhancing and improving its core digital business in order to ensure offering the best banking experience to individual customers through the best digital solutions so as to provide easier, more convenient, and secure digital payment solutions.

Moreover, in line with its expansion strategy in

### Adel Al-Majed :

- This year witnessed the launch of the bank's new brand identity in a step to keep up with our current growth
- Maintaining our leadership in customer service confirms our kept promises to customers to offer them the best services

the GCC and the Arab regions, the bank has recently launched the first phase of this expansion by announcing a strategic partnership with ADCB and its digital Islamic arm, Al-Hilal Digital Bank, to offer the services of Nomo Bank in the UAE. This is a significant milestone in the bank's growth journey and its expansion, which is well-aligned with the strategy set right from the establishment of the bank around two years ago.

This year, the bank launched its property finance product, which is an excellent investment opportunity for Middle East customers to help them realize their dream of owning properties in the United Kingdom, whether for investment, lease, or as a private residence, and since this is one of the most attractive and important real estate markets worldwide. This comes as a major step towards employing the digital bank's services in providing easier, more convenient, and secure property finance solutions.

### Highlights:

In 2023, Boubyan launched its new logo and brand identity, which aim to:

- Align and integrate our cultures seamlessly.
- Inspire, retain, and attract talent.
- Build strong bonds with customers.
- Enhance our competitiveness.

Additionally, Nomo launched its new multi-currency account, which allows customers to perform their banking transactions in six different currencies while linking them all to one card, thus offering a comprehensive banking solution that allows customers to use it instead of carrying several banking cards or cash at hand by offering them a world-class banking experience backed by state-of-the-art and innovative technology.

Customers can now benefit from making digital payments using six different currencies, enabling them to make payments in local currencies in more than 25 countries spanned across Europe and the Middle East, thus helping them save various FX fees and commissions. This can be done by opening a multi-currency account within seconds using Nomo App, and immediately benefiting from its remittance and fund-transfer services, coupled with the possibility of linking the account with Nomo card and Apple Pay.

### Digital collaborations and expansion in customer service

Despite the fierce competition in the market for banking services, particularly digital services, Boubyan managed to achieve a new milestone by offering a set of exceptional digital and conventional services: the bank announced the launch of Boubyan Visa-Oasis Digital Prepaid Card in collaboration with Kuwait Airways, making it the first digital prepaid card of its kind in Kuwait. Through this card, the bank offers innovative solutions to its customers who have a passion for travel, allowing them to collect air miles on their spending inside and outside Kuwait.

The bank further announced collaboration with Alhisba App through which the bank offers excellent services to its customers using the best

modern tech-solutions to facilitate their access to information and data related to the Kuwait real estate market.

Additionally, Boubyan inked a strategic partnership agreement with Baims App, a Kuwaiti remote-education startup, to ensure PRIME university and high school students have access to a set of great offers on training courses and tuition, while providing them with integrated educational services tailored to their specific curricula, in addition to giving them the opportunity to communicate with approved and vastly experienced instructors, thus offering new solutions that meet students' needs.

This year Boubyan opened its 46th branch in Kuwait in Al-Daiyeh, thus offering a comprehensive banking network, which is able to reach to various segments of its customers in application of the financial inclusion principle, which is the most important pillar in the bank's strategy, and is of paramount importance to the bank.

### Digitalization of corporate services to offer unique solutions

Moreover, Boubyan Bank continued attracting more companies across various sectors in the local market through offering a group of outstanding banking services and solutions that meet all the needs of corporate customers. The Corporate Banking Group is also keen on developing and improving advanced digital products and services that support and expand the scope of offered services.

During this year, Boubyan Bank announced the launch of a new service offered for the first time in the local market for instant collection of commercial receivables of suppliers and extension of payment terms for them, allowing customers to better manage their liquidity by improving financial statements of companies, through offering preferential financing rates through integrated solutions of a smart supply chain financing platform.

### The fastest growing brand in Kuwait

Brand Finance, the international brand-valuation consultancy, ranked Boubyan as the fastest growing brand in Kuwait at a growth rate of 33 percent in terms of valuation in 2023.

Boubyan aspires that BLME becomes the Islamic bank of choice for GCC customers in the United Kingdom as we have incorporated a set of main principles for the bank as a part of its transformation strategy following the acquisition, including having a sustainable customer-focused brand aligned with Boubyan Bank's Group.

### National cadres: A main pillar

Boubyan continued supporting its human resources and recruiting national cadres, and was able to reach the highest percentage of manpower across the private sector which now exceeds 80 percent, and continued its enablement approach for women who now account for 26 percent of the bank's employees, with many of them occupying leadership positions.

Additionally, it continued investing in its human cadres to improve their competence and sharpen their skills by offering them training programs and courses in cooperation with top companies specialized in human resources consulting and development. This came out of Boubyan Bank's keenness to adopt leading international standards to ensure that the bank is ready for future challenges by qualifying its leaders and providing them with the necessary tools to sufficiently compete in the market.

### CSR and the holy month of Ramadan

Following its annual tradition, Boubyan Bank continued launching many initiatives and programs



Adel Al-Majed

that suit the nature of the Holy Month of Ramadan in an attempt to spread the knowledge of the Glorious Quran among Muslims in Kuwait, the region, and the world. To this end, Boubyan Bank launched "Kuwait's App for the Glorious Quran with the 10 Recitations" in collaboration with the Public Authority for Printing and Distribution of the Holy Quran, Sunnah, and Related Sciences, which adopt modern technologies that guarantee communicating the same to millions in the manner that ensures everyone benefits from the same.

Kuwait's App for the Glorious Quran with the 10 Recitations is the first official App of its kind in Kuwait and the world that serves the Glorious Quran, its sciences, translation of its meanings, interpretation, and protection of the Quranic text against distortion, and which aims to reinforce the habit of reciting the Quran.

Additionally, a partnership was announced with the Grand Mosque of Kuwait whereby most of the bank's events during the Holy Month were held at the mosque such as the "Recite with Boubyan Competition", "Niqsat Boubyan" initiative, and the Iftar campaign, in addition to service and hospitality for worshippers during the last ten days of Ramadan with the participation of a group of volunteers from Boubyan Bank's employees from various departments in order to support the efforts of the organizers of Qiyam Prayers "Night Prayers" at the Grand Mosque. "Steps Campaign" continued sending its encouraging messages to citizens and residents to help them exercise walking during the Holy Month of Ramadan in the presence of the bank's team of volunteers at Al-Asima Mall. The campaign's proceeds will be allocated for the continued eyesight-restoration surgeries in Africa led by the "Noor Boubyan Campaign".

### Why is Boubyan the best?

Boubyan's choice by Service Hero relied on a group of criteria including a survey that extended over one year among consumers, who evaluated companies on a scale of 10 against their service-level expectations, their experience and satisfaction following the customer-service experience.

The evaluation relied on many elements such as staff's attitude, location of the bank, speed of service, confidence in the product, quality of service or product, value for money, the contact center, and the website of the bank. Service Hero's survey implements a strict protocol to confirm the identity of consumers who take part in the survey.

Kuwait's App for the Glorious Quran with the 10 Recitations has many innovative features that make it stand out from the rest of Apps: the most important of which is that it contains 10 different recitations, thus allowing users to listen to a complete collection of the best reciters of the Glorious Quran, while displaying the characteristics of the recitation, principles, different illustrations, and setting a bookmark for ease of reference in the 10 recitations, in addition to the possibility of selecting a specific word and listening to it in all available recitations.

In the first quarter of this year, Boubyan launched the "Boubyan Glow Up" health challenge for its customers in collaboration with Nutribox with prizes of KD 2,400 in value. This represented a pursuit of the bank's vision of adopting a healthy lifestyle and following healthy diets to avoid obesity and malnutrition diseases. In this challenge, the goal was for all participants to reach the optimal weight through a 6-week wellness program.

### Al-Shall Weekly Report

## Kuwait's real estate activity picks up in March

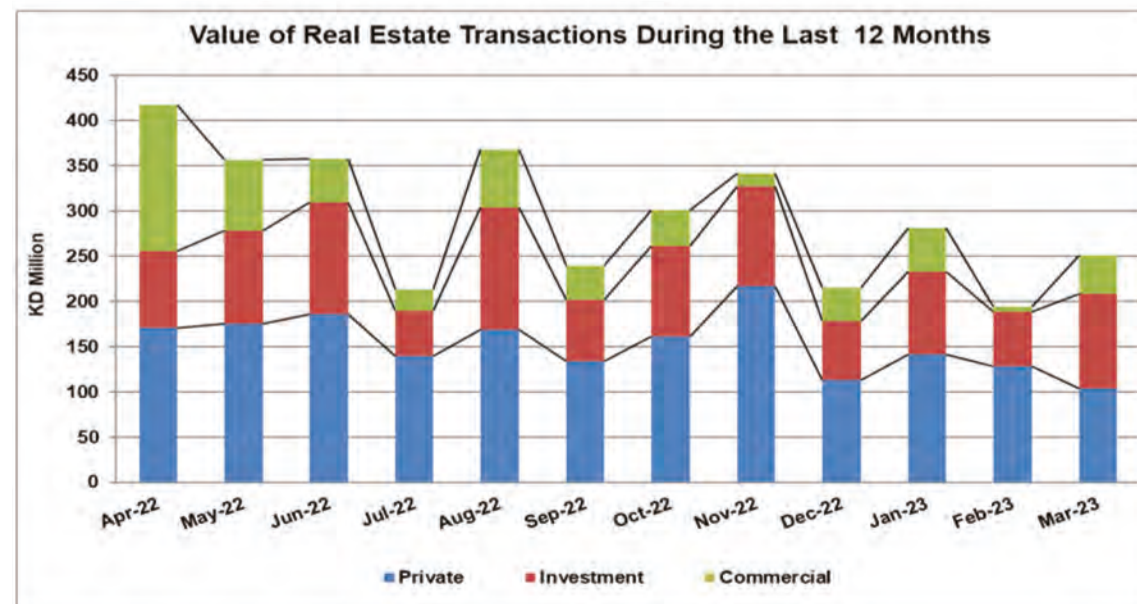
KUWAIT: The latest released data by the Ministry of Justice, Real Estate Registration & Authentications Department, indicates an increased real estate market activity during March 2023 versus February 2023 (after excluding the crafts activity and the coastal strip system). Total value of traded contracts and power of attorneys (POAs) was at KD 257.2 million in March, a 32.7 percent rise versus KD 193.9 million in February 2023 while declined by 30.8 percent versus KD 371.9 million in March 2022. Trading during March 2023 was distributed between KD 255.7 million in contracts and KD 1.4 million in POAs.

Number of real estate deals during March reached 351, of which 348 are contracts and 3 are POAs. The highest share in real estate deals went to Ahmadi governorate with 112 deals representing about 31.9 percent of the total number of real estate deals. Hawally governorate came second with 86 deals and representing 24.5 percent of total deals. The lowest share went to Jahra governorate with

10 deals, representing 2.8 percent of the total. The value of private housing activity reached KD 103.3 million, dropping by -19.2 percent compared with KD 127.9 million in February 2023. Its share of total real estate activity dropped to 40.2 percent versus 66 percent in February. The 12-monthly average of private housing activity stood at KD 153.3 million.

This means that March's trading value is 32.6 percent lower than the average. The number of deals for this activity dropped to 226 deals versus 258 deals in February. Accordingly, the value of private residential deals averaged KD 457,000 versus KD 496,000 in February, indicating a 7.8 percent decrease. The value of total investment activities scored KD 105.3 million, increasing by 73.9 percent when compared to KD 60.6 million in February 2023. Its contribution to overall real estate trading activity increased to 41 percent versus 31.2 percent in February. The trailing 12-month trading average of investment activity scored KD 91.5 4 million.

This means that the average trading value during March was 15.2 percent higher compared with the 12 months' average. In addition, the number of its deals rose to 121 compared with 93 deals in February. Therefore, the average value per deal for the investment activity reached KD 871,000 versus KD 651,000 in February, an increase by 33.7 percent. Commercial activity trading value increased to KD 42.4 million or by 685.5 percent, compared with KD 5.4 million in February 2023. Its share out of total real estate trading value increased to 16.5 percent compared with 2.8 percent in February.



The average value of commercial activity trading in the past 12 months scored KD 50 million. This means that trading value in March was 15.2 percent lower than the 12 months' average. Its deals totaled three compared to eight deals for February. The average value per deal for March reached KD 14.1 million versus a KD 675,000 average for February. Moreover, the warehousing activity had a single deal in March with a total value of KD 6.1

million. When comparing total March 2023 trading with March 2022, we note that liquidity in the real estate market decreased from KD 371.9 million to KD 257.2 million, i.e. a 30.8 percent decrease as mentioned previously. The drop was driven by the decrease of the private residential activity by 56.2 percent and the investment residential activity by 9 percent, while the commercial activity increased by 130.2 percent.