

Qatar

A Whole New Banking Experience

An Interview with Bassel Gamal Aly,
Chief Executive Officer, Ahli Bank Q.S.C.

EDITORS' NOTE Bassel Gamal Aly was appointed to his current post in 2006 after having previously served as Deputy Chief Executive Officer for Risk, Finance, Operation, and IT, and before that as Deputy Group Head of Risk. He joined Ahli United Bank (Bahrain) in 2001 after a time with CIB (Commercial International Bank-Egypt). Aly was born in Cairo, Egypt, and earned his BSc in economics from Cairo University.



Bassel Gamal Aly

How would you best describe Ahli Bank's niche in Qatar?

Ahli Bank has been a part of Qatar's growing economy over the past 23 years. It started a new era when Bahrain-based Ahli United Bank acquired a 40 percent stake in erstwhile Al Ahli Bank of Qatar. The bank was renamed Ahli Bank Q.S.C. We are a full-fledged commercial bank providing a range of retail, private, Islamic, and corporate banking and treasury services to our growing client base.

What factors led to Ahli Bank's 50 percent growth of net profits in 2007?

The increase in the bank's capital and focused strategies have allowed Ahli Bank Q.S.C. to grow significantly its retail, commercial, treasury, and private banking businesses, and has helped improve the quality and depth of services provided to our clients. This is reflected in the growth of our asset base, profitability, and market share. We have grown our balance sheet almost six fold in the past three years, without compromising asset quality and shareholder value. Additionally, Qatar is recognized today as one of the most vibrant economies in the world, as a top performer in the Middle East, and as having one of the highest per-capita incomes in the world. Backed by strong oil and gas prices, the macroeconomic factors remained buoyant and the local economy continued its upward growth momentum in 2007, maintaining Qatar's attractiveness for investment. Consumer spending grew and the demand for credit remained strong until new measures were introduced by the Central Bank, and corporate demand for loans across all sectors also remained strong.

What should international companies consider when selecting a bank to handle their financial transactions in Qatar?

At Ahlibank, clients' business requirements come as our first priority. Providing the quality service that our clients are used to in their home countries at competitive prices is one of key factors behind our ability to attract a growing number of international clients. Ahli United Bank also provides regional knowledge and cross border business modules for our clients in the seven countries we operate in – Bahrain, Qatar, Kuwait, Oman, Egypt, Iraq, and United Kingdom.

Any international corporation coming into Qatar needs the services of a bank providing a full range of services. This ranges from simple transaction accounts and cards for its employees to short term funding through letters of credit, overdraft funding, medium- and long-term financing, project finance, performance guarantees, and so on. Similar tailored products can be arranged for smaller end of the range through SME financing.

So we will be able to support any requirements that may arise for a business entity while carrying out its normal course of business in Qatar or in any country we operate in. ●

All the directions you need.



Local presence. Regional access.

A strategic partner of Ahli United Banking Group - Bahrain, UK, Kuwait, Iraq, Egypt & Oman

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