"Fitch": Saudi Banks are Recovering from the Pressures of Corona

The Credit Rating Agency, "Fitch", revealed that Saudi Banks have recovered well from the pressures of the Corona pandemic. According to a report by the agency, the economic activity of the banking sector in Saudi Arabia is showing a good recovery, supported by the increase in oil prices, which boosts government spending.

"Fitch" had given Saudi Arabia a credit rating of (A), and revised its outlook for Saudi Arabia to positive. According to the agency's report, the revision of forecasts reflected improvements in the balance sheet following the rise in oil revenues and the consolidation of public finances. "Fitch" expected the kingdom to record budget surpluses in 2022-2023 for the first time since 2013, equivalent to 6.7 percent and 3.5 percent of GDP, respectively. Assuming that the average price of Brent crude will reach $100 per barrel and $80 per barrel, and that the Kingdom's average oil production will be 10.7 million barrels per day, and 11.1 million barrels per day, respectively.

Source (Al-Arabiya.net Website, Edited)
Egypt Aims to Reduce Budget Deficit to 6.1 percent

The Egyptian Finance Minister, Mohamed Maait, indicated that "Egypt aims to reach a budget deficit during the next fiscal year 2022-2023 to about 6.1 percent of GDP, down from an estimate for the current fiscal year at 6.2 percent, despite the increase in spending." Egypt raised its expectations for the expenditure item in the draft budget next year, which was presented to the House of Representatives, by 15 percent, to 2.070 trillion pounds (112 billion dollars), an increase of 12.7 percent over the current year. Against expected revenues of 1.517 trillion pounds, an increase of 11.1 percent, and an expected deficit of 558 billion pounds, up from 487.7 billion pounds, as a result of the successive financial crises that the country is facing as a result of the war in Ukraine and the repercussions of the Corona epidemic. Minister Maait explained, during his speech to the parliament, that "the global crisis led to a rise in energy and food prices, and that the government was able to face severe and simultaneous shocks due to the strength of the national economy." He explained that "the budget was prepared in light of enormous challenges and pressures on the country's economy during the international turmoil that led to an increase in inflation." Noting that "interest payments on government debt will rise to 690.15 billion pounds in 2022-2023, equivalent to 45.4 percent of total revenues from 579.58 billion pounds this year." Source (Al-Sharq Al-Awsat Newspaper, Edited)

Omani Budget Achieves Surplus of One Billion Dollars

The general budget of the Sultanate of Oman achieved a financial surplus of 357 million Omani riyals by the end of the first quarter of this year (928 million dollars), as the surplus will be directed to improve economic recovery, increase spending on priority development projects, reduce the level of indebtedness and manage its risks. According to the Ministry of Finance, the state’s public revenues until the end of the first quarter of 2022 witnessed an increase of 66.3 percent, to record about 3 billion Omani riyals ($ 8.45 billion) compared to the revenues collected in the same period in 2021, which amounted to 1.8 billion Omani riyals ($ 4.3 billion). The rise was mainly attributed to the growth of net oil revenues at the end of the first quarter of 2022 by 70.2 percent, recording about 1.5 billion Omani riyals compared to the same period in 2021 due to the increase in the average oil price achieved to about $ 78 per barrel. The average production increased to about 1.025 million barrels per day, compared to the price achieved during the same period in 2021, which amounted to 45 US dollars and an average production of about 952,000 barrels per day. Current revenues increased by 23.7 percent, compared to the same period in 2021, as a result of the start of collection of value-added tax revenues by about 69 million Omani riyals and the excise tax by about 24 million riyals, in addition to improving the processes of supplying government revenues. Source (Al-Sharq Al-Awsat Newspaper, Edited)
أوضح المدير العام للاتحاد الدولي للنقل الجوي (إياتا) ويلي والش، أنّ "حركة المسافرين تتعافى بشكل أسرع مما كان متوقعاً"، معتبراً أنه "في المتوسط يمكن للقطاع الآن أن يشهد عودة أعداد المسافرين إلى مستويات ما قبل الجائحة في عام 2023، أي قبل عام مما كان متوقعًا في السابق".

وزاد الطلب مع تخفيف القيود المتعلقة بكوفيد في أنحاء العالم، مما أدى إلى قفزة في عدد الرحلات الجوية، بعد أن أغلقت الحكومات حدودها على مدار العامين الماضيين.

ولفت والش إلى أنّ "التوقعات على المدى القريب لا تزال إيجابية حتى مع مواجهة قطاع الطيران مشكلات جديدة مثل ارتفاع أسعار النفط والضخض وتخفيف القوى العاملة". ونوه خلال مؤتمر في الرياض إلى أنّ "نشهد حجوزات قوية للغاية، حيث أنّ جميع الرسوم التقنية لشركات الطيران الذين أتحدث معهم لا يرون فقط تحسن الطلب على السفر على المدى القريب ولكن طوال العام أيضاً"، مشدداً على أنّ "تعافي سوف يتسبب زخماً في بقية هذا العام وحتى حول عام 2023".

المصدر (صحيفة الخليج الإماراتية، بتصرّف)

Global Aviation Sector is Recovering Faster than Expected

The Director-General of the International Air Transport Association (IATA) Willie Walsh, explained that "passenger traffic is recovering faster than expected," noting that "on average, the sector can now see the return of passenger numbers to pre-pandemic levels in 2023, that is, a year before than was previously expected.

Demand increased with the easing of restrictions related to Covid-19 around the world, which led to a jump in the number of flights, after governments closed their borders over the past two years.

Kشفت وكالة النهوض بالاستثمار الخارجي في تونس (حكومية)، عن ارتفاع نسبة الاستثمارات الأجنبية في البلاد بنسبة 73 في المئة على أساس سنوي، خلال الربع الأول من عام 2022.

وبلغت الاستثمارات الأجنبية في الربع الأول من عام 2022 بقيمة 198.6 مليون دولار، مقابل 114.8 مليون دولار، خلال الربع الأول من عام 2021.

وتأمل تونس التوصل إلى اتفاق مع صندوق النقد الدولي مقابل تنفيذ إصلاحات لا تزال مبكرة، بما في ذلك خفض الدعم وتجميد الأجور، لتجنب ارتفاع الدين العام.

المصدر (صحيفة العربية الجديدة، بتصرّف)

Foreign Investment in Tunisia Increased by 73 percent

The Agency for the Promotion of Foreign Investment in Tunisia (governmental) revealed that the proportion of foreign investments in the country increased by 73 percent on an annual basis, during the first quarter of 2022.

Foreign investments in the first quarter of 2022 amounted to about 596 million dinars (198.6 million dollars), compared to 344.6 million dinars (114.8 million dollars), on an annual basis. Total foreign investments were distributed over 3.3 million dollars ($1.1 million), while direct foreign investments amounted to 592.7 million dinars ($197.5 million).

According to the budget law, Tunisia’s public debt will account for 82.57 percent of GDP in 2022, and the external debt is about 72.9 billion dinars ($24.8 billion), while the internal debt is 41 billion dinars.

Debt service increased by 55 percent compared to 2019, and it increased by 33 percent compared to 2020. Tunisia hopes to reach an agreement with the IMF in return for implementing unpopular reforms, including subsidy cuts and wage freezes, to avoid a collapse of its public finances.

المصدر (Al-Araby Al-Jadeed Newspaper, Edited)
The International Reserves and Foreign Currency Liquidity of the State of Qatar rose last April by 2.76 percent on an annual basis to $58.27 billion dollars, compared to $56.69 billion dollars in April 2021. According to Qatar Central Bank data, the annual growth came as a result of an increase in investment in foreign treasury bonds by 39.6 percent to $32.9 billion. In addition to the increase in the deposits of special drawing rights and the quota with the International Monetary Fund to about 1.5 billion dollars, compared to 540 million dollars in the same period last year.

Official reserves consist of four main components: bonds and foreign treasury bills, cash balances with foreign banks, gold holdings, special drawing rights deposits, and Qatar’s share in the International Monetary Fund. Liquid assets in foreign currency amounted to $15.7 billion, a growth of 1.9 percent, and balances with foreign banks amounted to $4.53 billion, down 66 percent, compared to $13.5 billion in April 2021. While gold stabilized at $3.23 billion.

Source (Al-Arab London Newspaper, Edited)