

# For the Fifth Consecutive Year NBB Named Bahrain's Best Retail Bank by MEED MENA Banking Excellence Awards

The National Bank of Bahrain (NBB) has been named Best Retail Bank – Bahrain at the MENA Banking Excellence Awards 2026, marking its fifth consecutive win in the category. The award acknowledges the Bank's continued progress in delivering customer-focused banking solutions, advancing digital service capabilities, and supporting key national priorities across housing finance, family banking, and SME growth.

The award builds on NBB's established retail banking track record and recognises the Bank's ability to translate customer needs into practical and accessible financial solutions. During the year, NBB continued to serve its mandate as a national banking partner through initiatives that improved access to social housing finance, accelerated digital adoption, and enhanced support for entrepreneurs and growing businesses across the Kingdom.

A key area of recognition was NBB's digital banking

advancements, which also played a major role in the award win. The Bank enhanced its Yalla Family Banking proposition with Saving Pockets and parental control features, encouraging responsible spending and saving habits among younger customers. It also introduced end-to-end Straight-Through Processing for Digital Loan Origination, same-day loan top-ups, integrated digital signatures, gamified reward experiences, and eKey 2.0 integration, creating more convenient and secure digital journeys across key retail services.

NBB's contribution to Bahrain's social housing ecosystem through Tas'heel+, launched in partnership with the Ministry of Housing and Urban Planning, was also a notable contributor to the award. As the first bank in Bahrain to introduce the enhanced government-subsidised housing



Subah Abdullatif Al Zayani, Chief Executive - Retail Banking at NBB



Usman Ahmed, Group Chief Executive Officer of NBB

finance solution, NBB expanded access to affordable home ownership for eligible citizens while supporting the Kingdom's long-term social development priorities.

Commenting on the achievement, Usman Ahmed, Group Chief Executive Officer of NBB, said, "Being named Best Retail Bank in Bahrain for the

fifth year in a row is a proud reflection of the purpose behind our institutional progress. Retail banking has a direct bearing on how individuals, families, and businesses manage their finances, and our responsibility is to make that experience more accessible, reliable, and relevant to their needs. This recognition belongs to

our teams, whose work continues to show how banking innovation can support customers while contributing to sustainable national growth outcomes."

For his part, Subah Abdullatif Al Zayani, Chief Executive - Retail Banking at NBB, added, "This accolade signifies the collective work we have done to build a retail banking proposition that proactively responds to how our customers choose to bank today. Our focus has always been on strengthening access across key touchpoints and ensuring that every enhancement to our banking experience brings clear value to the people and businesses we serve. It echoes the continued efforts of our Retail Banking teams in keeping the customer journey simpler, more seamless, and better aligned with evolving preferences."

The award also recognises NBB for its enhanced SME

Banking proposition, following the establishment of six dedicated SME business centres across Bahrain. The re-engineered service model improved geographic coverage, strengthened relationship management, and reduced onboarding friction for business customers, helping drive a 230% increase in monthly SME account openings. The initiative reflects NBB's ongoing commitment to supporting entrepreneurship and enabling the growth of Bahrain's SME sector through specialised banking services.

NBB's recognition at the MENA Banking Excellence Awards 2026 reaffirms its position as a leading retail bank in the Kingdom and underscores the impact of its integrated approach to customer service, digital transformation, and responsible banking. The Bank remains steadfast towards developing solutions that respond to evolving customer expectations while helping achieve Bahrain's broader economic and social development ambitions.

