NBB Group Chief Executive Officer Usman Ahmed Named Among Forbes Middle East's Top 100 CEOs of 2026

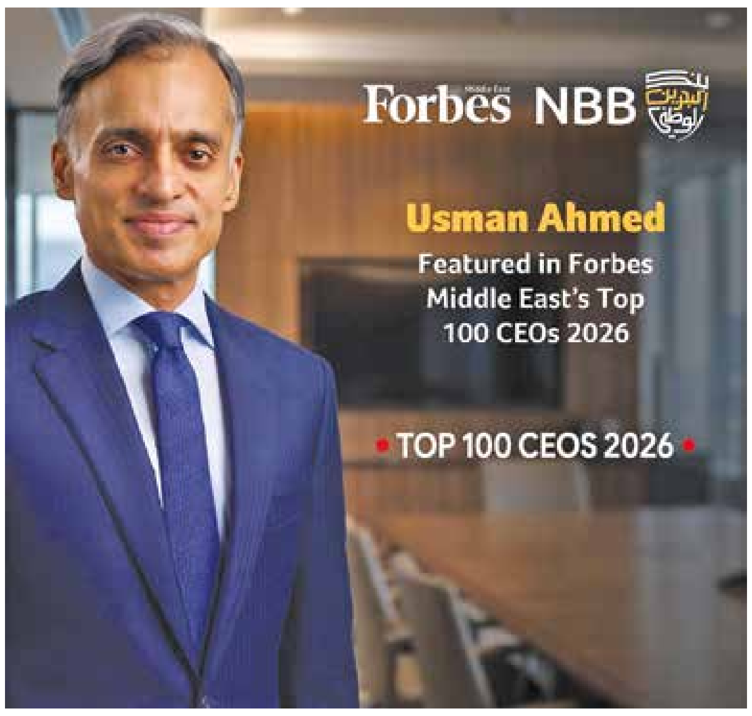
TDT | Manama

The National Bank of Bahrain (NBB) has announced that its Group Chief Executive Officer, Usman Ahmed, has been named among Forbes Middle East's Top 100 CEOs of 2026. This is his second consecutive appearance and third inclusion overall in the coveted list, following his recognition in 2023 and 2025.

Now in its sixth edition, the annual ranking honours executives whose leadership drives strong business performance to achieve meaningful economic and social contribution from their organisation. Candidates are assessed according to their impact across the region and the markets they serve, professional experience, company scale, recent achievements and the innovations introduced under their direction.

Since assuming his role in January 2023, Usman has led NBB through a period of sustained growth and continued transformation, advancing responsible innovation, strengthening the Bank's market position and expanding its contribution to Bahrain's financial sector and national development priorities.

The distinction also reflects the collective expertise and commitment of NBB's people, whose efforts continue to translate the Bank's strategic ambition into lasting value for customers, shareholders and the wider community.



U.S. Stocks Edge Lower Amid Oil Rally and Mixed Earnings

Stocks on Wall Street slipped on Thursday as investors weighed rising oil prices, corporate earnings and ongoing concerns about inflation and economic growth. The S&P 500 and Nasdaq Composite both eased 0.2%, while the Dow Jones Industrial Average fell 0.7%, pulling back after record highs earlier in the week.

Several companies posted mixed earnings, with gains in media and beverage stocks offset by sharp declines in aerospace and technology shares. Strong corporate profits overall have continued to support market confidence, with most S&P 500 companies reporting better-than-expected quarterly results.

Oil prices climbed more than 4% as uncertainty surrounding the Strait of Hormuz and tensions involving Iran continued to raise concerns over global energy supplies. Higher crude prices have added pressure to inflation by increasing fuel and transportation costs.

Investors are also closely watching the U.S. labour market and upcoming economic data for clues on the Federal Reserve's next interest rate decision. Treasury yields moved higher, while European markets advanced and most Asian markets ended the day lower.

New Standard Chartered report highlights Bahrain's role in connecting Islamic capital with the next generation of growth opportunities

TDT | Manama

As Bahrain continues to strengthen its position as a leading centre for Islamic finance, a new Standard Chartered report highlights a significant opportunity to deepen cross-border connectivity between Islamic capital and high-growth markets. Despite Islamic finance assets approaching USD6 trillion globally, only 6% of global sukuk capital currently reaches South Asia and Africa, underscoring the need for stronger financing and investment corridors to unlock the industry's next phase of growth.

According to Islamic Banking for Financial Institutions: The Islamic Finance Connector Era, the next phase of Islamic finance will increasingly be defined by its ability to mobilise liquidity, connect regions and facilitate investment across emerging economic corridors. Achieving this will require stronger financial, trade and digital connectivity to enable Islamic capital to move more efficiently across borders.

These findings are particularly relevant to Bahrain, one of the pioneers of modern Islamic finance, whose well-established regulatory framework and sophisticated financial services ecosystem have helped shape the industry's development for decades. As regional investment corridors continue to evolve, Bahrain is well positioned to strengthen cross-border Islamic finance by connecting capital with trade and investment opportunities across the GCC, Asia and Africa. This closely reflects the report's conclusion that stronger connectivity between capital, trade and investment will define the next phase of Islamic finance growth.

Khurram Hilal, CEO, Group Islamic Banking, Standard Chartered, said: "Islamic finance is becoming a critical enabler of cross border connectivity. As its role in facilitating trade, investment and capital flows continues to grow, institutions need recognised financing structures and operational capabilities that enable Shariah compliant capital to move seamlessly across borders as trade routes become increasingly interconnected."

Khurram Hilal, CEO, Group Islamic Banking, Standard Chartered

He added: "The challenge for many markets today is not a shortage of liquidity, but how to connect that liquidity with opportunity more effectively across borders. Financial institutions that build trusted connections between capital, markets and digital infrastructure will be best positioned to support sustainable growth across emerging economies."

Shaikha Tareef, Acting Chief Executive Officer, Standard Chartered Bahrain, said:

"Bahrain has long been recognised as a centre of excellence for Islamic finance, supported by a strong regulatory framework, deep market expertise and a longstanding commitment to innovation. As cross-border trade and investment continue to evolve, the Kingdom is well positioned to help connect Islamic capital with emerging opportunities across the GCC and beyond, reinforcing its role in supporting the continued growth and development of the global Islamic finance industry."

The report highlights rapidly evolving trade corridors between the GCC, Asia and other emerging markets as creating new opportunities for Islamic trade finance, cross-border investment and capital mobilisation. It also identifies growing demand for private credit, infrastructure finance, digital assets and tokenisation as key areas supporting the next phase of Islamic finance growth.

With one of the world's leading international Islamic banking franchises, Standard Chartered supports clients across these evolving trade and investment corridors through Shariah-compliant solutions, deep market connectivity and cross-border capabilities, helping connect capital with opportunity across the markets it serves.

Tojjar Talk Discusses the Future of Bahrain's Pearl, Gold, and Jewelry Sector

TDT | Manama

The Bahrain Chamber held the second session of its Tojjar Talk initiative, dedicated to the Pearl, Gold, and Jewelry Sector, with the participation of Minister of Industry and Commerce, H.E. Mr. Abdulla bin Adel Fakhro, and Chairman of the Bahrain Chamber, Nabeel Khalid Kanoo, alongside business owners, investors, and sector representatives. The session reviewed the current state of the sector, its development priorities, and concluded with recommendations aimed at enhancing competitiveness, improving the business environment, and supporting sustainable growth.

The Minister of Industry and Commerce emphasized the importance of continued collaboration between the public and private sectors and maintaining direct dialogue with business owners. He noted that dedicating a Tojjar Talk session to the Pearl, Gold, and Jewellery Sector reflects the shared commitment to advancing this vital industry. He added that the Ministry will continue working with the Bahrain Chamber and the private sector to evaluate and implement practical recommendations that support the sector's growth, enhance the business environment, and contribute to Bahrain's economic development goals.

Kanoo described the Pearl, Gold, and Jewelry Sector as one of Bahrain's oldest and most distinguished economic sectors, with a rich commercial heritage that has helped establish the Kingdom as a regional hub for the pearl, gold, and jewelry trade. He reaffirmed the Chamber's commitment to the sector, noting that the establishment of the Pearl, Gold, and Jewelry Committee during the 31st term of the Chamber's Board of Directors reflects its focus on strengthening engagement with industry stakeholders, identifying the sector's needs, and supporting initiatives that enhance its competitiveness.

He further highlighted the sector's continued contribution to the national economy and Bahrain's regional and international standing, stressing the importance of modernizing legislation, encouraging innovation, developing national talent, and fostering an environment that supports long-term growth.

Kanoo confirmed that the Chamber will follow up on the session's recommendations by referring all proposals to the Pearl, Gold, and Jewelry Committee for review and coordination with the relevant government authorities, ensuring they are translated into practical initiatives.

In closing, Kanoo said that the Tojjar Talk initiative serves as an important platform for engaging directly with Bahrain's economic sectors, gathering feedback from business owners, and transforming their recommendations into actionable initiatives that strengthen the private sector and enhance the competitiveness of the national economy.