

NBB Group Announces Key Promotions to Further Strengthen Its Talent Pipeline

Manama, Bahrain

The National Bank of Bahrain Group (NBB Group), comprising the National Bank of Bahrain (NBB) and Bahrain Islamic Bank (BisB), has announced 124 internal promotions, including 94 from NBB and 30 from BisB. This further strengthens the Group's leadership pipeline in line with its strategic transformation priorities.

Confirmed during the second quarter of 2026, the appointments were determined through NBB's structured performance management framework, which incorporates annual appraisals, leadership evaluations, and internal development programmes to identify and nurture high-potential individuals. Bahraini nationals accounted for 91.1% of the 124 promotions, underscoring the Group's ongoing commitment to local talent enrichment and Bahrainisation across its operations.

Commenting on the

announcement, Usman Ahmed, Group Chief Executive Officer of NBB, said, "These promotions represent the dedication of colleagues who have grown with NBB across our geographies and entities and continued to give their best to the Group. We are proud of the talent within our ranks, and proud that so much of it has been developed here in Bahrain. The professional calibre of our people is a genuine source of strength for us, and we highly appreciate the excellence they bring to their work every day."

Fatema AlAlawi, Chief Executive Officer of BisB, added, "Creating opportunities for professional growth is essential to building resilient and



"These appointments reflect the strength of our talent and our commitment to developing future leaders who will drive innovation and excellence in Bahrain's banking sector."

FATEMA ALALAWI, CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER OF BISB



"Our people are our greatest strength, and these promotions recognise the excellence and commitment they bring to the Group."

USMAN AHMED, GROUP CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER OF NBB



forward-looking institutions. These appointments reflect the strength of our talent, as well as the supportive environment we strive to cultivate across the Group. By investing in our

people and recognising their contributions, we are empowering the next generation of leaders who will continue driving innovation and excellence across the Kingdom's banking

sector." The latest promotions form part of NBB Group's broader commitment to a work environment that values

merit and encourages professional advancement. As a leading Bahraini financial institution with a growing regional footprint, the Group remains focused on developing capable leaders who can contribute to its continued progress across the markets it serves.

Bahrainis Shift from Europe to Cooler Gulf Breaks

Demand is driven by well-organised and high-quality tourism services

● Airfares are rising due to higher operating costs

● Some airlines have introduced additional fees of up to \$50 per ticket

● Hotel prices remain stable in most destinations

TD | Manama
Mohammed Darwish

Bahrainis are booking cooler, closer holidays this summer, with Salalah and Saudi Arabia's southern highlands gaining ground as parts of Europe and East Asia lose about 40 pc of last year's demand, travel office owners said.

Bookings have risen for Salalah in Oman and for Asir, Abha, Jazan, Najran and Al Baha in Saudi Arabia, where mountain weather and shorter travel times are drawing families seeking a summer break without long-haul flights.

Outside the Gulf, the Caucasus and Central Asia have also moved up the list, with Azerbaijan, Uzbekistan and Georgia among the destinations now drawing more Bahraini travellers.

Travel and tourism expert Waad Makki said world events and fast-moving regional conditions had led many people to rethink their travel plans, leaving them keener on nearby and safer options.

She said shorter, safer trips had become the first choice for many travellers who wanted a holiday without long flights or added hassle.



Waad Makki, travel and tourism expert

"From my work as executive director of a travel and tourism office, I see that the move towards nearby and safe destinations has become the preferred choice for a wide share of travellers," she said. She said individual bookings this summer had been good for Turkey, Azerbaijan, East Asia and Europe, as travellers sought to use the summer break while keeping room to change their plans.

Travel offices, she said, were offering flexible bookings that allow

full refunds when emergencies or new developments prevent a trip from going ahead, under the agreed terms.

She said trips were being prepared for Dhofar's khareef season in Oman and the Asir season in Saudi Arabia, both known for mild weather, scenery and cultural activities.

The aim, she said, was no longer only to send travellers to a destination, but to give them fuller trips with new activities, local experiences and different places to stay.

Ms Makki said the Dhofar and Asir programmes were built around quality, with selected visits, private activities and varied stays that allow travellers to see the destination in greater depth than standard holiday packages.

"Travel is not a luxury, but a human need," she said. "It gives people a chance to renew themselves, move again and discover new places and experiences."

Travel and tourism expert Hassan Al Nafea said summer book-

ings were middling and around 40 pc lower than in 2025, but the choice of destination had changed.

He said many Bahrainis were now looking for milder weather, easier access and entry rules that spare Gulf travellers from visa paperwork. Bosnia and Herzegovina and Albania were among the countries benefiting from that shift, he added.

"Demand has risen for Salalah in Oman and southern Saudi Arabia," he said. "Many citizens are looking for mild weather and ease of access."

Mr Al Nafea said some European capitals had become costlier this year, while Gulf cities with resorts and leisure sites, including Abu Dhabi and Dubai, were drawing more visitors.

Georgia, Azerbaijan and the wider Caucasus, along with Tajikistan, Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan, had become newer choices for Bahrainis, he said. Northern Turkey and Thailand also remained in demand.

What Happens When You Refuse to Give Up

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Ghadeer Alkumais

Bahraini-Egyptian Dr. Esraa Al Babli has spent her life proving that limitations exist only when people accept them. Today, the world's first dentist born with total hearing loss in both ears has become a symbol of resilience, breaking barriers in healthcare, academia

and international advocacy. Today, Al babli has achieved a series of historic milestones. She became the world's first

dentist born with total hearing loss, the first person with total hearing loss to earn a master's degree in her field, and the first official speaker at the United Nations representing the hearing-loss community.

Born without the ability to hear, Al babli grew up facing challenges in communication, education and social acceptance. Yet her parents refused to allow her condition to define her life. Instead, they encouraged her to believe in her abilities and pursue her ambitions without limits.

Reflecting on her experiences, Al babli said "I faced many challenges in my life the challenge of language when hearing was absent, the challenge of learning when people claimed that loss diminishes knowledge, and the challenge of society when doors were closed in my face. But I was never afraid of falling. Every fall became a path to rising again. I learned to turn



Dr. Esraa Al Babli, met HH Shaikh Khalid bin Abdulla Al Khalifa after the master degree

my weakness into my source of strength and to make my silence a voice the world could hear."



Dr. Esraa Al Babli

For Al babli, the real disability is not the loss of hearing but the loss of faith in oneself. Every doubt became motivation, and every obstacle became an opportunity to prove that determination is stronger than circumstance.

Today, she continues to advocate for inclusion and equal opportunity, believing that people with disabilities do not need sympathy as much as they need trust and access to opportunities. Through her work and public speaking, she hopes to inspire others to look beyond perceived limitations and pursue their ambitions with confidence.

Al babli's journey is ultimately not a story about hearing loss. It is a story about perseverance, courage and the power of self-belief. Her message is simple: the greatest barriers are rarely physical. More often, they are the limits people place on themselves and on others.