

Day one takes off with

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Bahrain International Airshow (BIAS) took off to a flying start on an action-packed day one at the Sakhir Air Base with the signing of deals worth more than \$700 million as day 2 also followed with major deals.

"We expect to see more during the show," said Kamal Ahmed, the Minister of Transportation and Telecommunications, extending his congratulations to His Majesty the King on the launch of the fifth edition of the Airshow.

The minister said that 11 of the top 15 global aerospace businesses are participating in this edition of the show where a number of announcements and high-level meetings with international civil and military delegations were conducted.

"Most significantly of these was Bahrain Airport Company's signings with three companies," the minister added. Officially inaugurated by His Highness Shaikh Abdullah bin Hamad Al Khalifa, the Personal Representative of His Majesty the King and the Chairman of BIAS Supreme Organising Committee, the fifth edition of the show witnessed attendance from 187 companies.

The first signing was for the design and renovation of the Civil Aviation Affairs building with Gulf Engineering House which will transform it into a private aviation terminal to cater to VIPs and business leaders. The new, state-of-the-art facility is expected to be completed by 2020 and will offer various services to meet the needs of private jet owners and users travelling through Bahrain International Airport



A US Marine Corps (USMC) Bell Boeing V-22 Osprey tiltrotor military aircraft performs air maneuvers during the 2018 Bahrain International Airshow



A United Arab Emirates Air Force Mirage 2000 performs air maneuvers

(BIA).

The second signing was the award of a catering contract for all four of its lounges to Bahrain Airport Services (BAS), and the third was for the operation of the new Passenger Terminal Building's airport clinic which was awarded to Bahrain Specialist Hospital that will allow for healthcare professionals to be on hand 24/7 to provide various medical services to passengers and airport staff at the new facility.

Gulf Air and Etihad Airways also signed a Memorandum of Understanding 'MoU' which covers a scope to introduce joint codeshare operations between Abu Dhabi and Manama. Additionally, Saudi Aramco announced its agreement at the value of 700 million dollars for the provision of 26 heli-

copters.

The Ministry of Transportation and Telecommunications also signed Air Service Agreements with Saudi Arabia, UAE, Brunei, and Brazil. The minister also met with Under Secretary of State at the Department for Transport Nusrat Ghani, who praised the strong bilateral relations between Bahrain and the United Kingdom.

The show also highlighted developments for the Bahrain space sector. As the responsible Minister for the National Space Science Agency (NSSA), the Minister of Transportation and Telecommunications signed an MOU with the UAE Space Agency and Khalifa University that would see the organisations working together on a two-year study programme to develop nano-satellites.

BIAS participation hits all time high

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Participation for the Bahrain International Airshow (BIAS) 2018 has touched an all-time high, said Kamal Ahmed saying the Exhibition Hall has doubled in size to meet the increased demand.

"The airshow's record-breaking size is not only a milestone for the Kingdom, but it also provides even more opportunities for the global aerospace community to explore potential partnerships," said the Minister of Transportation and Telecommunications and Chairman of Gulf Air Group Holding.



Minister Kamal Ahmed during the BIAS Gala dinner

growth and provide exhibitors more time to prepare. "I can confidently say it has been well worth the wait."

The minister added: "The eyes of the global aviation community are in the region, which has one of the fastest-growing aviation markets in the world."

To keep pace, he said, many regional airports are working on expansion and development projects, including Bahrain International Airport, "which is currently being transformed through the milestone Airport

Modernisation Programme into a state-of-the-art boutique airport, on par with the best in the world."

The Minister extended his thanks to His Majesty the King for inaugurating BIAS 2018, which is considered yet another achievement for the Kingdom during His Majesty's reign.

The gala dinner reflected the wealth and depth of Bahraini culture and included musical performances by the Mohammed bin Faris Band and the Qalali Band.



The airshow's record-breaking size is not only a milestone for the Kingdom, it provides even more opportunities

KAMAL AHMED

Kamal Ahmed was attending a gala dinner last night hosted at the Bahrain National Museum to mark the official opening of BIAS and welcome its participants. In attendance were the Gulf Air Group Holding Board of Directors, Bahrain Airport Company (BAC) management, as well as heads of delegations participating in the event, and guests from other countries.

The show, the minister said, was moved from its regular slot in January to November to accommodate its exceptional



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