

Bahrain investment in Prodrive goes beyond racing: Mumtalakat CEO

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Mumtalakat CEO Khalid Al Rumaihi says that Bahrain's investment in Prodrive goes well beyond motor racing as it hopes to bring about many beneficial initiatives for the Kingdom in technology and various other sectors.

He said this as Mumtalakat and Prodrive showcased the Bahrain Raid Xtreme (BRX) Prodrive Hunter rally car in Bahrain.

"Our partnership with Prodrive presents the opportunity to introduce to the Kingdom of Bahrain further high technology industries, which create

employment, enhance local expertise, and raise the profile of Bahrain as a centre of technological excellence in the region," Al Rumaihi said.

He added: "The drive behind our investment in Prodrive was beyond building a racing car and a team as in this occasion BRX has completely rebuilt Loeb's Prodrive Hunter from a base at Bahrain International Circuit, which reflects Bahrain infrastructure for high technology sports and industries.

"The same car rebuilt in Bahrain will be used in all international races the BRX team is joining, which is something that makes us proud."



Mumtalakat CEO Khalid Al Rumaihi, centre, with Sebastien Loeb, left, and David Richards at BIC

Loeb targets Desert Challenge victory

Nine-time World Rally Champion and Bahrain Raid Xtreme ace aiming for world title success in FIA World Rally-Raid Championship

● Sebastien Loeb shows Bahrain guests what makes the Prodrive Hunter special

● BRX gearing up for second round of FIA World Rally-Raid Championship next month in Abu Dhabi

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Sebastien Loeb is targeting victory in next month's Abu Dhabi Desert Challenge to put Bahrain Raid Xtreme (BRX) on course for a maiden title triumph in the inaugural FIA World Rally-Raid Championship.

The nine-times World Rally Champion is just a single point behind Nasser Al Attiyah after finishing second to the Qatari in last month's Dakar Rally in Saudi Arabia, and wants to go one better in the second round of the new Rally-Raid series in the UAE.

Since Dakar, Loeb has secured a memorable eighth career win in the Monte Carlo Rally in his first WRC start since 2020, and the Frenchman is in Bahrain this week as BRX fine tunes preparations for the Desert Challenge running from March 5 to 10.

From a base at Bahrain International Circuit, BRX has completely rebuilt Loeb's Prodrive Hunter after creating Dakar history in Saudi as the first top team to complete the rally with cars running on next generation advanced sustainable fuel.

The BRX Prodrive Hunter is a product of the partnership between Bahrain Mumtalakat Holding Company "Mumtalakat", the sovereign wealth fund of the Kingdom of Bahrain and Prodrive, the British motorsport and engineering group.

Khalid Al Rumaihi, CEO of Mumtalakat said: "Two years ago we had a vision and a mission when we established our partnership, and today here we are celebrating the team's achievements. "In addition to building an exceptional racing car and a great team, this partnership presents the opportunity to further diversify the economy of the Kingdom within the technology industries field, create employment, enhance local expertise, and raise the profile of Bahrain as a centre of technological excellence in the



The BRX Prodrive Hunter in action in Bahrain

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SEBASTIEN LOEB

region."

Yesterday, VIPs and members of the media had the opportunity to discover for themselves why the greatest rally driver of all time and the Prodrive Hunter form such a formidable combination.

After taking the BRX guests on a series of drives over desert terrain, Loeb immediately turned his focus to Abu Dhabi where he will be making his first Desert Challenge appearance.

"Today was a lot of fun for everyone, and I'm very happy that we were able to show our guests what a fantastic rally car the Hunter is, and why I'm so excited to be driving it," said Loeb.

"Now we concentrate fully on the Desert Challenge, and we're going to do everything we need to do to give ourselves the best chance of winning the rally.

"The overall aim this year now is to win the FIA World Rally-Raid Cham-



Rally raid is also known as cross-country rallying, and it is a form of long distance off-road racing that takes place over several days. The FIA World Rally-Raid Championship is in its first season in 2022, and it is sanctioned by the International Automobile Federation (FIA) and the International Motorcycling Federation (FIM). It awards world titles in the four-wheeled and motorcycle categories

ampionship, and put ourselves in the position to do the same in the Dakar next year, which is our major target as a team."

The sustainable fuel used by BRX reduces greenhouse gas emissions by 80 per cent compared to petrol, because it is made from agricultural waste material.

By using it during the Dakar, the

Regional motorsport history is 'embedded in Bahrain'

Staff Reporter
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The rise of motorsport in the region is a massive boost for the international motor racing industry, according to nine-time World Rally Champion and Bahrain Raid Xtreme (BRX) ace Sebastien Loeb.

"There are lots of races in this part of the world now; I think the place is really good for this," Loeb told TDT. "There is a big passion for motorsport in this region, and it's good to go to a place where people love what we are doing."

BRX team director David Richards highlighted that it all started in Bahrain, and that the Kingdom will always be motor racing's home in the Middle East.

Richards told TDT: "The whole region is building its influence in motorsport around the world—Mohammed Ben Sulayem becoming the president of the FIA, with new Grands Prix in Saudi and Qatar—but history tells us Bahrain was the first, and you can never take that away from Bahrain.

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"We were first here with rallies, many years ago, when I came to do rallies in 1976; the hill climb was here, the karting here, and the first Grand Prix circuit in the region was here.

"That history is really embedded in Bahrain. No one can forget that and they should be reminded of that. Bahrain is the home of motorsport in the whole region."



Sebastien Loeb gets ready to drive the BRX Prodrive Hunter

team's three cars saved over 28 tonnes of CO2 emissions. BRX aims to demonstrate that such fuels can be used as an alternative to petrol and diesel in road transport, and immediately make a contribution to fighting climate

change.

Following the Desert Challenge, the FIA World Rally-Raid Championship moves on to rounds in Kazakhstan (April 24-30), Spain (June 6-12) and Morocco (October 6-12).