

## NBB Jointly Leads Bahrain's USD 1 Billion Sovereign Bond

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The National Bank of Bahrain (NBB) acted as Joint Lead Manager and Bookrunner in the Kingdom's successful USD 1 billion 10-year international bond issuance. The Bank's involvement reinforces its role and contribution as a trusted financial partner in the country's most strategically important capital markets transactions over the years.

Despite ongoing volatility in global financial markets, the issuance was successfully priced at a final yield of 7.125%, tightening from initial price guidance of 7.50% on the back of a robust orderbook that peaked over USD 3.2 billion; representing a strong outcome in the

context of prevailing market conditions and marking another landmark transaction by the Kingdom. The offering attracted strong engagement from the investment community, underscoring sustained confidence in Bahrain's economic outlook and resilience.

Commenting on the occasion, Usman Ahmed, Group Chief Executive Officer of NBB, said, "Through this US\$ 1 billion issue, Bahrain has led the re-opening of international debt markets since the start of the regional conflict. The strong oversubscription achieved against an unprecedented market backdrop demonstrates the continued confidence of global and regional investors in Bahrain's medium-long term economic

vision and policies. NBB is proud to have played a leading role in the transaction".

Husain Almohri, Group Chief Executive - Markets & Client Solutions at NBB, added, "NBB's appointment on this transaction underscores our expertise in executing sophisticated capital markets mandates, as well as our strong track record in supporting the Kingdom across complex and strategically significant funding initiatives. The successful pricing of the bond reflects Bahrain's established credibility among global investors, underpinned by the Kingdom's effective leadership, policy direction, financial system, and economic management. It also highlights the strength of the longstanding relationships



Bahrain has built with the international investment community."

The Bank remains committed to leveraging its capabilities across debt capital markets, advisory, and investment banking services to support the Kingdom's strategic priorities and facilitate access to global investment opportunities that contribute to sustainable economic growth.

## Bahrain Among Top 5 MENA Startup Ecosystems in 2026 Report

The Kingdom of Bahrain achieved strong rankings across several key indicators in the Global Startup Ecosystem Report (GSER) 2026 report, with Bahrain's startup ecosystem generating \$1.6 billion in Ecosystem Value during the period from July 1, 2023 to December 31, 2025. This represents a 759% increase compared to the reporting period covered by the GSER 2021 report, which spanned July 1, 2018 to December 31, 2020. The Kingdom of Bahrain ranked among the Top 5 MENA Ecosystems in Performance, which measures the size and performance of an ecosystem based on the accumulated tech startup value created from exits and funding. Bahrain also secured positions among the Top 10 MENA Ecosystems in AI-Native Cluster, which measures the size and intensity of AI startup activity within the ecosystem, and among the Top 15 MENA Ecosystems in R&D Engine, which measures innovation through research activity.

On this occasion, Alya Al Aali, Deputy CE of Strategy & Insights at the Labour Fund (Tamkeen), commented: "The Kingdom of Bahrain's distinctive advantage lies in its agile startup ecosystem, which enables entrepreneurs to develop and test their ideas within a supportive environment that facilitates expansion into regional markets." She added that Tamkeen continues its efforts to support entrepreneurs and advance the startup ecosystem through initiatives that stimulate innovation, accelerate business growth, and expand access to financing and emerging technologies, thereby supporting their sustainability and competitiveness both locally and regionally.

In addition, Samantha Evans, Managing Director MENA at Startup Genome, said: "Rather than trying to compete on size, Bahrain has focused on precision, building depth in fintech and adjacent technologies where it can lead. With Tamkeen anchoring this approach, the ecosystem is proving that targeted investment and clear positioning can outperform broader, less focused strategies."



Alya Al Aali, Deputy CE of Strategy & Insights at the Labour Fund (Tamkeen)

The report highlighted Fintech, Blockchain, and AI & Digital Innovation as leading engines of Bahrain's startup growth that remain consistent with last year, supported by progressive regulation and innovation-driven initiatives. The report also outlined several factors contributing to Bahrain's attractiveness as a destination for startups and entrepreneurs. Bahrain offers a highly connected and agile ecosystem, competitive operating costs, and access to regional markets, in addition to a supportive regulatory environment and collaborative public-private sector initiatives that continue to strengthen innovation and entrepreneurial activity in the Kingdom.

Startup Genome, the Global Entrepreneurship Network, and the Labour Fund (Tamkeen) have continued their collaboration to monitor and benchmark Bahrain's startup ecosystem, while identifying opportunities and growth areas that support the Kingdom's innovation-driven economic development plans.

The Global Startup Ecosystem Report 2026 delivers key insights into the world's leading innovation ecosystems, highlighting trends, capital flows, and policy approaches shaping entrepreneurial success. Building on last year's analysis, the report expands its AI-Native factor to include emerging ecosystems, reflecting AI's growing role in competitive advantage. Backed by over a decade of independent research and a global consortium spanning 65+ countries, it provides a data-rich view of startup activity and investment trends, equipping policymakers, ecosystem leaders, and founders with actionable strategies to drive economic growth.

## Bahrain Bourse Opens the Market at London Stock Exchange Group 'LSEG' to Mark 'Bahrain Capital Market Day 2026'

Bahrain Bourse (BHB), a licensed exchange regulated by the Central Bank of Bahrain, recently celebrated 'Bahrain Capital Market Day 2026' at the London Stock Exchange Group (LSEG), reaffirming Bahrain's commitment to strengthening international investor engagement and advancing the Kingdom's capital market ecosystem.

The event commenced with a Market Open ceremony at LSEG to officially open the market and mark the launch of Bahrain Capital Market Day 2026. The ceremony was attended by a high-level delegation led by Mr. Yusef Al Yusef, Chairman of Bahrain Bourse, alongside representatives from Bahrain's financial sector and international investment community.

The occasion highlighted Bahrain's growing partnership with global investors and showcased the Kingdom's continued progress in developing a vibrant, resilient, and sustainable capital market. It also provided a platform to promote Bahrain's



investment landscape and discuss opportunities arising from the country's ongoing economic transformation initiatives, particularly in showcasing the Kingdom of Bahrain's capital market development roadmap, and Bahrain Bourse's 'Elevate' strategy 2026-2028.

The ceremony was followed by welcome remarks from Mr. Ivo Dekkers, Group Head of Sales - EMEA, Data & Analytics at LSEG, who highlighted the importance of international collaboration in supporting capital market growth and attracting investment flows. Mr. Yusef Al Yusef then addressed attendees, emphasizing Bahrain's strategic vision for capital market development and the Kingdom's commit-

ment to enhancing market competitiveness and accessibility.

The networking event brought together market participants, and industry stakeholders to explore Bahrain's recent economic transformation plans and discuss the Bahrain Bourse Capital Market Development Plan 2026-2028 - "Elevate".

The plan aims to further elevate Bahrain's capital market through a series of strategic initiatives designed to enhance market infrastructure, diversify investment products, increase market participation, and support the objectives of Bahrain Vision 2030. On the sidelines of the event, workshops for the various participating team members were held to explore potential areas of collaboration

within the area of AI execution, asset tokenization, and private markets.

Commenting on the occasion, Mr. Yusef Al Yusef, Chairman of Bahrain Bourse, said: "Bahrain's Capital Market Day at LSEG showcases our commitment to deepening our capital markets and strengthening connections with global investors. This initiative underscores our strategic focus on enhancing market infrastructure, supporting economic transformation plans, and advancing the objectives of the Capital Market Development Plan 2026-2028 - Elevate."

The event forms part of Bahrain Bourse's broader efforts to strengthen the Kingdom's position as a leading regional financial hub and foster meaningful dialogue with international investors and stakeholders. Through initiatives such as Bahrain Capital Market Day, Bahrain Bourse continues to promote investment opportunities within the Kingdom while supporting the long-term growth and development of Bahrain's capital markets.

## Royal Bahrain Concours and Gulf Air Renew Partnership for 2026

Where the Gulf & the World's Most Exclusive Cars Meet

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The Royal Bahrain Concours is proud to announce that Gulf Air, the national carrier of the Kingdom of Bahrain, has renewed its partnership with the event for its 2026 edition.

Following its support of the inaugural Royal Bahrain Concours, Gulf Air will return as a sponsor for 2026 with an enhanced partnership, reflecting its confidence in the event's long-term potential and its commitment to supporting Bahrain's growing reputation as a destination for world-class cultural, luxury and automotive experiences.

Taking place at the Royal Golf Club in Riffa on Friday 6 - Saturday 7 November 2026, the Royal Bahrain Concours will once again bring together a carefully curated collection of exceptional cars, collectors, enthusiasts, luxury partners and international guests.

The renewed support from Gulf Air follows a highly successful first edition, which welcomed 60 collector cars and more than 200 members' cars from leading car clubs across the GCC. With strong

- Gulf Air renews its partnership with the Royal Bahrain Concours for 2026
- Bahrain's national carrier will increase its support for the event following the success of the inaugural edition
- The Royal Bahrain Concours returns to the Royal Golf Club, Riffa, Bahrain, on 6-7 November 2026
- The 2026 edition will build on a successful debut, which brought together 60 exceptional collector cars and more than 200 members' cars from leading regional car clubs

regional engagement and growing international attention, the Royal Bahrain Concours is quickly establishing itself as one of the most important new additions to the global concours calendar.

### Gulf Air

As Bahrain's national carrier,



Gulf Air plays a key role in connecting the Kingdom with the wider world. Its continued partnership with the Royal Bahrain Concours underlines the shared ambition to showcase Bahrain as a destination of distinction, hospitality and premium experiences.

Founded in 1950, Gulf Air is one of the Middle East's longest-established commercial airlines. Operating from its hub at Bahrain International Airport, the airline connects Bahrain with destinations across the Middle East, Europe, Africa, North America, the Indian sub-continent and the Far East.

Through its renewed and ex-

panded support, Gulf Air will help welcome guests, collectors and international visitors to Bahrain for the 2026 Royal Bahrain Concours, reinforcing the event's position as a celebration not only of automotive excellence, but also of the Kingdom's culture, hospitality and global outlook.

James Brooks-Ward, Chairman of the Royal Bahrain Concours, commented: "We are delighted that Gulf Air has renewed its partnership with the Royal Bahrain Concours for 2026, and that it will be supporting the event in an even greater capacity this year.

"Gulf Air was part of the story

from the beginning, supporting the inaugural edition and helping us introduce the Royal Bahrain Concours to collectors, enthusiasts and guests from across the region and beyond. Its decision to strengthen that involvement for 2026 is a huge vote of confidence in what we are building.

"As Bahrain's national carrier, Gulf Air is a natural partner for an event that is designed to bring the world's finest cars, leading collectors and luxury brands to the Kingdom. Together, we share a commitment to presenting Bahrain at its very best: welcoming, ambitious, internationally connected and capable of hosting truly world-class experiences."

Martin Gauss, Chief Executive Officer of Gulf Air, added: "After the success of the inaugural Royal Bahrain Concours, we are very pleased to renew and enhance our partnership with the event for 2026.

"The first edition demonstrated the strength of Bahrain's luxury and automotive community, while also attracting attention from col-

lectors, enthusiasts and visitors from across the region and worldwide. We have full confidence in the continued growth of the Royal Bahrain Concours and are proud to play a greater role in supporting this year's event.

"As the national carrier of the Kingdom of Bahrain, Gulf Air is committed to supporting initiatives that promote the Kingdom as a distinctive international destination. The Royal Bahrain Concours is a strong example of that ambition, combining automotive excellence, hospitality and culture in a setting that reflects the best of Bahrain."

Organised by Thorough Events in collaboration with the Bahrain Tourism & Exhibitions Authority, the Royal Bahrain Concours has quickly established itself as a major addition to the region's luxury events calendar and an important new fixture within the international concours world.

Further details regarding the 2026 programme, participating vehicles, partners and ticket information will be announced in due course.