

Bahrain builds Russia trade links

- SPIEF boosts Bahrain's re-export plans
- H.E. Nass eyes trade realignment
- Chamber deepens Russia ties

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Bahrain is positioning itself as the region's next re-export powerhouse, using its participation at a major Russian economic forum to court investment, deepen private-sector ties, and showcase its logistics edge to international partners.

During his participation in the St. Petersburg International Economic Forum (SPIEF) 2025, His Excellency Sameer Nass, Chairman of the Bahrain Chamber of Commerce and Industry, said that promoting the national economy and enhancing international investments is a strategic priority for the Kingdom. H.E. underlined



Bahrain Chamber officials during the visit

Bahrain's ambition to become a key re-export platform, citing its strategic location and advanced logistics capabilities as core advantages.

"Russia is an important partner for Bahrain," H.E. Nass said, leading a Chamber delegation to the event, which drew over 20,000 global participants from 140 countries. "Our bilateral ties continue to evolve, especially

in sectors like manufacturing and technology transfer, where we see immense opportunity," H.E. sated.

Gateway ambitions

H.E. Nass highlighted Bahrain's plans to repurpose its logistics strength into a regional re-packaging and distribution centre. His Excellency emphasised the potential for joint

ventures between Bahraini and Russian firms to create competitive advantages in diversified industrial sectors, supporting the Kingdom's broader vision of economic diversification.

The Chamber, H.E. added, is intensifying its efforts to form durable global partnerships that support Bahrain's position as an investment-friendly business hub and attract new capital into



Bahrain ranks among the top five GCC countries for re-export trade, with logistics making up nearly 8% of its non-oil GDP

fields such as technology, manufacturing, and trade logistics.

Private-sector diplomacy

The Chamber's First Vice Chairman, Khalid Najibi, who also chairs the Bahraini side of the Bahrain-Russia Business Council, said the SPIEF platform is being used to connect private sectors across both countries. "We're promoting Bahrain's business environment and exploring new strategic alliances," he noted, pointing to the forum as an opportunity to unlock joint investment projects and expand

private-sector cooperation.

Najibi said particular attention is being given to SMEs and emerging Bahraini enterprises that stand to benefit from direct engagement with Russian counterparts.

SME spotlight

Board Member Ahmed Al-Saloom reinforced the Chamber's focus on the small and medium-sized enterprise sector, calling it the foundation of Bahrain's commercial structure. He praised the forum for offering SMEs visibility on a global stage and access to new foreign market opportunities.

He credited the Government, led by His Royal Highness Prince Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa, Crown Prince and Prime Minister, for prioritising SME development within the Kingdom's economic growth strategy.

As SPIEF continues to serve as a global marketplace for strategic partnerships, Bahrain is using the platform to shift its trade model toward high-value re-export services, forging new business pathways in a changing global economy.

Gateway Unveiled



Bahrain inaugurated its national pavilion at SPIEF 2025 in the presence of H.E. Abdulla bin Adel Fakhro, Minister of Industry and Commerce; H.E. Olga Lyubimova, Russia's Minister of Culture and Head of the Russia-Bahrain Intergovernmental Commission; H.E. Ahmed Abdulrahman Al Saati, Bahrain's Ambassador to Russia; and Alexander Stuglev, CEO of Rosscongress. H.E. Fakhro said the Kingdom's presence "highlights our commitment to building stronger economic bridges and opening new avenues for collaboration," noting over 190 active Bahrain-Russia business partnerships.

Tamkeen elevates Bahrainis at Sarens Nass



- Tamkeen supports 36 jobs

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At a company best known for lifting superstructures, it is Tamkeen that has quietly raised something more enduring. By investing in local talent, it has helped turn a crane and transport giant into a national workforce success story, where nearly 80 percent of employees are now Bahraini.

Tamkeen, Bahrain's Labour Fund, announced its support for the employment and career development of 36 Bahrainis at Sarens Nass Middle East. The support is part of its 2025 strategy to enhance

the presence of Bahrainis in the private sector and equip them with skills for long-term career advancement.

Strategic collaboration

Since 2017, Tamkeen has collaborated with Sarens Nass Middle East to build up a locally rooted team in one of the region's most technically demanding sectors. The company, a joint venture between Bahrain's Nass Group and Belgium-based Sarens NV, provides heavy lifting, crane services, and specialised transport solutions across the GCC.

"We are proud to support Bahraini companies that prioritise the employment and professional growth of local talent," said Khalid Al Bayat, Chief Growth Officer at Tamkeen. "Sarens Nass has con-

The average Bahrainisation rate in private heavy industry firms remains under 50 percent, making Sarens Nass's 78 percent Bahraini workforce an exceptional outlier in the sector

sistently demonstrated its commitment by utilising our programmes to hire, train, and reward Bahraini employees."

Al Bayat added that Tamkeen would continue to partner with firms that promote sustainable employment pathways, enabling Bahrainis to move into leadership roles and become the first choice for employers.

Skills in focus

Regional Director Al Hanoo Nass noted that Tamkeen's programmes are fully aligned with Sarens Nass's own strategic vision. "We have actively benefitted from Tamkeen's programmes to train and qualify Bahraini talent. Today we are proud to report that 78 percent of our workforce is comprised of Bahraini nationals," she said.

Nass explained that the company places a strong emphasis on upskilling, especially in technical areas that support industrial growth and match emerging market demands. "We firmly believe that investing in human capital is fundamental to the growth and sustainability of the private sector," she said.

Al Baraka integrates faith and fintech



Salman Alhashimi, Head of MEA NBFIs and Deputy Head of the GCC Region at BNY presents the award to Dr. Adel Abdullah Salem, CEO of Al Baraka Islamic Bank, in the presence of Hussain Yousif Atiya, Chief Corporate and Institutional Banking Officer

- Sharia and tech aligned

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Al Baraka Islamic Bank is demonstrating that Islamic finance can deliver cutting-edge performance, earning global praise for its seamless USD payment processing while staying true to Sharia principles.

The Bahrain-based bank has received the Straight-Through-Processing (STP) Award from The Bank of New York Mellon (BNY), a leading global financial services firm. The award recognises institutions with highly automated and accurate cross-border payment systems, validating Al Baraka's ability to blend ethical banking with digital sophistication.

Global validation

BNY grants the STP Award to financial institutions that meet the highest benchmarks in straight-through-processing of payments, meaning transactions completed without manual intervention. The award was presented by Salman Alhashimi, Head of MEA NBFIs and Deputy Head of the GCC Region at BNY, to Dr. Adel

Abdullah Salem, CEO of Al Baraka Islamic Bank, in the presence of Hussain Yousif Atiya, Chief Corporate and Institutional Banking Officer.

"We are proud to receive this recognition from BNY, which reflects our continued focus on operational excellence and innovation in financial services," said Dr. Salem. "It is the result of our ongoing investment in digital infrastructure and our commitment to delivering efficient and reliable banking experiences to our clients."

Ethical meets efficient

Atiya added, "This award underscores the competence of our teams and their dedication to providing solutions that meet the highest standards for international banking and executing global payments. We're well poised to expand our offering of digital banking services to corporate and financial institution clients."

Al Baraka's achievement challenges assumptions that Islamic banks may lag in technological adoption due to Sharia governance frameworks. On the contrary, the bank's systems are not only compliant but also competitive, proving that religious values and world-class fintech can coexist.