NBB Unveils New Identities for Its Business Digital Banking Platforms

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The National Bank of Bahrain (NBB) has announced the rebranding of its digital banking platforms, with NBB DigiCorp and NBB DigiConnect transitioning to NBB Business and NBB Connect, respectively.

The refreshed identities reinforce the platforms' connection to the NBB brand while supporting the Bank's strategy to deliver a more unified and intuitive digital banking experience for corporate and SME clients. The new names also establish a stronger foundation for the continued evolution of NBB's digital offering.

Clients will continue to enjoy the same services, capabilities and secure banking experience they rely on today, with no changes to platform functionality or day-to-day operations.

Commenting on the occasion, Husain Almohri, Group Chief Executive – Markets & Client Solutions at NBB, said, "By introducing NBB Business and NBB Connect, we are making it simpler for clients to identify the solutions available to them while preserving the trusted experience they already know. This initiative reflects our focus on combining innovation with convenience as we continue enhancing the way businesses engage with our digital services."

Husain Almohri, Group Chief Executive – Markets & Client Solutions at NBB

The rebranding reflects NBB's broader commitment to adapting its services in line with evolving client expectations, ensuring businesses continue to benefit from secure, efficient and technology-enabled banking solutions.

Through a more cohesive digital ecosystem, NBB is strengthening the way clients interact with the Bank while laying the groundwork for future developments across its Transaction Banking and digital service offerings.

Industry and Commerce Undersecretary Chairs Third Meeting of Permanent Committee on Patents

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H.E. Eman Ahmed Al Doseri, Undersecretary of the Ministry of Industry and Commerce, chaired the third meeting of the Permanent Committee on Patents, held via videoconference with the participation of Their Excellencies Undersecretaries and heads of intellectual property authorities, and H.E. Ahmed bin Nasser Al Marshadi, Director General of the Patent Office at the GCC General Secretariat.

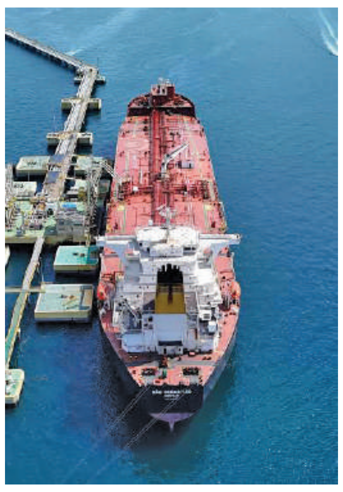
During the meeting, H.E. Al Doseri highlighted the importance of advancing the patent system and strengthening GCC cooperation in intellectual property to support innovation and promote a knowledge-based economy. She also underscored the importance of enhancing the role of the GCC Patent Office in line with international best practices and strengthening integration among GCC countries.

Qatar's Non-Hydrocarbon Economy Reaches Nearly 70% of GDP

Qatar's non-hydrocarbon economy now accounts for nearly 70% of GDP, up from 40% in 2011, highlighting the country's progress in economic diversification. Central Bank Governor Sheikh Bandar bin Mohammed bin Saoud Al-Thani said the sector grew 3.5% year on year in Q1 2026, despite regional challenges. Construction, wholesale and retail, real estate, and financial services all recorded growth during the period. Qatar's debt has also declined to around 40% of GDP, from 60%. Meanwhile, the country plans to double LNG production capacity to 145 million tonnes annually by 2030, while expanding investments in technology, artificial intelligence and innovation.

Global stocks rally on lower oil prices, US-China hopes

AFP



Global stock markets rallied on Monday, September 21, as falling oil prices, easing Treasury yields and renewed optimism over US-China diplomacy helped improve investor sentiment.

Wall Street led the gains, with technology and artificial intelligence stocks driving the rebound. The S&P 500 rose about 1.1%, while the Nasdaq Composite gained around 1.6%. Chipmaker AMD surged more than 9%, briefly taking its market value above $1 trillion, while Intel also posted a sharp gain.

A major boost for markets came from a decline in crude prices. Brent crude fell more than 3%, while US crude also declined sharply. Investors reacted to signs that additional Saudi oil supplies were reaching global markets and to hopes for diplomatic progress in the Middle East. Saudi crude exports were estimated to have recovered to slightly above 4 million barrels per day in September, according to Kpler data cited by Reuters.

Lower oil prices eased some of the inflation concerns that have weighed on markets following recent central-bank tightening. The US 10-year Treasury yield also moved lower, providing additional support for equities, particularly growth and technology shares.

US-China Talks Boost Confidence

Investor sentiment was also supported by high-level US-China discussions ahead of an expected meeting between US President Donald Trump and Chinese President Xi Jinping.

US Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent said Washington and Beijing had agreed to establish a formal dialogue on artificial intelligence, including an "incident line" to improve communication during major AI-related safety incidents. The two sides also discussed trade, although no extension of the current US-China trade truce was confirmed.

The upcoming Trump-Xi summit is expected to address trade, technology and broader geopolitical issues. Markets are watching for signs that the two countries can maintain a more stable trading relationship.

Tech Stocks Lead the Rebound

The rally extended across major markets in Asia and Europe, with semiconductor and artificial intelligence companies among the strongest performers.

The combination of stronger AI-related demand, lower oil prices and easing bond yields helped reverse some of the pressure seen in global markets during the previous week.

However, investors remain focused on inflation and the possibility of further US Federal Reserve rate increases. Reuters reported that markets were still pricing in a meaningful chance of another rate hike as policymakers continue to monitor persistent inflation pressures.

Monday's gains therefore reflected a combination of lower energy costs, stronger technology demand and improved diplomatic expectations, while investors continued to assess the risks surrounding inflation, interest rates and geopolitical tensions.

Saudi Arabia Unveils First Ceer Vehicles Under Exobot Brand

TDT | Agencies

Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman, chairman of the Public Investment Fund (PIF), has launched the first vehicles produced by Saudi electric vehicle manufacturer Ceer under the "Exobot" name, marking a new step in the Kingdom's efforts to develop its domestic automotive industry.

The launch forms part of Saudi Arabia's broader industrial diversification strategy under Vision 2030, with the country seeking to attract investment, develop national talent and expand the role of the private sector in advanced manufacturing.

"The launch of Ceer's first vehicles represents another step the Kingdom is taking in its journey to build a sustainable and prosperous industrial ecosystem," the Crown Prince said, according to the Saudi Press Agency. He added that the initiative aims to strengthen automotive manufacturing as a contributor to economic growth and position Saudi Arabia as a regional and global hub for the sector.

The first Exobot vehicles will be offered in sedan and SUV models. They are the first of seven models that Ceer plans to introduce over the next five years, including medium-sized and compact vehicles featuring different powertrain systems.

Production of the models will take place at Ceer's manufacturing complex within the King Salman Automotive Cluster in King Abdullah Economic City. The facility is described as the largest of its kind in the Middle East and among the world's advanced automotive manufacturing facilities.

Ceer said Exobot vehicles feature designs inspired by Saudi Arabia's landscape and culture, while their development and engineering were carried out locally according to international specifications.

The company is expected to contribute more than SR30 billion ($8 billion) to Saudi Arabia's GDP by 2034 and improve the Kingdom's trade balance by approximately SR80 billion. It is also expected to generate direct and indirect employment opportunities in the automotive sector.

The launch builds on the PIF's efforts to establish an integrated domestic automotive ecosystem. The fund launched Ceer in 2022 as Saudi Arabia's first automotive brand, with the company tasked with developing local manufacturing capabilities, attracting investment and creating opportunities for the private sector.

The introduction of Exobot vehicles represents another stage in Saudi Arabia's efforts to build a domestic automotive manufacturing base and expand the contribution of advanced