

Tamkeen launches updated financial services sector skills report

● Under “Skills Bahrain” initiative

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The Labour Fund “Tamkeen” announced the release of the updated Financial Services Sector Skills Report, as part of the “Skills Bahrain” initiative and developed in collaboration with private sector stakeholder holders, government entities, and education and training providers.

The report builds upon the



Amer Marhoon, Managing Director of Skills Bahrain

findings of the initial report published in 2022, which provid-

ed an overview of the needs of the workforce in the sector and identified its skill gaps. The latest version reflects the sector’s evolving landscape, with updated content aligned to current labour market developments and the Core Skills Framework launched in 2024. The report categorizes sector activities using international standards tailored to Bahrain’s context, covering banking, insurance, asset management, financial markets, and financial technology (FinTech).

The financial services sector plays a pivotal role in Bahrain’s

economy, surpassing oil and gas as the largest contributor to the Kingdom’s GDP, accounting for 17.8%. The sector employs approximately 14,362 individuals, with Bahrainis representing 70% of the workforce, according to the 2023 Labor Force Survey published by the Central Bank of Bahrain.

The report outlines key trends shaping the future of the sector, including rapid digital transformation and the growing prominence of FinTech. It also highlights increasing demand for specialized skills in areas such as cybersecurity, data analytics,

and financial risk management. In addition, it identifies emerging roles, including actuaries, data analysts, compliance officers, and credit officers. There is also a growing focus on Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) practices, with sustainability officers becoming a priority for financial institutions as they integrate ESG practices into business strategies, investment decisions, and risk management processes in alignment with global and local frameworks.

Mr. Amer Marhoon, Managing Director of Skills Bahrain, stat-

ed: “This report highlights the importance of investing in the development of skilled national talent to meet the demands of a rapidly changing sector. As digital transformation accelerates, the need for advanced technical skills in fields such as cybersecurity, artificial intelligence, and data analysis continues to grow. The report also highlights the need to guide the next generation towards emerging specializations such as ESG, which can further strengthen Bahrain’s position as a leading financial hub both regionally and internationally.”

Minister drives green card, water rules

New technical standards approved



● Green card framework reviewed

● Gulf water rules adopted

● Technical updates gain approval

Mahir Haneef
TDT | Manama

A high-level committee chaired by the Minister of Industry and Commerce, HE Abdulla bin Adel Fakhro, has approved sweeping updates to Bahrain’s product standards, marking a pivotal shift toward environmental accountability through the introduction of

green labeling and water-saving regulations.

Green focus

The sixty-second meeting of the National Committee for Standards and Metrology was held this week, bringing together senior officials including Undersecretary Eman Ahmed Al Doseri and Assistant Undersecretary for Domestic and Foreign Trade Shaikh Hamad bin Salman Al Khalifa. The committee reviewed Bahrain’s upcoming ‘Green Product Card’ initiative, a regulatory tool designed to guide eco-labelling and sustainability compliance.

Participants also discussed the implementation status of the Gulf Regulation for Water Conservation Tools, which aligns Bahrain with GCC-wide stand-

ards aimed at reducing water consumption through more efficient fixtures and plumbing products.

Product standards updated

During the session, the committee approved new technical regulations covering a set of targeted products. These updated standards are designed to strengthen consumer safety while ensuring compatibility with international specifications in the areas of measurement, safety, and product quality.

The committee also reviewed several submissions related to national development goals, including requests to update or new draft specifications in support of domestic initiatives.

Sustainability alignment



The GCC Standardization Organization’s regulations for water-saving fixtures have been adopted across the GCC, requiring products to meet eco-efficiency ratings before import or sale.

HE Minister Fakhro praised the contributions of committee

members and reaffirmed the importance of aligning Bahrain’s technical frameworks with global best practices. He stressed that advancing legislative and regulatory infrastructure is essential for maintaining both consumer safety and environmental stewardship.

The achievements of the Bahrain Standards and Metrology Directorate (BSMD) were also highlighted during the meeting, reflecting Bahrain’s broader direction toward institutionalizing sustainable production and trade practices.

With the technical decisions now approved, the next phase is expected to focus on enforcing the new standards and raising public awareness of the Green Product Card system.

Indonesia begins \$5.9 bn EV battery project despite environment fears

Jakarta, Indonesia

Indonesia broke ground Sunday on a \$5.9 billion megaproject for EV battery production backed by Chinese giant CATL, despite NGOs raising concerns over a lack of environmental guarantees.

Indonesia is the world’s largest nickel producer and it is trying to capitalise on its vast reserves, with a 2020 export ban spurring a domestic industrial boom of the key metal used in EV batteries and stainless steel.

The EV battery project will include a \$4.7 billion investment on the eastern island of Halmahera and a \$1.2 billion investment in West Java, energy minister Bahlil Lahadalia said in a speech alongside President Prabowo Subianto.

Sudan gold mine collapse kills 11: state company

Khartoum, Sudan

Additional gold mine has killed 11 miners and wounded seven others in war-torn Sudan’s northeast, the state mining company said yesterday.

Since war erupted between Sudan’s regular army and the paramilitary Rapid Support Forces (RSF) in April 2023, both sides’ war efforts have been largely funded by Sudan’s gold industry.

According to official and NGO sources, nearly all of the gold trade is funnelled through the United Arab Emirates, widely accused of arming the RSF.

In a statement, the Sudanese Mineral Resources Company (SMRC) said that the collapse occurred in an “artisanal shaft in the Kirsh al-Fil mine” in the remote desert area of Howeid, located between the army-controlled cities of Atbara and Haiya in Sudan’s northeastern Red Sea state.

It did not mention when the collapse took place.

The war, now in its third year, has shattered Sudan’s already-fragile economy, yet the army-backed government announced record gold production of 64 tonnes in 2024.

Trump says ‘very wealthy’ group to buy TikTok

AFP | Washington, United States

President Donald Trump said yesterday a group of buyers had been found for TikTok, which faces a looming ban in the United States due to its China ties, adding he could name the purchasers in two weeks.

“We have a buyer for TikTok, by the way,” Trump said in an interview on Fox’s Sunday Morning Futures with Maria Bartiromo.

“Very wealthy people. It’s a group of wealthy people,” the

president said, without revealing more except to say he would make their identities known “in about two weeks.”

The president also said he would likely need “China approval” for the sale, “and I think President Xi (Jinping) will probably do it.”

TikTok is owned by China-based internet company ByteDance.

A federal law requiring TikTok’s sale or ban on national security grounds was due to take effect the day before Trump’s

inauguration on January 20. But the Republican, whose 2024 election campaign relied heavily on social media and who has said he is fond of TikTok, put the ban on pause.

In mid-June Trump extended a deadline for the popular video-sharing app by another 90 days to find a non-Chinese buyer or be banned in the United States.

Tech experts quickly described the TikTok kerfuffle as a symbol of the heated US-China tech rivalry. While Trump had

long supported a ban or divestment, he reversed his position and vowed to defend the platform -- which boasts almost two billion global users -- after coming to believe it helped him win young voters’ support in the November election. “I have a little warm spot in my heart for TikTok,” Trump told NBC News in early May. “If it needs an extension, I would be willing to give it an extension.”

Now after two extensions pushed the deadline to June 19, Trump has extended it for a

third time.

He said in May that a group of purchasers was ready to pay ByteDance “a lot of money” for TikTok’s US operations.

The previous month he said China would have agreed to a deal on the sale of TikTok if it were not for a dispute over Trump’s tariffs on Beijing.

ByteDance has confirmed talks with the US government, saying key matters needed to be resolved and that any deal would be “subject to approval under Chinese law.”