

HRH Prince Salman hails US role in regional stability, reaffirms support for Palestinian state

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His Royal Highness Prince Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa, the Crown Prince, Deputy Supreme Commander of the Armed Forces, and Prime Minister, yesterday praised the United States and its allies for their pivotal role in maintaining regional and global security, stability, and development, while reaffirming Bahrain's steadfast support for the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people.

The remarks came during HRH Prince Salman's meeting with Thomas J. Barrack, US Ambassador to Türkiye and



Special Envoy for Syria, held on the sidelines of the 21st IISS Manama Dialogue 2025.

Reaffirming Bahrain's commitment to the establishment

of an independent Palestinian state, HRH said such a step is vital for lasting peace and would benefit both the Palestinian people and the wider region.

Speaking on Bahrain-US relations, HRH Prince Salman noted that bilateral ties continue to expand across multiple sectors, driven by shared goals

and mutual interests. HRH underscored the importance of further strengthening cooperation within the framework of the Comprehensive Security In-

tegration and Prosperity Agreement (C-SIPA), describing it as a cornerstone for deeper strategic partnership. The meeting also reviewed regional and international developments and matters of common interest.

Present were His Highness Lieutenant-General Shaikh Nasser bin Hamad Al Khalifa, National Security Advisor and Commander of the Royal Guard; His Highness Shaikh Mohammed bin Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa; Dr Abdullatif bin Rashid Al Zayani, Minister of Foreign Affairs; and Shaikh Salman bin Khalifa Al Khalifa, Minister of Finance and National Economy.

A sweet date!

Kingdom may host world dates observatory

- Government-backed bill now before Parliament
- To monitor and analyse global date production and trade

● Oversight by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Mohammed Darwish
TDT | Manama

Bahrain could soon become the world's window into the global dates market, with lawmakers set to vote on a government-backed bill proposing the Kingdom as the perma-



Picture for representation only

nent home of the International Dates Observatory.

If approved, the law would formalise an agreement signed in Manama on 22 September 2025, officially designating Bahrain as the permanent seat of the Observatory. The pact grants the institution legal status, the right to con-

tract and own property, and access to the facilities required for its operations.

The draft law, issued under Decree No. 64 of 2025, has been referred to Parliament's Public Utilities and Environment Committee for review, with the Legislative and Legal Affairs Committee asked to provide its remarks.

Once established, the International Dates Observatory will collect, analyse, and publish data on global date production and trade — giving member states reliable market insights and evidence-based indicators to shape their decisions. It will be empowered to hold multi-currency accounts and transfer funds in accordance with Bahraini law, while working in coordination

with the government.

Under the terms of the agreement, the Director of the International Dates Council must keep Bahrain's Ministry of Foreign Affairs informed about the Observatory's leadership and staff changes. All official correspondence with Bahraini authorities will pass through the ministry.

The agreement also includes a safeguard clause affirming Bahrain's right to act in the interest of national security, safety, and public order during emergencies. Disputes will be resolved amicably through diplomatic channels, and any amendments must be made in writing and ratified through the same procedures.

The Legislation and Legal

Opinion Commission has confirmed that the proposal aligns with Bahrain's Constitution and qualifies for approval under Article 37(2). Parliament will now study the file and the recommendations of the two committees before a final decision is made.

If ratified, Bahrain would solidify its role as a central hub for global agricultural intelligence — this time, with a sweet focus on one of the Arab world's oldest and most prized fruits.



The global dates market is valued at over USD 15 billion and is projected to grow steadily as demand rises for natural sweeteners and healthy snacks — with Middle Eastern countries accounting for more than 75% of global production.

MPs propose allowance for multiple sclerosis patients

Mohammed Darwish
TDT | Manama

Multiple sclerosis (MS), a chronic neurological disorder that affects the central nervous system, could soon be recognised as a qualifying disability for monthly allowances under a proposal submitted by five MPs.

If approved, individuals living with MS would be entitled to financial support from the Ministry of Social Development.

The condition, which can cause movement, sensory and visual impairments, often disrupts daily life and may force patients to withdraw from work, studies, or social activities.

According to the parliamentary memorandum, people with MS are not currently listed among the disability categories eligible for regular financial aid. "Many therefore face high treatment costs without steady financial or social backing," the document states.

The lawmakers argue that including MS within the supported categories aligns with Bahrain's Law on the Care, Rehabilitation and Employment of Persons with Disabilities, as well as the Kingdom's international obligations.

They note that MS patients often require expensive medication and ongoing medical care, including physiotherapy, MRI scans, periodic injections, and specialist consultations — expenses that can be overwhelming, especially for those unable to remain employed due to the illness.

The memorandum also cites international practice, where MS is recognised as a disability eligible for assistance, and points out that Bahrain's legal framework permits the inclusion of chronic conditions that cause long-term incapacity.

The proposal was submitted by MPs Jaleela Alawi, Dr Mahdi Al Shuwaiikh, Dr Hisham Al Ashiri, Mahmood Fardan, and Mohsen Al Asboul.

Tougher jail terms, fines proposed for fatal and negligent injury cases

Mohammed Darwish
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Hefty penalties and longer jail terms could soon be introduced for those found guilty in cases of fatal or negligent injury, under a new bill up for a vote in Parliament this Tuesday.

The proposed amendments set out prison terms of up to 10 years and fines reaching BD10,000 in the most serious cases, aligning penalties with those already applied under traffic laws.

For fatal incidents, courts could impose prison terms ranging from two to five years, with fines between BD2,000 and BD6,000. Where multiple deaths occur, the range would rise to two to seven years and BD3,000 to BD10,000 in fines.

Under the draft, harsher sentences would apply when aggravating factors are present — such as driving under the influence of alcohol or drugs, running a red light, breaching basic duties at work, or failing

to assist a victim despite being able to help.

For fatal incidents, courts could impose prison terms ranging from two to five years, with fines between BD2,000 and BD6,000. Where multiple deaths occur, the range would rise to two to seven years and BD3,000 to BD10,000 in fines.

In cases involving both multiple deaths and an aggravating factor, sentences could extend from 3 to 10 years.

For negligent injury, the basic penalty would be up to one year in jail or a BD200 fine. If the

injury causes a permanent disability or involves an aggravating factor, penalties would rise to one to five years in jail and BD1,000 to BD5,000 in fines. Multiple injuries would carry two to five years' imprisonment and BD2,000 to BD8,000 fines, increasing to two to seven years where aggravating factors apply.

The Interior Ministry told MPs that some fatal accidents without aggravating elements currently result only in a fine or short jail term, while cases involving drink, drugs or reckless

driving already attract tougher, mandatory penalties. The proposed change seeks to close the gap between the Penal Code and traffic laws, ensuring similar offences are treated with equal severity.

The Supreme Judicial Council said it is not authorised to comment on such legislative proposals.

Parliament's Committee on Foreign Affairs, Defence and National Security has recommended approving the bill, noting unanimous support among members present.