

Bahrain and Qatar committed to advancing ties

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His Royal Highness Prince Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa, the Crown Prince and Prime Minister, emphasised the Kingdom of Bahrain’s commitment to advancing relations with the State of Qatar to mutually benefit the citizens of both countries. HRH Prince Salman was speaking as he received yesterday His Excellency Nasser Abdullah Al Nassr, the newly appointed Ambassador of Qatar to Bahrain, at Riffa Palace.

HRH the Crown Prince and Prime Minister highlighted the



HRH the Crown Prince and Prime Minister receives H.E. Qatar Ambassador Nasser Abdullah Al Nass

strength of Bahrain-Qatar historic relations, supported by His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa and His Highness Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al-Thani, the Amir of Qatar.

For his part, H.E. Ambassador Al Nassr expressed his appreciation for His Royal Highness’s commitment to advancing Bahrain-Qatar ties and conveyed his best wishes for the Kingdom’s continued progress.

H.E. Shaikh Salman bin Khalifa Al Khalifa, Minister of Finance and National Economy, also attended the meeting.

Transport unity

Shura Council backs GCC unified land-transport rules for smoother cross-border road haulage



H.E. Dr Abdullah bin Ahmed Al Khalifa

● **New decree-law aims to streamline goods movement and address delays**

Mohammed Darwish
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The Shura Council approved yesterday Decree-Law No. (35) of 2025, adopting the Gulf Cooperation Council’s unified land-transport rules for cross-border road haulage between member states.

The decree-law was passed by name vote and sent to the Speaker of the Council of Representatives to inform the government.

During the debate, His Excellency Dr Abdullah bin Ahmed Al Khalifa, Minister of the Ministry of Transportation and Tele-



Abdullah Al Nuaimi

communications, said the sector was running on too thin a legal base, with pressure felt most at the King Fahd Causeway. “We are facing a legislative gap in Bahrain and at the international level, particularly at the King Fahd Causeway where major challenges appear,” he told members.

Traffic

He said the scale of freight traffic was clear.

“We have more than 2,300 trucks belonging to 150 companies,” he said, adding that the ministry had brought in remote inspection to cut delays. “Remote inspection will help speed up procedures and make things easier.”

H.E. Dr Abdullah said Bahrain moved to ratify the unified rules after neighbours started applying them.

“Saudi Arabia was the first state to ratify it, so it was neces-



Dalal Al Zayed

“Remote inspection will help speed up procedures and make things easier.”

— H.E. DR ABDULLAH BIN AHMED AL KHALIFA, MINISTER OF THE MINISTRY OF TRANSPORTATION AND TELECOMMUNICATIONS

sary that Saudi Arabia does not start applying it while Bahrain falls behind,” he said.

Report

The Foreign Affairs, Defence and National Security Committee backed the decree-law in a report debated by the chamber.

Its rapporteur, Abdullah Al Nuaimi, said the step followed decisions taken by GCC leaders at their 43rd Supreme Council session and was meant to deal with delays after the date set



Dr Ebtisam Al Dallal

for work under the unified rules had passed.

The report said the hold-up risked leaving a legal gap that could disrupt cross-border traffic, especially with Saudi Arabia already applying the system, and could harm Bahraini carriers in an open regional market.

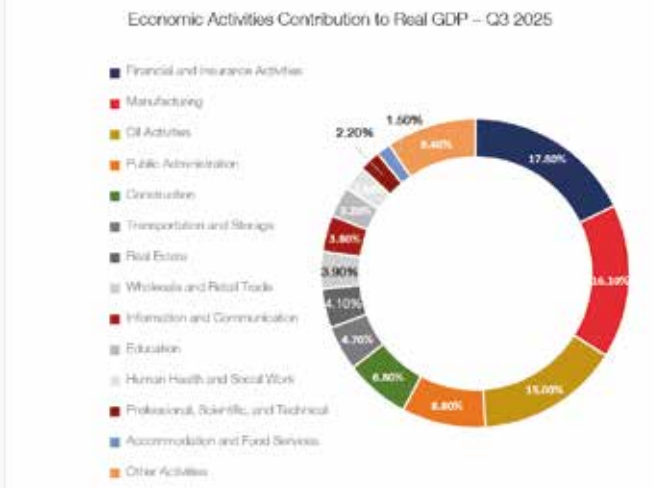
Under the decree-law, Bahrain approves the attached unified regulation, defines the “competent authority” as the body to be named by decree, and sets an exchange rate for application purposes at one Bahraini dinar to ten riyals.

Grievances

It also sets a route for grievances against decisions taken under the regulation and its executive rules, keeps existing decisions in force until those executive rules are issued, and includes an implementing article.

The attached regulation has 25 articles.

Services Drive Growth



Financial and insurance activities led Bahrain’s GDP contribution in the third quarter of 2025, underscoring the growing role of services in the economy.

Mahir Haneef
TDT | Manama

Bahrain’s economy expanded steadily in the third quarter of 2025, with growth increasingly driven by services, trade and digital activity rather than oil alone, according to a new report by the Bahrain Chamber.

Real GDP grew by four percent year on year in the third quarter, supported by a 3.1 percent rise in the non-oil economy. Real estate emerged as the fastest-growing non-oil sector, expanding by 5.4 percent, followed by financial and insurance activities at five percent and education at 4.8 percent.

The report shows that financial and insurance activities are now the largest contributor to real GDP, accounting for 17.8 percent of output, ahead of manufacturing and oil activities. Manufacturing contributed 16.1 percent, while oil activities accounted for 15 percent.

Trade momentum also strengthened during the quarter. The volume of trade between Bahrain and other GCC

countries rose by 22 percent compared to the same period last year, increasing to \$2.15 billion. Trade with Saudi Arabia and the UAE continued to dominate, while trade with Oman recorded the fastest growth, surging by 116 percent year on year.

Domestic economic activity reflected a shift towards digital payments and consumer spending. The value of point-of-sale transactions rose by 12 percent, while electronic fund transfers through the Fawri and Fawateer systems recorded strong double-digit growth. At the same time, the value of ATM withdrawals declined by 11 percent.

The report also noted a decline in business loan interest rates across major sectors, including construction, manufacturing and trade, alongside Bahrain’s continued top ranking in the MENA region for mobile network excellence during the quarter. Oil prices fell during the period, but the report indicates that non-oil sectors and regional trade helped sustain overall economic growth.

Labour Minister takes part in 8th Abu Dhabi Consultation Ministerial Meeting

Dubai

His Excellency Yousif bin Abdullhussain Khalaf, Minister of Labour and Minister of Legal Affairs and Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Labour Market Regulatory Authority (LMRA), participated in the 8th Ministerial Meeting of the Abu Dhabi Consultation.

It was held in Dubai, UAE from January 31 to February 1, with the participation of ministers responsible for labour affairs, alongside a number of specialised regional and international organisations.

The meeting addressed several strategic themes related to



H.E. Yousif bin Abdullhussain Khalaf with ministers responsible for labour affairs

strengthening labour cooperation frameworks among participating countries, including labour mobility, skills pathways, and productivity to support a

just transition towards the green economy. It also explored the legal, social, and professional dimensions of temporary migrant workers in the platform

economy.

Discussions further examined the impact of climate change, the role of skills and diversity in enhancing labour productivity, and

emerging labour market trends across member states.

The Abu Dhabi Consultation aims to align policies and perspectives on labour markets

and promote constructive dialogue between labour-sending and labour-receiving countries, in support of shared interests and sustained economic growth.

This is achieved through the development of balanced labour policies that respond to market needs, safeguard workers’ rights, and ensure safe and supportive working environments, while keeping pace with labour market transformations, particularly emerging professions requiring advanced skills, and prioritising optimal investment in human capital and the integration of citizens into promising sectors and future jobs.