

Debt dilemma

● Shura to tackle important issues on international commercial court

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Shura Council will take up Decree-Laws 8 and 9 of 2024 today to underpin the Bahrain International Commercial Court and review the State's 2023 final account, which shows a wider deficit after over-spending and a 7 per cent rise in public debt.

The Financial and Economic Affairs Committee reports that the non-oil economy grew by 3 per cent in 2023 compared with the 2022 outturn.

Actual spending exceeded the approved budget, which left a larger deficit at year-end.

The committee urges firm steps to rein in expenditure and calls for a tighter debt-management plan to curb further borrowing.

Project costs

It also asks for a review of how ministries and agencies estimate project costs to make better use of public money.

Recurring issues remain: the final account omits a balance sheet and a cash-flow statement and attaches only a receipts-and-payments schedule.

The committee recommends folding the revenues of entities exempt from remitting to the general account into the State's consolidated final account.

Revenue

It notes that the National Audit Office audits revenue and spending chapters but not the annexes, which contain large sums, and that some entities keep breaching their approved limits each year with a rising total.

The Legislative and Legal Affairs Committee, in a separate pair of reports, backs Decree-Law 8 on a set of justice-related treaties and Decree-Law 9 establishing the Bahrain International Commercial Court.

The treaty package is described as the legal base for setting up the court and for it to exercise its powers.

It is intended to bring common rules for exchanging evidence, support recognition of cross-border judgments and agreements, and give friendly settlements international effect.

Measures

The measures also set out a flexible appeal route with an international character for the court's rulings.

The committee says these steps aim to build user trust and strengthen Bahrain's standing as a venue for international commercial dispute resolution.

Global standards

Decree-Law 9 creates a specialised, independent court run to global standards to handle cross-border commercial cases with speed and professionalism and to offer flexible options for parties.

‘Historic’ as UK joins C-SIPA to bolster regional security

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The Defence Working Group (DWG) has officially welcomed the United Kingdom's accession to the Comprehensive Security Integration and Prosperity Agreement (C-SIPA), marking a significant step toward strengthening regional security and fostering shared prosperity alongside Bahrain and the United States.

The formal welcome ceremony and meeting took place at the Royal Guard Headquarters, under the leadership of His Highness Lieutenant General Shaikh Nasser bin Hamad Al Khalifa, National Security Advisor and Commander of the Royal Guard.

Describing the occasion as a “historic moment,” Shaikh Khalid bin Ali bin Jaber Al Khalifa, Deputy National Security Advisor and Deputy Secretary General of Bahrain's Supreme Defence Council, told the Daily Tribune that the UK's accession to C-SIPA represents a strategic milestone, one that integrates defence cooperation, economic resilience, and technological advancement.

“Today marks the first time the United Kingdom joins Bahrain and the United States in



HH Lieutenant General Shaikh Nasser bin Hamad Al Khalifa with The Defence Working Group and the UK officials at the formal welcome ceremony



this framework, reflecting our collective vision for a secure and prosperous region,” said Shaikh Khalid. “C-SIPA is comprehensive by design, it strengthens security cooperation while also enhancing prosperity through innovation, digital infrastruc-

ture, and economic collaboration.”

During the meeting, member states reaffirmed their collective commitment under Article (2) of the agreement, emphasizing that any threat or aggression against one member's sovereign-

ty or territorial integrity would be treated as a matter of grave concern by all.

The discussions underscored C-SIPA's growing importance as a platform for collective security, regional deterrence, and strategic cooperation. Delegates highlighted the need for enhanced coordination to counter external threats and safeguard international stability, reinforcing a shared approach to peace and prosperity in the Gulf.

Trilateral framework

His Excellency Alistair Long, the British Ambassador to Bahrain, emphasized that while the trilateral collaboration feels natural, given the long-standing defence ties between the three nations, joining C-SIPA formalizes and strengthens that cooperation even more.

“Practically, it doesn't feel new,” Ambassador Long said. “We've been collaborating closely for years, our naval bases literally operate side by side in Bahrain. But to be in this framework is significant; it gives structure and shared purpose to our cooperation.” He credited Bahrain and the United States for their vision in creating the agreement, which aligns with the UK's belief that security and prosperity are interdependent. Ambassador Long highlighted that C-SIPA also embraces the principles of the international rules-based order, regional inclusivity, and technological advancement.

“This agreement resonates deeply with UK values, it's about building prosperity through security, upholding international norms, and advancing innovation together,” he noted.

Reckless rage

10-year term upheld for driver who ran down neighbour after sickle threat

● Defendant under influence of drugs

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Ten years' jail upheld for a driver who chased a neighbour and deliberately ran him down after threatening him with an iron sickle, the Criminal Court of Appeal ruled.

Appeal judges held that the defendant took narcotics by choice and remains answerable for what followed.

The medical committee found no proof the drug was forced on him, nor that he thought it was anything else.

He is to be punished as if sober, the court added, and the claim that he lacked intent to kill does not change that.

Abnormal state

The file states the defendant turned up at the victim's home in an abnormal state.

He looked tense, shouted threats and waved an iron sickle, then left. He later returned to the same area, more aggressive, and chased the victim while holding the same blade.

During the pursuit he smashed a window of the victim's car in view of passers-by.

An eyewitness said he saw the defendant running after the victim with the sickle and shouting that he would kill him.



Image used for illustrative purposes only

Threats

The witness got the man into a car to calm him, but the defendant fought to get out and kept repeating the threats.

Moments later he moved the vehicle and steered it at the victim. The victim tried to get clear.

The defendant turned the car, accelerated and ran him over, pinning him between vehicles and keeping his foot down.

The witness broke a window, shifted the gear to reverse, cut the engine and pulled the defendant out, while the defendant kept shouting that he would kill the victim.

Medical reports recorded severe injuries, including fractures to both legs caused by strong crush force. Doctors warned such injuries can be fatal if complications arise.

Investigators reported the

defendant had recurring family disputes and used narcotics, leaving him quick to anger and violent in conduct. He admitted taking psychotropic substances and causing the incident, adding he could not recall the details because of the drug's effect. Records showed a previous conviction for drug use.

Maximum penalty

In court, the Public Prosecution sought the maximum penalty, citing the risk he poses and the need for deterrence.

It charged him with attempted murder for first trying to assault the victim with an iron sickle and then running him over to take his life, causing injuries. The acts came with the felony of using psychotropic substances at the same time and place, and with wilful damage to the victim's property.

Commitment to peace



His Excellency General Shaikh Rashid bin Abdullah Al Khalifa, Minister of Interior, noted that the IISS Manama Dialogue is among the most prominent international forums hosted by Bahrain, distinguished by its high level of organisation and participation, reflecting the Kingdom's global standing. He emphasised Bahrain's commitment to promoting coexistence and a culture of peace, in line with the vision of His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa. He also highlighted the strong relations and strategic partnership between the Kingdom of Bahrain and the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, and their joint efforts to enhance regional stability and international security. H.E. General Shaikh Rashid was speaking as he received General Nadeem Raza, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee of the Armed Forces of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan.

Public safety and security a priority

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His Excellency General Shaikh Rashid bin Abdullah Al Khalifa, Minister of Interior, has outlined the Ministry of Interior's efforts to maintain public safety and security for all citizens and residents.

He noted the continued development of the Bahrain Police through advanced training and the use of modern technologies in delivering security services.

H.E. General Shaikh Rashid was speaking as he met with Lord Ross Kempell, Member of the UK House of Lords, on the sidelines of the 21st IISS Manama Dialogue 2025.

The Interior Minister welcomed Lord Kempell's visit to the Kingdom of Bahrain to participate in the Manama Dialogue, which addresses key regional and global strategic issues, including coexistence and countering extremism.

He highlighted the close relations between Bahrain and the United Kingdom and their shared commitment to enhancing regional security.

They discussed means to strengthen cooperation and coordination in police work, exchange expertise in public safety and civil protection, and enhance joint efforts in areas of mutual interest that support shared objectives between the two countries.