

Faith and culture unite

Thousands of Filipino devotees celebrate beloved 2026 Feast of the Sto. Niño at Sacred Heart Church

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More than 2,000 devotees gathered for one of the most anticipated religious celebrations of the Filipino Catholic community in Bahrain, the Feast of the Sto. Niño at the Sacred Heart Church.

For Lorily N. Agustin, faith is best lived and celebrated with family.

The 50-year-old Office Manager at the Property Management Division of Dream Group recently attended the event, together with her husband, Carlo Jose Agustin, and their eight-year-old daughter, Regina Caily Agustin.

Worshippers

The Agustin family was among worshippers who brought their Santo Niño images to the Mass, where they were blessed as a sign of faith and devotion.

The gathering reflected both the strong faith of the Filipino community and its vibrant presence in Manama, bringing together families and friends in prayer, thanksgiving, and shared devotion.

The celebration opened with a Holy Mass presided over by Fr. Anthony Almazan, OFM Cap., Spiritual Director of Katolikong Pinoy sa Bahrain.

Devotion

After the Mass, devotees demonstrated their devotion



The gathering showcases Filipino faith and unity, bringing families together in prayer and thanksgiving



through vibrant parades, lively dances, and heartfelt prayers, filling the celebration with bright costumes, smiling faces, and a shared sense of hope and joy.

People of all ages participated actively, making the event a truly inclusive gathering that fostered both faith and fellowship within the community.

The Hermano and Hermana for this year are Mr. King and

Ms. Gabie, together with Ms. Cielo Teresita Layson and Ms. Lolita Cruz.

Gratitude

The Katolikong Pinoy sa Bahrain (KPSB) extended its heartfelt gratitude to them, as well as to all donors and supporters whose generosity made this year's celebration possible.

The community also acknowledged the invaluable service of

previous Hermano and Hermanas — Mr. Marlon and Mrs. Ednalin Gumarang (represented by Mr. Herman and Mrs. Alma Valenzona), Mr. Renne Subido and Mrs. Puralyn Fiel, Engr. Vic John Potot, Ms. Edel Alviz, and Ms. Margie Cristobal, along with all 2025 supporters.

Their devotion and service to the Senior Sto. Niño continue to serve as an enduring source of inspiration for the community.

The panel of judges for the Ati-Atihan, Dinagyang, and Sinulog Street Dance competitions included Michael C. Belano, Khadlyn Ramos, Ricardo Advincula, and Cecilia V. Ancheta.

Lumad Bisdakon, a group of 27 members, emerged as the champion in all the street dance categories, followed closely by the Philippine School Bahrain (PSB) cultural group and the All Guardian Bahrain Dance Group.

The participating cultural groups offered their talents as a form of prayer while preserving and celebrating Filipino cultural heritage.

Cecilia V. Ancheta, a freelance journalist and member of the panel of judges, remarked that all the performances were impressive, effectively depicting the transition from pagan traditions to Christianity as reflected in their presentations.

Manama Central Market's 'worsening' condition raises Parliamentary alarm



Old Manama Souq
Hasan Barakat
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The condition of Manama Central Market has emerged as a significant point of concern in Parliament, with members warning that prolonged neglect is threatening both economic activity and the preservation of the city's cultural heritage.

During the seventeenth ordinary session of the Council of Representatives, held as part of the fourth ordinary annual term of the sixth legislative session, lawmakers highlighted the urgent need for measures to revitalise the market and support local merchants.

Second Deputy Speaker Ahmed Qarata described the market as facing severe infrastructural and service related deficiencies that had rendered it largely unfit for efficient operation or movement.

He pointed to the absence of essential facilities, including designated truck parking areas and unloading zones, noting that these shortcomings continued to disrupt daily commercial activity and accessibility.

Qarata stated that the market had for years suffered from persistent failures in air conditioning systems, declining standards of cleanliness, and recurring sewage problems.

Delayed benefits and humanitarian visa cases tackled

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MP Jalila Al Alawi delivered a wide-ranging parliamentary intervention addressing unresolved employment files, social insurance reform, humanitarian residency cases, housing pressures in the Capital Government, and outstanding issues related to the fisheries sector.

The remarks were made during the seventeenth ordinary session of the Council of Representatives, convened as part of the fourth ordinary annual term of the sixth legislative term.

Al Alawi raised concerns regarding the electronic system of the General Organisation for Social Insurance, calling for substantive technical reform to ensure the timely disbursement of entitlements, particularly pensions owed to the families of deceased contributors.

She further emphasised the need for tangible changes in the organisation's investment practices to enhance long term sustainability and service efficiency.

Addressing residency and visa procedures, Al Alawi supported proposals calling for the acceleration of visa and residency services for spouses of Bahraini men and women.

MP calls for suspension of vendor evictions



The area is experiencing parking problems

Hasan Barakat
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MP Mamdouh Al Saleh delivered a measured parliamentary intervention addressing municipal administration, the condition of traditional markets, and regulatory gaps related to foreign labour.

The remarks were made during the seventeenth ordinary session of the Council of Representatives, held as part of the fourth ordinary annual term of the sixth legislative chapter.

In addressing the proposal calling for the suspension of eviction orders against vendors



Al Saleh cautioned that proceeding with removals without providing realistic and functional alternatives would place undue pressure on traders and disrupt livelihoods.

in Jidhafs Market, Al Saleh stressed that the market represented one of Bahrain's long established commercial and social centres.

He noted that the area was experiencing clear deterioration in infrastructure and services, in the absence of a comprehensive redevelopment plan capable of addressing long standing challenges.

He highlighted the difficult conditions under which vendors currently operate, citing the absence of organised parking, inadequate sanitary facilities, and a lack of proper ventilation and cooling.