

# Inclusive Ashura Transit

Trial begins with early rollout

● Six-route network announced

● Access added for disabled

● Hotline launched for feedback

**Mahir Haneef**  
TDT | Manama

Bahrain's Jaafari Endowments has launched an upgraded Ashura public transport project offering free bus services across six major routes to Manama - now including early trial access and dedicated support for people with disabilities.

The initiative, inaugurated by HE Yousef bin Saleh Al Saleh, Chairman of the Jaafari Endowments, aims to ease the commute for mourners during the Ashura season through coordinated public services backed by the state.

The project runs from the night of the 7th to the 10th of Muharram (2025), operating daily from 6 pm to 3 am.



H.E. Yousef bin Saleh Al Saleh visits the dedicated public transport buses for people with disabilities during Ashura



## Expanding inclusion

In a first, this year's plan includes a dedicated bus for people with disabilities, a move hailed by officials as a critical step toward making religious

participation more accessible.

Additionally, golf carts have been deployed along procession paths in central Manama to help transport elderly attendees, children, and those with mobility challenges.



The upgraded scheme began with a trial phase on the 5th of Muharram at select stations and also saw contributions from private institutions, with one volunteering two buses to support the initiative.

## Shared responsibility

Al Saleh highlighted the collaboration with Al Sadiq Transport Company, whose General Manager Majid Taher was present at the launch.



Bahrain is the only GCC country where free, large-scale public transport is annually organised by a religious endowment for Ashura, with coordination from state and civil sectors.

He also extended gratitude to the Ministry of Interior, Ministry of Justice, the Capital Governorate, and various traffic authorities for ensuring safety and coordination.

"The continued success of this initiative year after year reflects the deep commitment of the Kingdom's leadership to supporting religious rituals and providing services that respect the needs of all citizens," Al Saleh said.

# Bahrain Pushes Experiential Tourism Talent Exchange



Noora Al Saadoon chairs the high-level meeting

● Bahrain chairs Cairo meeting

● Joint travel packages proposed

● Experiential learning plan unveiled

**Mahir Haneef**  
TDT | Manama

Bahrain has called for a new chapter in Arab tourism cooperation, proposing experiential talent exchanges and unified regional travel packages at a high-level meeting in Cairo this week.

The Kingdom, currently presiding over the Arab Technical Tourism Committee, presented a suite of action-oriented proposals during the committee's 13th session.

Noora Al Saadoon, Director of Policy and Planning at the Bahrain Tourism and Exhibitions Authority (BTEA), chaired the meeting and urged member states to transition from planning to implementation in cross-border tourism collaboration.



The Arab region attracts nearly 100 million tourists annually, but fewer than 10 percent visit more than one Arab country per trip, highlighting untapped potential for regional tourism integration.

## Regional mobility

One of Bahrain's headline proposals was the launch of joint Arab tourism packages.

These integrated itineraries would enable tourists to visit multiple destinations within the region in a single trip, an effort designed to increase stays, boost spending, and strengthen the Arab world's collective appeal as a seamless travel experience.

The session also tackled how

to build a more resilient tourism sector amid fast-changing global travel patterns and technological disruption.

## Capacity-building focus

Al Saadoon introduced a second major Bahraini initiative: an "experiential learning exchange" that would allow Arab tourism professionals to gain hands-on experience across destinations and administrative institutions within the region.

She said this initiative would strengthen both institutional and human capital, enabling Arab tourism entities to adapt more effectively to global demands while fostering deeper professional links across borders.

## Implementation next

The committee's recommendations, including both Bahraini proposals, will be submitted to the Arab Ministerial Council for Tourism at its upcoming session.

Final approval and implementation timelines are expected to follow. With its leadership role in Cairo, Bahrain has signalled a strategic shift in Arab tourism from conceptual alignment to concrete execution.

# 'SAYAW PINOY': Folkdance Competition 2025

**Pradeep Puravankara**  
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In a spectacular tribute to the 127th Philippine Independence Day, the Filipino Club Bahrain, headed by Ms. Rosemarie Hernandez, in collaboration with the Philippine Dance Crew, proudly produced "SAYAW PINOY: Folk Dance Competition 2025."

This year's friendly competition was a vibrant representation of the Filipino community's creativity, living tradition, and



## A Filipino traditional dance

unbreakable pride in Bahrain.

The stage shined with the percussive energy of classic folk dances, nurturing the sense of Filipino culture from the moment the curtain was raised.

All five contenders from the

Filipino community organizations in Bahrain showed a kaleidoscope of bright colors in costumes, strict choreography, and powerful storytelling, all derived from the Philippines diversified cultural backgrounds.

## BDF modernisation and development policy



Lieutenant General Dhiab bin Saqr Al Nuaimi, Chief of Staff, chaired the meeting of the Isa Royal Military College Council yesterday, which was held at the college. During the meeting, several topics related to the development programs and plans for Isa Royal Military College were discussed, in line with the continuous modernisation and development policy adopted by the Bahrain Defence Force (BDF). The meeting also addressed specialised training programs and both theoretical and practical academic matters. The meeting was attended by a number of senior officers from the BDF.

# Celebrating beneficiaries of 'Weyak' programme

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Coinciding with the International Day Against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking, the General Directorate of Verdict Enforcement and Alternative Sentencing held a celebration for the beneficiaries of the "Weyak" programme, a pioneering initiative under the alternative sentencing framework.

The event was attended by the Director-General of Verdict Enforcement and Alternative Sentencing, His Excellency Shaikh Khalid bin Rashid Al Khalifa, alongside representatives from supporting and partner entities involved in implementing the programme.

On this occasion, the Director-General affirmed that the "Weyak" programme, from

which two batches have graduated with a success rate of 87%, is a practical embodiment of the instructions of H.E. Interior Minister General Shaikh Rashid bin Abdullah Al Khalifa to enhance recovery opportunities and ensure the safe reintegration of individuals into society.

He noted that the programme has proven its effectiveness.