

60m-Gallon Hidd Water Plant Planned

Acwa Power submitted the only bid under Bahrain's Independent Water Producer programme



● Plant expected to begin operations in 2028

● SWRO technology will improve efficiency and reduce energy use

● Project will strengthen Bahrain's long-term water security

TDT | Manama
Mohammed Darwish

Bahrain is moving ahead with plans for a new drinking water plant in Hidd able to produce up to 60 million imperial gallons a day. The scheme aims to raise the country's water output as demand increases over the coming

years. Saudi Arabia's Acwa Power was the sole bidder for the Hidd Independent Water Project, Tender Board data showed. The company offered BD0.276 for each cubic metre of water produced. That works out at about 276 fils for every 1,000 litres of desalinated water.

This sum is a water production tariff, not the full cost of building the plant, as the scheme is offered under the independent water producer model rather than as a standard building contract. The plant's net contracted capacity will be 11,364 cubic metres an hour, equal to about 272,000 cubic metres a day, or close to 60 million imperial gallons a day of potable water.

It will be built under a build-own-operate model. The developer will fund, build, own, run and maintain the plant, then sell the water at the agreed tariff

once the bid is assessed and the award steps are completed.

The new plant will use sea-water reverse osmosis, a desalination method designed to cut energy use compared with some older systems. The scheme is part of the Electricity and Water Authority's plans to renew Bahrain's water infrastructure and introduce plants with higher efficiency and lower running needs. It is expected to enter full commercial operation in the second quarter of 2028. Once running, it will add new capacity to Bahrain's water network, serving homes, businesses and industry.

The Electricity and Water Authority had earlier issued an international tender after a pre-qualification stage involving local and overseas companies and consortiums. Acwa Power wlatere named as the sole bidder when the tender envelopes were opened.

MSME Day Forum Goes Global with Sarajevo Edition

Forum explores supply chain challenges, economic uncertainty, and innovation pathways

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Neethu V

The Bahrain Small and Medium Enterprises Society will host the 14th International MSME Day Forum in Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina, on July 6 and 7, marking the first time the event is held outside Bahrain.

The forum is organised in cooperation with the World Union of Small and Medium Enterprises Organizations (UNISMEO) and the Chamber of Economy of Bosnia and Herzegovina, with support from the Government of Bahrain.

Dr. Abdulhassan Hassan Al Dairi, Chairman of the Bahrain Small and Medium Enterprises Society and President of UNISMEO, said the forum's international expansion reflects Bahrain's leading role in advancing the small and medium enterprises (SME) sector globally.

He highlighted that Bahrain began observing MSME Day in 2010, well before the United Nations officially declared June 27 as International MSME Day in 2017. He also noted that the society



Dr. Abdulhassan Hassan Al Dairi, Chairman of the Bahrain Small and Medium Enterprises Society and President of UNISMEO



Mirsad Jašarević - President of the Chamber of Economy of Bosnia and Herzegovina and President of UNISMEO Bosnia

approached the UN in 2016 with a proposal to establish a global observance recognising the importance of SMEs worldwide.

This year's forum will be held under the theme "MSMEs in a Green Digital Economy and Global Changes in Supply Chains." Discussions will focus on key challenges facing small businesses, including global economic uncertainty, geopolitical tensions, and supply chain disruptions.

The two-day programme will feature five panel discussions, an opening ceremony, a book launch by a UNISMEO

board member from Nigeria, and the announcement of policy recommendations aimed at strengthening SMEs—particularly micro-enterprises—and improving their resilience in a rapidly evolving global economy.

Mirsad Jašarević, President of the Chamber of Economy of Bosnia and Herzegovina and President of UNISMEO Bosnia, welcomed the partnership with Bahrain, saying the forum will serve as a global platform for exchanging ideas and developing practical solutions to support the sustainable growth of SMEs worldwide.

From palm to plate

Bahrain's rutab season begins

TDT | Manama
Hasan Barakat

Bahrain's rutab markets are beginning to fill as the summer heat settles in, with early local varieties opening a season that arrives in stages rather than all at once. A tour by The Daily Tribune found active buying at local markets, where consumers chose from the first fresh batches of Bahraini rutab amid prices that varied according to variety, timing and supply.

Vendors said early types such as Mawaji, Tayyar and Ghurra are now available, while popular varieties including Khalas and Khunaizi are expected to arrive in larger quantities later in the season.

Bahraini heritage enthusiast Hasan Al Majed said the rutab season is part of a wider agricultural rhythm tied to the life of the palm tree. He said rutab is not only a taste, but a story of a palm tree



and years of patience.

According to Mr Al Majed, the season in Bahrain usually runs from July through August, although early varieties begin appearing before the peak.

Al Majed explained that the fruit passes through several traditional stages before becoming



Bahraini heritage enthusiast Hasan Al Majed

dates. It begins with Hababou, a small green fruit, before moving to Sheesa, a longer and thinner early stage. It then reaches Khalal, when ripening begins, followed by Biser, the stage before full softening.

Rutab

Rutab is the best-known stage in Bahrain, he said. At this point, the fruit becomes soft, juicy and sweet, making it one of the most popular seasonal foods. The final stage is Tamr, when the fruit becomes dry or semi-dry and suitable for storage over longer periods. Seller Abdulshahed Al Shamtout said

Bahrain's rutab season does not begin with all varieties appearing together. Mawaji is among the first to open the season, followed by Tayyar, Bajairat, Ghurra, Nasiri and Khudairi.

He said more varieties, including Barhi, Hilali, Shishi, and Salmi, will appear as the season progresses. Al Shamtout said Bahrain has more than 72 local rutab varieties.

They differ in colour, size, taste and ripening time, giving the season both length and va-



riety.

He said the season usually begins in the final part of June and continues until around mid-September, with peak availability from July to mid-August.

Seller Habib Al Baqali said Mawaji began appearing in markets around three weeks ago, followed by Bajairat and Tayyar.

He said Ghurra is currently among the most in-demand varieties, selling for about BD2.5 per kilogramme. Bajairat sells for about BD1.5, while Mawaji ranges between BD1 and BD1.5 per kilogramme.

Al Baqali said Tayyar gets its name from its short season and how quickly it disappears from markets. He added that Bajairat is known as an early ripening variety, recognised by its yellow colour at the start of the season. He said Khalas and Khunaizi remain among the most await-



Bahrain has more than 72 local rutab varieties, each differing in colour, size, taste and ripening time, which is why the season arrives in stages rather than all at once.

ed varieties for consumers, but their arrival depends on their natural ripening time.

GCC Visitors Flock to Final Day of Almond Festival

Almonds drew strong interest from GCC visitors on the final day of the three-day Bahrain Almond Festival held in Hoorat A'ali, as families and tourists explored a wide range of fresh produce, home-made products and agricultural displays.

The festival featured fresh Habban almonds alongside almond ice cream, sweets, jams, roasted coffee and Bahraini honey, with steady footfall reported from morning until closing hours.

Local seller Abu Kareem said the current Habban season is at its peak and typically lasts between four to six weeks before the jumbo variety arrives. He noted that despite increasing competition from imported produce, Bahraini almonds continue to maintain strong local demand. Visitors were presented with several varieties of Habban almonds, including yellow, red-fleshed and mixed types, with prices ranging between BD5 and BD10 depending on quality and size.

Beyond fresh produce, productive families and small businesses showcased almond-based innovations such as maboob, desserts and ice cream, highlighting growing opportunities for seasonal food entrepreneurship.

The festival also featured almond seedlings, with vendor Sadiq Al Marzooq noting strong interest from GCC visitors keen on cultivating the



Bahraini Habban almonds remain in high demand despite competition from imported produce, with the peak harvest season lasting 4-6 weeks and offering multiple varieties priced between BD5 and BD10.

trees themselves. He said the seedlings are suited to Gulf climates and added an educational dimension to the event by encouraging agricultural awareness alongside commercial activity.

Organisers and vendors said the turnout reflected a rising appreciation for local agricultural heritage and the potential for expanding value-added products built around Bahrain's seasonal crops.