

Retail Sweep



- 1,411 shops inspected
- 14 irregular workers detained
- 106 deportations confirmed

Mahir Haneef
TDT | Manama

Shops and commercial outlets came under heightened scrutiny last week as the Labour Market Regulatory Authority (LMRA) carried out over 1,400 inspection campaigns across Bahrain, with most of them targeting street-level businesses.

From July 27 to August 2, the LMRA conducted 1,425 inspection campaigns and visits, of which 1,411 were direct visits to various shops in all governorates. These efforts led to the detention of 14 irregular workers and the deportation of 106 individuals found in violation of labour and residency laws.

Joint Oversight

In addition to standalone inspections, 14 joint campaigns were conducted in coordination with several government bodies, including the Ministry of Interior, represented by the Nationality, Passports and Residence Affairs (NPRA), as well as the respective Police Directorates and the Social Insurance Organisation.

The campaigns were spread across the kingdom, with three in Muharraq, six in the Northern Governorate, and five in the Southern Governorate. The LMRA confirmed that legal measures had been taken in response to all observed violations.



In Bahrain, the Labour Market Regulatory Authority has conducted over 50,000 inspections since 2021 to combat irregular employment and protect market stability.

Stability Focus

Authorities said the campaign was part of ongoing coordination to protect the integrity of the labour market and ensure compliance among businesses.

The LMRA reaffirmed its commitment to intensifying inspection efforts in cooperation with relevant ministries and entities, with a focus on rooting out practices that undermine economic or social stability.

Public Participation

The agency also urged residents and businesses to support these efforts by reporting suspected violations via its website (www.lmra.gov.bh), call centre (17506055), or through the government's Tawasul platform.

The statement reiterated that addressing illegal labour practices is a shared responsibility aimed at preserving the Kingdom's competitive edge and social security.

Camera Job Scam

Victims flown to Bahrain

Gear stolen from hotel room

WhatsApp used to lure targets

Pradeep Puravankara
TDT | Manama

A freelance photography job that appeared legitimate turned into a costly deception for three Qatar-based professionals after they were flown to Bahrain and robbed of their camera gear.

The fraud has raised alarm over job scams circulating in social media groups targeting creative workers in the Gulf.

The victim, a photographer residing in Qatar and hailing from Kalikavu in Malappuram district of the southern Indian state of Kerala, responded to a poster shared in a Qatar-based WhatsApp group. It advertised freelance photography work across GCC countries and included a Saudi contact number.

He was told the assignment was with a UK-based company and would take place in Bahrain. Due to "visa sensitivities,"

Freelancers lured, equipment stolen



Image used for illustrative purposes only

details were withheld until after arrival. After expressing interest, he received a flight ticket and travelled to Bahrain on Saturday.

Well-planned setup

At the airport, he was received by an Asian man who escorted him to a hotel apartment in Juffair. The man claimed there was no work that day and held on to a spare key to the room. Later, he took the victim out for dinner and said the project would start the following day.

On Sunday, a taxi picked up the victim and dropped him at a beach resort in Jaw. He was asked to wait in the lobby for two hours, then told to proceed to a star hotel. After a long wait with no client in sight, the victim returned to his room to find

it ransacked. His Sony camera, charger, memory cards, and other gear worth around BD1,300 were missing.

Pattern of theft

When he reported the incident to hotel staff, they revealed that similar cases had occurred in other rooms. At the Nabih Saleh Police Station, he met two other Qatar residents who had been targeted in the same manner. Together, the three lost equipment valued at nearly BD15,000.

The Asian man had booked the room under his own name and submitted valid passport details, but police found that he had boarded a flight to Pakistan the previous afternoon. A forensic team inspected the apartment and the investigation



Scams involving fake photography jobs have been reported across the GCC, with some victims in the UAE, Oman, and Bahrain losing thousands in camera gear over the past three years.

is ongoing.

The case has drawn attention to the risks faced by freelance professionals in the Gulf who often operate without contracts or formal safeguards. With platforms like WhatsApp and Telegram now being used for informal recruitment, job scams have become harder to detect.

Authorities have urged job seekers to verify credentials before accepting overseas assignments, especially those that require no paperwork or rely on vague instructions. The victims returned to Qatar yesterday.

5,000 Bahrainis Aided by New Charity

5,000 families supported

Hala Almoayyed joins board

2025 plan prioritises expansion

Mahir Haneef
TDT | Manama

The Better Life Association, a charitable initiative established in 2023, announced that it has supported more than 5,000 individuals and families in Bahrain.

The update came during the association's ordinary general assembly meeting, where



Better Life Association's ordinary general assembly meeting

its members reviewed past achievements and approved strategic plans for the year ahead.

Board members and founding trustees attended the meeting, which featured a presentation of the 2024 annual report. The report highlighted a wide range

of health, education, and empowerment programmes delivered across Bahrain, underscoring the association's expanding reach and rising influence in local philanthropy.

Strategic plans

The assembly also ap-

proved the 2024 financial report and adopted the estimated budget for 2025. The plan outlines efforts to expand the association's sustainable programmes and strengthen its operational infrastructure in line with its institutional goals.

Bahrain Airport Joins UN GARD First

Crisis preparedness boost

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Bahrain International Airport has become the first in the Arabian Gulf to join the UN-backed Airports Emergency Readiness (GARD) programme.

The move strengthens Bahrain's crisis preparedness in civil aviation, aligning with directives from the Interior Minister.

Launched in cooperation with the UNDP, DHL, and national agencies, the initiative includes field assessments, staff training, and crisis simulation.

Role

Officials highlighted its role in enhancing national resilience and logistical continuity during disasters.

The GARD programme applies global best practices in emergency planning and Bahrain's participation reflects a commitment to operational safety and international standards.

Seminar on AI, satellite data in managing disaster

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His Excellency Dr. Mohamed Ebrahim Al Aseeri, CEO of the Bahrain Space Agency (BSA), participated in a seminar organised by Planet in partnership with the National States Geographic Information Council (NSGIC), focused on the application of artificial intelligence and satellite data in disaster management.

It brought together experts and stakeholders to explore how emerging technologies can enhance early warning

systems, accelerate damage assessments, and support more effective responses to natural disasters such as floods, wildfires, and earthquakes.

The event also highlighted international case studies demonstrating the practical use of satellite imagery and AI in real-time monitoring and post-disaster recovery efforts.

Solutions

The discussions focused on utilising cutting-edge solutions in disaster management, particularly the integration of artificial intelligence.

Housing Goes Mobile

Mahir Haneef
TDT | Manama

Ministry of Housing and Urban Planning is drawing praise for its 'Mobile Branch for Housing Finance' initiative, launched in cooperation with Eskan Bank.

The mobile unit brings housing services into public spaces, making it easier for citizens to explore finance options and receive guidance without visiting traditional offices.

The branch was recently set up at The Avenues Mall, allowing visitors to access services such as real-time eligibility

checks, financing consultations, and digital property tours.

Citizens said the initiative helped them better understand the housing programmes available and clarified the steps required to apply.

Real-Time Guidance

Ahmed Al-Ali, who visited the branch, said the experience helped him identify housing options suited to his income and family circumstances. He received a detailed explanation of eligibility criteria, the financing ceiling, and how allowances are factored into the assessment.