

Allowance return

‘Judge-led board’ bill aims to guide external auditors

MPs urge reinstatement of cost-of-living payments for low-income workers

Mohammed Darwish
TDT | Manama

Five MPs have filed an urgent proposal calling for the cost-of-living allowance for low-income earners to be reinstated for those whose payments were stopped, with driving instructors and other self-employed workers at the centre of the request.

The proposal was signed by MP Zainab AbdulAmeer, Khalid Buanaq, Ahmed Al Salloom, Hisham Al Awadhi, and Eman Shuwaiter.

In an explanatory memorandum, the MPs said the request seeks the return and continuation of the allowance for self-employed workers, especially driving instructors, against a backdrop of higher living costs that they said has reduced income and purchasing power.

Payments

They said the halt in payments for some people in these trades has left them facing day-to-day



MP Zainab AbdulAmeer

expenses without the support they previously received, despite ongoing living obligations and rising costs.

The memorandum said this has affected their financial and living stability and widened the gap between income and basic needs.

The MPs said the proposal aims to provide ongoing financial support for low-income earners, bring self-employed

workers, particularly driving instructors, back within the group eligible for the allowance, and ease the burden linked to higher prices for goods and services.

Support

They also said it is intended to support social justice and improve living stability for those affected by the suspension.

They justified treating it as urgent by pointing to the pres-



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sure created by the continued halt, warning it could lead to further day-to-day difficulty and economic instability, and calling for fast action to restore the support and meet its stated purpose.

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Judges would chair a new ‘External Auditors Accountability Board’ under an urgent bill sent to Parliament that rewrites how external auditors are overseen and sanctioned.

Royal Decree No. 76 of 2025 refers amendments to Decree-Law No. 15 of 2021 on External Auditors to the Council of Representatives under the Constitution’s fast-track route.

The decree was issued at Riffa Palace on 31 December 2025, signed by King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa and naming Prime Minister Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa.

The Legislation and Legal

Opinion Commission said the bill follows Cabinet Decision No. 2821-02, taken on 8 December 2025 and relayed to the commission on 14 December, approving the draft and ordering its urgent referral.

The draft updates the rules for entry to the auditors’ register, including a valid professional accounting qualification, at least five years’ experience and full-time practice.

It keeps Bahraini nationality as the baseline but sets conditions for non-Bahrainis, including lawful residence, work with a licensed audit firm in Bahrain, proof they remain authorised abroad, and five years’ continuous post-qualification experience.

Travel booking fraud

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Bahrain’s Public Prosecution has ordered the pre-trial detention of two suspects accused of defrauding victims by offering travel services, including flight tickets, at discounted prices.

Authorities said the suspects allegedly obtained money from victims without providing the promised services.

According to the prose-

cution, the case began after multiple complaints were received regarding online advertisements promoted through social media platforms. Investigations found that the suspects had used these platforms to target victims and collect payments.

Legal measures have been taken, passports and flight tickets were seized, and the suspects are being held pending further investigation ahead of referral to the criminal court.

Falcon Junction upgrade hits 18%



Muharraq Municipal Council session in progress

Councillors push for details

Mohammed Darwish

Muharraq Municipal Council approved a run of municipal service items yesterday, including waiving on-site parking rules for a property in East Hidd and changes to traffic on Roads 2207 and 2205, as it met the Ministry of Works for updates on projects across the governorate.

Councillors agreed to keep

Road 2207 as a two-way route, while turning Road 2205 into a one-way road for exit only.

They also asked for a review of all access points leading onto Al Busaiteen Avenue, and backed a change to the entrance and exit layout of a building opposite Road 2010 by shifting it to the adjacent road in East Hidd.

Update

The council heard an update on the bridge link between Muharraq and Arad.

Ebrahim Al Khayat, a representative of the Ministry of

Works, said: “The bridge link between Muharraq and Arad is 85 per cent complete,” adding that detailed designs for the roads and elevated bridge were being prepared.

He said the scheme includes a sea bridge with three lanes in each direction, along with work at the interchange with Khalifa Al Kabeer Highway, including a flyover carrying traffic northbound and southbound and further upgrades at ground level.

Aim

On the road works leading to

Bahrain International Airport at Falcon Junction, Al Khayat said the aim was to make access easier by raising capacity and easing queues on the approach roads.

He said Phase 3A was under way and had reached 18 per cent completion.

He added that the works include a one-way flyover providing a two-lane slip allowing a continuous turn onto Khalifa Al Kabeer Highway, widening Arad Highway from three lanes to four in each direction, and a water culvert to improve drainage into Arad Bay.

Support for agriculture

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Northern Governor Hassan Abdullah Mohammed Al Madani, reiterated the governorate’s steadfast support for agriculture, deeming it essential for food security and a vital component of its historical and cultural legacy.

He also confirmed the governorate’s commitment to the “Northern Governorate: A Healthy City” initiative, commending the expertise of Bahraini farmers and the exceptional quality of local agricultural products.

His remarks were delivered during an event at the Abu Saiba Nursery. He was

accompanied by Deputy Northern Governor Brigadier Abdullah Ali Rashid Maanter, and Engineering Services and Investment Director Suhaila Ahmed Yousha’a Al Yousha’a, alongside other dignitaries in environmental and community matters.

During the event, the Northern Governor toured the various sections, which encompassed local nurseries, productive family enterprises, workshops, and immersive agricultural activities.

There were dedicated children’s play areas and a variety of food stalls. He praised the participants for their considerable efforts and dedication.

A celebration of unity, gratitude and renewed hope

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Members of the Filipino American Association of Bahrain (Fil-Am Bahrain) welcomed the New Year in high spirits.

Its president, Orlando Fontanilla, hosted a joyful New Year celebration at the elegant party hall of Fontana Gardens in Juffair, Bahrain.

The gathering brought together members, friends, and supporters for an evening marked by unity, gratitude, and renewed hope.

The venue was filled with

The celebration was more than a festive gathering, it served as a reminder of the strength, unity, and enduring spirit of the Fil-Am community.

warmth and festive energy as guests reflected on the year that had passed and looked ahead with optimism.

Memories

Laughter, lively conversations, and shared memories highlighted



Fil-Am community welcomes the new year with optimism

ed the strong bonds that continue to unite the Fil-Am com-

munity.

In his New Year message dur-

ing an interview, Fontanilla expressed heartfelt appreciation

for the community’s ongoing support and active participation.

He highlighted the importance of togetherness, volunteerism, and cultural pride, the core values that Fil-Am has long championed.

Many of those who attended have long been steadfast supporters of the organization’s mission and initiative

Festive cuisine, personally overseen by Fil-Am Community Outreach Chair Grace Estacio, was paired with cheerful music and joyful moments of camaraderie, perfectly capturing the season’s spirit.