

Public employee, businessman face bribery charges

Rehab Mohammad
TDT | Manama

The High Criminal Court has begun hearing a bribery case involving a public employee and a businessman accused of exchanging money to speed up official transactions during 2023.

The court has adjourned the case to 12 January to allow the defence to review the case files.

According to the Public Prosecution, the first defendant allegedly accepted a bribe in return for abusing his position to facilitate procedures outside his official authority.

Transactions

Prosecutors said the second defendant, a businessman, is accused of offering and paying the bribe, amounting to BD2,800, in exchange for accelerating transactions.

The prosecution added that investigations found the employee continued to intervene in transactions despite being transferred from his post, citing his prior role and connections.

MP for Arab financial audit initiative



MP Ahmed Abdulwahid Qarata
TDT | Manama

MP Ahmed Abdulwahid Qarata, Second Deputy Speaker of the Council of Representatives, member of the Executive Committee of the Arab Inter-Parliamentary Union (AIPU), and Chairman of the assigned Financial Committee, is participating in the preparation of a procedures manual for audit, financial oversight, and the selection of the Union's external legal auditor.

The initiative aims to enhance supervisory performance, reduce expenditures, and improve the investment of revenues of the Arab Inter-Parliamentary Union.

The participation, to be held at the headquarters of the General Secretariat of the Arab Inter-Parliamentary Union in Beirut, comes pursuant to a mandate issued by the Union's Executive Committee during its 40th meeting, which was held in Cairo, on December 15-16.

The programme is scheduled to include a meeting with Brahim Boughali, President of the AIPU, as well as bilateral meetings with the representatives of the Parliament of the State of Libya and the Parliament of the Islamic Republic of Mauritania.

Rider restrictions

Parliament backs proposal to bar delivery motorbikes from main roads

Mohammed Darwish
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Parliament voted yesterday to refer a proposal to the government for review that would ban delivery motorbikes from Bahrain's main roads, backing the measure even after a committee advised against it.

The proposal was submitted by MPs Bader Al Tameemi, Abdulwahid Qarata, Ali Al Doseri, Hamad Al Doy and Abdulla Al Rumaihi.

It calls on the government to stop delivery riders using main routes and to curb traffic breaches linked to the sector.

Evidence

During the sitting, Al Tameemi pointed to impound figures as evidence of the scale of the issue.

"If we speak according to official statistics, more than 1,000 delivery motorbikes were impounded over four years, an average of 250 a year, which means there is a real problem on main roads and secondary roads," he said.

He also cited a recent example from Shaikh Khalifa bin Salman Highway while travelling from Riffa towards Manama.

"This road has five lanes and a delivery rider was in the far-left lane where the lane speed is 120 kilometres an hour, which poses a real danger," he said.

Rejection

The Foreign Affairs, Defence and National Security Committee had recommended rejecting the proposal, arguing that many areas cannot be reached without



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– MP BADER AL TAMEEMI

using main roads.

It said diverting delivery bikes would push pressure onto internal and secondary roads, adding to congestion, and could lead riders and companies to switch to cars for deliveries, increasing vehicle numbers.

MP Mohammed Al Olaiwi said he shared concerns about delivery bikes but questioned the practicality of a ban on main routes.

"The proposal is very important, but preventing delivery riders from main roads is unrealistic because they will move to internal roads," he said.

Penalties

The lawmaker called instead for tougher penalties and a li-



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Image used for illustrative purposes only

censing system that limits the number of riders per company.

The Ministry of Interior, through the General Directo-

rate of Traffic, set out similar reservations in its comments on the proposal.

It said Bahrain's road network

is built as an interconnected system linking main and secondary roads, junctions and different areas, and argued that a ban would be difficult to apply and would not improve traffic flow.

The directorate said it was already carrying out intensified enforcement against delivery riders who breach the Traffic Law, including impounding motorbikes. It reported that 1,005 delivery motorbikes were impounded from 2022 through February 2025.

It also said it was close to finishing a project to supply 500 smart cameras to record traffic offences and track unsafe driving behaviour, with the aim of strengthening monitoring and improving road safety.

Measures

The committee's rapporteur, MP Dr Maryam Al Dhaen, said the committee remained against the proposal and urged a focus on other measures.

"The solution to the delivery bike problem is to find alternative solutions such as using cars more, or drones," she said.

She also raised a health concern tied to delivery times, warning: "If cooked food is delayed for more than 50 minutes to an hour in delivery, it may spoil, and if that process is delayed it can turn into toxic substances, including salmonella, which can cause food poisoning."

MP Abdulla Al Rumaihi supported the proposal during the sitting, telling MPs his car had been involved in a serious crash linked to a delivery motorbike.

33,000 daily bus trips cited as case for two-line Bahrain Metro

Mohammed Darwish
TDT | Manama

Thirty-three thousand bus trips a day is the baseline on Bahrain's public transport network, the Minister of Transportation and Telecommunications, His Excellency Dr Shaikh Abdulla bin Ahmed Al Khalifa, told MPs yesterday.

He also restated plans for a two-line Bahrain Metro running from Bahrain International Airport to Seef and from Juffair to the Educational Area in Isa Town.

"The Bahrain Metro project is still going ahead, God willing, and it is one of the most important projects for the ministry," H.E. Dr Shaikh Abdulla said during the sitting, describing the scheme as central to expanding mass transit.

He linked the case for a metro to current demand on buses, telling Parliament: "The daily trips are 33,000 on normal days, 50,000 at weekends, and in some events 75,000."

MP Lulwa Al Rumaihi, responding to the minister's written answer on the latest updates,



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– H.E. DR SHAIKH ABDULLA BIN AHMED AL KHALIFA, MINISTER OF TRANSPORTATION AND TELECOMMUNICATIONS



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welcomed the detail on the first phase and pressed for the next stage to follow without a long wait.

"We hope there will be a second phase, without a long gap after the first, covering all

governorates of the Kingdom of Bahrain," she said, arguing that areas with high population density need stronger links to cut reliance on private cars and ease traffic jams.

Under the first phase, the



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– MP LULWA AL RUMAIHI

The minister said recent work has focused on confirming the two routes and choosing station sites that serve key residential and commercial areas.

He added that reaching the stations has been treated as a main part of the technical work, carried out with the Ministry of Housing, alongside plans to strengthen feeder services so passengers can get to the metro stops.

H.E. Dr Shaikh Abdulla told MPs the ministry is also working through the remaining steps needed on the two corridors, including land matters and moving services that obstruct preparation of the routes, and asked Parliament to keep backing the project.