

Appeal Court upholds jail term in salon forgery case

● One-year prison sentence for husband and wife

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A criminal appeal court has upheld a one-year prison term for a husband and wife convicted over forged commercial registry papers linked to a women's salon, ordering the documents seized and sending the wider business dispute to the civil courts.

The First High Criminal Court of Appeal backed the lower court's ruling against an Arab woman and her Asian husband.

Prosecutors said the woman used her partner's electronic signature without her knowledge to name herself manager of the salon's commercial registration, then added her husband as an authorised person on the same record.

Partnership

The complainant and the first defendant had formed a partnership registered on the Sijilat system, according to case papers.

The complainant later logged in and found her access locked, leaving her unable to carry out any action on the registration.

When she approached the relevant ministry, she discovered an authorisation uploaded to the system bearing her signature, granting the second defendant powers over the commercial registration.

Fraudsters posing as police officers lose appeal bid

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Two men who posed as police officers and forced a driver to hand over the PIN to a money app have had their three-year prison terms upheld on appeal, after BD96 was transferred from his account.

The High Criminal Court of Appeal upheld the sentence after hearing that the pair stopped the victim on the road, took his phone and then drove him to an open sandy plot where he was assaulted.

According to the case file, the second defendant signalled for the driver to pull over, got into the vehicle and claimed he was a policeman.

He searched the car and seized the victim's mobile phone, then ordered him to drive to a nearby area where the first defendant was waiting.

Prosecutors said the first defendant demanded the PIN for one of the victim's financial applications.

A 'grey' warning

Shura Council set to discuss updates to Bahrain's anti-money laundering legislation

● Legal advisers caution delays could trigger FATF scrutiny before March 2026

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The Shura Council will debate Decree-Law No. 36 of 2025 on Sunday, which updates Bahrain's 2001 anti-money laundering and terrorist financing law.

Government legal advisers have warned that any delays in passing the law could draw scrutiny from the FATF, potentially placing Bahrain on its 'grey list' ahead of March 2026.

The Legislation and Legal Opinion Commission said the changes are meant to keep pace with newer methods used in money laundering, terrorist financing and the financing of weapons proliferation.

Package

It linked the package to the Financial Action Task Force's standards and to findings from Bahrain's National Risk Assess-

ment.

In its memorandum, the commission said the amendments address international duties that Bahrain will be judged against in the next periodic review.

It said delay could harm the Kingdom's reputation and its financial and economic standing, and raise the risk that other countries treat dealings with Bahraini financial bodies as high-risk, with stricter checks and added hurdles for cross-border business.

Coordination

The commission also cited a need to strengthen the committee responsible for combating money laundering and terrorist financing, widening its remit to improve coordination inside Bahrain and with partners abroad, and tying its work to risk assessment and national planning.

It said the decree-law would also give the implementing unit more room to act, including the power to stop or delay suspicious transactions for a set period while enquiries continue, either on its own initiative or in response to requests from foreign counterparts.



Dr Ali Al Rumaihi, Head of Shura Council's Foreign Affairs, Defence and National Security Committee

The memorandum referred to deeper cooperation on information sharing and joint financial analysis, and stronger parallel financial enquiries aimed at tracing unlawful proceeds and identifying criminal networks.

Schedule

Another change is an update to the schedule attached to the 2001 law to cover newer activities and sectors seen as exposed to money laundering and terrorist financing risks, including work by virtual asset service providers.



The changes are meant to keep pace with newer methods used in money laundering, terrorist financing and the financing of weapons proliferation.

The Shura Council's Foreign Affairs, Defence and National Security Committee has recommended approval.

The committee noted the decree-law contains seven articles, replacing and adding definitions and rewriting provisions across several parts of the 2001 law.

Strategy

It also replaces the attached schedule and swaps the name of the committee concerned with money laundering and terrorist financing, while outlining updated tasks linked to the Na-

tional Risk Assessment and the national strategy.

It said the text deals with gaps shown in practice, including updated definitions for the implementing unit and proceeds of crime, an expanded scope for money laundering offences, and tougher confiscation rules that cover proceeds and the means used, while protecting the rights of third parties acting in good faith.

The committee said the decree-law strengthens the Financial Intelligence National Centre (FINC) as the implementing body by adding a new provision giving it wider powers in financial enquiry, analysis and coordination.

Transactions

That includes seeking a pause or delay of suspicious transactions to prevent illicit proceeds being moved or dissipated.

It also pointed to changes meant to strengthen cooperation and information exchange with counterpart units abroad, including joint analysis, asset tracing and recovery, while keeping information confidential and limiting its use to lawful purposes.

Shooting and military marathon events



His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa, the Supreme Commander of the Armed Forces, delegated Lieutenant General His Highness Shaikh Mohammed bin Isa Al Khalifa, President of the National Guard, to attend the closing ceremony of the shooting and military marathon championships. The event, held at the shooting ranges complex in Sakhir Camp, coincided with the National Guard's 29th anniversary celebrations. It featured the final rounds of the National Guard's weapons shooting championship, including rifle, pistol, and shotgun competitions, with the Special Operations Unit team qualifying for the shooting events. Earlier in the morning, the military marathon commenced, with the Special Operations Unit securing first place among all participating units.

Shura Council to vote on protected species law

● Environment body to gain powers under draft law

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The Shura Council is due to vote on Sunday on a draft law that would let the Supreme Council for Environment update all of Bahrain's protected-species schedules attached to the CITES trade law.

The bill amends Article (3) of Law No. (5) of 2021 on regulating and monitoring international trade in endangered species of wild fauna and flora.

It would replace item (13) so the Supreme Council for Envi-

ronment can delete or add any species in the law's annexes. That covers Annexes (1), (2) and (3), instead of Annex (3) only.

Memorandum

The explanatory memorandum says the change is meant to help Bahrain keep its lists in step with the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES).

Under the current law, the Supreme Council for Environment may amend Annex (3) directly, but any change to Annexes (1) and (2) requires a legislative amendment to the law itself under constitutional procedures.

The memorandum says that route can be too slow for the regular updates under CITES, delaying the adjustment of national rules to Bahrain's inter-



Dr Mohammed Ali Hassan, Head of Shura Council's Public Utilities and Environment Committee

national obligations.

Lists

The Supreme Council for Environment backed the draft, saying the lists of species change based on decisions taken by the CITES Conference of the Parties, and that giving it power over all

annexes would avoid delays in updating the schedules.

It said the change would support Bahrain's work to protect biodiversity, and its regional and international cooperation.

The Shura Council's Public Utilities and Environment Committee recommended approval after reviewing the draft law.

Measures

In its report, the committee cited Article (9) of the Constitution, which says the state shall take the necessary measures to protect the environment and preserve wildlife.

It said the draft widens the Supreme Council for Environment's powers under Law No. (5) of 2021 in support of protecting biodiversity as part of environmental protection.

Jailed, fined for insulting Arab countries and false news

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The Lower Criminal Court has sentenced a defendant to four months in prison for insulting Arab countries and deliberately spreading false news.

The court also ordered the confiscation of electronic devices used in the offence and fined the defendant BD100 for all charges linked to the case.

The Public Prosecution said it received a report from the Directorate of Anti-Electronic Crimes after monitoring a televised interview in which the defendant appeared and made statements on social media platforms containing false information and offensive remarks against Arab states.

The statements also included incitement to chaos and conspiracy, as well as calls for resistance and demonstrations against governments.

The prosecution said it launched an investigation into the incident, reviewed the statements made by the defendant and questioned him in the presence of his lawyer before ordering his detention and referring him to the competent court, which issued its ruling.

The Public Prosecutor emphasised freedom of opinion and expression is guaranteed under the constitution, provided it does not undermine national unity.