

# Customs Fines Added for Seal Removal

Updated GCC customs law brings fines and new exemptions framework

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New rules on customs clearance, duty refunds and traveller exemptions have been issued in Bahrain. Fines also cover cutting lead seals, removing customs seals, locks or ties, and removing covers from goods.

The changes were issued by Interior Minister Shaikh Rashid bin Abdullah Al Khalifa under Decision No. 63 of 2026, amending the executive regulations of the GCC Unified Customs Law. They take effect the day after publication in the Official Gazette.

Customs may now accept electronic papers for clearance if the owner of the goods or an authorised representative sends them. The sender must be approved by Customs, and the papers may be checked, certified, electronically signed or matched against originals.

The decision also allows heavy machinery and equipment not available in local markets to enter temporarily for projects or for practical and scientific tests linked to them. The period is capped at three years, with room for extension by the director-general or his authorised representative.

Foreign goods re-exported outside the GCC may have customs duties re-

funded in full or in part. The goods must be from one consignment, worth at least BD2,000, unused locally, and in the same state in which they entered.

Re-export must take place within one year of the first duty payment. Refund claims must be filed within six months of re-export, and will cover only duties already paid.

Travellers will be allowed duty-free personal luggage and gifts worth up to BD300, provided the items are personal and not in commercial amounts. The traveller must not be a frequent customs user or a trader in the goods carried. The cigarette limit is 200.

Personal postal parcels and consignments will be exempt if they are non-commercial and worth no more than BD100. The exemption does not cover banned, counterfeit or fraudulent goods, restricted items without permits, tobacco and its products, or goods breaching approved standards

or intellectual property rights.

Charity supplies may also be exempt from customs duties if the charity is registered and works in humanitarian, social, cultural, scientific, religious or other charitable fields without seeking profit. Associations with a political aim will not benefit.

Charities may not sell or use exempted goods for any purpose other than the one for which the exemption was granted unless Customs gives approval after inspection.

Relief goods are also covered, provided the relevant government body writes to Customs. The goods must fit relief

work and match the actual need. They may not be sold after duty-free clearance without Customs approval.



## Customs Rules Update

- Fines now apply for tampering with customs seals and security.
- Customs may accept electronic documents for clearance if approved.
- Duty refunds are allowed on eligible re-exported goods under strict rules.
- Travellers can bring BD300 worth of goods duty-free (200 cigarettes limit).
- Small parcels up to BD100 are exempt if non-commercial.
- Misuse of exempt goods can lead to fines of BD50-BD1,000.
- Updated rules also cover the temporary import/export of machinery and goods.

The decision adds a customs breach for using exempted goods, or goods admitted under a lower tariff, for a purpose other than the one for which they were imported. Replacing, selling or disposing of such goods without Customs approval and without paying duties is also covered.

Customs breaches under the amended regulation carry fines from BD50 to BD1,000, or the same value in another GCC currency.

The decision also creates rules for temporary exports, covering heavy machinery, goods sent abroad to complete manufacturing, equipment sent for repair, goods for exhibitions and theatres, containers for filling, animals for grazing and commercial samples.

Temporary export is generally capped at 365 days, with some cases allowed extensions up to five years with Customs approval. Animals sent for grazing and other approved cases are capped at 180 days.

Temporary export ends when the goods return to GCC states, are turned into final exports, or when the approved period ends. Customs approval must be obtained before the goods are sent out.

## 5G-Advanced Powers Bahrain Vision

Meeting explores next-generation network technologies



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Senior officials in Bahrain held discussions with Chinese technology firm Huawei to explore new cooperation opportunities in digital infrastructure and advanced telecommunications technologies.

Ministry of Transportation and Telecommunications Assistant Undersecretary for Telecommunications, Shaikh Ahmed bin Isa bin Duaij Al Khalifa, met David Dai, Huawei's Vice President for ICT Solutions and Services in the Gulf region, along with Wu Zi, the company's Director of Gov-

ernment Relations and Public Affairs.

The meeting focused on strengthening collaboration in areas supporting Bahrain's ongoing digital transformation, particularly in developing next-generation telecommunications systems.

Officials placed special emphasis on 5G-Advanced technology and its expected role in improving network performance, increasing capacity, and enhancing the country's wider digital infrastructure.

Shaikh Ahmed bin Isa underlined the importance of part-

nerships with global technology leaders in helping Bahrain achieve its ambition of becoming a regional hub for digital connectivity and innovation.

The discussions also reviewed progress under Bahrain's Sixth National Telecommunications Plan, while both sides exchanged views on future sector priorities, including infrastructure expansion and technological advancement.

The meeting comes as Bahrain continues to invest in strengthening its telecommunications sector to support economic diversification and digital growth.

## Oil at \$98 – and the world is strangely calm

The Strait of Hormuz has been effectively closed for three months.

AFP

So why aren't oil markets in panic mode?

The world is living through one of its biggest oil supply shocks in decades – and yet, the market is barely flinching. Since March 4, 2026, Iranian forces have declared the Strait of Hormuz “closed,” threatening and carrying out attacks on ships attempting to pass through the waterway. Yet Brent crude, while elevated, remains within the range of the past two decades.

The Strait of Hormuz is the world's most critical oil chokepoint, handling roughly 20% of global oil consumption – around 18 to 21 million barrels per day. A prolonged disruption here doesn't just rattle markets – it reshapes them.

The Trump Factor

Despite the crisis, oil prices



**ICE Brent could trade into the region of \$80-90 immediately, with risks towards \$100 and ultimately \$140 in a worst-case scenario.**

ING ANALYSTS

have stayed surprisingly anchored. U.S. President Donald Trump's repeated claims that

a deal with Iran is “imminent” have helped dampen panic. Markets are pricing in hope – not reality. There is little evidence Washington and Tehran are genuinely close to any agreement, as strikes continue across the region.

What Could Happen Next?

Analysts estimate any serious Iranian move to close the Strait could send prices to \$100 per barrel. ING goes further, warning of \$140 in an extreme scenario of significant and extended supply disruption

## Yusuf bin Ahmed Kanoo Group Signs Pledge of Allegiance to His Majesty the King

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In line with its commitment to the values of loyalty and national belonging, Yusuf bin Ahmed Kanoo Group, one of the largest independent family-owned multinational businesses in the Middle East and a Bahraini institution with a legacy spanning more than 135 years, participated in signing the Pledge of Allegiance to His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa, King of the Kingdom of Bahrain.

The pledge was signed by members of the Board of Directors and Executive Man-



agement of Yusuf bin Ahmed Kanoo Group, reflecting the collective commitment of the Group's leadership to the Kingdom and its future aspi-

erations.

Commenting on the occasion, Mr. Fawzi Ahmed Kanoo, Chairman of Yusuf bin Ahmed Kanoo Group, stated: “The

Pledge of Allegiance embodies the values of loyalty, belonging, and unity that have long been at the heart of Bahrain's success. We are honoured to

reaffirm our support for His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa and the Kingdom's leadership, and we remain committed to contributing to Bahrain's ongoing growth and development.”

Dr. Faisal Khalid Kanoo, Deputy Chairman of Yusuf bin Ahmed Kanoo Group, said: “This occasion reflects our deep appreciation for the remarkable progress achieved by the Kingdom under the leadership of His Majesty the King. We take pride in being part of Bahrain's journey and in supporting initiatives that contribute to the nation's continued advancement and prosperity.”

The signing of the pledge underscores the strong bond between Bahrain's institutions and its leadership, while reflecting the dedication of Yusuf bin Ahmed Kanoo Group's Board of Directors and Executive Management to supporting the Kingdom's future.

This initiative further reaffirms Yusuf bin Ahmed Kanoo Group's commitment to contributing to the Kingdom's aspirations under the leadership of His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa, and with the support and guidance of His Royal Highness Prince Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa, Crown Prince and Prime Minister.