

Bahrain Councils Address Infrastructure Needs and Resident Complaints

Land Dispute Cleared for A'ali - Salmabad Road Link Project

TDT | Manama
Mohammed Darwish

A land dispute that had delayed the development of Road 4004 has been resolved, clearing the way for progress on a key road link between A'ali and Salmabad.

Abdullah Ashoor, representative for the sixth constituency on the Northern Municipal Council, said the project in Block 740 remains a top priority as it will significantly improve traffic flow and accessibility for residents and road users.

He said the project has now reached the final design stage following coordination with relevant authorities, with construction expected to begin once remaining technical and budgetary approvals are completed.

The main obstacle had been that part of the required land was not classified as public property. That issue has now been settled



through coordination between multiple government entities.

Ashoor confirmed that the land regularisation process was completed in cooperation with the Ministry of Finance and National Economy, the Ministry of Works, the Urban Planning and Development Authority, and the

Electricity and Water Authority.

With this step completed, the project is now ready for asphalt works once final procedures and budget approvals are finalised.

He also noted continued coordination with Dr Salman Mohsen, representative for the fourth constituency on the Northern Municipal Council, in pushing forward the project in line with approved plans.

Ashoor said the road will benefit a large number of citizens, residents, and daily commuters, expressing appreciation to government bodies and local residents for their patience and co-operation.

Capital Council Steps Up Response to Public Complaints

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The Capital Municipal Council has intensified its follow-up on residents' complaints, holding 17 weekly meetings and conducting eight field visits to address service-related issues across Manama, including rainwater accumulation concerns.

Dr Khulood Al Qattan, Deputy Chair of the Capital Municipal Council and head of its Public Relations and Media Committee, said the council is closely monitoring complaints received through various channels as part of efforts to improve public services and respond to community needs.

She said the council has expanded its field monitoring, with committee members con-



ducting on-site inspections of reported issues. The Public Relations Committee also organised 11 community engagement events to directly hear residents' concerns.

Dr Al Qattan added that a dedicated communication line has been established to ensure

residents can easily reach council staff and receive quicker responses to complaints and suggestions. She said clear reporting mechanisms are in place, allowing issues to be submitted by phone, in person, or through the government's electronic portal.

She stressed that the council is working closely with relevant authorities to achieve effective solutions, noting that improving living standards in the capital is a shared responsibility.

Dr Al Qattan also thanked ministries, civil society organisations, and partner entities for their cooperation, saying their support helps translate community requests into practical improvements that enhance services and quality of life in Manama.

Casino Garden Visitors May Pay for Selected Services



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Hasan Barakat

Visitors to Muharraq's renovated Casino Garden may soon pay small fees for selected facilities, under a proposal that keeps public access to the park completely free.

The Financial and Legal Committee of the Muharraq Municipal Council recommended approving charges for certain service facilities within the park while firmly rejecting any entry fee. This move ensures the park remains open and accessible to all community members.

Under the proposal, fees would apply to the use of restrooms and sports courts within the park. The aim is to improve service quality and maintain consistent standards of cleanliness and upkeep, particularly because these facilities require continuous care and rising operational costs.

The recommendation follows a request from Muharraq Municipality, which had initially sought the council's views on introducing an entry fee after the park's redevelopment. The municipality stated that the broader objective is to sustain maintenance, protect green spaces and recreational areas from overuse, and secure a stable income source to support ongoing operations.

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Hasan Barakat

Longstanding resident complaints prompted a major infrastructure decision in Isa Town, after the Southern Municipal Council approved a full redevelopment plan for Block 810 to improve roads and public services in the area.

The council reviewed several service-related proposals, with the redevelopment of Block 810 in Constituency One emerging as the most significant. Members also examined responses from relevant ministries regarding previously submitted councillor proposals.

The upgrade proposal, sub-



mitted by Southern Municipality council member Abdulla Saleh Daraj, received unanimous approval. It calls for a complete overhaul of the block's ageing infrastructure following repeated complaints about deteriorating internal roads that have exceeded their operational lifespan.

Daraj said the poor road con-



dition has affected traffic flow and raised safety concerns, stressing the need for urgent intervention.

The approved works include resurfacing internal streets using asphalt and interlock paving, installing a modern rainwater drainage system with underground storage tanks to reduce water accumulation, and

upgrading street lighting across the area.

Officials said the improvements are expected to enhance road safety, reduce accidents, and improve overall living conditions, while also preserving the urban character of the area in line with Bahrain's Economic Vision 2030.

In a related development,

Shura to Vote on Prison and Inmate Work Law Changes

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Mohammed Darwish

Two draft laws replacing references to prison and inmate work with reform, rehabilitation and training terms will go before the Shura Council on Sunday. This move is meant to address remarks from the International Labour Organisation regarding wording that could be read as allowing forced labour alongside jail terms.

The first bill would amend parts of the Penal Code issued by Decree-Law No. 15 of 1976 and attached to Decree No. 68 of 2025. The second would amend parts of the Reform and Rehabilitation Institution Law issued by Law No. 18 of 2014 and attached to Decree No. 69 of 2025. In both reports, the Shura Council's Foreign Affairs, Defence and National Security Committee recommended passage in principle after studying the lower chamber's decision, the attached papers, the opinion of the Legislative and Legal Affairs Committee,

and legal notes prepared for it.

In the Penal Code bill, Article 55 would be replaced in full. Article 210 would also change so that the phrase 'in prison' becomes 'in a reformation and rehabilitation centre', while the word 'prisons' would change to 'reformation and rehabilitation centres' wherever it appears in the same law. The third article deals with implementation.

The committee said the bill came in reply to remarks made by the ILO and its Committee of Experts on the Application of Conventions and Recommendations regarding legal texts that might be understood as allowing compulsory work alongside a jail sentence. It said Bahraini law does not take that line, but the wording should change so the meaning is plain.



It said the new text for Article 55 would shift the focus from requiring a convicted person to carry out work inside prison to placing that person in rehabilitation and training programmes inside reform and rehabilitation centres. In the committee's view, that ties punishment more clearly to

correction and return to society, while removing any reading that may suggest forced labour. The report also said the wording change in Article 210 and across the Penal Code would align the law with the terms already used in the 2014 Reform and Rehabilitation Institution Law. That, it said, would unify the language used in the two laws and match the shift from the old prison-based wording to one built around reform and rehabilitation.

Shura will also take up the second bill on Sunday, this time dealing with the Reform and Rehabilitation Institution Law itself. That draft law also has

three articles. Article 1 would replace the text of Article 18. Article 2 would make wider wording changes throughout the law, changing terms linked to work and employment to terms centred on rehabilitation and training. The third article deals with implementation.

Under those changes, the title of Chapter Two of Part Two would replace 'employment' with 'rehabilitation and training'. The phrase 'from work' in Articles 19 and 31 would become 'from rehabilitation and training'. The word 'employment' in Article 20 would also be replaced with 'rehabilitation and training', while 'work reward' in Articles 21 and 22 would become 'rehabilitation and training reward'.

The committee said this bill, too, came from ILO remarks on wording that could be misunderstood as allowing compulsory labour as part of a custodial sentence. It said the aim was to move the law away from an employment-based reading toward one that clearly shows training, skill-building and preparation for return to

society.

It added that Bahrain's reformation and rehabilitation centres now work through organised education and training programmes, along with health and social care, in a rights-based setting meant to improve the chances of reintegration. The bill, it said, would give that approach clearer legal wording.

The committee said the change to Article 18 mattered in particular because it would replace the word 'work' with 'rehabilitation and training', replace 'types of work' with 'rehabilitation and training programmes', and replace 'wage' with 'reward'. In its reading, that moves the duty placed on inmates from a work-based frame to a rehabilitative one, while removing wording that could be taken to imply compulsory labour.

After reviewing both bills and the views put by members, the committee ended by recommending approval in principle and passage of the draft articles in the form shown in the attached tables.