

# From danger to safety

Hazardous waste removed from illegal Maqsha dump in coordinated clean-up

● **Cleaning to take about two weeks**

**Mohammed Darwish**  
TDT | Manama

Hazardous waste dumped on a vacant plot in Block 450, Maqsha, is being cleared in a joint clean-up effort involving the Northern Municipality, the area's municipal council, and a private cleaning firm.

The work follows complaints from nearby residents, who contacted Dr Shubber Ibrahim Al Wadaei, the council's chairman and representative for the First Constituency.

He visited the site and arranged for an on-site inspection involving environmental specialists, municipal staff, the cleaning company, and the Jaafari Waqf Directorate.



Dr Shubber Ibrahim Al Wadaei visits the dump site

Chemicals harmful to human health were found stored haphazardly on the land. Construction rubble had also piled up, turning the area into a dumping ground.

The council, with support from Civil Defence and environmental inspectors, moved to begin clearing the site without delay.

Cleaning began yesterday and



is expected to take about two weeks, given the size of the area and the volume of waste.

The effort is being carried out with help from the Public Health and Environment Directorate,

the Civil Defence, the Ministry of Municipalities Affairs and Agriculture, and the cleaning company.

Dr Al Wadaei said the site was stripped of fencing to keep

it open and discourage further misuse.

He also said that the person responsible for the dumping had been identified, summoned, and met with environmental staff.

A contract was signed with a specialist firm to remove the dangerous materials and transport them to a designated facility.

The council said this clean-up forms part of a wider plan launched at the start of the current term to keep watch over empty land and prevent it being turned into rubbish tips.

The same site was cleared in November 2020 during the previous council term, but the same person later returned to dump more waste.

The case has now been passed to the Public Prosecution.

The ongoing effort aims to restore the site fully and stop any further harm to residents or the surrounding environment.

## MP proposal aims to protect Tamkeen funds

**Mohammed Darwish**  
TDT | Manama

A parliamentary proposal to clamp down on misuse of wage-support funding from Bahrain's Labour Fund (Tamkeen) has been tabled by MP Mohammed Al Olaiwi.

The move follows reports of some businesses registering Bahrainis purely to pocket wage subsidies without offering actual employment or meaningful job roles.

In other instances, employees who should benefit fully from the scheme reportedly had part of their financial support held back unlawfully.

**Worrying cases**

MP Mohammed Al Olaiwi said: "We've seen worrying cases of firms gaming Tamkeen's wage-support system. Bahrainis are signed up in name alone, gaining nothing in terms of real employment or career progress."

The proposal calls for better monitoring tools to confirm real working relationships exist and to ensure companies provide proper career growth



MP Mohammed Al Olaiwi

and a decent working environment.

"The goal is to stop public funds being wasted and to guarantee that Tamkeen's financial backing reaches those genuinely needing it," explained Al Olaiwi. "Any firm caught fiddling the books or misleading the fund must be held fully accountable."

The proposals also aim to boost job security for Bahraini workers and maintain trust in Tamkeen's programmes.

"These dishonest practices weaken Tamkeen's purpose," added Al Olaiwi. "Firm action against misuse is the only way to maintain the public's confidence in the scheme."

### Sewage network project breaks ground

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Work has started on a new sewage network in Jebelat Hebshi and Al Qadam, bringing drainage to hundreds of properties for the first time.

The project, now active in Blocks 431 and 435 of Jebelat Hebshi and Block 477 in Al Qadam, is set to connect 414 homes and buildings to the system.

It was handed to Abdulhadi

Al Afoo WLL following a public tender.

Main pipelines are being laid, with an 83-metre stretch to be drilled underground using tunnel-boring methods.

Crews will also build 367 main inspection chambers, another 418 smaller ones, and a pumping station. Roads dug up during the works will be re-paved once the pipes are in place.

## From the Shadows to Dignity

Ashraf family returns home after 18 years of undocumented life in Bahrain



Mr. Ashraf and his family are on their way home for good

**Pradeep Puravankara**  
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After more than 18 agonizing years of living undocumented in Bahrain, Mr. Ashraf, his wife Ramsheedha, and their two daughters have finally returned home to Kerala, their dignity and identity restored.

For over a decade, the Ashraf family's existence was confined to a tiny rented room in Riffa, a life marked by invisibility, lack of documentation, and constant fear.

Mr. Ashraf's dream of a better life in Bahrain turned into a legal nightmare as visas expired, leaving his wife undocumented since 2013 and his elder daughter since 2012.

The youngest, Arafa Fatima, born in Bahrain, had no legal existence – no passport, no CPR, no birth registration.

#### Medical care

This dire situation meant the children could not attend school, the family could not work legally, and even seeking basic medical care was fraught with anxiety.

The family's silent struggle intensified when Mr. Ashraf was diagnosed with end-stage kidney failure, requiring life-saving dialysis. Without income or legal identity, obtaining such critical treatment seemed impossible.

Hope arrived when Mr. Sudheer Thirunilath, Global PRO and President of Pravasi Legal Cell (PLC), Bahrain Chapter, learned of their plight. With the support of PLC governing council members, the journey to recovery began.

Mr. Ashraf was admitted to Salmaniya Hospital for catheter surgery and later dialysis sessions were arranged at a nominal cost in the KIMSHEALTH (GCC), with the support of Mr. Jacob Thomas, Group Executive Director.

PLC took charge of all logistical and emotional support, including hospital coordination, medication, food, rent, and even obtaining their marriage certificate and attestation.

#### Hurdle

The biggest hurdle was Arafa Fatima, the daughter born in

**Mr. Ashraf's wife has been undocumented since 2013 and his elder daughter since 2012.**

Bahrain who legally "did not exist."

PLC arranged for a power of attorney for Adv. Tariq Alown, who filed a case to secure her birth certificate.

Outstanding hospital charges at Jidhafs were settled, and with support from MP Hassan Eid Bukhammas, the process at the Central Informatics Organization (CIO) was fast-tracked.

The breakthrough arrived when the court ordered Arafa's birth to be officially registered. For the first time in her 13 years, she had a legal identity.

The PLC team continued their relentless efforts: lost passport reports were filed, outpasses (emergency certificates) were issued for all four family members, and finally, passports were initiated, fully restoring their identities.

**Fines**

The last major obstacle was the accumulated immigration fines over 13 years, an insurmountable sum for the family.

The PLC team approached Bahrain's Immigration Authorities, who responded with remarkable empathy, helping to legalize the family's stay and allowing them to depart without fear.

The Embassy of India in Bahrain, under the leadership of H.E. Shri Vinod K. Jacob, First Secretary Mr. Ravi Jain, and Second Secretary Mr. Ravi Singh, arranged tickets through Air India to Kannur International Airport.

Yesterday, the Ashraf family finally boarded the plane, returning to their homeland with documents, identity, and dignity.