

# New parking meters praised, but workers seek longer hours

● All of the old parking meters in the Diplomatic Area have now been replaced with modern solar-powered units.

Rehab Mohammad  
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**W**orking in the Diplomatic Area? Then there is one improvement many office workers would like to see.

Employees are urging the Ministry of Works to introduce an eight-hour parking payment option for the newly installed parking meters in the Diplomatic Area, saying it would better match a standard working day and make parking more convenient.

At present, motorists can pay for a maximum of two hours at



a time. For employees working regular eight-hour shifts, that means returning to the parking meter every two hours to renew their ticket if they wish to avoid a fine.

Workers say extending the payment period to eight hours would make it easier to comply with parking regulations without having to repeatedly leave their offices during meetings, deadlines or busy work schedules.

The request comes weeks after the Ministry of Works introduced 42 new solar-powered parking meters in the Diplomatic Area, replacing older machines as part of a wider effort to modernise parking management.



The ministry says the project is designed to improve traffic flow, regulate the use of the area's 546 parking spaces and offer motorists more convenient payment options through credit cards, Apple Pay and cash.

Employees say they welcome the upgraded technology and the easier payment methods but believe adding an eight-hour payment option would make the new system even more practical for those working full-time in the area.

They say such a change would reduce unnecessary trips to parking meters, help improve productivity and encourage greater compliance with park-

ing regulations by allowing motorists to pay for the duration of a normal working day.

They have called on the Ministry of Works to consider the proposal as a practical enhancement to an already modernised parking system.



Picture for representation only

## MPs seek to scrap gratuity for domestic workers

● The first proposal seeks to abolish the end-of-service payment for domestic workers, while the second wants to transfer the responsibility for paying gratuities from employers to LMRA.

● MP Al Sayegh wants the Private Sector Labour Law amended to end gratuity.

● Another proposal seeks to transfer gratuity payments for expatriate workers to the LMRA.

Mohammed Darwish  
TDT | Manama

**T**housands of domestic workers in Bahrain could lose their end-of-service gratuity if Parliament approves one of two proposals aimed at reducing employers' financial burden.

The first proposal, currently before Parliament's Services Committee, seeks to abolish the end-

Maryam Al Sayegh, MP

Under the existing law, domestic workers receive half a month's salary for each of their first three years of service and a full month's salary for every year thereafter.

of-service payment for domestic workers, while a second proposal would transfer the responsibility for paying gratuities to expatriate workers from employers to the Labour Market Regulatory Authority (LMRA). The proposal to remove the benefit for domestic workers was submitted by MP Maryam Al Sayegh, who wants the Private Sector Labour Law amended to end the gratuity currently paid when domestic employees complete their service.

Under the existing law, domestic workers receive half a month's salary for each of their first three years of service and a full month's salary for every year thereafter.

The amendment would affect domestic employees including gardeners, house guards, nannies, drivers and cooks employed by households.

Ms Al Sayegh said the proposal was intended to ease the fi-

financial pressure on Bahraini families, particularly those with limited incomes.

She noted that domestic workers now typically earn between BD120 and BD180 a month, with some earning even more, compared with less than BD100 in the past.

Families already pay recruitment costs that can exceed BD2,000, in addition to monthly salaries and end-of-service benefits, she said, arguing that the overall financial burden has become excessive.

She added that Bahrain's legislation should give priority to protecting Bahraini citizens, especially low-income families, while continuing to take foreign workers' interests into account. Giv-

ing precedence to Bahrainis, she argued, should not be regarded as discrimination.

Meanwhile, a separate proposal by MP Mohammed Al Marafi would retain end-of-service benefits for expatriate workers but transfer the payment obligation from employers to the LMRA.

The proposal seeks to amend Article 116 of the 2012 Private Sector Labour Law to require the authority to settle gratuity payments owed to non-Bahraini employees. According to the explanatory memorandum, the move would reduce employers' financial obligations, help businesses retain capital and offset rising employment costs, including increased contributions to the Social Insurance Organisation.

### BD2k

Families already pay recruitment costs that can exceed BD2,000

## Iran strike forces business closure, landlord waives BD25,000 in rent



Mohammed Darwish  
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**A** Bahrain company forced to shut down for three months after its premises were damaged in an Iranian strike has secured a rent waiver worth more than BD25,000, following an out-of-court settlement with its landlord.

The agreement ended a dispute over rent payments after the attack left the business unable to operate from the damaged premises.

After negotiations, the landlord agreed to waive three months' rent, with both sides taking into account the extent of the damage, the loss of use of the property and the financial losses suffered during the closure.

Lawyer Rabab Mahdi, who handled the matter, said the impact of the Iranian attack extended far beyond physical damage to buildings, leaving some businesses unable to access their premises or continue normal operations.

She said such cases required a careful review of contractu-

al obligations in light of the circumstances and the losses incurred by each party.

According to Ms Mahdi, many commercial disputes arising from extraordinary events can be resolved without litigation when negotiations are based on the terms of the contract, supporting evidence and a realistic assessment of the financial impact.

She said reaching a settlement allows both parties to avoid lengthy court proceedings, legal costs and uncertainty while preserving their business relationship.

Lawyers, she added, now play an increasingly important role in helping businesses assess legal risks, resolve disputes and negotiate practical solutions that enable commercial relationships to continue despite regional crises.

Ms Mahdi described the settlement as an example of how negotiation can protect the rights of both landlords and tenants while recognising the exceptional circumstances created by the regional conflict.



Many solar parking meters are connected wirelessly, allowing authorities to monitor faults, payment status and occupancy remotely without visiting each machine.