

Warns Against Illegal Garage Conversions

Municipality says homeowners must obtain approval before converting garages into rooms or majlises

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Muharraq Municipality has reminded homeowners that converting residential garages into rooms, majlises or other living spaces without official approval violates Bahrain's building regulations and contributes to the governorate's growing parking shortage.



Illegal parking bay conversions could cost homeowners up to BD10,000.

The municipality stated that parking spaces form an essential part of a property's approved building plan and are not simply

extra areas that can be altered freely. Any change in a garage's use requires prior approval through a licensed engineering office and must comply with municipal regulations aimed at preserving on-site parking, easing traffic congestion and maintaining urban planning standards.

Officials warned that unauthorised conversions are municipal violations and may result in the property being flagged, requiring owners to restore the garage to its original approved use. Such alterations are also not recognised in official land records where the property is registered.

Under Bahrain's Unified Guidebook of Building Permit Regulations, residential properties must provide parking for at least two vehicles, while parking areas are excluded from the property's permitted building coverage. These requirements were further reinforced under Resolution No. 56 of 2022, which regulates construction standards across the Kingdom.

The municipality noted that



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this reminder comes as Muharraq continues to face a long-standing shortage of residential parking, particularly in older neighbourhoods where many homes were built without garages due to limited plot sizes. Authorities have introduced measures over the years to ease congestion, including clearing vehicles from narrow streets and converting abandoned properties into public parking areas.

Officials stressed that every illegally converted garage removes a designated parking space, plac-

FACT BOX	
	Homes must provide parking for at least two vehicles.
	Converting garages without approval is a municipal violation.
	Illegal conversions are not recognised in land records.
	Muharraq continues to expand public parking to ease shortages.

ing additional pressure on already crowded streets and undermining ongoing efforts to improve parking availability across the governorate.

Ministry logs 343 associations, new law pending

Ministry manual expanded to 18 chapters as sector consultation gets underway

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Ministry of Social Development has registered 343 associations as of May 30, with a new law to regulate the sector still in its early stages, the ministry's undersecretary has confirmed.

Ziyad Adel Darwish revealed the registered total spans a wide range of civil organisations, including 91 charitable associations, 40 professional bodies, 22 clubs, 12 associations for people of determination, 10 co-operative societies, and three corporate social responsibility associations.

Darwish said a preliminary study for new legislation was underway but the existing legal framework would remain in place for now, noting that the Associations Law had already undergone several amendments in recent years.

The ministry is also developing a guidance manual for



Ziyad Adel Darwish, Ministry of Social Development Undersecretary

associations, clubs, and private institutions under its supervision. Originally drafted with just four chapters, the manual has since expanded to 18 and remains open for review.

Entities consulted during the drafting process included the Bahrain Medical Society, the Al Shakhoura Fund, the Muharraq Charitable Society, and associations representing retirees, reflecting the ministry's push for broad sector input before finalising the document.

Hilton Garden Inn Bahrain Bay, The Avenues- Bahrain and Breeze Runners Bahrain Join Forces for Community Mall Run

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Hilton Garden Inn Bahrain Bay, in partnership with The Avenues- Bahrain and Breeze Runners Bahrain, successfully hosted a community mall run on Saturday, 4 July, bringing together runners and fitness enthusiasts for an energising morning dedicated to health, connection, and community spirit.

The run began at The Avenues- Bahrain, with participants completing a route through the mall before crossing the finish line at Hilton Garden Inn Bahrain Bay. The event concluded with stunning views overlooking Bahrain Bay, providing the perfect setting to celebrate the runners' while reinforcing the importance of incorporating movement and wellbeing into everyday life.

The initiative reflected Hilton Garden Inn Bahrain



Bay's commitment to creating brighter experiences through meaningful community engagement. Rooted in the brand's promise of Brighthearted Hospitality, the event went beyond the finish line by bringing people together in an environment that encourages connection, wellness, and memorable moments. With its direct access to The Avenues Bahrain, the hotel offered a seamless transition from the run to a welcoming post-race gathering.

Participants were then treated to a hearty breakfast at Together & Co. Café, overlooking the tranquil waters of Bahrain Bay. The post-run breakfast provided the perfect opportunity to refuel, connect with fellow runners, and unwind while enjoying the scenic waterfront, embodying the warm hospitality and thoughtful experiences that define the Hilton Garden Inn brand.

"At Hilton Garden Inn Bahrain Bay, we believe great experiences are built around

bringing people together," said Mostafa Zakaria, Commercial Manager at Hilton Garden Inn Bahrain Bay. "Our partnership with Breeze Runners Bahrain reflects our shared passion for encouraging healthier lifestyles while creating opportunities for the community to connect. Through Brighthearted Hospitality, we strive to create experiences that leave people feeling better than when they arrived. With our direct access to The Avenues Bahrain

and beautiful views overlooking Bahrain Bay, Hilton Garden Inn Bahrain Bay was the perfect place to celebrate the finish of a fantastic morning with a well-deserved breakfast and great company."

The successful event highlighted the hotel's ongoing commitment to supporting community-driven initiatives that promote wellbeing and active living. By partnering with local organisations such as Breeze Runners Bahrain, Hilton Garden Inn Bahrain Bay continues to bring Brighthearted Hospitality to life, creating experiences that extend beyond accommodation and inspire peo-

ple to connect, recharge, and enjoy the best of Bahrain Bay together.

Hilton Garden Inn Bahrain Bay looks forward to hosting more community-focused events that inspire residents and visitors alike to stay active, build meaningful connections, and experience the warmth of Brighthearted Hospitality in one of Bahrain's most vibrant waterfront destinations.



Muharraq City Project Acquires 247 Properties in First Phase

Acquisitions across six historic neighbourhoods to support roads, public facilities and heritage restoration

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Ministry of Municipalities Affairs has completed the acquisition of 247 properties under the first phase of the Muharraq City Development Project, covering six historic neighbourhoods, Minister Eng Wael bin Nasser Al Mubarak announced.

The acquisitions, carried out in coordination with the Ministry of Housing and Urban Planning, will support a range of vital works including road network development, construction of public facilities, urban landscape improvements, and rehabilitation of heritage areas.

Al Mubarak said all proce-



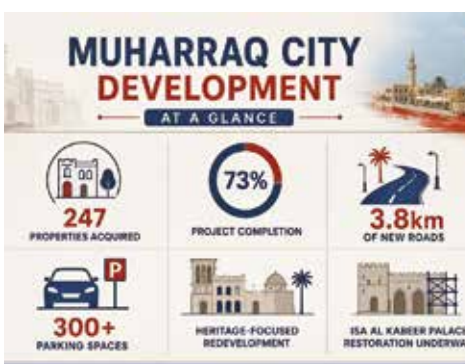
dures were conducted in accordance with the Expropriation for Public Benefit Law, with compensation paid on a fair and transparent basis to property owners.

Project advances at pace

Construction across the six neighbourhoods has reached 73 per cent completion, ac-

cording to Housing and Urban Planning Minister Amna Al Romaihi, with the visitor centre finished, a model housing unit delivered, and 3.8km of internal roads and secondary infrastructure under way. A car park accommodating more than 300 vehicles is also in progress.

The broader Muharraq City



Development Plan rests on five pillars: preserving historical identity, providing family housing, safeguarding heritage buildings, expanding green spaces, and upgrading infrastructure. The plan also includes the restoration of Isa Al Kabeer Palace under a Royal Order from His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa.

Singapore Gulf Bank Backs Bahraini Talent



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Minister of Labour and Minister of Legal Affairs, Yousef bin Abdulhussain Khalaf, met with Justin Han, Founding Member and Chairman of the Board of Singapore Gulf Bank, to discuss strengthening cooperation in creating employment opportunities for Bahraini jobseekers. Ali Mousa, Vice Chairman of the bank's Board of Directors, also attended the meeting.

The discussions focused on supporting national efforts to expand career opportunities in the banking sector and reviewed the bank's initiatives to attract Bahraini talent. Both sides also explored efforts to enable Bahrainis to take up specialised roles in the banking industry, helping enhance the competitiveness of the national workforce, support labour market objectives, and meet the evolving needs of the Kingdom's growing economic sectors.