

Focus on tourism, GCC preparations and ‘Sijilat’ system



His Royal Highness Prince Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa, the Crown Prince and Prime Minister, chaired the 514th meeting of the Government Executive Committee, which reviewed progress on key tourism indicators, preparations for the 46th GCC Supreme Council session in the Kingdom of Bahrain, and developments on the “Sijilat” online commercial registration system.

# Workforce power

HH Shaikh Isa: Investing in citizens drives national development and long-term prosperity

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The national workforce is a cornerstone of the Kingdom’s development, and investing in Bahrainis while expanding opportunities is a strategic investment for progress and long-term prosperity. This was emphasised by His Highness Shaikh Isa bin Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa, Minister of the Prime Minister’s Court, as he attended yesterday the Prime Minister’s Office graduation ceremony honouring the tenth intake of the Prime Minister’s Fellowship Program, held under his patronage.

HH Shaikh Isa noted the continued implementation of initiatives designed to enhance the skills of the national workforce, in line with the Kingdom’s comprehensive development, led by His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa, and the directives of His Royal Highness Prince Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa, the Crown Prince and Prime Minister.

Congratulations

His Highness congratulated the fellows and wished them success in their endeavours.



HH Shaikh Isa bin Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa with fellows at the graduation ceremony



He emphasised that the programme embodies HM the King’s far-reaching vision of

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“The continued implementation of initiatives is designed to enhance the skills of the national workforce, in line with the Kingdom’s comprehensive development.”

- HH SHAIKH ISA BIN SALMAN BIN HAMAD AL KHALIFA, MINISTER OF THE PRIME MINISTER’S COURT

nurturing a generation capable of driving the Kingdom’s development.

Stressing that their achievements reflect their ambition and dedication in serving the King-

dom, HH Shaikh Isa commended the tireless efforts of the fellows throughout the programme.

The tenth intake of the Prime Minister’s Fellowship Programme expressed their grati-

tude to His Royal Highness the Crown Prince and Prime Minister for his unwavering support to the national workforce.

**Appreciation**

The fellows expressed their appreciation for HH Shaikh Isa bin Salman’s steadfast commitment to supporting the national workforce and overseeing its development.

They also reaffirmed their dedication to continuing their diligent efforts in serving Bahrain and its citizens.

During the graduation ceremony, His Excellency Osama bin Saleh Al Alawi, the Minister of Social Development, gave a speech on behalf of the committee overseeing the Program’s alumni.

He expressed his gratitude to HRH Prince Salman for his unwavering support of the national workforce, and for fostering a spirit of excellence that empowers them to realise the far-reaching vision of HM the King.

H.E. Al Alawi also noted HH Shaikh Isa’s steadfast commitment to the Kingdom’s development through strategic investment in Bahraini citizens.

## ICAI Bahrain Chapter announces 17th Annual Flagship Conference on Future Ready

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The Institute of Chartered Accountants of India (ICAI) – Bahrain Chapter is proud to host its 17th Annual Flagship Conference on 21st and 22nd November 2025 at the Gulf Convention Centre, Gulf Hotel, Bahrain, under the leadership of CA Vinit Maroo, Chairperson of ICAI Bahrain Chapter.

This prestigious event will bring together global leaders, industry experts, and professionals to explore the inspiring theme “FUTURE READY.”

The conference focuses on empowering Chartered Accountants to thrive in a rapidly evolving ecosystem—where finance meets technology, ethics meet excellence, and the future belongs to those prepared to lead it.

Dignitaries

The inaugural session will be graced by several eminent dignitaries, including H.E. Mr. Vinod K. Jacob, Ambassador of India to the Kingdom of Bahrain; Mr. Jamal Fakhro, Managing Partner of KPMG; Mr. Abbas Al Radhi, Chairman of the Bahrain Accountants & Auditors Association; and Mr. Ramesh Damani, Esteemed Investor.

The two-day event will feature an impressive lineup of distinguished speakers delivering insightful sessions.

Key highlights include Mr. Sachin Pilot, Former Deputy Chief Minister of the Rajasthan Government and Member of the Rajasthan Legislative Assembly; Mr. Paresch Gupta, Educator and Founder of Evangelist and Brand Ambassador for the Rajasthan Government’s Youth and Sports initiatives; Mr. D.R. Mehta, Former SEBI Chairperson and Deputy Governor of RBI; Mr. Clint Mclaclan, Director ESG & Technical at Alba Aluminium & Power; and Col. Rajeev Bharwan, Army Veteran.

Adding depth to the program, it will also be graced by Mr. Ram Subramaniam, Partner – Digital Transformation, MCA.

## Parliament rejects bill for pre-marital mental health and drug tests

Citing practical and clinical hurdles

Mohammed Darwish  
TDT | Manama

A controversial bill to widen pre-marital medical checks to include mental-health screening and drug-use tests was rejected by Parliament yesterday.

The Services Committee’s advice to dismiss the text carried after the Ministry of Health and the Supreme Council of Health warned of practical and clinical hurdles, including confidentiality, the need for full psychiatric assessment rather than simple lab tests, and the risk of false positives where prescribed treatments contain similar substances.

They noted the existing law targets conditions passed to a spouse or to children.



H.E. Ghanim Al Buainain

MP Basema Mubarak, one of the sponsors, said the proposal drew on real cases.

“This proposal wasn’t put forward randomly,” she told the chamber. “It came after studying what is happening in Bahrain in terms of divorce, family break-ups and the plight of women with unresolved marriages, often linked to mental-health problems or substance use. When a young woman marries



MP Basema Mubarak

a man, or a young man marries a woman, and one has such an issue, there is no harm in finding that out in the pre-marital check.

“Bahrain’s pre-marital programme has already earned a name for cutting genetic illnesses such as diabetes and sickle cell and other chronic conditions. After studying this proposal, I want to know the reason for the committee’s rejection.”



MP Abdulwahid Qarata

Reasons

Committee rapporteur MP Abdulwahid Qarata set out the panel’s reasons.

“The proposed tests are not for conditions passed through marriage,” he said. “Mental health, drug use or the misuse of medicines are not transferred to a spouse or to children, so they fall outside the purpose of the current law. A psychiatric

assessment is not a blood test.

“It can take five or six clinical sessions. We live in a small society where families can ask about a prospective spouse, and in some cases recovery happens after marriage. Blocking marriages on this basis is not healthy.”

Minister of Parliamentary Affairs, His Excellency Ghanim Al Buainain, said the current statute already provides scope to add tests without changing the law.

“The current text is enough,” he said. “It covers genetic and communicable diseases because they can pass to future generations. But when we talk about matters that may end once a person stops using a substance, I do not think we should put people through shame, screenings and legal burdens. The law also lets the minister add other diseases to the test list when needed, without tying everyone down with an amendment.”