

Legislative-executive representatives hold joint meeting to discuss budget

Budget based on Government Action Plan and Fiscal Balance Programme, says Finance Minister

● A joint meeting between the financial committees of the Shura and Representatives Councils and representatives of the government is set to be held later this week.

Manama

The Financial and Economic Affairs Committees at the Shura and Representatives Councils held yesterday its first joint meeting with the government's representatives to discuss a draft law to endorse the state's general budget for the fiscal years 2019-2020.

The meeting was chaired by Representatives Council Speaker Fawzia Zainal, in the presence of Shura Council Chairman Ali Al Saleh and Deputy Prime Minister Shaikh Khalid bin Abdullah Al Khalifa, the Head of the Ministerial Committee for Financial and Economic Affairs and Fiscal



The joint committee meeting stressed continuing co-operation between the executive and the legislature.

Balance.

The meeting was also attended by the Minister of Finance and National Economy, the Minister of the Shura and Representatives Councils Affairs, the Head of the Shura Council's Financial and Economic Affairs Committee and members of the Financial and Economic Affairs Committees at the Shura and Representatives Councils.

The Representatives Council Speaker stressed that the royal directives of His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa, included mainly in his address in

the opening of the first session of the fifth legislative term, will always serve as a roadmap in serving the nation and citizens.

She praised co-operation with the government led by HRH Prime Minister Prince Khalifa bin Salman Al Khalifa and HRH Prince Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa, the Deputy King.

She noted that positive co-operation between the legislative and executive branches, the spirit of consensus and complementarity, taking into consideration the supreme interest of the nation, catering to citizens'

The government has given citizens' interests and sustainability of services utmost consideration throughout the preparation of the budget.

SHAIKH SALMAN

needs, preserving achievements, ensuring continuity of the direct subsidisation programme for

financial balance.

He pointed out that the exceptional circumstances surrounding endorsement of the budget necessitate hard work to ensure its rapid implementation.

He added surmounting the circumstances is a joint responsibility and all have to work as one team.

He expressed hope the efforts made by all parties will lead to a budget that takes into consideration first and foremost the supreme national interest.

Deputy Prime Minister Shaikh Khalid bin Abdullah Al Khalifa conveyed the greetings of HRH the Premier and HRH the Deputy King, stressing that discussing the state's general budget project for the fiscal years 2019-2020 will bring to Bahrain more growth and prosperity under the leadership of HM the King.

He underlined the government's keenness on ensuring cooperation and consensus are the characteristic features of the meetings during which the budget will be discussed.

He pointed out that the budget project reflects keenness to pre-

eligible citizens while taking into account current challenges will contribute to achieving set up goals from the state's general budget draft law, the Government's Action Plan and plans to boost the economic situation.

The Shura Council Chairman stressed the need for continuous cooperation between the legislative and executive branches to carry out the state's general budget project for 2019-2020, reach a consensual result that meets the aspirations of HM the King's leadership and citizens and back the efforts to achieve

Iran regime played 'a major role in destabilising Syria'

TDI | Manama
Mohammed Zafran

Iran has played a dangerous role in supporting the Syrian regime and destabilising Syria, according to a prominent Bahraini human rights activist.

Iran has contributed to destabilising Syria by providing long-term support to bring militias from Lebanon, Iraq, Afghanistan and Pakistan, and to mobilise them in Syria to fight the opposition factions, it was claimed.

According to Gulf European Centre for Human Rights Secretary General Faisal Fulad, this resulted in the killing, disappearance and the arrest of a large number of Syrian citizens and the destruction of property of citizens such as houses, agricultural land and livestock by Iranian militias.

"Since the first day of the Syrian crisis in March 2011, Iran has provided various military support to the Syrian regime.

"Iran since March 2011 be-



Mr Fulad, third from right, at the conference.

gan to send military advisers to Syria, but in 2012 without announcement, Iran directly intervened in Syria by sending Revolutionary Guards, Iraqi and Lebanese Shiite militia groups.

"However, the announcement of participation of Iranian forces and foreign militias was in 2013, which these forces began to commit crimes against humanity in Syria, which is a war crime and violation of international law," Mr Fulad pointed out.

"According to Syrian human rights reports, the Iranian militias have made Syrian citizens

suffer from starvation, as well as destroying Syrian property in several cities and villages.

"Arbitrary arrests and forced abductions have displaced tens of thousands of Syrian citizens because of the role of Iranian militias against innocent Syrians.

"These crimes violate international law and constitute war crimes and crimes against humanity. Hence, it needs international intervention to stop Iran's crimes in Syria."

Gulf European Centre for Human Rights recently participated in a conference in Geneva

to discuss the ongoing crimes in Syria by the Syrian regime and Iran.

The conference was held at the Swiss Press Club in Geneva in conjunction with the 40th Session of the Human Rights Council in Geneva.

Mr Fulad presented a paper on the Iranian regime's financing of terrorism, supporting armed groups and committing of crimes against humanity in Syria and the rest of the Middle East, such as Yemen, Bahrain and Lebanon through Hizbollah, Iraq through several militias.

Police attackers lose appeals

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The High Appeals Court has upheld the sentences issued against two defendants involved in attempting to murder police officers and training on how to use weapons and explosives in Iraq.

The pair were among the five tried in connection with this case, all of whom received life in prison each.

However, only the appellants challenged the initial verdicts.

The defendants are said to have travelled to Iraq in 2017, where they were trained at the hand of militants on using weapons and explosives and how to make bombs.

The appellants were reportedly ordered by their co-defendants to carry out assaults

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defendants were convicted in the case and all received life in prison.

against police officers in Manama via guns.

According to court files, the duo used Kalashnikov guns against in an effort to murder them.

Nevertheless, their attack was thwarted and they were arrested.

Their accomplices, however, are still at large and were tried in absentia.

DJ duo launches new disco record label

TDI | Manama
Harpreet Kaur

Bahraini duo Mazen and Vish released their debut Dar Disku extended play record, a blistering two-track release that brilliantly updates long-lost Middle East music for today's dance floors.

Merging Middle East music with club-ready disco and house, Bahraini DJ and producer duo Mazen Almaskati and Vish Mhatre have created their own cutting-edge, homegrown label Dar Disku, that has quickly become a cult name, securing a guest mix

and interview for BBC radio plus headline DJ slots in Dublin, London, Mumbai and Bahrain in just six months.

Dar Disku, which literally means 'home of the disco' in Arabic, has quickly proved its skill in their first official release which was out worldwide on January 21 where the duo are currently prepping for their tour, starting from April 16 in Kent, United Kingdom.

Speaking to Tribune, Mazen Almaskati, said: "This project aims to encapsulate a collective culture and various forms of artistry from the Middle East that was right before our eyes grow-



DJ duo Mazen Almaskati and Vish Mhatre

ing up in Bahrain. Many of us looked to the West for 'valuable'

art, things that were worth our time and attention and unfortu-

nately may have turned a blind eye to our homegrown talents and schools of thinking and creativity.

"Bahrain is rich in culture and art owing to it being a melting pot of not only all Middle Eastern cultures but cultures from all over the world. This has manifested in the music and art and physical forms around us and even the way we speak. All in all, Bahrain has a lot to offer. We hope to not only revive people's keen ear for middle eastern music but also to bring people together with the shared experience of growing up in a place like this whilst reclaiming the pride and awe that it deserves."

Echoing a similar view, Vish Mhatre said, "Bahrain has not only the talent but also the means to harness this creative potential and produce fantastic art and music. During our time making music in Bahrain we have met many incredible artists making fantastic art and music from home studios and bedrooms and so with the technical barriers of entry changing year by year.

"We foresee the future of Bahrain's creative output not being limited by the skill and talent of homegrown artists, but instead by the presence of an all-encompassing creative platform and collective."