

What's on the Council Agenda?

Key Local Issues Raised in Latest Session

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Hamala Housing Delays

Residents in Hamala and nearby areas are still unable to begin building homes due to long-delayed road works and site preparation, despite owning plots of land.

During a Northern Municipal Council session, Mohammed Saad Al Doseri highlighted deteriorating infrastructure in areas such as Hamala 1010 and Jasra, saying repeated requests to the Ministry of Works have seen little progress due to budget constraints.

A formal recommendation has been submitted calling for urgent acceleration of road and infrastructure works to enable housing development.

Repeated flooding concerns

Blocked and poorly maintained rainwater drainage systems continue to affect areas such as Hamad Town, with residents facing recurring water accumulation after rainfall.

Northern Municipal Council member Abdulla Al Qubaisi raised the issue, saying repeated correspondence with authorities has not resulted in lasting solutions on the ground.



Abdulla Al Thawadi

He said responsibility continues to shift between agencies, while drainage channels remain uncleared despite official assurances.

Call to Install 'Sahel' Waste



Bag Dispensers

A proposal has been made to install "Sahel" waste bag dispensers at a fuel station in Block 581, Salman City, to improve access to essential household

supplies.

Mohammed Saad Al Doseri said the locations would offer residents a convenient way to obtain garbage bags during daily errands.



Speed bump review

Residents in several neighbourhoods are calling for faster action on pending speed bump requests amid growing concerns over speeding vehicles in residential streets.

Abdullah Al Thawadi raised the issue in the Northern Municipal Council, stating that delays in implementation are leaving communities exposed to safety risks.

While officials stressed the need for technical standards and site inspections, members called for joint field visits to assess urgent cases.

Vandalism in public parks

Repeated vandalism at a Hamad Town park has raised concerns over the lack of security presence in public recreational areas.

Abdulla Al Qubaisi said the absence of a guard has contributed to ongoing damage to facilities, including children's play areas.

Municipal officials confirmed repair works are underway but highlighted the financial burden caused by repeated destruction of public property.

The discussion also saw debate over accountability, with calls for stronger preventive measures rather than repeated repairs alone.

Abdullah Al Thawadi raised the issue at the Northern Municipal Council, saying delays in execution are leaving communities exposed to safety risks.

2,000 people a month

New disability complex nears launch

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A phased opening of the Comprehensive Disability Complex is nearing; the new centre is expected to serve about 2,000 people a month in one place, Social Development Minister Osama Al Alawi said.

He said the complex will provide specialist care for people with autism of all ages, including a government rehabilitation centre, a leisure club, diagnostic services, physiotherapy, sports facilities and areas for beneficiaries to display their products.

He said 2,122 people with autism spectrum disorder are registered with the ministry, including 1,695 males and 427 females, adding that these figures align with regional and international rates.

All people with autism receive the doubled disability allowance of BD200 a month, he said, while some also receive social security payments and the cost-of-living allowance.

About 2,200 students with disabilities are enrolled at 55 rehabilitation centres, includ-



H.E. OSAMA AL ALAWI, MINISTER OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

ing six government centres, 15 non-profit centres and 34 private centres. He said these centres provide vocational and behavioural rehabilitation, physiotherapy, transport and accompaniment services.

Pressure

The ministry provides BD1.2 million a year to 12 non-profit centres, he said, helping ease pressure on families.

Al Alawi said care for people with disabilities requires coordinated work from diagnosis through rehabilitation, education, health, employment and inclusion in society. He said this

also depends on cooperation between the legislative and executive branches, civil society groups, the private sector and the National Committee for the Care of People with Disabilities.

He said the ministry has a clear system for licensing and monitoring all rehabilitation centres under its supervision. Inspection visits are carried out regularly, and legal and administrative action is taken as soon as any breach is found. In some cases, preventive steps are taken before a breach occurs. He added that the ministry has seen better compliance by these centres with the rules and procedures in force.



Shaikh Khaled bin Khalifa Al Khalifa, General Director of Vatel Bahrain, accompanied by Fatema Ali Frutan, conducted an inspection tour to review the progress of final examinations for the current semester. During the visit, officials assessed arrangements across examination halls and engaged with students to gather feedback on the exams and their alignment with the curriculum. Shaikh Khaled commended the discipline and commitment demonstrated by students and by academic and administrative staff, highlighting the institution's readiness and professionalism in delivering assessments efficiently.

The Invisible Student

Digital Distraction and the Rise of 'Hacking Learning' in Online Classrooms

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The class begins on time. Students log in, attendance is marked, and everything appears to be in order. Names line the screen, microphones remain muted, and the session moves forward as expected. Then, within minutes, something shifts.

Responses slow down. Interaction fades. Questions are met with silence. What begins as a room full of students gradually turns into a one-sided conversation. They are present, but not truly there. This is the emerging reality of online education: the rise of the invisible student.

Today's learners are no longer engaging with a single stream of information. They are surrounded by constant digital activity, messages, notifications, multiple tabs, and parallel content competing for their focus. In such an environment, attention is not lost; it is divided.

Students listen, glance at other screens, reply to messages, and return intermittently to the class. Participation becomes fragmented, and concentration weakens without completely disappearing.

Alongside this shift, another pattern is becoming visible. Learning is increasingly approached as something to be managed efficiently rather than explored in depth. This can be understood as "hacking learn-



teaching.

Instead of expecting students to remain continuously focused, learning needs to be structured in a way that brings them back into the session repeatedly. Short shifts in pace, moments of pause, or even a simple change in activity can act as "attention resets," helping students reconnect with the content.

Equally important is reducing the gap between what is taught and how students experience the world outside the classroom. When learning feels distant or purely theoretical, attention drops quickly. However, when ideas are connected to real-life situations, students are more likely to return their focus even after distraction.

Another shift lies in how we interpret silence. In online classrooms, silence does not always mean disengagement, it may simply reflect delayed attention. Allowing space for re-entry, rather than expecting immediate responses, can make participation more natural.

The aim, therefore, is not to eliminate distraction, but to design learning that can work alongside it. When teaching aligns with how attention behaves today, engagement becomes more sustainable.

Students have not disappeared from our classrooms; they have simply become invisible. Recognizing this shift is the first step. Responding to it thoughtfully will shape how effectively we teach in an increasingly digital world.

ing." The emphasis moves from engaging with ideas to completing academic requirements with minimal effort.

This behavior is not always driven by disinterest. It often reflects pressure, overload, and the pace of a digitally connected lifestyle. However, the outcome is clear: understanding becomes surface-level, and meaningful engagement declines.

Tasks

Over time, this creates a disconnect between presence and learning. Students attend sessions and complete tasks, yet their grasp of the subject remains uncertain. What later appears as weak performance or dependence on shortcuts often originates from this earlier stage of fragmented attention.

The challenge, therefore, is not attendance, it is attention.

And attention today behaves differently. It comes and goes, rather than staying fixed for long periods. This requires a more realistic response from