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Shura panel opposes 30-day grace period to renew work permits

Mohammed Darwish
TDT | Manama

A parliamentary proposal to give employers an extra 30 days to renew work permits is being resisted by a Shura Council committee, which argues that recent legal changes already deal with the issue and warns the grace period could fuel irregular employment.

The Services Committee of the Shura Council has studied a draft law to amend Article (26) of Law No. (19) of 2006 on the Regulation of the Labour Market.

The text is based on a bill earlier approved by the Council of Representatives, and the Shura Council is due to debate and vote on it at its sitting next Sunday.

According to the memorandum of the Legislation and Legal Opinion Commission, the draft aims to give employers extra time to renew work permits so that the penalty laid down in Article (36) is not applied the moment a permit expires.

It also seeks to reduce cases brought by the Labour Market Regulatory Authority (LMRA) before the courts and to avoid suspending business activities when permits lapse.

Fourth office for consular services

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The Ministry of Foreign Affairs has opened its fourth legalisation office on Abdullah bin Jabr Al Dosari Street in Gudaibiya, as part of efforts to enhance the quality and reach of government services.

The new office will provide a full range of consular attestation services, including apostille and traditional attestation, to ensure faster, accurate, and streamlined procedures for citizens and residents.

The Consular Services Sector at the ministry said the expansion forms part of a broader plan to continue improving performance, strengthening staff capabilities, and accelerating digital transformation across consular services.

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Royal support spurs Bahrain-Japan strategic partnership

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Bahrain and Japan's strategic partnership continues to advance in line with the unwavering support of His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa.

This was emphasised by His Highness Shaikh Isa bin Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa, Minister of the Prime Minister's Court and Chairman of the High Committee of the Rashid Equestrian and Horse Racing Club (REHC), as he met yesterday with Hiroshi Ito, the Counselor at the Japan Racing Association.

HH Shaikh Isa noted that the recent visit of His Royal Highness Prince Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa, the Crown Prince



HH Shaikh Isa bin Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa with Hiroshi Ito

and Prime Minister, to Japan represented a significant milestone in Bahraini-Japanese

relations, further enhancing the partnership across various

fields, including the equestrian

and horse racing sectors.

His Highness highlighted the importance of the equestrian sec-

tor and emphasised the Kingdom's commitment to further strengthening partnerships that support its sustainable development.

Cooperation

HH Shaikh Isa underscored that the REHC High Committee remains dedicated to expanding international cooperation, further reinforcing Bahrain's position as a distinguished global destination for horse racing.

Hiroshi expressed his gratitude for the opportunity to meet with His Royal Highness, commending Bahrain's notable progress in organising horse racing events.

He also extended his best wishes to the Kingdom for continued progress and prosperity.

Eco-friendly push for clean energy

New EWA transition plan aims for 'greener' power to meet 45% of demand by 2040

● Targetting 30% cut in natural gas use

● Eyeing solar-powered electricity systems

● Switching to solar power can lower electricity bills

Mohammed Darwish
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A new energy transition plan drawn up by the Electricity and Water Authority (EWA) aims to cut natural gas use by more than 30 per cent and meet over 45 per cent of the country's power demand from clean sources by 2040, even as electricity consumption is expected to rise by about 40 per cent to around 28 terawatt-hours in the same year.

The Authority says the plan, completed in November 2023, is a roadmap for moving from fossil fuels towards more sustainable energy sources.

It places strong weight on security of supply, a wider mix of energy sources, lower carbon emissions and cost control through higher efficiency in power generation, while setting out how rising demand is expected to be covered up to 2040.

Carbon emissions

By 2035, the project is intended to reduce carbon emissions



Image used for illustrative purposes only

by 30 per cent and ensure that at least 20 per cent of energy comes from clean sources, as part of a wider strategy for renewable power.

The plan ties these targets to Bahrain's Economic Vision 2030 and to national goals linked to sustainable development.

According to figures published by the Authority, 323 renewable energy projects have already been completed and work is in progress on a further 47.

Together, these schemes have reduced annual carbon emissions by about 75,000 tonnes.

Renewable capacity

More than 65 megawatts of renewable capacity are in oper-



The plan, completed in November 2023, is a roadmap for moving from fossil fuels towards more sustainable energy sources.

ation, alongside over 90 megawatts of centralised renewable

power, with further increases planned under the National Renewable Energy Action Plan and the National Energy Efficiency Action Plan.

A key plank of the programme is the Net Metering / Net Billing system, which allows customers to generate electricity from solar panels and export surplus power to the national grid.

The Authority is extending this scheme across the residential, commercial and industrial sectors to widen distributed generation and help meet national clean energy targets.

All related services have been moved onto the 'Benayat' platform, so applications for solar projects and other services are

now handled electronically.

Technical support

The Authority lists more than 90 certified consultants and over 50 certified contractors for solar-powered electricity systems, providing technical support for new rooftop and other installations.

The Authority states that switching to solar power can lower electricity bills by covering part of consumption with on-site generation, while also reducing reliance on fossil fuels and helping to keep the environment cleaner.

It adds that solar systems can provide a steady and locally generated source of power for homes and businesses.

In its public statements, the Electricity and Water Authority presents the Energy Transition Plan, together with solar and digital projects, as the means to expand clean energy, manage rising demand and cut emissions in line with Bahrain's stated environmental and economic targets.

323

Renewable energy projects that have already been completed.