

# Ten-year prison term and fine for Asian drug dealer

**Rehab Mohammad**  
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The High Criminal Court has sentenced an Asian national to 10 years in prison and fined him BD5,000 after convicting him of possessing narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances with intent to traffic. The court also ordered his permanent deportation following completion of the sentence and the confiscation of all seized items. According to case details, police officers on patrol became suspicious of a vehicle parked on the roadside with the defendant

inside. Upon stopping him, officers observed signs of nervousness and trembling, while he was using his mobile phone to send a voice message in a foreign language via WhatsApp. A previously sent message containing a location was found, and when the defendant noticed the police presence, he attempted to flee but was apprehended. A liquid substance of unknown nature was found in his possession, and a search of the vehicle led to the seizure of substances suspected to be narcotics. The defendant and the seized



items were referred to the Anti-Narcotics Directorate. Further investigations re-

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and distributing narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances using the so-called “dead drop” method. The defendant’s role was limited to receiving, storing, and distributing the substances in

return for financial gain. With authorization from the Public Prosecution, the defendant’s residence was searched, resulting in the seizure of large quantities of narcotic drugs of various types and weights, in addition to tools used for consumption and packaging. During prosecution questioning, the defendant confessed to possessing the seized substances. Laboratory analysis by the Criminal Investigation Directorate confirmed that the items contained narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances.

## Driver falls asleep, kills pedestrian

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An Asian defendant appeared before the First High Criminal Court to respond to charges of causing the death of a pedestrian in a traffic accident. He told the court that he fell asleep while driving, losing control of the vehicle and causing it to veer off course, resulting in the fatal collision. The court has scheduled February 24 for the verdict, following the defendant’s admission to the act attributed to him. The Public Prosecution charged the accused with causing the victim’s death through negligence, driving without exercising utmost care, endangering pedestrians, and damaging public property. The charges also included failure to drive with caution and vigilance, which contributed to the accident.

## Housing Ministry ties property zoning to plan for 2030

**Mohammed Darwish**  
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The Ministry of Housing and Urban Planning says property classifications are decided under a set of planning rules led by the “National Strategic Structural Plan 2030”, which it described as the top guide for urban growth and land use. The ministry’s comments came in a written reply to a parliamentary question from MP Hanan Fardan. The 2030 plan steers growth in stages and spells out how land should be used. Classification and reclassification decisions rely on “urban classification maps” for each governorate.

# Shura to debate adverts on public building wall space

**Mohammed Darwish**  
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Spare wall space on public buildings could be used for adverts under a draft change that the Shura Council is due to take up on Sunday, 18 January, after the Public Utilities and Environment Committee backed the plan. The proposal amends Article 12 of Decree-Law No. 14 of 1973 on regulating advertisements, attached to Decree No. 27 of 2025. The aim is to allow government bodies to rent out vacant spots on public buildings, or parts of buildings used for public services, as advertising space, under rules to be set by a ministerial decision.



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A blanket ban in the current law would remain in place, but the amendment adds an exception for adverts placed under



Dr Mohammed Ali Hassan, Head of Public Utilities and Environment Committee

those rules. The committee said it reviewed the draft law and the Council of Representatives’ decision and attachments, after MPs agreed the bill. It also looked at the view of the Ministry of Municipalities

Affairs and Agriculture, which supported the approach. The Shura Council’s Legislative and Legal Affairs Committee said the draft was sound from both constitutional and legal standpoints, according to the Public Utilities and Environment Committee. **Revenue** In its report, the committee said the change would widen the areas that can be used for advertising, with revenue expected through licensing fees and other returns linked to use of the sites. It added that the ministerial rules are meant to keep adverts from harming the look of public buildings or affecting the public services provided from them.

## Lane set for closure

● From today to Jan. 24

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The Ministry of Works announced that, as part of the laying of electrical cable works for the Electricity & Water Authority on Sahla Avenue in the North Sehla Area, the slow lane for northbound traffic near its intersection with Shaikh Salman Highway will be closed. One lane will be provided to ensure the continued movement of traffic. The closure will be effective for two weekends, starting from today to Saturday, January 24, starting on Friday at 12:00 am to Saturday at 12:00 pm. All road users are requested to observe and obey traffic rules for the safety of all.

# Capital Governor inaugurates Coffee and Chocolate Expo 2026 fifth edition in style

● Exhibition aims to boost economic and tourism activities

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The Capital Governor, His Excellency Shaikh Khalid bin Hamoud Al Khalifa, opened the fifth edition of the Coffee and Chocolate Expo 2026, organised by Bedayat Company at Water Garden City in Manama. The event forms part of the economic and tourism activities hosted by the Kingdom of Bahrain. It comes within the framework of national efforts to stimulate the exhibitions and hospitality sector and to enhance the Kingdom’s status as a leading destination for hosting special-



H.E. Shaikh Khalid bin Hamoud Al Khalifa at the ribbon-cutting ceremony

ised events with developmental impact. On this occasion, the Governor said that organising this exhibition reflects the rapid development witnessed by the Kingdom’s economic and investment sector and its active role in supporting economic development. He noted that such events stimulate investment and open new horizons for cooperation and partnerships.

He also highlighted the Kingdom’s competitive advantages and its advanced regulatory and organisational infrastructure for hosting high-quality events at both regional and international levels. The Governor affirmed that the Capital Governorate places great importance on supporting initiatives and projects that strengthen national economic growth and enhance its competitive capabilities, in line with

the government’s directions and future economic vision. The vision aims to achieve sustainable development, diversify sources of income, and expand investment opportunities across various sectors. The exhibition features a wide range of activities and specialised events in the chocolate and coffee sectors, including professional competitions, educational workshops for children and adults, and live demonstrations of production

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— H.E. SHAIKH KHALID BIN HAMOUD AL KHALIFA, CAPITAL GOVERNOR

and preparation techniques. It also includes health and educational awareness seminars, with broad participation from companies, factories, and cafés specialising in the production and distribution of chocolate and coffee at both local and international levels.