

Budaiya Highway work begins

BD29.19m project will widen 6.7km stretch to six lanes and replace four roundabouts

TDT | Manama
Hasan Barakat

After more than two decades of studies, designs, approvals and tender procedures, work on the long-awaited Budaiya Highway development project has begun.

Barriers were installed along the route on Friday, with sections of the road reserve fenced off and prepared for widening works. Trees and palm trees within the project area have been relocated, while food trucks operating along both sides of the highway have been cleared from the site.

The most visible works are currently taking place between the Sar and Diraz roundabouts, while preparation and removal of encroachments are also under way elsewhere along the route. Utility lines, including electricity, water and underground services, are being relocated or protected in coordination with the relevant authorities.



The Ministry of Works signed the implementation agreement with Haji Hassan Al Aali Group on January 10 after awarding the contract for nearly BD29.19 million. The project is being carried out as part of the development of roads leading to Salman City and is funded by the Kuwait Fund for Arab Economic Development.

The project covers 6.7 kilometres of Budaiya Highway, from its junction with Shaikh Khalifa bin Salman Highway in the east to the Janabiya Highway junction in the west.

The highway will be widened

from two lanes in each direction to three, creating six lanes in total. Four existing roundabouts will be replaced with signalised intersections, while the existing traffic signal at the Janabiya Highway junction will also be modified.

The upgrades are intended to improve traffic flow at key intersections and reduce waiting times during peak hours.



Calls grow for action over capital's back streets

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Complaints over foul smells, rodents and insects in some back streets and alleys of the capital have prompted calls for stronger enforcement, better cleanliness and more public facilities.

Second Deputy Speaker of the Council of Representatives Ahmed Qaratah said practices including urinating and spitting in streets, alleys and around buildings, combined with poor cleanliness in some areas, could contribute to the spread of insects and rodents, particularly in densely populated neighbourhoods.

Qaratah called for daily patrols and field teams to monitor such practices and take legal action, with cooperation between the Ministry of Interior, health authorities and municipal bodies. He said complaints were particularly concentrated around the capital's old souq, Hoorra and nearby residential areas.

He warned that continued poor hygiene and such practices could pose public health risks and lead to additional



Ahmed Qaratah, Second Deputy Speaker of the Council of Representatives



Lawyer Jasim Al Essa

costs if diseases linked to rodents and insects spread.

Lawyer Jasim Al Essa said public urination in a place where others can see it may constitute an offence under Bahrain's Penal Code. He noted that Article 350 provides for imprisonment of up to one year or a fine for acts committed publicly that offend against decency.

Two decades of helping people get home

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After two decades of helping people find their way home, Air India Bahrain's Sales Manager Narayana Menon retired from his official duties, taking with him two decades of memories, friendships and stories of people he helped along the way.

During his years in Bahrain, Menon witnessed the aviation industry change dramatically. Technology transformed ticketing, reservations and customer service, while passengers grew accustomed to faster responses and more seamless travel experiences.

But for him, one principle remained constant: people value honesty, reliability and genuine care.

"The greatest satisfaction came from helping passengers during difficult situations and seeing them travel with peace of mind," he says.

Some of those situations extended far beyond the usual demands of his job. Families seeking to reunite, passengers facing medical emergencies and people who had exhausted every other

option often turned to him for assistance. Those encounters, he says, were among the most meaningful parts of his career.

"The profession is ultimately about serving people, not just managing travel," Menon says.

Among the many chapters of his career, the Vande Bharat Mission during the COVID-19 pandemic remains particularly significant. At a time when thousands of Indians were stranded away from home, Menon worked closely with the Indian Embassy and his colleagues to help facilitate their safe return.

It was an intense and challenging period, he recalls, but the appreciation he received from passengers and the wider community made it an experience he will always cherish.

Over the years, professional relationships also grew into lasting friendships, particularly through his interaction with Bahrain's Indian community. For Menon, earning that trust remains one of his greatest achievements.

As he prepares to step away from his official responsibilities, he has no plans to simply slow down. He intends to remain in



Treat every passenger with respect because every traveller has a unique story.
NARAYANA MENON

Bahrain for the time being and devote more time to community service - something that has always brought him happiness.

His message to young professionals entering aviation is equally rooted in the values that shaped his own career: integrity, empathy, patience and professionalism.

"Treat every passenger with respect because every traveller has a unique story."

After 20 years, Menon may be leaving his desk - but not the people who made the journey worthwhile.

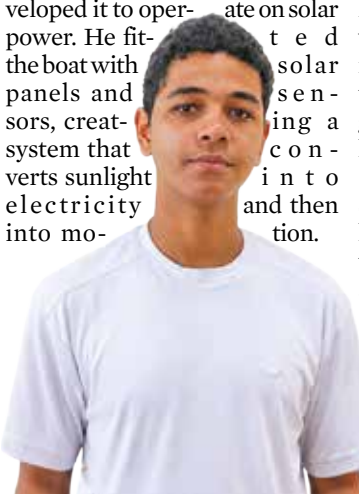
From Solar-Powered Boats to Gulf Literary Success

Bahraini students turn recycled materials and creative writing into award-winning achievements

TDT | Manama
Hasan Barakat

Two Bahraini students are turning their talents into achievements in science, sustainability and literature, earning recognition both at home and across the Gulf.

At Hidd Primary Intermediate Boys School, Mohammed Ahmed Al Manaei designed a model boat using recycled materials and developed it to operate on solar power. He fitted the boat with solar panels and sensors, creating a system that converts sunlight into electricity and then into motion.



Mohammed Ahmed Al Manaei

The project allows the boat to sail without fuel, helping reduce harmful emissions and reliance on non-renewable energy sources.

Mohammed's talents extend beyond technology. He also writes and performs poetry, takes part in school and cultural events, and regularly represents his school at external events.

He said he is keen to take part in activities and projects that help develop his different skills, while thanking the school administration and teachers for their continued support and guidance in poetry, which he said has strengthened his confidence.

At Sitra Secondary Girls School, Mariam Ahmed Mukhtar has built her own success through a passion for reading and creative writing.

Her literary journey began with the school's Midad competition, where she won first place for a short story. After joining the Rawae Sitra literary team, she further developed her writing and won first place in the poetry, story and novel

competition organised by the Arab Bureau of Education for the Gulf States.

Representing Bahrain in the Gulf competition, Mariam won the silver medal.

The achievement encouraged her to complete her first novel, Muzn Al Ghasaq, which developed from the short story that had earned her earlier recognition. The novel was launched at a ceremony organised by her school to celebrate her achievement.



Mariam Ahmed Mukhtar

From The Court

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Rehab Mohammad

Man acquitted in online betting fraud case

The Lower Criminal Court acquitted an Arab man accused of unlawfully obtaining money from another person through an online football betting game.

The court found no conclusive evidence linking the defendant to the alleged fraud, noting the absence of technical evidence showing that he hacked an information system, obtained the victim's data or acted with



the person responsible for the incident.

The court said the investigation findings were insufficient to establish his guilt and acquitted him of the charge.

Asian man faces money laundering trial



A 26-year-old Asian man is facing trial before the High Criminal Court First Chamber over allegations of laundering more than BD38,000 in proceeds from drug trafficking.

The Public Prosecution alleges that BD38,108.701 was deposited into his bank accounts before being transferred to another person to purchase digital currencies through an

international platform. The currencies were then allegedly transferred to the defendant's accounts to conceal the source of the funds and give them a legitimate appearance.

Investigations reportedly uncovered suspicious P2P digital currency transactions and links to an international drug trafficking network. The court has scheduled August 18 for pleadings.

Two women jailed five years for trafficking

The High Criminal Court has sentenced two Asian women to five years in prison and fined each BD2,000 for their involvement in a human trafficking case involving a woman who was forced into prostitution and sexual activities.

The case began after the victim responded to a Facebook job advertisement offering work in Bahrain. Prosecutors said she was brought to Bahrain, had her passport taken and was later forced to provide prostitution and sexual massage services, with the defendants allegedly collecting and supervising the



proceeds.

The court also ordered the defendants to cover the cost of returning the victim to her home country and permanently deported them from Bahrain after serving their sentences.