

MP calls for move to fast-track visa issuance to help stranded Bahrainis fly home

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Bahraini citizens stranded abroad are calling for a way home, and MP Basema Mubarak says the answer lies in fast-tracking visas to countries with working airports. She said she had received a number of appeals in recent days from nationals unable to return to the Kingdom due to heightened tensions in the region.

Many, she added, are struggling with the prospect of long and exhausting overland travel, particularly those accompanied by elderly relatives, young children or people with chronic health conditions.

Human toll

The journeys, she warned, are taking a human toll: physical, emotional and medical. “We urge the relevant authorities to facilitate entry visas to countries with accessible airports,” she said, “so that Bahraini citizens can fly back safely. This would provide a practical and humane solution for those unable to reach home by other means.” Mubarak called for immediate coordination among the responsible agencies to implement workable alternatives,



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- MP BASEMA MUBARAK

saying urgent humanitarian steps were needed to protect those affected. She expressed confidence that the matter would be given the attention it deserved.

New maternity charges for visitors at public hospitals



Salmaniya Medical Complex

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Non-Bahraini visitors and non-residents will be charged new rates for childbirth at government hospitals from 1 July 2025, under a decision by the Supreme Council of Health (SCH). Natural births will cost BD425, while caesarean sections will be priced at BD1,025. The change follows a detailed review carried out with the relevant bodies to re-examine the cost of maternity care.

The figures were adjusted to match the actual outlay, including pay for medical staff, supplies used during delivery, and supporting services. Those living in Bahrain and women employed in the public sector are not affected by the revised prices. They will continue to receive maternity services as per the current rules. The Council said the move is part of its push to improve how services are shared out and to ensure the quality of care can be maintained over time.

Move to set up national halal certification system

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KMH Afaaq has submitted the lowest bid at BD211,750 to design Bahrain's halal certification system, as part of a public tender launched by the Ministry of Municipalities Affairs and Agriculture. The Animal Wealth Affairs is overseeing the process, which

also attracted a BD242,880 offer from Gulf Innovations for Consulting and Technical Services, according to figures published by the Tender Board. The chosen consultancy will be expected to lay down the framework for a national system, setting out how it should operate and what rules must apply.

Return routes

Bahrain seeks second overland option to repatriate citizens from Iran

Mohammed Darwish
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Repatriation of Bahraini citizens from Iran is in motion, with authorities exploring return routes through both Iraq and Turkmenistan, according to MP Jalal Kadhém. One route has already been secured via the Iran-Iraq border, with arrangements in place to exempt Bahrainis from Iraqi visa charges. A second path, through Turkmenistan, is still being negotiated. Discussions with neighbouring countries are said to be advancing, with the focus on opening a secure and practical route.



Kadhém said Bahrain's Ministry of Foreign Affairs is handling the matter, with the country's non-resident ambassador to Turkmenistan, Bassam Al Marzooq, who is based in Ankara, overseeing efforts to establish a safe passage. Discussions with neighbouring countries are said to be advancing, with the focus on opening a secure and practical route.

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- MP JALAL KADHEM

Work He added that work continues with those currently in Iran, as well as their families back home, who are being kept informed of the latest. The embassy has asked those

wishing to travel through Turkmenistan to send their personal details using its hotline: +90 539 353 54 03, or via email at ankara.mission@mofa.gov.bh. Kadhém said the response from government departments had been quick and cooperative. **Calm and patient** He urged families to remain calm and patient while coordination continues. Bahrain's embassies, he added, are still active on both the Iraq and Kuwait fronts as additional overland options. He said Bahrain's conduct during previous events had shown it would not leave its citizens behind, and that current steps were in keeping with that approach.

‘COVID Legacy Powers Safety’

- COVID-19 shaped safety model
- Digital tools aid preparedness
- MPs join civil defence training

Mahir Haneef
TDT | Manama

Bahrain's handling of the COVID-19 pandemic has laid the foundation for a far-reaching transformation in civil protection and crisis governance, according to a senior lawmaker. MP Dr. Maryam Al-Dhaen said the Kingdom's pandemic response had demonstrated how trust, innovation, and citizen participation could be channelled into a long-term national safety strategy. That experience, she noted, has now evolved into an integrated civil defence model focused on readiness, technology, and shared responsibility. She pointed to current efforts that embed digital tools into emergency response frameworks, while simultaneously



MP Dr. Maryam Al-Dhaen

empowering society at large to play a greater role in public safety. Smart tools, safer citizens One of the most visible changes is the rollout of the 'BeAware Bahrain' mobile application, which offers users real-time alerts, safety guidance, and interactive support in emergency scenarios. Dr. Al-Dhaen described the app as a key part of Bahrain's shift from reactive crisis response to proactive community protection. Complementing the app is the National Civil Protection Platform, an institutional framework designed to unify state and community efforts under a



In 2021, Bahrain was among the top five countries globally in COVID-19 testing per capita, according to the WHO.

common strategy. The platform, she said, reinforces Bahrain's advanced security culture and promotes an environment of resilience and awareness. **Shared responsibility** The government's civil protection efforts also include expanding the scope of preparedness across different sectors. Dr. Al-Dhaen highlighted the recent civil defence training sessions conducted for Members of Parliament, calling it a clear sign that the responsibility for public safety is being shared across institutions.

“The concept of safety in Bahrain has become a shared responsibility between state institutions and society,” she said, noting that awareness campaigns and simulations have now reached multiple levels of government and civil society. **Leadership and coordination** Dr. Al-Dhaen credited His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa for leading a crisis governance model that prioritises regional stability and domestic readiness. She also praised the active role of His Royal Highness Prince Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa, the Crown Prince and Prime Minister, in monitoring emergency procedures and enhancing national preparedness. She further commended the Civil Defence Council, chaired by His Excellency Lieutenant General Shaikh Rashid bin Abdullah Al Khalifa, Minister of Interior, for its role in strengthening preventive measures and coordination across agencies. In closing, Dr. Al-Dhaen said Bahrain's civil protection system today reflects the lessons of its pandemic response, turning past challenges into future safeguards.

Bahrain-US strategic partnership



Her Excellency Noor bint Ali AlKhulaif, Minister of Sustainable Development Chief Executive of the Economic Development Board (Bahrain EDB), received H.E. Steven C. Bondy, Ambassador of the US to the Kingdom of Bahrain. During the meeting, Minister AlKhulaif reaffirmed the longstanding strategic partnership between Bahrain and the US, underscoring the shared commitment to advancing economic development and sustainable growth. Discussions focused on topics of shared interest and explored means to expand existing cooperation to support mutual aspirations and goals.