

Three MPs Lead Deputy Speaker Race

Al Salloom, Al Ashiri and Abdulameer emerge as leading contenders for vacant post



Dr Hisham Al Ashiri



Ahmed Al Salloom, MP



Zainab AbdulAmeer, MP

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Three MPs have pulled ahead in the race for the vacant first deputy speaker post as rival camps begin counting votes and sounding out allies inside Parliament.

Ahmed Al Salloom, Hisham Al Ashiri and Zainab Abdulameer are now the clearest names in the running, parliamentary sources told The Daily Tribune, as the contest moves from private talk towards a fight for support.

The post has been empty since May, when MPs voted unanimously to strip former first deputy speaker Abdulnabi Salman of his membership.

Since then, talks have spread through the House, with MPs testing support, weighing alliances and seeking enough votes to put a candidate over the line.

Ms Abdulameer has emerged as the leading woman in the race, while Al Salloom and Al Ashiri are also understood to have built strong groups of supporters. The field is far from fixed.

Jalal Kadhem, Mohammed Salman Al Ahmed, Abdullah Al Rumaihi, Dr Muneer Suroor and Mohammed Al Olaiwi are also being discussed as possible contenders, alongside MPs Jaleela Alawi Al Sayed and Basema Mubarak.

Sources said several names have already begun calling colleagues and seeking pledges of support. Some have made greater

headway than others, giving the first signs of how the vote could break.

At the same time, MPs are sounding out the chances of agreeing on one candidate who can command support across several groups and avoid a split field.

No contender has yet made a final declaration, leaving room for late entries, withdrawals and deals between parliamentary blocs.

The outcome is likely to turn on alliances and raw vote numbers as MPs work out which candidate can draw the widest support.

Sources said the race remains open, but the next round of talks is expected to narrow the field and give a clearer sense of who has the votes to take the post.

Schools Prepare for New Academic Year

Ministry outlines school timings, first-week programmes and readiness checks for 2026-2027

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Morning assemblies will move indoors during periods of high temperatures, while schools will run reception and orientation programmes throughout the first week of the 2026-2027 academic year, under a Ministry of Education circular.

The circular sets school hours for primary pupils at 7.05am to 12.35pm, while intermediate pupils will finish at 1.15pm. In schools covering both stages, pupils will leave according to their respective stage.

Secondary technical and vocational students will attend from 7.05am to 1.45pm during the morning period, with an evening period running from 2pm to 7.30pm. Students at religious institutes in the intermediate and secondary stages will attend from 7.05am to 1.45pm.

Schools have been instructed to organise welcome and orientation programmes throughout the first week, including introductions to



school facilities, staff, support offices and subjects. Special programmes will also be held for first-year primary pupils and their parents.

The ministry also instructed schools to ensure all pupils are assigned to classes, provided with timetables and have their records updated on the school management system by the third week of September. Textbooks must be distributed to all pupils, and shortages must be addressed in coordination with education directorates.

Readiness Checklist

- Indoor assemblies during high temperatures
- First-week reception and orientation programmes
- Facilities and safety systems inspected
- Textbooks distributed before classes begin
- Air-conditioning operated for two weeks before term

Call for Tougher Rules on Mental-Health Practitioners

MP warns against bogus therapists, Reiki claims and unproven ‘energy’ treatments

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People with flimsy certificates or no proper clinical training should be stopped from posing as therapists and treating serious mental-health problems, Dr Maryam Al Dhaen has said.

She called for far stricter rules on who can diagnose, assess or treat patients, saying the public must be able to tell the difference between psychologists, therapists, counsellors, coaches and unlicensed practitioners.

Her call follows a recent decision in Kuwait and comes amid growing concern over people selling unproven practices as treatment for anxiety, depression and trauma.

‘Once someone claims they can treat anxiety, depression, trauma or other psychological problems, the state has the right to require proper qualifications, evidence-based methods and clinical oversight,’ Dr Al Dhaen told The Daily Tribune.

She said proper rules would also make it easier to judge what happened when care went wrong. Patient records, informed consent, supervision, referral rules for suicidal or dangerous patients, duties of confidentiality and limits on advice about medicines would all help show if a practitioner had acted as they should.

‘A short course or an online certificate should not be enough for someone to open a clinic and start treating serious psychiatric problems,’ she said.

Dr Al Dhaen called for recognised degrees, supervised clinical training and firm limits on what each type of practitioner is allowed to do.



“Belief should not be sold as mental health treatment.”

- DR MARYAM AL DHAEN, MP

But she warned against treating all non-clinical qualifications in the same way.

‘Of course, there are qualifications that are recognised internationally, such as YMCA, VTCT and NVQs,’ she said, citing yoga qualifications offered in Britain. ‘We cannot wrong people who hold these certificates and are qualified to work with them.’

Dr Al Dhaen has previously called for stricter checks on Reiki healing, warning that it can give patients ‘false hope’, especially when sold as a substitute for recognised medical or psychological care.

She also took aim at social-media adverts linking gemstones and rings to what sellers call ‘hidden energies’ or ‘vibrations’.

‘You see claims that wearing a certain stone or ring can increase income, bring wealth, improve the chances of pregnancy, bring luck or success, or affect health and a person’s psychological state,’ she said.

Some claims go much further. Dr Al Dhaen said certain sellers even claim that ‘jinn’ or other unseen beings live inside particular stones or rings and can wield special powers over their owners.

Behind the Scenes of Media Work

Dialogue session explores intellectual property, media inspection and forecasting

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Youth City 2030 hosted a dialogue session titled “My Job Is Reading Books and Watching Films” as part of the “Media Professional’s Diaries” series organised by the Ministry of Information.

The session, held at the Youth City theatre, was part of the Youth City 2030 programme organised by the Ministry of Youth Affairs in cooperation with strategic partner Labour Fund (Tamkeen).

The session was moderated by media professional Jumana Al Dhowadi, a programme presenter and producer, who explained that the “Media Professional’s Diaries” series introduces young people to the behind-the-scenes professions and demanding tasks involved in producing pro-



grammes, books and other media content.

She said the sessions provide young participants with a clearer understanding of specialised media careers, their responsibilities and future employment opportunities in the sector.

Maryam Imran, Head of the Intellectual Property Section

at the Ministry of Information, highlighted the importance of protecting and registering creative works and journalistic and media content.

She explained that providing creators with legal protection safeguards their moral and financial rights and formally establishes ownership of their

intellectual property, helping prevent violations and the unauthorised use or theft of their work.

Imran stressed that legal protection and action against violations provide creators with greater professional security and encourage them to continue producing creative work.

Indonesian Embassy Marks 81st Independence Day



The Embassy of the Republic of Indonesia in Manama commemorated the 81st Anniversary of Indonesia’s Independence with a flag-raising ceremony at the embassy’s diplomatic complex in Mahooz.

The ceremony was led by Indonesia’s Ambassador to Bahrain, H.E. Ardi Hermawan. It was attended by embassy diplomatic staff, members of the Dharma Wanita Persatuan (DWP) women’s association and hundreds of Indonesian diaspora

members representing different professional sectors in Bahrain.

In his address, Ambassador Hermawan highlighted the importance of community solidarity among Indonesians living abroad, while encouraging the diaspora to contribute to Indo-

nesia’s cultural and economic diplomacy.

He described the 81st Independence Day as an important milestone for strengthening solidarity and praised the cohesion and civic contributions of the Indonesian community in Bahrain.