

55 fake jobs scam under court review

Hearing set Nov. 24

Rehab Mohammad
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The High Criminal Court of Appeal has scheduled November 24 for hearings in the appeal of an employment-fraud case in which the first appellant was sentenced to five years in prison and fined BD10,000, while the second appellant received a three-year prison sentence and a BD5,000 fine.

The third to fifth female defendants were each sentenced to three months in jail and fined BD1,000, with the court ordering a three-year full suspension of the fifth defendant's sentence.

The Court of Appeal also ordered the temporary suspension of the sentences of the third and fourth appellants pending the outcome of the appeal, after they settled the amounts owed to the Social Insurance Organization (SIO).

According to the testimony of a court supervisor at the SIO's Legal Affairs Directorate, the Inspection Department detected a criminal suspicion involving two companies subject to the Social Insurance Law.

The authorized system user submitted requests through the SIO's electronic platform to add and remove 55 workers as insured employees of the two companies, filling in wage details and employment dates, and attaching forged employment contracts.

Housing surge

Ministry expands schemes and financing options to meet rising demand for citizens

Mohammed Darwish
TDT | Manama

Housing and Urban Planning Minister, Her Excellency Amna Al Rumaihi, told Parliament yesterday that the rise in housing applications since 2022 is a 'natural' outcome of new requests entering the system each year, saying the ministry is widening eligibility rules and expanding housing schemes and finance in cooperation with the private sector to meet demand.

She said many applications have been served, yet new ones are coming in faster than before, particularly after the ministry, working with MPs, eased rules on 'wife's inheritance' cases and adjusted income calculations so annual increments do not lead to changes or cancellations of files.

Criteria

“Extended loan schemes have enabled more than 10,000 citizens to obtain housing services from 2022 to today.”

- H.E. AMNA AL RUMAIHI, HOUSING AND URBAN PLANNING MINISTER

The Minister added that any widening of criteria brings in more families than earlier estimates.

Al Rumaihi said traditional projects remain central to housing provision.

In Sitra Housing City, 500 homes are due to be handed over in December alongside 1,200 more under construction, while work is under way in Al Hidd and 372 units are being built in Khalifa Town,



with roads and sewerage works carried out in parallel.

Loan schemes

On housing finance, she said extended loan schemes have enabled more than 10,000 citizens to obtain housing services from 2022 to today, a total she compared to two housing towns delivered within three years, supported by joint projects with developers.

These include 231 units in the

Suhail project in Al Louzi, 76 units in the Al Wadi scheme in Wadi Al Buhair and 133 units in Madinat Salman, all priced to match state-backed housing finance and subsidised by the ministry.

Optional programme

She added that the second batch of the optional 'Land and Loan' programme is now being distributed, covering 804 residential plots with BD40,000 in subsidised finance based on application seniority, along with directives from His Royal Highness Prince Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa, the Crown Prince and Prime Minister, to offer an extra BD10,000 on the BD70,000 full loan and BD3,000 grants linked to certain apartment schemes.

Requests dating back to 2002 remain under review, she said, but cannot all be handled through this programme alone.

Plan approved to limit gym licences to four, five-star hotels

MPs approve proposal

Mohammed Darwish
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An urgent proposal to confine licences for gyms in the First Constituency of the Capital Governorate to four- and five-star hotels was approved by the Parliament yesterday.

The proposal was tabled by MP Mohammed Janahi, Second Deputy Speaker Ahmed Qarata, Speaker Ahmed Al Musallam, First Deputy Speaker Abdalnabi Salman and MP Ahmed Al Salloom.

Janahi said the proposal calls on the government to reorganise gym licences so that these activities are limited to four- and five-star hotels within the constituency.

He stated that the area has become crowded with a large number of salons and outlets providing the same type of service, which, in his view, has added to traffic on the main roads in this part of the capital.

He added that allowing small shops to run gym activities affects the tourism sector. According to Janahi, restricting these activities to higher-grade hotels would raise service standards, support tourism and bring the sector under a framework that prevents improper practices.

Fairer shifts and pay for 24-hour clinic doctors

Mohammed Darwish
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Parliament yesterday approved an urgent proposal to change the 24-hour shift system in primary healthcare centres and improve contracts for Bahraini doctors who hold master's degrees from the Arabian Gulf University.

The motion calls for fairer shift patterns, extra financial and compensatory incentives, and employment terms that match the doctors' academic qualifications and duties.

Under the proposal, the Health Ministry is urged to review the rota in centres that operate round the clock so that morning, evening and night du-

ties are shared out more evenly among doctors, with extra pay for those on continuous shifts.

The text also seeks revised contracts for family medicine master's graduates from the Arabian Gulf University so that their grades, pay and tasks are brought into line with the higher level of training they have completed.

The motion was submitted by MPs Jaleela Alawi and Hesham Al Ashiri. Ms Alawi said the move responds to complaints from doctors who work in 24-hour primary care centres.

She said: "Doctors are bound by an inflexible shift pattern that has disrupted their personal lives and made it harder to meet family responsibilities."

MPs support BD100,000 legal check on government contracts

Mohammed Darwish
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A proposed requirement for all government contracts worth more than BD100,000 to be reviewed by the Legislation and Legal Opinion Commission has secured MPs' backing, after Parliament approved a draft law on Tuesday despite objections from the government and the Shura Council.

The bill amends Article 2 of Law No 60 of 2006, cutting the review threshold from BD300,000 to BD100,000.

Second Deputy Speaker Ahmed Qarata told the chamber that the current rule has been in place since 2010 and said the Commission now examines around 450 contracts a year

Criteria

He argued that the criteria should be adjusted to match the volume of work and the level of legal review expected.

Under the draft, the Commission must examine all acts and contracts concluded by ministries, institutions, public authorities and entities covered by the Law on the Regulation of Government Tenders, Bids, Purchases and Sales whenever their value exceeds BD100,000, and no such contract may be signed without its prior legal



Ahmed Qarata



MP Mohammed Al Rifai

ready reviews private tenders from BD50,000 and government tenders from BD25,000.

Problem

"If checks begin at 25,000 and 50,000 dinars," he asked, "where is the problem in reviewing contracts from 100,000 dinars upwards?"

According to the Legislative and Legal Affairs Committee, the aim is to widen legal oversight of major government contracts and bring firmer control over public spending, in line with the Fiscal Balance Programme's call for administrative acts and contracts to be examined from a legal angle.

The second article of the bill is executive in nature, requiring the Prime Minister and ministers to apply the law from the day after its publication in the Official Gazette.



The current rule has been in place since 2010 and the Legislation and Legal Opinion Commission now examines around 450 contracts a year.

opinion.

MP Mohammed Al Rifai described the change as one of Parliament's efforts to strengthen checks on public funds, noting that the Tenders Board al-

Appeal set for BD500,000 embezzlement scandal

Hearing on Nov. 24

Rehab Mohammad
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The High Criminal Court of Appeal has set November 24 for pleadings in the appeal of a social center director who was sentenced to 15 years in prison, fined, and ordered to repay and forfeit over BD500,000 in connection with illegal fundraising, embezzlement, and money laundering.



A second defendant received a one-year sentence.

The lower court found that the director collected cash and in-kind donations — including

coupons and Ramadan food baskets — without a license, then diverted the funds for personal gain.

He used part of the money for himself, distributed some as advances to individuals, and spent the rest on unauthorized bonuses, gifts, and center activities.

Auditors also uncovered irregularities in service contracts, including a cleaning contract in which the worker received only BD140 of the BD520 monthly payment, with the director pocketing the difference.

Miss Magayon Bahrain 2025 crowned



The United Bicolanos in Bahrain marked a significant milestone by celebrating its 13th Foundation Anniversary alongside the inauguration of the first-ever Miss Magayon Bahrain 2025. The festive event took place on October 31, 2025, at the elegant Al Maha Ballroom in Downtown Rotana, drawing a vibrant crowd of community members and supporters. The highlight of the evening was the crowning of Ms. Pearl Mortera Peabody as Miss Magayon Bahrain 2025. With grace and poise, Pearl captured the hearts of the judges and the audience, earning her the prestigious title. She was joined on stage by the runners-up: Ms. Anne Jelyn Rafael, who secured the first runner-up position, and Ms. Bianca Marie Dela Cruz, who was named the second runner-up. The evening was a showcase of Bicolano culture and talent, featuring performances that highlighted the rich heritage of the Bicol region.