

BCCI recognises Sectoral Committees' contributions to private sector

Created a supportive business environment



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Manama

Chairman of the Bahrain Chamber, Sameer Nass, expressed his appreciation to His Royal Highness Prince Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa, the Crown Prince and Prime Minister, for his continued support of economic development and the strengthening of partnership with the private sector. He also commended the support of the Government of the Kingdom of



Bahrain, along with the cooperation of the Ministry of Industry and Commerce and relevant authorities, which contributed to creating a supportive business environment and enabled the sectoral committees to perform their roles efficiently. This came during a ceremony recognizing the efforts of the ten sectoral committees on the occasion of concluding their work for the 30th administrative cycle (2022–2026) and the achievements realized during this period.

Nass affirmed that the 30th cycle marked a pivotal milestone for the Chamber amid global economic challenges,

highlighting how the sectoral committees turned obstacles into opportunities that strengthened the business environment and private sector competitiveness. He credited this success to the support of the Board of Directors, institutional integration, and teamwork, which reinforced the Chamber's role as a strategic partner in economic development.

He praised the national competencies and expertise within the committees, noting their role in developing initiatives and economic proposals that drive growth and sustainability. These committees act as the Chamber's advisory and specialized arm, addressing sectoral challenges and opportunities in line with its strategic vision and Bahrain's development priorities.

Nass added that the Chamber restructured the committees according to international best practices, reducing their number from 28 to 10 to unify

efforts and enhance efficiency. This allowed them to better monitor challenges and propose practical solutions, including key economic issues such as commercial fees.

High-quality recommendations

Vice Chairman of the Bahrain Chamber, Khalid Najibi stated that the sectoral committees have consolidated their role as an advisory body supporting economic decision-making through insights and recommendations that reflect sector realities and anticipate future trends. He noted that the annual sectoral committees conference represents a continuation of the Chamber's efforts to provide government entities with high-quality recommendations that promote market stability, growth, and sustainability. He also expressed his appreciation to the chairpersons and members of the committees for their voluntary efforts and strong

sense of national responsibility, which positively reflected on performance and outcomes during this cycle.

Second Vice Chairman of the Bahrain Chamber, Mohammed AlKooheji, emphasized that the sectoral committees serve as an effective link between private sector aspirations and government programs through well-considered recommendations that support development. He stressed the importance of strengthening public-private partnerships to transform these recommendations into implementable policies and initiatives, enhancing their tangible impact. He also commended the dedication of committee members, whose voluntary contributions were reflected in the quality of results achieved during the 30th cycle.

Strategic investment

Meanwhile, Vice Treasurer and Head of the Steering Committee of the Bahrain Chamber,

Waleed Kanoo, noted that the committees have achieved tangible results since launching their action plans in July 2022. These efforts included submitting numerous recommendations to government entities and holding coordination meetings with relevant stakeholders, contributing to addressing challenges faced by small traders and small and medium-sized enterprises.

Kanoo concluded that empowering the sectoral committees represents a strategic investment in the future of the national economy, as it enhances sector competitiveness and productivity. He expressed his aspiration to continue this approach in the coming phase to expand achievements and maximize developmental impact, supporting sustainable economic growth in the Kingdom of Bahrain through partnership and integration among all stakeholders.

US touts 'New Gaza' filled with luxury real estate

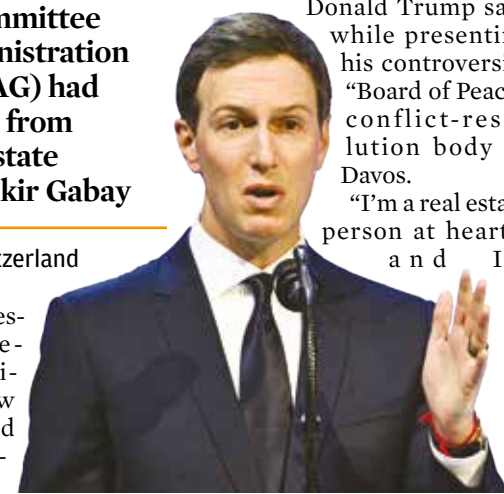
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● Kushner said the National Committee for the Administration of Gaza (NCAG) had enlisted help from Israeli real estate developer Yakir Gabay

AFP | Davos, Switzerland

US officials yesterday presented their vision for a "New Gaza" that would turn the shat-



tered Palestinian territory into a glitzy resort of skyscrapers by the sea, saying the transformation could emerge in three years.

The war in Gaza, sparked by Hamas's October 2023 attack on Israel, left much of the Palestinian territory damaged or destroyed and forced most of its residents to flee their homes.

"We're going to be very successful in Gaza. It's going to be a great thing to watch," President Donald Trump said while presenting his controversial "Board of Peace" conflict-resolution body in Davos.

"I'm a real estate person at heart... and I

said, look at this location on the sea. Look at this beautiful piece of property. What it could be for so many people," he said at the World Economic Forum.

His son-in-law Jared Kushner, who has no official title but is one of Trump's envoys for the Gaza ceasefire, said his "master plan" aimed for "catastrophic success".

With a slide showing dozens of shiny terraced apartment towers overlooking a tree-lined promenade, he promised a Mediterranean utopia rising from the scarred Gaza landscape.

"In the Middle East they build cities like this, you know for two or three million people, they build this in three years," Kushner said.

"And so stuff like this is very doable if we make it happen."

He touted investments of at least \$25 billion to rebuild destroyed infrastructure and public services.

Within 10 years, the territory's GDP would be \$10 billion, and households would enjoy average

income of \$13,000 a year thanks to "100-percent full employment and opportunity for everybody there", he said.

"It could be a hope. It could be a destination, have a lot of industry and really be a place that the people there can thrive."

'Amazing' opportunities

Kushner said the so-called National Committee for the Administration of Gaza (NCAG) had enlisted help from Israeli real estate developer Yakir Gabay.

"He's volunteered to do this not for profit, really because of his heart he wants to do this," Kushner said.

"So the next 100 days, we're going to continue to just be heads down and focused on making sure this is implemented."

Trump had earlier in the conflict floated his vision of turning Gaza into a "Riviera of the Middle East", sparking outrage around the world.

Notably absent from Kushner's presentation was Egypt's President Abdel Fattah al-Sisi,

whose country had spearheaded in 2025 a reconstruction plan for Gaza supported by Arab nations and welcomed by the European Union.

According to a brief statement from his office, Sisi flew home at dawn on Thursday, hours after he and Trump exchanged praise in a tete-a-tete, with the US president calling him "a great leader, a great guy".

Ali Shaath, Gaza's recently appointed administrator under Trump's "Board of Peace", has said the Egyptian plan was the "foundation" of his committee's reconstruction project.

A top UN official warned this month that Gazans were living in "inhumane" conditions even as the US-backed truce entered its second phase.

Entire neighbourhoods, hospitals and schools have been heavily damaged or destroyed, forcing hundreds of thousands of people to live in makeshift shelters.

Kushner said 85% of Gaza's economic output had been aid

for a long time.

"That's not sustainable. It doesn't give these people dignity. It doesn't give them hope," he said.

"We'll announce a lot of the contributions that will be made in a couple of weeks in Washington," he said.

"There'll be amazing investment opportunities."



As of 2023, the population of the Gaza Strip was estimated at about 2.23 million people—a figure commonly cited by demographic sources like Britannica and UN-linked estimates