

'Redundant' proposal

Shura Council rejects draft law on Bahraini teacher hiring priority

Mohammed Darwish
TDT | Manama

A proposal to require private educational institutions to give priority to hiring qualified Bahrainis for teaching posts was rejected by the Shura Council yesterday.

The decision followed advice from the Services Committee, which urged members not to support the proposal in principle, noting that the legal provisions it sought to amend have already been repealed.

The committee said the outcome the bill aimed for was already in place in much of the sector.

Data

It cited Ministry of Labour data showing Bahrainis made up 93.12 per cent of licensed trainers in private training institutions in 2024, with Bahrainis accounting for 74 per cent of licensed managerial staff.

During the debate, Shura Council member Dalal Al Zayed said the aim behind the bill was shared across government and lawmakers, but questioned what its wording would actually change.

"The aim is one shared by the legislative and executive authorities," she told the cham-



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The aim is one shared by the legislative and executive authorities. The wording did not set any effect on private educational institutions if they failed to hire Bahrainis.”

DALAL AL ZAYED, SHURA COUNCIL MEMBER

ber, adding that "the wording did not set any effect on private educational institutions" if they failed to hire Bahrainis.

She pointed instead to wage support through Tamkeen as a key reason the numbers have risen.

"Tamkeen is putting dedicated funds today to support Bahraini wages," Al Zayed said, adding that the approach had lifted the share of Bahrainis in private educational and training institutions "as trainers or managers".

She also urged private schools that rely on teachers for certain languages to keep pushing in the same direction.

Bahrainisation

"Private educational institu-

tions that bring in teachers for certain languages should also seek Bahrainisation," she said.

The bill, based on a proposal submitted by Parliament, would have amended Article 11(1) and Article 12(1) of Decree-Law No. 25 of 1998 on private educational and training institutions.

The Services Committee said the change had been overtaken by Law No. 4 of 2026 on private educational institutions, issued on 28 January 2026.

Provisions

It pointed to provisions stating that the rules relating to private educational institutions in Decree-Law No. 25 of 1998 are repealed, along with any provision that conflicts with the newer law, leaving the draft amendments aimed at articles

that no longer apply to private schools.

In its account of the bill's purpose, the committee cited a memorandum from the Legislation and Legal Opinion Commission saying the draft was meant to give priority to Bahrainis with the qualifications needed for teaching roles in the private sector, after an increase in the number of graduates seeking teaching jobs in the public sector.

The committee said the ministry's capacity did not match demand, which was put forward as a reason to draw private schools into employing more graduates.

Policies

The committee also cited a Ministry of Education letter dated 28 July 2025, in which the ministry said the aim of giving Bahrainis priority in hiring was already being met through policies and steps in place across both the public and private sectors.

The Shura Council had sent the draft back for further study after discussing an earlier report on 4 May 2025.

Yesterday, it followed the Services Committee's latest recommendation and rejected the bill.

Deepfake offence proposal returned to panel for further study

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A deepfake proposal was withdrawn from debate in the Shura Council yesterday and sent back to committee for further study, with Dr Ebtesam Al Dallal casting the lone vote against the move.

Members agreed to return the draft to the Foreign Affairs, Defence and National Security Committee for a fresh review before it comes back to the chamber at a later sitting.

The proposal would add a new Article 10 bis to Law No. 60 of 2014 on Information Technology Crimes.

It would punish anyone who produces or falsifies audio or visual material using an information technology system, then shares, publishes, transmits, distributes, sends or makes it available in a way that could make another person a target for contempt or punishment, violate honour, tarnish families' reputations, or serve an unlawful purpose.

Fine

The draft sets a fine of between BD3,000 and BD10,000 and allows for imprisonment, with courts able to impose either penalty or both.

The proposal was submitted by Ali Al Shihabi, First Dep-

uty Chairman Jamal Fakhro, Dr Mohammed Ali Hassan, Khalid Al Maskati and Dalal Al Zayed.

The committee had urged members not to pass it in its current form, saying existing criminal laws already cover the harm caused by fabricated audio and video and raising concerns about proof and practical enforcement.

Speaking for the committee, rapporteur Ali Al Aradi said the draft aimed to criminalise the use of information technology systems to produce or falsify audio or visual material and then circulate it in ways that harm others.

He said the committee's view was that the criminal texts already in force are enough to deal with misuse, without creating a new offence tied to a single technique.

The committee described deepfakes as content made using artificial intelligence and machine learning to create, alter or combine audio or video so that a real person or event is made to appear real but untrue, in a form that can be hard to spot, with words or acts attributed to someone other than their true source.

In the chamber, the proposers argued that the absence of recorded cases was not a reason to wait.





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