

Muharraq development projects' progress on track

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His Excellency Shaikh Khalid bin Abdulla Al Khalifa, Deputy Prime Minister, conducted a field visit to Muharraq City Development Project to inspect its progress.

The visit was in line with the directives of His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa and His Royal Highness Prince Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa, the Crown Prince and Prime Minister, to preserve Bahrain's historical and cultural identity.

H.E. Shaikh Khalid bin Abdulla affirmed that the Royal Vision is a key pillar of the ongoing urban development in Muharraq.

He noted that historical and cultural identity is essential to city planning and to preserving urban landmarks.

The Deputy Prime Minister added that the development works reflect the government's



H.E. Shaikh Khalid bin Abdulla Al Khalifa is being briefed with the ongoing urban development in Muharraq commitment, under the leadership of HRH the Crown Prince and Prime Minister, to preserving the city's heritage, upgrading its infrastructure and services, and turning its historical legacy into a sustainable cultural and economic asset. This approach positions Mu-



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harraq as a model of balanced development that supports modernisation while protecting the Kingdom's urban heritage.

The Deputy Prime Minister noted that ongoing works across the project's sites follow a com-

prehensive vision based on coordination among all relevant entities operating under the Team Bahrain approach.

This ensures integrated efforts and helps accelerate progress.

H.E. Shaikh Khalid bin Abdulla added that this unified approach supports implementation to the highest standards, preserves Muharraq's historical character, and meets the needs of residents while advancing development.

During the field visit, the Deputy Prime Minister was briefed by Ibrahim bin Hassan Al Hawaj, Minister of Works, on the development of Shaikh Abdullah Avenue and Shaikh Isa Avenue, which include upgrades to infrastructure services and façades in alignment with the Isa Al Kabeer Palace Project.

The completion rate has reached 37%.

Measures to protect lives and improve road safety

Shura Council clears decree-laws on traffic violations linked to deaths with heftier penalties and criminal orders

Mohammed Darwish
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Two decree-laws raising penalties for road-death and injury cases and revising criminal case rules cleared the Shura Council yesterday, with members sending both to Parliament's Speaker to notify the government.

The chamber approved Decree-Law No. 31 of 2025 amending parts of the Penal Code issued under Decree-Law No. 15 of 1976.

The committee rapporteur, Ali Al Aradi, said the measure protects the right to life and bodily safety as core constitutional rights and applies the same punishment to similar acts.

He said the change would help courts deal more precisely with cases of killing or injury by mistake and keep judgments consistent.

Decree-Law No. 32 of 2025, which amends provisions of the Code of Criminal Procedure issued under Decree-Law No. 46 of 2002, also passed.

Criminal justice

Al Aradi said the update completes work to modernise criminal justice rules so procedures match the revised Penal Code and the amended Traffic Law.

He added that maintaining the criminal-order system as an early way to close minor cases would ease pressure on courts and speed decisions in straightforward matters, while leaving fair-trial rights intact.

In the debate, Dr Jameela Al Salman backed the Penal Code amendments, saying they rest on a clear legislative view aimed at protecting lives and improving road safety.

"The first key point everyone agrees on is protecting life and entrenching deterrence," she said.



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- H.E. YOUSIF KHALAF, LEGAL AFFAIRS MINISTER



"The first key point everyone agrees on is protecting life and entrenching deterrence."
- DR JAMEELA AL SALMAN



"The higher penalties fit a wider move to deal more firmly with acts that cause serious harm or death."
- DALAL AL ZAYED



"This should help enforcement bodies apply the rules across the different cases set out in the article."
- LINA QASIM

Deterrence

Al Salman described deterrence as both general, aimed at public behaviour, and specific, aimed at repeat offenders, arguing that this would cut accident rates.

She added that tougher punishments work best when three conditions are met: certainty that the rule will be applied, penalties that fit the offence, and quick enforcement by the authorities.

The lawmaker called for continued follow-up and wider public awareness alongside the legal changes.

Dalal Al Zayed said the higher penalties fit a wider move to deal more firmly with acts that cause serious harm or death.

Approach

She supported the approach of combining fines with custodial terms, or allowing either, leaving the choice to the courts.

On refusal to assist, she said:

"The crime is the withholding of assistance despite being able to provide it," giving the example of a doctor or an ordinary passer-by.

She said the legal dividing line between misdemeanour and felony rests on the elements of the offence and the penalties set by law.

Lina Qasim welcomed bringing Article 342 of the Penal Code into step with the Traffic Law amendments, saying this should help enforcement bodies apply the rules across the different cases set out in the article.

Evidence

She asked how judges would show that a driver had refused to help despite being able to do so, and what evidence would be used.

The lawmaker also queried how the law would treat deaths that occur later in hospital after a crash, and how the new penalties would affect cases still under trial or on appeal.

Legal Affairs Minister Yousif Khalaf said the difference between "sijn" (imprisonment) and "habs" in Bahraini criminal law tracks the kind of offence rather than sentence length.

"Imprisonment is for felonies, while detention is a penalty for misdemeanours," he said, explaining that although penalties for killing by mistake under the amended Traffic Law have risen, the legislator kept the act classed as a misdemeanour.

He pointed to other Penal Code articles that allow detention terms of up to 10 years while remaining misdemeanours, and said the category is chosen after studying the act itself.

Exception

Khalaf said assigning some of these cases to the High Criminal Court is a written exception in the new text because heavier sentences may reach ten years or more if another aggravating factor applies, allowing a three-judge panel to hear them instead

of a single-judge lower criminal court.

On deaths occurring after a delay, he said liability depends on direct causation from the crash, regardless of timing, and that courts rely on technical expertise to assess that link.

He confirmed that offences committed before the amendments will be tried under the law in force at the time, as criminal law does not apply retroactively.

Controls

The Minister also clarified two controls for penalties that combine detention and a fine.

Where the wording allows detention or a fine, the judge is free to choose, keeping criminal orders available for minor cases.

Criminal orders follow a financial scale, he said: sums below BD2,000 may be decided by a public prosecutor at assistant level, while higher amounts are issued by a judge of the Lower Criminal Court.

Royal Fund calls for support to families of fallen heroes

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The Royal Fund for Fallen Servicemen has invited individuals and businesses to contribute in support of its mission to care for the families and children of those who made the ultimate sacrifice in service to the Kingdom.

This initiative reflects the spirit of community partnership, honouring the bravery and dedication of fallen servicemen who defended the values of justice and honour.

The fund has also announced the availability of the "Razji Flower" for purchase at locations across Bahrain. Details about sales points can be found on the fund's website at <https://www.rffs.bh> or on its social media accounts @bahrain-razji.

DANAT unveils revamped laboratory report design

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The Bahrain Institute for Pearls and Gemstones "DANAT" announced the introduction of its newly enhanced design for all gemmological reports issued by the Institute, including the identification of pearls, gemstones, and diamonds.

This development forms part of DANAT's continued effort to strike an effective balance between operational efficiency and environmental sustainability, thereby further enhancing the quality and credibility of its internationally accredited outputs.

This update supports DANAT's broader effort to reduce the environmental impact of its packaging and cut the use of non-eco-friendly materials.