

# ‘New normal’

Signs of gradual business revival as shoppers return cautiously

● **Malls’ visitor numbers increasing**

**Neethu V**  
TDT | Manama

Businesses across Bahrain are adapting to a new normal as the Kingdom navigates evolving geo-political conditions.

In commercial areas such as Manama and Seef, footfall has been lower compared to usual post-Eid activity, although signs of gradual recovery are emerging.

Major retail destinations including The Avenues and City Centre Bahrain are reportedly witnessing improved visitor numbers compared to the initial days of the situation, as residents gradually return to malls for shopping and leisure, albeit with caution.

**Activity**

However, local retailers note that activity during Eid was relatively strong, followed by a gradual slowdown in the subse-



Shopper at a local retailer shop

quent days, though better compared to the initial days of the conflict.

Service providers, particularly in the banking sector, continue to maintain operations through both branches and digital platforms. Al Salam Bank has

resumed full operations across all branches from March 25, 2026.

“The resumption of operations in all our branches today, as conditions improve, reaffirms our commitment to providing a comprehensive banking experience,” said Mr. Mohammed Bouhaji, Chief Retail Banking Officer.



Mohammed Bouhaji

“The bank also highlighted its digital services.

Similarly, National Bank of Bahrain has resumed operations across most branches, with services returning to regular hours under enhanced safety measures while continuing to promote digital banking.

Other banks in the Kingdom, including BBK, Ahli United Bank, and Bahrain Islamic Bank, continue to operate through their branch networks with regular or adjusted hours, while also maintaining uninterrupted services via digital platforms.

## Bahrain delivers statement on behalf of GCC states, Jordan

Geneva

His Excellency Ambassador Abdullah Abdulfatif Abdullah, Permanent Representative of the Kingdom of Bahrain to the United Nations Office and other international organisations in Geneva, delivered a statement on behalf of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) member states and the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan during the 61st session of the Human Rights Council.

The statement was delivered in support of a request to convene an urgent debate to prioritise the unlawful Iranian attacks and address their human rights implications without delay.

It affirmed that, since 28 February 2026, the Islamic Republic of Iran has carried out unjustified military attacks targeting the territories of several countries, including the Kingdom of Bahrain, the United Arab Emirates, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, the Sultanate of Oman, the State of Qatar, the State of Kuwait, and the Hashemite Kingdom

of Jordan.

The attacks have affected civilians and critical infrastructure, resulting in casualties and significant damage, including to essential systems sustaining civilian life.

**Concerns**

The statement also raised concerns over the safety of air and maritime navigation, particularly in the Strait of Hormuz, as well as the impact on supply chains and global energy market stability.

It stressed that these actions constitute a flagrant violation of international law, the United Nations Charter, international human rights law, and international humanitarian law, and pose a direct threat to regional and international peace and security.

It further noted the clear position of the international community, including the condemnation by the United Nations Secretary-General and United Nations Security Council Resolution 2817 (2026), which strongly denounced the attacks.

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