

# Inside the Vote as Chamber Maps Out Every Step



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TDT | Manama

## Flow

For many, voting is a moment that lasts minutes. But behind that moment, every step must be clear.

At a consultative meeting ahead of the Bahrain Chamber elections, officials walked through the full voter journey, from entry to exit, in a plan de-

signed to prevent confusion, delays and missed opportunities.

Election Committee Chairman Abbas Abdulmohsen Radhi confirmed that preparations are complete and that the process will run smoothly and on time, highlighting the strategic location of the Bahrain International Exhibition Centre in Sakhir.

## Movement

The process begins at Door 2, the main entrance, leading

voters to registration in Hall B, where up to 35 counters and four help desks will operate to minimise waiting.

Voters then move to a waiting area before entering the voting hall. Once ballots are cast, they exit through Door 1. Door 3 is reserved for candidates, with two large halls allocated as their base.

## Clarity

Nine tables will be staffed

by the Election Committee, alongside a dedicated transparency team. A large screen will broadcast the process live, reinforcing visibility and trust.

Each candidate will be assigned a defined space for campaign advertisements, with guidelines requiring the Chamber's logo; organisers stressed the need to maintain order and avoid overcrowding.

## Accuracy

Officials stressed that small details can determine whether a vote is counted.

Voters must use designated pens, avoid folding ballot papers, and ensure only the required circles are filled. Any extra marks could lead to automatic rejection. Each ballot carries a serial number and barcode, with results processed electronically before announcement.

## Details

Voting will take place on Saturday, 28 March 2026, from 8am to 10pm at the Bahrain International Exhibition Centre in Sakhir. Members must settle dues at least seven days prior and vote in person, with up to 18 candidates selectable.

On that day, the path is simple. Walk in, follow the route, cast the vote, and walk out knowing it counted.

# Philippines declares 'national energy emergency'

● The state of emergency was declared just hours after the country's energy secretary said the Philippines planned to boost the output of its coal-fired power plants

● Indonesia had assured the Philippines it would place no limits on coal orders.

AFP | Manila, Philippines



a coal fired power plant in Oyon Bay in Masinloc town, Zambales province, north of Manila

Philippine President Ferdinand Marcos declared a state of "national energy emergency" yesterday, citing risks to the domestic fuel supply and energy stability created by the Middle East war.

The state of emergency was declared just hours after the

country's energy secretary said the Philippines planned to boost the output of its coal-fired power plants to keep electricity costs down as the war wreaks havoc with gas shipments.

"A state of national energy emergency is hereby declared in light of the ongoing conflict in the Middle East, and the re-

sulting imminent danger posed upon the availability and stability of the country's energy supply," the executive order released Tuesday evening said.

The order authorises the country's Department of Energy to make advance payments of 15% to secure fuel contracts while taking direct action

against hoarding or profiteering. "The declaration... will enable the government, through the (energy department) and other concerned agencies, to implement responsive and coordinated measures under existing laws to address the risks posed by disruptions in the global energy supply and the domestic economy," the order said.

The order also grants the transportation department the ability to direct public transportation fuel subsidies and reduce or suspend toll charges and aviation fees, while fast-tracking aid to individuals in "crisis situations".

The Philippines, which has some of the region's highest energy costs, is heavily dependent on imported fuel to keep its power plants running.

## Leaning on coal

Energy secretary Sharon Garin told reporters earlier Tuesday that with the cost of LNG (liquefied natural gas) soaring, the

country would "temporarily" be forced to lean even more heavily on the carbon-belching fossil fuel.

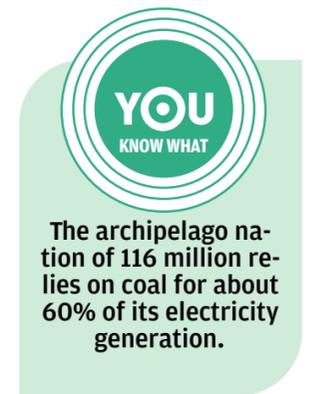
While hoping to "maximise" the use of local coal, the Philippines was also keeping the option of upping its purchases of coal from top supplier Indonesia, the energy secretary said.

"We talked to the generation companies, the coal-powered plants, to check how much they can increase their generation," Garin said, calling it a "temporary measure" that could start as early as April 1.

"If we are successful in implementing this, at least we can decrease the electricity rate hikes because of the conflict in the Middle East," she said.

Indonesia, meanwhile, had assured the Philippines it would place no limits on coal orders.

"There's no restriction on our importation of coal from Indonesia as of today," Garin said, adding increased purchases may not be necessary.



President Marcos in January announced a "significant" discovery of natural gas made near the country's rapidly depleting Malampaya offshore natural gas field.

It was hoped the discovery could extend the life of the field, which supplies about 40% of power to main island Luzon and was expected to run dry within a few years.

# EU says illegal for Slovakia to charge foreigners more for diesel

AFP | Brussels, Belgium

Slovakia's decision to make foreign drivers pay more for diesel runs afoul of European Union laws, the European Commission said yesterday.

Bratislava announced this and other measures last week to limit sales of the fuel, citing the suspension of oil supplies from a pipeline through Ukraine, as energy prices soared globally due

The government of Slovak Prime Minister Robert Fico last week began restricting diesel sales at service stations, allowing customers to only fill a car tank and a container of up to 10 litres.

to the war in the Middle East. "We consider that this measure is highly discriminatory and against EU law," commission spokesman Ricardo Cardoso said of the diesel price for foreign motorists.

"While we understand the

need to support citizens, and at this time in particular, measures must not discriminate between nationality, nor should they undermine the integrity of our single market," he told a press conference.

The commission would "take

the appropriate legal action" to ensure compliance, Cardoso added.

The Druzhba pipeline has been at the centre of a spat between Slovakia, Hungary and Ukraine.

Kyiv has said the pipeline

supplying Russian oil to Europe was damaged by Russian strikes on Ukrainian territory in late January.

Landlocked neighbours Slovakia and Hungary, whose leaders foster close ties with the Kremlin, have accused Kyiv of deliberately delaying the reopening of the pipeline.

The government of Slovak Prime Minister Robert Fico last

week began restricting diesel sales at service stations, allowing customers to only fill a car tank and a container of up to 10 litres.

It also said that foreign drivers, who currently take advantage of lower prices in Slovakia, would be charged more, paying a price calculated on the averages charged in Austria, Poland and the Czech Republic.