

Power shift ahead

Draft law to scrap Electricity and Water Authority, create national utility, and fines up to BD50,000

Mohammed Darwish
TDT | Manama

A draft law would dissolve the Electricity and Water Authority, set up a National Electricity and Water Company and give an independent regulator tariff powers, with fines up to BD50,000 for breaches.

The bill before Parliament repeals the 1996 Electricity and Water Law and the 2007 decree that formed the Authority.

The regulator, answerable to a minister named by decree, would license operators, set technical, health and safety standards, enforce the rules and approve tariffs and fees after Cabinet approval.

Existing operating units may keep working for a limited time under a transition plan set by the regulator.

Licences

Those already carrying out regulated work before the law takes effect may continue for six months, extendable once by the regulator, provided they apply for the required licences within that period.

Earlier laws would fall away, while present regulations would stay in force until new ones are issued under the draft.

The regulator would have its own budget tied to the state fiscal year, funded by general-budget allocations, service fees, accepted grants and donations, and administrative fines.

It must produce annual reports and strategic plans and consult interested parties before issuing rules or decisions with a direct effect.

Standards

General rules to be issued would cover incident reporting, retention of network maps and plans, compliance with approved technical standards and a ban on non-approved materials or devices.

Supply rules would aim to keep electricity and water regular, secure and efficient, protect the public from risk, set installation and connection terms and permit disconnection for non-payment or unsafe equipment.

They would also tackle unlawful use of services and press for careful consumption.



Image used for illustrative purposes only

Electrical works would have to meet approved standards, with unlicensed setups barred and test certificates required from specialists.

Rules

Water works would be tied to rules on quality and potability, source monitoring, sample testing, publication of quality data, staff competence and the use of approved devices, with certificates of completion from qualified personnel.

The National Electricity and

water schemes, the company may partner with the private sector, lease state land and help secure permits.

The regulator may direct it to build new production if required capacity cannot be met by current suppliers.

A binding transition plan would move all assets, liabilities and rights from the Authority to the company, which would step into all contracts and dealings.

The Authority would then be dissolved, with staff moved to the company or another government body while keeping their employment rights.

Information

Penalties include up to six months in jail or fines up to BD50,000 for operating without a licence, breaching rules, giving misleading data or refusing to provide required information.

Fines up to BD500 would apply to anyone who hinders regulator staff or licensees, with the proceeds going to the regulator.

Government support would be set by the Cabinet on a proposal from the finance ministry and in coordination with the regulator.

Water Company would take on the Authority's tasks along with its own core duties.

It would consult the regulator on policy, create four business units for procurement, transmission, distribution and supply, lease land for assets and improve the use of resources.

It may offer energy-efficiency services and set up a central energy-services arm to accredit specialist firms for upgrades.

Permits

For independent power and

Asian man on trial for human trafficking

TDT | Manama

The Public Prosecution has finished its inquiry into a human-trafficking case involving forced labour and sexual exploitation, and has sent an Asian national to the High Criminal Court.

The first hearing is set for Tuesday, 7 October 2025.

The case arose from a report by the Anti-Human Trafficking Directorate after two complainants said they came to Bahrain for work.

Passports

On arrival, their passports were taken, their movement curbed, and they were made to work long hours without any rest days and in conditions that did not match the job.

They also reported sexual exploitation.

Prosecutors heard both complainants and ordered their placement in a shelter run by the National Committee to Combat Trafficking in Persons.

The suspect was questioned and held on remand.

Inquiries

Police inquiries were requested and, according to the case file, supported the account given.

Sentence upheld, suspended

● BD650 repayment key to six-month jail suspension for three years

TDT | Manama

A man in his thirties kept his six-month jail term after the High Criminal Appeals Court upheld the conviction but ordered the sentence suspended for three years.

Judges took that step after the defendant returned BD650 and the victim signed a waiver.

The Lower Criminal Court had found him guilty of entering the victim's residence and

taking SR6,500, equivalent to BD650, from a wallet.

The victim said he saw the intruder, later identified him with complete certainty from a photograph shown by police, and lodged the complaint that led to the case.

Certificate

On appeal, lawyer Abdulaziz Mousa filed a certificate from the Court Affairs confirming the deposit of the stolen sum with the court treasury, together with a notarised waiver from the victim.

He told the court his client would not repeat the offence and asked for a stay of execution.

In its reasons, the appeals

court said the first-instance judgment set out facts that met all elements of the offence and rested on evidence it accepted, including the victim's statement in the investigation file.

Ruling

The appellant, it added, brought nothing new to disturb the ruling.

The court said penalty assessment and any leniency are matters for the trial court's discretion and need no detailed explanation.

Citing Articles 81 and 83, it upheld the conviction and sentence, and ordered the suspension for three years in light of the repayment and waiver.

East Hidd residential towers



Her Excellency Amna bint Ahmed Al Rumaihi, Minister of Housing and Urban Planning, confirmed that construction on the new-generation residential towers project in East Hidd Housing has reached 86% completion. The project will provide 740 apartments, with all infrastructure works already completed. The Minister made the remarks during a field visit to East Hidd, joined by ministry officials, the Housing Bank, and the engineering team, to review progress on construction packages and infrastructure developments. She emphasised the importance of adhering to timelines to ensure swift delivery of housing services to eligible citizens, praising the efforts of engineers and contractors.

RCSI Medical University of Bahrain Renews Esteemed Adjunct Professorships



The Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland (RCSI) – Medical University of Bahrain is pleased to announce the renewal of appointments for four distinguished Adjunct Professors. These appointments reaffirm the University's commitment to fostering strong partnerships with leaders whose expertise continues to shape healthcare education, research, and service to the community.

On behalf of the University, Professor Sameer Otoom, President of RCSI Medical University of Bahrain, acknowledges the ongoing contributions of His Excellency Professor Ahmed Mohamed Al Ansari for advancing the Kingdom's healthcare regulation, quality standards and contribution to research in medical education, His Excellency Professor Fawzi Ameen for promoting humanitarian and public health initiatives across the region, Professor George Cheriyan for fostering leadership in hospital management and community healthcare, and Professor Tariq Mohammed Saeed for driving surgical innovation and advancing clinical training excellence.

Commenting on the announcement, Professor Otoom highlighted: "We are privileged to renew the appointments of these distinguished healthcare leaders, which reflects our belief that strong partnerships between academia and the healthcare sector are essential for progress. Through the renewal of these distinguished appointments, we are ensuring that our students, staff and the wider community benefit from perspectives that connect clinical practice, regulation and humanitarian service. Their continued association with the University strengthens our capacity to contribute meaningfully to the Kingdom of Bahrain's healthcare system."

RCSI Medical University of Bahrain continues to advance its mission in medical education, research and community engagement, ensuring that students are guided and inspired by healthcare leaders at the forefront of transformation in the Kingdom of Bahrain and the region.