

Bahrain Film Festival fifth edition set to open today

TDT | Manama

The fifth edition of the Bahrain Film Festival is set to open today under the slogan “Short Films... Great Stories.”

Organized by the Bahrain Cinema Club in cooperation with the Ministry of Information, the festival will run from today to November 4, 2025, at Marassi Galleria Mall.

The fifth edition celebrates creative talent and spotlight exceptional cinematic visions from Bahrain and the wider Arab world.

The opening ceremony will feature a red carpet event, followed by an official opening attended by Information Minister, His Excellency Dr. Ramzan bin Abdullah Al Nuaimi, who will deliver the keynote address.

Speeches from the organizing committee and festival management will follow.

During the ceremony, the festival will honor a number of artistic figures, including Ali Abbas and Majid Shams Group, one of Bahrain’s most prominent creative collectives from the late 1960s and early 1970s.

The group produced five short films on 8mm film, marking a significant chapter in the Kingdom’s cinematic heritage.

On the regional level, the festival will pay tribute to Syrian actress Mona Wassef, a celebrated figure in Arab cinema whose illustrious career spans more than five decades.

Screening

Following the tribute, the opening film “Hope,” directed by Bahraini filmmaker Ahmed Al-Zayani, will be screened.

The film marks Al-Zayani’s directorial debut and tells a story of solidarity and perseverance in the aftermath of the global pandemic — highlighting the power of hope amid hardship.

Throughout its five-day run, the festival will feature a series of workshops, artistic discussions, and short film screenings aligned with the goals of the fifth edition — to celebrate creative talent and spotlight exceptional cinematic visions from Bahrain and the wider Arab world.

Funds scandal

Appeal continues in BD86,000 school forgery case

Mohammed Darwish
TDT | Manama

The Court of Appeal is still hearing the case of three government-school employees convicted of taking BD86,000 from school funds by forging and using official documents.

Judges ordered a three-member panel of experts to report on the file and stayed the first appellant’s sentence until the appeal is decided.

The original judgment set 10 years’ jail for the first defendant, a fine of BD75,204 and 345 fils, and restitution of the same amount to the school; three years for the second, with a fine of BD10,897 and 550 fils and restitution; and one year for the third, with a BD 790 fine and restitution.

Maximum penalties

In an earlier hearing, the Public Prosecution asked for the maximum penalties, saying the evidence shows forged papers were used to seize the money.

The case began in April 2024 when the Ministry of Education’s Financial Resources Di-



Image used for illustrative purposes only

rectorate carried out a routine audit at a government school and found suspect steps around invoices and spending.

An internal inquiry was opened.

Breaches

Its work pointed to a pattern of financial and administrative breaches between September 2019 and March 2024: hidden invoices and records; cheques issued in the names of people inside and outside the school;

forged cheques, invoices and vouchers; and sham invoices and purchase quotations.

The inquiry put total embezzlement at BD87,000, counted 163 forged cheques, 203 fake purchase quotations, 51 doubtful invoices and dealings involving 355 invoices.

Investigators named the first defendant as Head of Administrative and Financial Services.

Accounts

He oversaw buying, receipt

of services, approval of financial papers and the signing of cheques, and admitted taking money and moving it to his own accounts using documents pre-signed in blank by the school principal.

The second was the treasurer, in charge of cashing cheques, petty cash and keeping funds and cheque books.

The third was a senior equipment technician who handled purchase requests and liaised with the finance committee.

Sham invoices

The probe also found the first and second defendants produced sham invoices with specialised software on their own computers to hide who gained from the funds, which went on personal bills for electricity, water, beauty salons, clinics and fuel.

Prosecutors charged the three, as public employees, with taking school money in concert with the principal and forging official documents to enable the offence.

The court will consider the experts’ report before ruling on the appeal.

Stage set for bowling charity event

● For Breast Cancer Awareness Month

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The officers of Pinay Ikaw Na (PIN) have finalized preparations for the 4th Pinay Ikaw Na Bowling for a Cause, in celebration of Breast Cancer Awareness Month.

This special charity event will be held on October 31, 2025, from 8:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. at Funland Bowling Centre, Bahrain.

The “Bowling for a Cause” charity event aims to raise funds to support cancer patients and distressed Overseas Filipino Workers (OFWs).

Meeting

PIN President Dinah E. Sta. Ana presided over the meeting, which was also attended by the following officers namely: Marijoy De Vera, treasurer; Evangeline Pilotin, assistant treasurer; Ada Co Baluyut, marketing officer and Mary Agnes Haydee Dabucol, auditor.

For inquiries and participation, please contact Marijoy at +973 3999 8783 or Dinah at +973 3979 7669.

Turkish Ambassador Calls for Peace in Gaza

● Republic Day celebration

Ashen Tharaka
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The 102nd anniversary of the Republic of Türkiye was marked with heartfelt emotion and a strong call for peace as the Turkish Ambassador to Bahrain, H.E. Ayse Hilal Sayan Koytak, urged the international community to uphold international law and protect innocent lives in Gaza.

Speaking at the national day reception in Manama, Ambassador Koytak reflected on how “fragile peace can be” and emphasized that “respect for international law is essential to preserve human dignity and stability.”

She noted that Türkiye has been at the forefront of diplomatic and humanitarian efforts to achieve a ceasefire, facilitate aid delivery, and support peace initiatives in Gaza.

“We are deeply concerned by the continued attacks and the



H.E. Ayse Hilal Sayan Koytak and Council of Representatives Speaker Ahmed bin Salman Al Musallam, along with distinguished guests at the cake-cutting ceremony

loss of civilian lives. Violations of the ceasefire must end immediately,” she said, reaffirming Türkiye’s commitment to a two-state solution as the only path toward lasting peace based on international legitimacy and justice.

Ambassador Koytak also reaffirmed Türkiye’s readiness to continue supporting the people of Gaza through humanitarian assistance and peacebuilding efforts — consistent with the

country’s long-standing values of justice and compassion under the leadership of President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan.

The celebration in Manama featured a special message from President Erdoğan, read aloud during the event, in which he extended his warmest greetings to Turkish citizens and friends around the world.

The President described Republic Day as “a symbol of independence, unity, and resilience,”

honoring the sacrifices of generations who built the modern Turkish state.

“The Republic of Türkiye stands as a powerful nation, deeply rooted in its history and committed to building a just and peaceful world,” the message read.

In her address, Ambassador Koytak highlighted the strong and evolving ties between Türkiye and Bahrain, describing the relationship as one built on “mutual respect, shared values, and

close cooperation.”

She expressed appreciation for the hospitality extended to her since assuming her duties in Manama, noting that Bahrain’s culture of tolerance and harmony reflects the warmth of its people.

“It is a privilege to serve in this beautiful country and contribute to strengthening the friendship between our two brotherly nations,” she said.

NOTICE

HSBC gives notice of its intention to suspend providing regulated financial services in its branch located at Adliya (Building 7, Dilmun Avenue, Block 327), effective from 27 November 2025. Seef branch will continue to be operating as usual.

HSBC Bank Middle East Limited, Bahrain

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Activist faces trial over false claims in social media videos

Mohammed Darwish
TDT | Manama

Prosecutors have sent a social-media activist to the Criminal Court after she posted videos accusing a government body of misconduct.

She is charged with publishing false news, publicly insulting a public entity, and using a communications network to send false and misleading messages. She remains in custody.

The Prosecution will take legal action against anyone who spreads rumours or publishes false and misleading news that harms the public interest.

The Prosecution opened an inquiry into the clips and questioned the woman. She admitted filming and sharing them, and said the claims were made up.

Witnesses told prosecutors the accusations were untrue and aimed at harming the body’s name and shaking trust in public services.

An investigating officer said the clips carried false reports that swayed public opinion and caused moral harm.

The Chief of the Cybercrime Prosecution said the Prosecution, through its criminal remit, works to keep order on social platforms and will take legal action against anyone who spreads rumours or publishes false and misleading news that harms the public interest.