

Rape victims set to receive due justice

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Bahrain's rape laws have once again come under scrutiny, with critics arguing that the current laws are unfair and place an undue burden on victims of rape, particularly women.

The current laws place women in a difficult circumstance as they are often required to provide evidence that the act was non-consensual, which can be difficult to prove, especially when there are no witnesses or physical evidence.

Another issue is the fact that a rapist can avoid prosecution if he marries his victim. This is a provision in Bahraini law known as Article No. (353) of the Penal Code of 1976, and it has been widely denounced as a violation of women's rights.

During Bahrain's weekly parliamentary session, Nawaf Al Maawada, Minister of Justice, Islamic Affairs and Endowments, said that rapists will not escape punishment, and that the Kingdom is a conservative Muslim society with respect shown to multiple faiths.

He also identified that as society and cultures are changing, this leads for governments to review and update legislation accordingly.

The provision essentially allows a rapist to evade punishment by marrying his victim, thereby legitimising the act of rape and perpetuating a culture of impunity.

Critics argue that these laws send a message that rape is not taken seriously in Bahrain and that victims are not given the appropriate protection and support they deserve, when suffering through a grueling act. They

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also argue that the current laws discourage victims from coming forward and reporting the crime, which can lead to a cycle of abuse and violence.

In addition, when women are given proper treatment and safe spaces to come forward, this encourages women to reveal their truth, which therefore en-

courages other women to do the same.

In recent years, there have been calls for reform of Bahrain's rape laws. As times are changing globally, governments are realising that laws must change with society. There have been many proposals by the Bahraini parliament to remove article 353 from the 1976 penal code.

The issue of rape laws in Bahrain is a complex and sensitive one, but it is clear that there is a need for reform to ensure that victims of rape are given the protection and support they rightfully deserve as humans.

It is hoped that the government will take these concerns seriously and work to enact meaningful change in the near future to create a progressive and modernised society, in which all feel safe and protected.

Dr Kiran Bedi visit



India's most famous police officer Dr Kiran Bedi visited the Indian Embassy in coordination with the Indian Ladies Association (ILA). The Ladies Social and Charity Association has been giving back to the community for 68 years across the GCC. The occasion was attended by Mrs. Monika Srivastava, wife of the Indian Ambassador to the Kingdom of Bahrain, H.E. Piyush Srivastava, Miss Sharada, the ILA President, and ILA members. During the interaction with the ILA members, Dr Bedi discussed the difficulties she encountered while performing her duties in a prison where 10,000 inmates were all men and had never seen a woman managing them.

Iconic Backstreet Boys show in Bahrain successful!

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Sold out Backstreet Boys Show held at Al Dana Amphitheatre proved a success, as videos circulating online display the fun-spirited and ultra-fun atmosphere during the show, and concert attendees cite this as one of the best experiences for the millennials as they reminisce about the past.

The iconic act performed their biggest hits of all time and memorable moves that sparked for the concert to be a mega fun night filled with overly satisfied guests.

Concert goers said that as the Backstreet Boys are the longest active boy band in the world, the show exhibited reminiscent times for the older generations of the group's biggest hits.

NBB awarded Best Retail Bank in Bahrain and Best App for Customer Experience in MENA

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The National Bank of Bahrain (NBB) has been named as the 'Best Retail Bank in Bahrain 2023' maintaining this position for the second consecutive year, while the Bank's Loyalty & Rewards application 'Points by NBB' has won the title of 'Best App for Customer Experience in MENA 2023' at the MENA Banking Excellence Awards, organised by MEED (Middle East Economic Digest).

The awards ceremony took place yesterday in Dubai, UAE and was attended by senior NBB representatives.

NBB is the Kingdom of Bahrain's leading financial institution and the award is a recognition of the Bank's highly innovative and customer centric products, services and digital platforms.

As a digitally advanced and data-driven organisation, NBB continues to deliver tailor-made products and services to meet the day-to-day banking needs of its growing customer base.



Usman Ahmed

'Points by NBB', the Bank's new Loyalty & Rewards platform is one of many new innovations that led to the NBB app being named as the Best App for Customer Experience.

For its recognition as Best Retail Bank, the Judging Panel commented: "National Bank of Bahrain (NBB) has emerged as a digital and data-driven organisation, delivering innovative solutions to customers with immediate value to clients. This success has been driven by the Bank offering an enhanced cus-



NBB's two awards

tom experience with bespoke and customised service offerings to cater to all customer segments. They provide an array of product offerings, ensuring efficiency and proficiency in their service level.

"The Bank's 21 branches, multiple alternative channels, digital banking services, contact centre, and website provide a variety of channels for customers to connect with the Bank. NBB's commitment to customer satisfaction has earned them this position as Best Retail Bank Bahrain."

Commenting on NBB's award for Best App for Customer Experience, MEED's MENA Banking Excellence Awards Judging Panel said: "The National Bank of Bahrain (NBB) has revolutionised digital banking with its innovative Points by NBB loyalty rewards platform. Offering personalised experiences, various redemption options and support for SMEs, the platform is testament to NBB's commitment to customer-centricity and embracing the latest technological trends, setting a new standard in



Subah Abdullatif Al Zayani

the banking industry."

Reflecting on the awards success, Usman Ahmed, NBB's Group Chief Executive Officer, said; "We're delighted that our best-in-class Retail Banking offerings and digital platforms have been recognised at the MEED's MENA Banking Excellence Awards. These awards are a testament to the Bank's commitment to being customer centric and digital-first in its product and service offerings, ensuring a simplified and rewarding banking experience

for its customers in the rapidly transforming regional banking industry."

Commenting on the achievements, Subah Abdullatif Al Zayani, Chief Executive Retail Banking, also stated; "In recent years, we have curated an extensive line-up of products that put our customers first and ensure that they receive a highly personalised customer journey. Furthermore, thanks to the extensive work that went into making our fast-developing rewards platform 'Points by NBB' user friendly, and accessible where many new and exciting features are being planned, our app is now regarded as one of the best of its kind and we're very pleased that it has been named as the Best App for Customer Experience."

The National Bank of Bahrain has continuously positioned itself as the preferred bank of choice across the Kingdom and the region. NBB aims to further develop its customer-centric offerings and business practices in honour of its promise of being 'Closer to You'.

Union Minister V Muraleedharan visits Indian School

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Indian Union Minister of State for External Affairs and Parliamentary Affairs V Muraleedharan interacted with the students at the Indian School Bahrain (ISB) on May 5.

The programme was held at the school's Jashanmal auditorium in Isa Town campus.

Indian Ambassador to the Kingdom of Bahrain Piyush Srivastava, ISB Hon. Chairman Prince Natarajan, Hon. Secretary Saji Antony,

Executive Committee Members Binu Mannil Vrugheese, Rajesh MN, Premalatha NS, Mohammad Nayaz Ullah, Principal VR Palaniswamy, Riffa Campus Principal Pamela Xavier, Staff Representative Johnson K Devassy, Indian Embassy Second Secretary Ravi Kumar Jain, Ihjas Aslam, Principals of the CBSE affiliated schools in the Kingdom, staff and students attended the programme which began with the national anthem.

Union Minister V Muraleedharan, who lit the



The Union Minister with Indian Ambassador Srivastava and Indian School Bahrain officials

lamp, gave a felicitation speech in which he appreciated the

achievements of the Indian schools in the Kingdom.

Referring to the ISB, the minister said: "I'm delighted to be

here in this historic and one of the largest schools in the region. I'm glad to know that the Indian School Bahrain is a UNESCO affiliated school which has earned a great reputation as a center of educational excellence in the country. It's a pleasure to interact with the ignited minds. I take this opportunity to thank the visionary leadership of the Kingdom of Bahrain for providing facilities to create institutions like the Indian School Bahrain to teach the Indian curriculum."