

CAPTAINS CORNER

Women MPs hold key to future reforms



CAPTAIN MAHMOOD AL MAHMOOD

India's 82 women MPs represent just 15% of the total of 542 members of the Lower House and the world's most populous democracy comes 141 in the global ranking of women in national parliaments. Bahrain's eight women MPs out of 40 seats in the lower house have put the Kingdom at 114 in the rankings. Topping the list is Rwanda whose 49 women MPs make up 61% of the elected parliamentarians. But for sheer numbers China (749 out of 2975 MPs), Cuba (313 women out of 586 MPs) and Mexico (250 out of 500 MPs) are leaders.

These numbers and stats come from the website of the Inter Parliamentary Union (IPU), a global body that unites the Parliaments of the world. The IPU facilitates parliamentary diplomacy and empowers parliamentarians to promote peace, democracy and sustainable development around the world.

There are many women Members of Parliament in the IPU meet this year and they will network and turn the spotlight on their specific concerns in the Forum of Women Parliamentarians within the IPU meeting.

This year, the annual meeting of the IPU has brought the elected representatives of over 143 nations to Bahrain in a valuable summit that will help to build a platform of friendship and cooperation among these influential representatives of the people. Truth be told, democracy is a shape-shifting and messy model of governance – but it is, in the final analysis, the most representational one we have and we must continue to build on it, strengthen it and take its potential further afield from the confines of the national boundaries and onto the international stage.

Women are relatively new entrants in the field of parliamentary rule. In many nations, they even received the power to vote and elect their representatives only recently. In Bahrain, women have always been considered equal partners in nation-building and always received every right to participate in governance that was accorded to men. When parliament was reawakened in 2002 with the reforms of HM the King, the New Age Bahraini woman stepped up to the plate and sought a place alongside her male colleagues in parliament. We have even had the very first female Speaker of the Lower House (H.E. Fawzia Zainal, elected 2018).

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(Captain Mahmood Al Mahmood is the Editor-in-Chief of The Daily Tribune and the President of the Arab-African Unity Organisation for Relief, Human Rights and Counterterrorism)

Deceived by job provider, expat family with ailing child faces uncertain future

TDT | Manama

Trapped in a web of deceit spun by a job provider's false promise, an expatriate family and their 4-year-old son, who suffer from Type 1 Diabetes, are fighting for survival.

His employer had promised him a family visa, but now, he is left with a BD2,700 fine for overstaying visit visa, for he is also jobless.

The family says they are struggling to pay for their son's medicine.

Fasil, an Indian expatriate, and his wife, say food, rent and medicine expenses are frightening them.

The ordeal started in August 2019 with Fasil arriving in Bahrain on a visit visa after accepting a job from a

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The offer was that the company would give him a family visa, encouraging him to bring his wife and son along. "But, that never happened," Fasil says, "and I started collecting fines for overstaying my visit visa."

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"But, that never happened," Fasil says, "and I started collecting fines for overstaying my visit visa."

"As the pressure mounted, I even tried to pay of the fines by leaving the

job to collect the indemnity.

"However, that too failed to work.

By this time, Fasil also missed the opportunity to apply for amnesty offered by the government, which expired in January 2021.

The government announced an amnesty for visa overstays amid the pandemic. "But, I, unfortunately, waited for flights to reopen to send my family

back."

"That decision backfired, and I missed the opportunity, attracting more fines.

"Since I had also left the job, even my son's medication was in trouble.

The four-year-old was diagnosed with Type 1 diabetes in November 2022.

But, thanks to the Migrant Workers Protection Society, Fasil says, "we are managing rent and insulin."

"For how long is the question now? "Life has become a struggle with us not knowing how to make ends meet."

Fasil pleads for assistance to return his family to India to continue his son's treatment, as another job here will only allow him to pay the dues and fine.

After 18 years of being stranded, 60-year-old woman returns home

Zahra Ayaz
TDT | Manama

After being stranded in the Kingdom for over 18 years, Donga Kannamma, a 60-year-old expatriate woman from Andhra Pradesh, India, can finally breathe a sigh of relief.

With the help of social workers and the Indian embassy, she was able to fly back home on Thursday.

Although the embassy had issued her an Emigration Certificate in September, the lack of sufficient documents had hindered her departure.



Donga Kannamma, a 60-year-old expatriate woman from Andhra Pradesh, at the airport

With the help of social workers and the Indian embassy, she was able to fly back home on Thursday.

Fortunately, social worker Sudher Thirunilath was able to communicate her situation to immigration officials, who promptly resolved the issue within two weeks.

Thirunilath expressed gratitude to Sanipaul, the Vice President of The Indian Club, for facilitating Kannamma's procedures and providing accommodation during her stay.



Shura Council Chairman Ali bin Saleh Al Saleh had a meeting with Oman's Shura Council Chairman Shaikh Khalid bin Hilal Al-Mawali on the sidelines of the 146th IPU Assembly. Al Saleh stressed the collaborative efforts to promote peace, brotherhood, and harmonious coexistence among nations and peoples around the world. Meanwhile, Shaikh Khalid bin Hilal Al-Mawali acknowledged Bahrain's excellent organization of the IPU meetings and highlighted the significance of the theme that centres on peaceful coexistence. The meeting was attended by Shura Council Second Deputy Chairperson Dr Jehad Abdulla Al Fadel and Secretary General Kareema Al Abbassi.



Council of Representatives Speaker Ahmed bin Salman Al Musallam held a meeting with Mojtaba Rezakhah, head of the delegation representing the Iran Islamic Consultative Assembly. The Iranian parliamentary delegation expressed gratitude towards Bahrain for hosting and organising the 146th IPU Assembly, and the two sides discussed ways of cooperation and joint coordination in international parliamentary forums. Also present at the meeting were Council of Representatives First Deputy Speaker Abdulnabi Salman, as well as MPs Mamdooh Abbas Al Saleh and Hassan Ibrahim Hassan, along with Secretary General Rashid Mohammed Bounejma.

Over 200 delivery motorcycles seized in a month

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Traffic authorities have seized over 200 motorcycles belonging to restaurant delivery services within a month for violating traffic laws.

The General Traffic Department cited the drivers' noncompliance with regulations, which endangered the lives of other road users, as the reason for the measures.



Motorcycles seized by traffic authorities

These motorcycles have been confiscated for a period of 30 days. The department stressed that it will continue to monitor all violations that negatively impact the rights of others and disrupt traffic flow. In light of these incidents, the department has called on all drivers to comply with traffic regulations and rules to ensure the safety and well-being of all road users.