



3,752 face legal action for driving on hard shoulders

Since the beginning of the school year, the General Traffic Department has stopped 95 vehicles for the same violation

● **Directorate urges drivers to follow rules and regulations for own safety**

Zahra Ayaz
TDT | Manama

More than 3,700 drivers are set to face legal action after taking their vehicles on hard shoulders, which is only meant for emergency use.

As per the traffic directorate, cases have been filed against 3,752 drivers. The directorate has always been urging the drivers to follow the rules and regulations for their own safety.

As part of its role in implementing the law, the General Traffic Department had conducted field and media awareness campaigns to show the seriousness of this violation and its impact on traffic safety rates.

Keeping citizens' safety in mind, the presence of traffic patrols has increased in various streets where the rate of violations has increased, with the goal of limiting them.

Some drivers find it very convenient driving on the hard shoulder. Little do they realise – or choose not to accept – that under the law it is a violation, say sources.

“Motorists find the hard shoulder the easiest way to race ahead on the road. It saves time, say these reckless drivers.”

According to police officials, the hard shoulder is considered a blind area and drivers should not be driving on them whatever the reason is. Driving on hard shoulders can also lead to fatal accidents.

The Daily Tribune has published many reports on the Kingdom's road networks. Despite best efforts to address the traffic woes that erupted following the reopening of schools in the Kingdom, tailbacks are a common scene and commuters are reportedly having difficulties in moving from one point to the other across the nation.

School day timings and bus departures were rescheduled a few weeks ago by the authorities as part of easing the traffic jams, which had become notorious.

The move aimed at ensuring the interests of students, parents and commuters by imple-



Driving on hard shoulders is a serious violation of traffic rules

menting mechanisms to facilitate an easy flow of traffic across the Kingdom's road networks.

As per the Education Ministry's decision, the school day now begins at 7:05 am at all public educational institutions and end at 12:35 pm at primary schools (including those of the Religious and Jaffari institutes), 1:30 pm at intermediate schools, 1:45 and 2:15 pm at secondary schools and the Religious and Jaffari institutes (for both the intermediate and secondary levels).

Regarding technical schools, the school day timings remain unchanged, from 7:05 am to 1:45 for morning period students,

and from 2:00 pm to 7:30 pm for the evening period students.

Earlier, the Ministry of Interior confirmed that efforts are being intensified to ensure the smooth flow of traffic across the country.

The Community Service Police in all four governorates and the General Traffic Department have increased their presence in the vicinity of schools and kindergartens to ensure safe passage for students and teachers.

The traffic chaos began after more than 147,000 students returned to 210 government schools following a long gap of almost three years.

Al Zayani hails Alba 'influential part' in major industrial growth



Al Zayani with Shaikh Daij

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Industry and Commerce Minister Zayed bin Rashid Al Zayani has commended the influential part played by the Bahrain Aluminium Company (Alba) in boosting growth in the industrial sector, and increasing the demand for Bahraini aluminum globally.

Al Zayani highlighted the major contributions of national companies to the economy as he visited yesterday Alba, in the presence of its Chairman, Shaikh Daij bin Salman bin Daij Al Khalifa, and Chief Executive Officer, Ali Al Baqali.

The Minister stressed the government's commitment to continue supporting national companies to achieve the national economic development objectives.

During the visit, Al Zayani inspected the sixth smelting line expansion project and was briefed on the progress of operations. He also toured the rest of the factory and listened to an explanation of all stages of manufacturing and production processes.

Shaikh Daij noted that this visit reflects the government's care to the industrial sector, in general, and to the aluminum one, in particular.

The Chairman affirmed that Alba constantly seeks to explore further expansion projects, upgrades and new facilities for the company's operations, thus enhancing its competitiveness in the global aluminum industry and achieving the objectives of Bahrain's Economic Vision 2030.

Padulang Bisdak 2022 successful

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Filipinos gathered to celebrate Padulang Bisdak 2022, an annual sports festival held at A' Ali Sports Club from 8am to 5pm on 7 October.

Philippine Embassy Charge de Affaires Anne Jalondoon Louis graced the opening ceremony of the event as she tossed the ball of a basketball game between Blue and Green Teams.

According to Rachel Ann “Potpot” Ortega, PRO of Global Bisdak Bahrain, the festival aims to promote solidarity through sports, saying: “After more than two years, we don't have any major events or activities because of the pandemic. Members were really excited for this sports' day as we finally gathered again.”

The Yellow Team emerged as the overall champion as it



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dominated scores in basketball, volleyball, badminton and table tennis.

GFH acquires second US Medical Clinics Portfolio valued at \$400mln

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GFH Financial Group has announced increasing its exposure to the medical office/clinics sector through a second US Medical Clinics Portfolio in a transaction valued at \$400 million.

The income-yielding portfolio is comprised of 11 geographically diversified assets spread across four US states – California, Texas, Maryland and Louisiana.

Covering an area exceeding 1 million square feet, the Portfolio is anchored by investment-grade credit tenancy through Baylor Scott & White (Moody's Aa3), Texas A&M Health Science Center (Fitch: AAA), Texas Tech University (Fitch AA+), Memorial Hermann (S&P: A+) and Tidal Health (Moody's:Aa3). The assets also offer unique specializations within their respective

submarkets, positioning them for high occupancy and rent growth.

Supporting the investment, the medical clinics sector has been strong performing and proven to be highly resilient to economic downturns, with 99% rent collection during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Furthermore, the medical clinics occupancy reflected the strong demand for the sector in the first half of 2022 according to Colliers reaffirming its resiliency.

The sector also continues to benefit from population growth and the aging of the US population accompanied by a steady increase in healthcare expenditure, which accounted for 19% of the US GDP in 2021 as well as the continued increase in demand for outpatient services that are provided in the medical clinic



Mr Nael Mustafa ... support for the healthcare sector is among GFH Financial Group's priorities

sector.

The investment capitalises on the joint venture partnership with Big Sky Medical (Big Sky), a highly reputed and experienced asset management platform focusing on medical assets with a proven track record of acquiring and managing healthcare properties.

The principals of Big Sky

Medical have invested in nearly 6m square feet comprising approximately 100 medical assets across 19 states with an overall current portfolio value of \$2 billion.

GFH aligns interests with Big Sky medical as both share the same focus of investing in and aggregating assets in the high-demand and downturn-resilient

medical sector.

GFH's partnership with Big Sky has already resulted in a number of acquisitions totaling approximately \$500mn in the past six months alone. This transaction is the third in a series of joint acquisitions.

Commenting, Mr Nael Mustafa, Co-Chief Investment Officer – Real Estate at GFH, said,

“We are pleased to announce the acquisition of this prime, income-yielding medical clinic portfolio as part of GFH's ongoing expansion in the medical office building sector in fast-growing cities across the US. We believe strongly in the long-term fundamentals in the healthcare sector and the dynamics that are supporting an increase in demand for high-quality medical office space. This includes aging populations and growth in out-patient care which continues to make the sector highly recession-resilient and unimpacted by economic cycles. We look forward to working with our partner Big Sky Medical to maximise the value of these assets.”

To date, GFH has built a portfolio of assets in the US medical office building sector valued at \$1 billion.