

'Change' on hold

Government resists calls to roll back BCCI voting system

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The government has pushed back against a parliamentary push to roll back Bahrain's chamber voting system to an earlier model, arguing that the capital-based structure is fairer and better represents business interests.

While some in the business community see the resistance as stalling change, the Bahrain Chamber insists the existing system strikes the right balance and bolsters investor trust.

The bill at the centre of this clash seeks to bring back an earlier system for vote distribution.

Currently, a company with BD5 million or more in capital holds 256 votes; companies with BD1 million to BD5 million receive 128 votes, while those with BD500,000 to BD1 million are given 64 votes.

Firms with BD100,000 to BD500,000 get 32 votes, those with BD50,000 to BD100,000 have 16 votes, and companies with BD20,000 to BD50,000 receive 8 votes.

Companies under BD20,000 hold 4 votes, while those not disclosing their capital have 2.

The old law, which the bill aims to revive, arranged votes differently: companies with under BD20,000 had 2 votes, those with BD20,000 to BD100,000 were given 3, and businesses from BD100,000 to BD500,000



Image used for illustrative purposes only had 4 votes.

Larger companies

Firms with BD500,000 to BD1 million received 5 votes, those from BD1 million to BD5 million had 6, while larger companies — those between BD5 million and BD100 million — were allotted 7 votes.

Companies with BD100 million to BD500 million held 8 votes, those from BD500 million to BD1 billion had 9, and firms above BD1 billion had 10 votes.

Officials emphasise that the current system, established by the Financial and Economic Affairs Committee in the Council of Representatives, is fully aligned with government policy and the Bahrain Chamber of Commerce and Industry (BCCI).

In a statement, the government, represented by the Min-

ister of Industry, Commerce, and Tourism, defended the capital-linked system as a fair method to balance the number of firms against their financial weight.

Multiple registration

They noted that voting in the Chamber of Commerce differs from voting in Parliament, with each member voting as a business owner, some holding multiple registrations similar to shareholders.

The government also highlighted that the bill's points were already reviewed during the drafting of Law No. 16 of 2020.

This law, shaped by thorough studies and discussions among all parties, set up the structure linking votes with capital to reflect economic strength.

Backing the government's

stance, BCCI has consistently supported the current voting system, arguing that capital-based voting provides a fair reflection of each company's contribution to Bahrain's economy.

The chamber stated that prior to Law No. 16 of 2020, it conducted extensive reviews to ensure fair voting rights across sectors.

Costs

The 2020 updates also reduced costs for companies — a benefit that, according to BCCI, supports the business community.

These changes, BCCI claims, have stabilised the chamber, linking capital to influence while making Bahrain more attractive to overseas investors.

The 2020 updates also brought clarity to chamber op-



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erations, reducing uncertainty and supporting the chamber's long-term economic goals.

Meanwhile, the Bahrain Development for SME (BDSME) Society, representing nearly 500 members, reported no complaints regarding the current voting system.

The society believes the setup favours small and micro-businesses, which hold about 70 per cent of the votes, enhancing their representation in chamber elections.

Old system

It opposes a return to the old system, arguing that the current approach offers fairer representation aligned with members' economic strength.

Man appeals jail term for robbery and assault case

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A 20-year-old man is appealing a five-year prison sentence and deportation for his involvement in a violent robbery.

The man, along with unidentified accomplices, assaulted and robbed two of his friends, stealing cash, electronics, and personal documents.

The High Appeals Court scheduled a hearing for November 25th to consider the appeal.

According to the first victim's testimony, the incident occurred at the residence of the second victim.

The 27-year-old African national defendant, who was present, briefly left the house claiming to retrieve something from his car.

He returned three minutes later with four other individuals.

Without warning, the group assaulted the victims, causing various injuries.

They then proceeded to steal a significant amount of property.

Items stolen from the first victim included his European driver's license, identification card, BD400, \$800, two mobile phones, car keys, a laptop, and an iPad.

MPs propose 20% cut in housing loan interest rates

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Five MPs have submitted a proposal urging a 20% reduction in interest rates on housing loans.

The proposal, spearheaded by MP Eman Shuwaiter and co-signed by MPs Zainab Abdulameer, Mahdi Al Shuwaikh, and Ahmed Qarata, aims to alleviate the financial burden on citizens seeking home loans.

The MPs argue that the current interest rates imposed by local banks are excessively high, reaching approximately 50% of the loan amount in some cases.

This significantly increases the financial strain on citizens trying to secure housing.

The proposed reduction, they contend, would constitute crucial government support for housing services and contribute to improving the overall quality of services provided.

The proposal highlights the need for government intervention to make homeownership more accessible and affordable for Bahraini citizens.

The MPs believe that lowering interest rates will significantly increase the affordability of housing and contribute to a more stable and prosperous housing market.

The proposal's success will depend on its reception by the Bahraini parliament and the government's response to the MPs' concerns.

New leaders for KSCA



The Kerala Social and Cultural Association (KSCA) has hosted the Annual General Body Meeting at its headquarters, where the Governing Body elected office bearers for the years 2024-2026. Rajesh Nambiar was elected as the President of the committee, and Anil Kumar UK (Vice President), Anil Kumar Pillai (General Secretary), Satish K. (Assistant Secretary), Arun CT (Treasurer), Manoj Palayadam (Cultural and Literary Wing Secretary), Anoop Pillai (Membership Secretary), Sujith (Sports and Games Secretary) and Ajesh Nair (Internal Auditor) were also elected.

Council proposes small fee for clothing bins to aid recycling

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Second-hand clothing bins in Northern Bahrain may soon be managed with a small fee, aiming to bring a bit of order to donation sites scattered across public areas, the Northern Municipal Council announced yesterday.

Under the plan, organisations responsible for managing donation bins on public land would be required to pay a small fee. Plans are in place to arrange bin locations on walkways and in parks, under a proposal by council member Mohammed Saad Al Dosari.

Al Dosari's proposal aims to organise donation bins, which are often left in random spots.

He explained that a small fee would help the council track bin locations and encourage Bahrain's growing habit of recycling.



Mohammed Saad Al Dosari, Council member

“With bins in the right places, it's easier for people to give what they no longer need, making recycling simpler for everyone.”

- MOHAMMED SAAD AL DOSARI, COUNCIL MEMBER

“This is about more than just keeping our streets tidy,” Al Dosari told The Daily Tribune. “With bins in the right places, it's easier for people to give what they no longer need, making recycling simpler for everyone.”

Al Dosari, who mentioned his own family often donates old clothes, believes that clear rules will keep Bahrain's recycling spirit alive.

The Northern Municipal Council has agreed to pass the plan to the Minister of Municipalities Affairs and Agriculture for review.

The Financial and Legal Committee of the council previously requested that this idea be added to the council's agenda and reviewed its details on 30 October.

GCC Power 2024 Conference Opens in Bahrain

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Against a backdrop of soaring energy demands and a rapidly shifting global focus toward sustainability, Bahrain today inaugurated the 20th GCC-CIGRE International Conference and

30th Exhibition for Electrical Equipment, 'GCC Power 2024'.

Hosted in partnership with the GCC Regional Committee for Electric Systems (GCC CIGRE) and Bahrain's Electricity and Water Authority (EWA), the conference sets the stage for intense discus-

sions on the future of energy, running from November 11th to 13th.

Bahrain's EWA President, Kamal bin Ahmed Mohammed, presided over the event alongside GCC ministers and prominent representatives from leading global energy companies.

Speaking to an audience of energy leaders, he reaffirmed Bahrain's commitment to sustainable development and underscored the nation's strategic shift toward renewable energy. The conference, he noted, presents a rare opportunity for

global experts and policymakers to converge, exchange insights, and drive collaborative solutions aimed at both regional and global energy advancements.

GCC Power 2024 will play a significant role in shaping the region's energy landscape.