

BWU lobbying for law on domestic violence

Activists hold meetings with MPs to discuss amendments to draft family law

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The Bahrain Women's Union (BWU) held its first roundtable discussion yesterday to push for the swift approval of a law on domestic violence included within the draft family law.

The meeting was attended by several parliamentary members from both the Shura Council and the Lower House, as well as lawyers and members of the BWU. Speaking to *Bahrain Tribune*, Fatima Rabeea explained that the union proposed some amendments to the draft law which were discussed and debated at length during the meeting.

"Domestic violence is a reality and it is most often the woman who is a victim in this male-dominated society," she explained. "The amendments that we have recommended are supported by statistics and cases cited by lawyers and victims."

The discussion included the participation of 15 people who debated the amendments and other aspects of the draft family law. "It is vital for the family law to be passed and implemented as soon as possible," Rabeea said. "Violence in households affects not only the victim but also the children. They become indirect victims and while they may not be physically abused they will carry emotional scars probably for the rest of their lives."

On Friday over a hundred people marched from Al Fateh Mosque up to Marina Club to show solidarity with victims of domestic violence. They were also demanding that the draft fam-



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PUSHING FOR CHANGE: BWU members and MPs are seen during a roundtable discussion on domestic violence.

ily law be fast tracked and implemented as soon as possible.

This event was also organised by the Bahrain Women's Union but included the participation of several other organ-

isations. A petition was also signed during the to push for these demands.

The petition will be presented to King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa, requesting him to look into the matter.

The union now plans to continue to lobby with politicians and decision-makers to highlight this issue with a meeting being scheduled for today with Members of Parliament.

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