

No rift in Bahrain's Al Wefaq

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Hurting at what he called an orchestrated sidelining of the opposition, MP Shaikh Ali Salman said he would be stepping down as the bloc's leader in parliament when it reconvenes after Eid.

The secretary general of the bloc made this statement in the local Press, which also stated that there was a rift in Al Wefaq bloc as some members were planning to leave the bloc and become independent deputies.

The head of the bloc, Khalil Al Marzooq, denied this and said: "There is no unrest in the bloc as reported in the Press. No members of the bloc will leave and become independent. We are committed to work for the country and will continue to do so," he said.

MP Jawad Fairouz from the bloc concurred with Marzooq and said that Shaikh Ali has expressed dissatisfaction on how things have turned out so far in parliament.

"He is unhappy with the way the bloc has been treated and sidelined. There is no conflict between any of the members on this issue and we will remain a part of Al Wefaq bloc," he said.

Deputy Jassim Hussein said that Shaikh Ali was sending strong signals to the authorities to cooperate with the bloc.

"We represent the majority in parliament and have submitted several proposals but issues like improving the living conditions of the people and constitutional amendments remain unchanged," he said.

This is not the first time that Shaikh Ali expressed dissatisfaction over performance of the legislative authority. He had told the Tribune that there was a hidden agenda between the government and the Shura Council which parliament is not aware of. He claimed that the government is interfering with the functioning of parliament and is influencing the Shura Council to pass laws, which benefit them.

Al Wefaq bloc had walked out in protest for one week after their motion for a probe into alleged corruption and misuse of office by the Minister of State for Cabinet Affairs, Shaikh Ahmed bin Atiyatallah Al Khalifa, was defeated in the session. It had also boycotted the joint inaugural session of Parliament and taking of the oath.