



## My Opinion

Ahdeya Ahmed

### Iraq...torn between civil war, ISIS and preserving its Arab identity

I spent the day today on Baghdad's streets. I just needed to see for myself this Arab capital that I had just heard of for more than decades. Needed to listen to Elias Khodher and Nadhem Ghazalis songs while driving around Baghdad

After all, these were the singers my dad used to listen and used to tell us how Iraq was beautiful. I needed to live art, culture and breath its air. I also needed to see the county once torn apart because of sectarianism that led to the death of more than half a million Iraqis. I couldn't help wonder how can a country where you see Christmas trees in its airport upon arrival can be the same country in which Sunnis and Shiite Muslims killed each other. How can the same streets on which Christmas trees and Santa costumes are sold be the streets where Muslims killed each other just because they differed over an issue that happened more than 1400 years, incidents that are misinterpreted and used by some political leaders under the umbrella of Islam to create rifts in different societies for their own personal interests.

Unfortunately this rift in Iraq led to a civil war that cost the lives of more than 600,000 people including innocent children.

Its strange how welcoming, generous and loving the people of Iraq and how they're the same people who one day killed each other. Its simply sad to see these fun loving people became victims of sectarianism also because of how rich they were and how some counties wanted to rip them off and put their hands on its wealth. Unfortunately this plan succeeded. Their wealth has become a treasure others benefit from. What just remains to be something they are holding on to is their Arab identity, regardless of the Iranian interference that is very clear.

On its streets, you see how friendly people are. I went into one store and while chatting with the sales lady I asked her if she in any way was affected by the civil war. Her story was as short, simple yet extremely sad. She said her dad was a taxi driver and one night on his way back home he was stopped on the street and shot in the head by members of the opposite sect.

She was only 12 when she was orphaned.

Imagine how many sad stories did the 600,000 people who were killed in the civil war have left behind.

Yes Iraqis have defeated ISIS. Yes they celebrated defeating ISIS and achieved unity, hopefully one with a purely Arab identity but the fact remains to be that you sense how this precious land is still bleeding. We lost Iraq as a protective armour for the Arab world. All we can hope for now is that its people become their own protective armour and at least protect their land and the only greatness left for them, their Arab identity.

*(The views and opinions expressed in this article are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the policy or position of this newspaper.)*

# 30% stake for RCO in Seef properties

DT News Network  
Manama

In a historic move, His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa granted orphans and widows under the umbrella of the Royal Charity Organisation a 30 percent stake in Seef Properties.

The decision was announced by His Highness Shaikh Nasser bin Hamad Al Khalifa during the 20th-anniversary celebration of the Seef Mall.

"HM The King has given directives to grant orphans and widows under the umbrella of the Royal Charity Organisation 30pc of the company's shares in support of charity and humanitarian work," said HH Shaikh Nasser, the Representative of His Majesty the King for Charity Works and Youth Affairs, Chairman of the Board of Trustees of the Royal Charity Organisation.

Seef Properties, a leading real estate development company in Bahrain, was established in 1999 by the Government of Bahrain as a publicly listed company with an aim to manage Seef Mall and other government properties. It continues to attract a large number of visitors thanks to its wide range of international brands including retail, restaurants and leisure facilities for children and adults, as well as hundreds of stores suitable to different lifestyles.

Yesterday's announcement was made in the presence of the Board of Directors of Seef Properties and the Executive Management of the company.

The company, Shaikh Nasser said, is now one of the most important tourist, commercial and economic destinations for



HH Shaikh Nasser bin Hamad Al Khalifa during the anniversary celebration at Seef Mall

citizens, residents, visitors and tourists, which significantly contributes to driving the growth and development in the area surrounding Seef Mall." The mall enjoys branches in Muharraq and Hamala.

Seef Properties recorded net profits of BD7.93 Million for the first nine-months of 2017, an 11.2pc increase from BD7.13 posted during the same period last year. Net profits for the third quarter of 2017 was BD2.73m compared to BD2.64m in the same period last year.

His Majesty the King's decision was hailed by Essa Mohammed Najibi, Chairman of Seef Properties, CEO of Seef Properties Ahmed Yusuf and Dr Mustafa Al Sayed, Vice Chairman of the Board of Directors of RCO.

"Launched as a wholly owned company by the Housing Bank, shares of Seef Properties was later listed on the Bahrain Bourse. The move, Najibi said, was aimed at transferring national wealth to citizens.

Seef Mall has announced

month-long activities as part of its anniversary celebrations. This includes the "Shop and Win" campaign launched earlier this month. The campaign allows shoppers who spend BD20 at any of the mall's shops and restaurants in Seef District to win BD1,000 on a daily basis. A stage performance of the animation Ice Age will be held from December 21 to 23, followed by a Chess Championship on December 29 and 30. A fireworks display will add more sparks to the festivities.

## Joining hands to promote a green, healthy life style



Giving away seedlings

Harpreet Kaur/ DTNN  
reporter@dt.bh

Sitra

Efforts to keep the capital city of Bahrain clean and beautiful got a green boost yesterday when officials and the public joined their hands to promote a greener environment.

The event held on Sitra Walkway included distribution of seedlings, a walkathon as well as a medical check-up camp to raise awareness regarding the clean and green environment and to promote a healthy lifestyle.

"The event was a huge success in terms of crowd turnover," Mohammed

Ali Al Khozai, Chairman of Capital Municipal Council told DT News.

Titled 'In love with Bahrain', the festival, organised by Capital Secretariat Council along with the Bahrain Sports for All Federation Organisation, forms part of Bahrain National Day activities.

Chairman and Board Members of the Capital Secretariat Council, Cabinet members, President and members of the Bahrain Sports For All Federation and a number of heads of municipal councils and municipal members were present.

Workshops for kids, held on the sidelines of the event, helped them gain awareness on the importance of

clean environment and "how they can contribute to the society".

When asked about the future programmes of the Council, Al Khozai said, "The first is to develop a strategy on the basis of the directives given by the leadership."

"The Capital Secretariat Council is committed to providing high-quality municipal services to residents and residents of the capital," he added.

The Council, according to Mazen Al Umran, Vice Chairman of the Capital Secretariat Council, will organise follow up events at the Karbabad Beach and the Bab Al Bahrain in the coming weeks.