

Al Jazeera slammed for spreading lies, rumours



Shaikh Khalid bin Ahmed Al Khalifa

**DT News Network
Manama**

Foreign Affairs Minister Shaikh Khalid bin Ahmed Al Khalifa yesterday slammed Doha-based Al Jazeera Satellite Channel for spreading lies and rumours.

Shaikh Khalid described the channel on his Twitter account as “despicable” and said that

“it’s causing disorder in our countries”.

The minister even said that demand number 14 is to sue the channel, referring to the 13 demands set by the Anti-terror Quartet -- Bahrain, Egypt, Saudi Arabia and the UAE -- to end their boycott with Qatar.

The demands included curbing diplomatic relations

with Iran, severing all ties to terrorist organisations, seizing Qatar’s support to terrorists and terrorist organisations, aligning itself with the other Gulf and Arab countries militarily, politically, socially and economically, and shutting down Al Jazeera and other malicious channels aired from several parts of the world.

MPs seek age-cap on expats working in govt institutions

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A group of MPs yesterday announced that they have submitted a proposal to ban expats over the age of 60 from working in government institutions.

The proposal comes less than a year after the council voted against a similar bill to do the same for foreign employees in the public sector aged above 50.

Submitted by MP Dr. Jameela Al Sammak and four fellow MPs, the proposal amends Article 11 of Law Decree 48 of 2014 promulgating the Civil Service Law by prohibiting expats above 60 from working in ministries, official authorities and public establishments.

The MPs said that the move would create more job opportunities for Bahraini citizens by terminating the employment contracts of foreigners who cross the age of 60 in these establishments by the force of the law.

“This category of workers isn’t included in the retirement system and enjoy the privilege of renewing their work contracts for unlimited periods, even after reaching the age of 60. This requires a legislative amendment to regulate the termination of their employment contracts by the force of the law. The amendment would prevent

The move is aimed at creating more jobs for Bahrainis by terminating expatriates who cross the age of 60

them from remaining in the job and allow citizens to be recruited in these positions,” Dr. Al Sammak explained.

She also said, “It has been confirmed that foreigners have remained in these positions for long periods of time, without replacing them with Bahraini citizens. This is against the basics of the constitution and harms citizens who aspire to serve their homeland.”

Justifying the proposal, the lawmaker quoted Paragraph A of Article 16 in the kingdom’s constitution, which states, “Public jobs are a national service entrusted to their incumbents, and State employees shall have the public interest in mind when performing their jobs. Foreigners shall not be entrusted with public posts

except in those cases specified by law.”

However, Dr. Al Sammak said that “foreigners should be appointed to public service in case of the absence of qualified Bahraini cadres to fill these positions, for a limited period”.

A similar proposal to ban expats above the age of 50 from working in the public sector was debated for over a year in the parliament.

Official authorities, including the Labour Market Regulatory Authority and Bahrain Chamber for Commerce and Industry in addition to a couple of local labour unions rejected the proposal back then, stating that “it contradicts with the International Labour Convention”. The Council of Representatives eventually rejected the proposal.

Bahrain’s efforts to combat human trafficking hailed

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CEO of the Labor Market Regulatory Authority, Chairman of the National Committee to Combat Trafficking in Persons, Osama bin Abdulla Al-Absi, yesterday received US Ambassador to Bahrain, Justin Hicks Siberell.

The US Ambassador

pointed out Bahrain’s effort to combat human trafficking, which boosts its international standing according to global reports, stressing his country’s support for challenging this international crime.

Al-Absi reviewed Bahrain’s efforts to confront the phenomenon and steps to develop work environment. He

also noted key initiatives and projects to protect labour rights, including the establishment of the Expat Protection and Assistance Centre.

He highlighted Bahrain’s resolve to combat this crime through developing a set of cooperation mechanisms and measures between government and private sides.

Interception an act of terror: UAE official

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One of the jets - a Mirage 2000 - reportedly flew within three vertical kilometres and 215 horizontal metres of the civilian registered aircraft, according to *The National*.

This is the fifth time a Qatari aircraft approaches a UAE plane while flying an approved route over a country’s airspace.

The UAE’s General Civil Aviation Authority said the

maneuver left just seconds before the collision of the two aircraft, endangering the lives of those on board, *The National* said.

“We will file a complaint with the International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO) regarding this infringement,” the GCAA said.

“The threat of passenger safety in any way is unacceptable. The incident is a

clear repetition of the threat to the safety of civil aviation and a violation of international laws and conventions,” it said in a statement.

In an interview with Sky News Arabia, Saif Al Suwaidi, director general of the GCAA, described the incident as “the greatest form of terrorism: using military weapons against civilians”.

He said the UAE would be

filing another official complaint with the International Civil Aviation Organisation, a UN specialised agency.

Mirage 2000 jets can fly up to 2,400kph, Al Suwaidi said, and should the jet have intended to move closer to the aircraft: “a collision could have occurred within just a blink of an eye.”

“A fighter jet flying that close to a defenceless civilian aircraft is an act of intimidation and a

show of power.

“If this is not stopped from happening again it could lead to an accident,” he said.

Last month, Qatari fighter jets came within just 200 metres of a UAE-registered aircraft in what was described as a dangerous escalation of the harassment of the Emirates by the country’s civil aviation authority.

The UAE, along with Saudi

Arabia, Bahrain and Egypt, have imposed travel, diplomatic and trade sanctions on Qatar since last June, accusing it of supporting terrorism.

Following the incident, the UAE General Authority of Civil Aviation said that it will file a complaint with the International Civil Aviation Organization.

- *The National* contributed to this report