

Qatar yet to respond to Bahrain's calls, but doors are still open, says Foreign Minister

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Bahrain's Foreign Minister yesterday expressed the keenness of the Kingdom on continuing its brotherly ties with Qatar, saying that the "doors are still open for dialogue."

Bahrain, Dr Abdullah bin Rashid Al-Zayani, has invited our brothers in Qatar for talks on multiple occasions to settle "outstanding issues."

However, "the State of Qatar has not responded to the calls made by the Kingdom of Bahrain so far," said the Minister of Foreign Affairs.

Bahrain took the initiative following the decision made at Al Ula, the minister said, adding that Kingdom wants stability, growth and prosperity to prevail in the region.

"It's not right to leave pending



matters without taking action," the minister said.

"Therefore, the responsibility

rests with the brothers in Qatar who failed to acknowledge the invitations addressed to them

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The responsibility rests with the brothers in Qatar who did not respond to the repeated invitations addressed to them by the Kingdom. Bahrain is keen on brotherly relations with Qatar, and the door is still open for dialogue

DR ABDULLATIF BIN RASHID AL-ZAYANI,
THE MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS

by the Kingdom," the minister said, stressing the need for talks on matters including Bahraini fishermen, maritime coordina-

tion, aviation and others.

"We still hope Qatar will respond to Kingdom's call to settle contentious issues through dialogue and direct negotiations," the minister said.

The minister also appreciated the response of Qatar to Bahrain's decision to allow entry to all GCC citizens using ID cards or passports without any prior arrangements.

The minister was speaking during a meeting with editors of local newspapers.

On GCC security, the minister, citing the directive of HM King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa and HRH Prince Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa, the Crown Prince and Prime Minister, said it is a great challenge that requires close cooperation.

"It's for which the summit of the Gulf Cooperation Council has called for financial and mon-

etary unity between member states by 2025," the minister stressed.

In this regard, the minister also pointed out that peace, sustainable development, and human rights are the pillars of Bahrain's foreign policy.

The minister also stressed the importance of the speech made by HM the King at the Jeddah Summit, which highlighted the need for stabilising energy prices and supporting initiatives aimed at exporting grain and wheat.

Bahrain, the minister said, believes that sanctions are not a way to solve problems.

"Solutions to problems can form only at the dialogue table and through peaceful efforts."

The minister also expressed his satisfaction at the restarting of grain export from Russia and Ukraine.

Speaker hails one-China policy



Speaker Fawzia bint Abdullah Zainal yesterday affirmed Bahrain's position towards the one-China policy and wished the country further progress and security. The speaker was meeting the Chinese Ambassador to Bahrain Anwaer Habibullah. The meeting discussed enhancing Bahraini-Chinese cooperation and developing parliamentary action between the House of Representatives and its Chinese counterpart. The ambassador expressed his country's appreciation of the Kingdom's development of bilateral relations based on close historical relations and common interests.



Ahmed Al Fateh Islamic Centre head Nawaf Rashid Al Rashed received US Ambassador to Bahrain Steven Bondy during his visit to the centre. The ambassador toured the centre and was briefed on its features and facilities. Al Fateh, with its distinctive Islamic architect, is the largest mosque in Bahrain. The ambassador expressed his admiration for the Islamic calligraphy at Al Fateh Mosque and for its status as a cultural landmark in the Kingdom. Following the visit, the US Embassy tweeted, "Ambassador Bondy visits the Al Fateh Grand Mosque in #Manama to underscore the United States support for interfaith dialogue and religious tolerance."

Affordable housing now more attractive

● Ministry doubles minimum financing, expands upper limit

● Upper age limit raised from 35 to 40 years

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The Ministry of Housing yesterday announced doubling the minimum financing available for housing beneficiaries from

BD19,000 to BD40,000.

The ministry has also increased the ceiling of the maximum finance amount from BD60,000 to BD70,000.

The move aims at raising the number of beneficiaries of housing services.

The previous scheme allowed obtaining finance based on an applicant's monthly income and paying 25% of the salary. "This will be raised to 30% of even 35% of income, given the maximum amount does not exceed BD70,000."

Financing is now available for six different purposes, including

buying a house, land, building, extending an existing building, buying and building on the land, and purchasing a building and then renovating it.

In the previous scheme, financing was limited to construction on land owned by a beneficiary. Buying a home or financing renovations were complimentary services.

The new scheme further allows beneficiaries to mortgage common shares in a property as a guarantee for the banks instead of providing separate documents for the property.

Financing is not limited to the

housing bank but includes participating banks now, allowing beneficiaries to secure additional funds.

A newly created category in the Mazaya programme now allows beneficiaries greater flexibility to choose the most appropriate financing to purchase or build a house, buy land or buy and build on a plot.

The ceiling of finance is determined considering beneficiaries' age and deduction rate.

The age limit has also been raised from 21 to 40 years, against the current scheme where it's 21 to 35 years.



Electricity and Water Authority (EWA) Chairman Kamal bin Ahmed Mohammed met with the main partner of operations at Haya Power & Desalination Company (AI Dur II IWPP) located in Al Dur and ACWA Power Board of Directors Chairman Mohammad Abdullah Abunayyan. EWA chairman stressed the keenness to move forward towards developing the electricity and water sector by adopting initiatives and programs that ensure the growth of electricity and water consumption and attract investments to the sector, in line with Bahrain's urban, industrial, and commercial expansion.

Mall of Dilmunia now gold-level "Healthy Mall"



The award ceremony

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Mall of Dilmunia has become a gold-level "Healthy Mall" for meeting the criteria of the "Healthy Mall" programme set by the Health Promotion Directorate.

The recognition came as Health Ministry's Assistant Undersecretary for Public Health, Dr Mariam Al Hajri, and Health Promotion Director, Dr Wafa Al-Sharbaty, visited the Mall yesterday.

Officials presented the certificate to the Mall Chief Executive Officer, Shaikh Mohammed bin Duaij Al Khalifa.

Dr Al-Hajri commended the

efforts exerted by the management of the Mall of Dilmunia to promote healthy lifestyles, praising breastfeeding and other services for those with special needs.

The "Healthy Mall" programme is one of the initiatives launched by the Ministry of Health within the National Plan for the Promotion of National Belonging and Consolidation of Citizenship Values (Bahrainouna).

Out of 24 commercial outlets that have participated in this year's edition, ten received the gold level, and ten silver, while the remaining four are still working to meet preset criteria.

Education Minister approves scholarships for academic year 2022-'23

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Dr Majid bin Ali Al Nuaimi, the Minister of Education, yesterday approved the names of scholarship winners for the academic year 2022 - 2023.

Outstanding students, graduates of public and private schools, who had secured a cumulative average of 95% or more, received the scholarships. The applicants who had an average of 90% to 94.9% were awarded scholarships in various disciplines, following approved criteria.

This year, the minister said, there were no ability tests and considered only cumulative av-



erage for awarding scholarships.

The ministry also stressed plans to consider students who memorised the Holy Quran, students with special needs, and talented and distinguished stu-

dents in school activities.

Dana Abdullah Bouasli, Head of Scholarships, said students can use their secret numbers obtained for registering to know the winners on the ministry's website www.moe.gov.bh from today until next Friday.

To complete procedures for confirming scholarships, students should send the required documents for verification. Email ids are pub_uni_grants@moe.bh for scholarship recipients at the University of Bahrain and priv_uni_grants@moe.bh for local universities.

Winners of scholarships outside the Kingdom must bring

their documents to the scholarships and grants section at the Auditors Services Centre in the ministry's building in Isa Town.

For enquiries (8am to 1pm), call 17873048 - 17873046 - 17873280 - 17875177.

To contact the technical support team, call 17278417 - 17278269 - 17278892 - 17278236 or email it.support@moe.gov.bh.

The Ministry of Education had also called on students nominated for the next academic year to send their forms with required documents to new_grants_2022@moe.bh from September 1 to October 31, 2022.