

Interior Minister, US Ambassador sign counter-terrorism training agreement

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Interior Minister General Shaikh Rashid bin Abdulla Al Khalifa and outgoing US Ambassador Justin Siberell signed yesterday an agreement letter between the two countries, to promote bilateral ties in the detection of explosives and other related materials, as part of counter-terrorism training and cooperation between the concerned authorities of both sides.

The signing came in a meeting

between the two high-ranking officials, which was attended by Public Security Chief Lt-General Tariq Al Hassan.

The Interior Minister welcomed the US Ambassador and expressed appreciation for his efforts and roles in supporting bilateral ties between the two friendly countries, especially in security, and wished him all the best.

The meeting also reviewed relations and topics of common interest.

The US Ambassador expressed



The Interior Minister and the US Ambassador signing the agreement letter

thanks and appreciation to the Interior Minister, hailing the cooperation and coordination of the Interior Ministry to promote bilateral relations between the two countries.

He wished Bahrain and its citizens development and prosperity.

Also at the meeting, the Interior Minister presented the US Ambassador a memorial gift out of appreciation to his efforts in promoting cooperation between Bahrain and the US.

Bahrain keen to expand IAEA technical cooperation



Dr Shaikha Rana during the virtual meeting

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Bahrain is keen to expand cooperation with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) at various levels in order to meet common aspirations, it has been stressed.

This came during a virtual meeting between Ministry of Foreign Affairs undersecretary and National Committee on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and Their Destruction chairperson, Dr Shaikha Rana bint Isa bin Daij Al Khalifa, and IAEA Technical Cooperation Department for Asia and the Pacific director Jane Abaya.

Dr Shaikha Rana hailed the results of the previous session of the technical cooperation programme with the IAEA for 2018-2020, which had a positive impact on developing the performance of many vital sectors in the Kingdom, especially

in the health, environmental and scientific fields.

Abaya commended Bahrain's efforts in developing these programmes, noting the remarkable progress achieved in the peaceful uses of nuclear energy, and wishing the Kingdom further progress and prosperity.

The two sides exchanged views on the technical cooperation framework for Bahrain for 2022-2023 in the fields of health, food, agricultural, and nuclear security, in addition to approving strategic work programmes in the fields of health, environment and customs affairs.

Representatives from the Supreme Council for the Environment, the University of Bahrain, the Customs Affairs Directorate of the Ministry of Interior, the Ministry of Health, and other relevant authorities also participated in the meeting.

Events management companies make urgent appeal

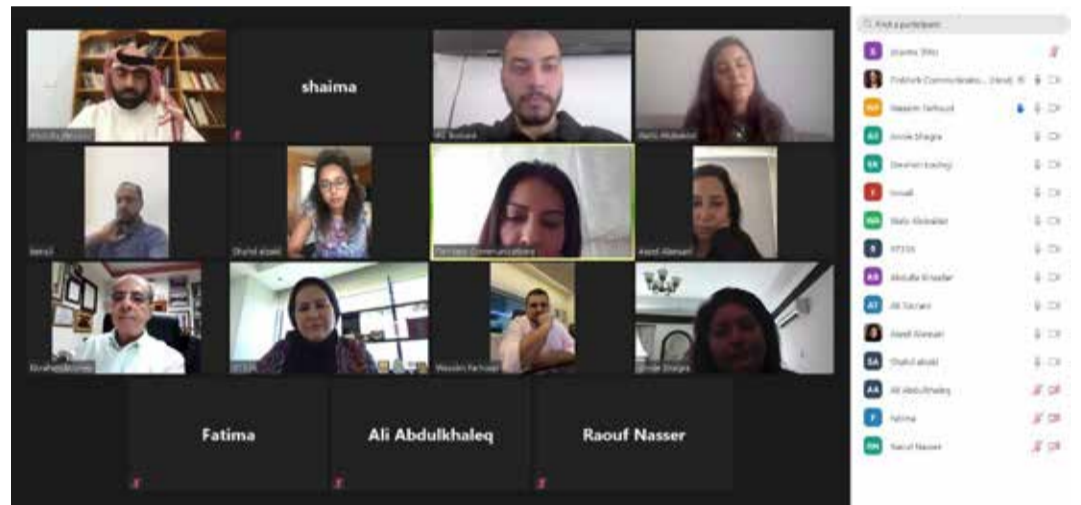
● Call goes out to support this vital sector through the economic stimulus package as it is one of the worst-hit in the Kingdom amidst the coronavirus crisis

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Registered Bahraini events management companies have made an urgent appeal to His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa, His Royal Highness the Prime Minister Prince Khalifa bin Salman Al Khalifa, and His Royal Highness Prince Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa, Crown Prince, Deputy Supreme Commander and First Deputy Premier, to support the events management sector through the economic stimulus package and consider it as one of the worst-hit in the Kingdom amidst the coronavirus (COVID-19) crisis.

The appeal was an outcome of a virtual meeting held recently by a group of representatives from Bahraini events management companies to discuss how the current situation has affected the sector.

The company representatives noted that many of their enterprises are facing major challenges and might not be able to survive, due to the cancellation



A screenshot of the virtual meeting

of all events since March of this year.

They stressed that some events management companies already have 100 per cent losses and have been forced to close, while also suffering from financial commitments, non-payment risks, and unpaid wages.

It must also be taken into consideration that most of these companies totally depend on their business, they said.

The representatives further pointed out the economic significance of their sector and its tremendous contributions to the national economy in helping to foster growth in the Kingdom.

Moreover, the government is always keen to improve this sector, taking into account the

new international exhibition and convention centre, which will be the biggest in the Kingdom, with 308,700 square meters in Sakhir, next to Bahrain International Circuit.

The virtual meeting's attendees called on the government, mainly the Ministry of Industry, Commerce and Tourism and the Ministry of Finance and National Economy, to issue a special guide for the events management sector, following the example of restaurants and salons, in addition to offering a significant aid to this sector for a 12-month period.

Also among the meeting's outcomes, representatives asked for the reactivation of Tamkeen's events support

programme, having full legal and logistic backup. They also suggested launching a fund by Tamkeen, the Bahrain Chamber of Commerce and Industry, and the Bahrain Tourism and Exhibitions Authority to promote domestic tourism and support all types of local events.

The attendees expressed their optimism towards meeting their urgent needs in order to save their businesses from total collapse and bankruptcy during this pandemic.

They also highly praised the commitment of the Kingdom's leadership to overcoming the current exceptional circumstances with an unprecedented policy response and economic stimulus packages.

Humanitarian aid vital to tackle COVID-19

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In today's unprecedented times, there should be no restrictions on global humanitarian aid and "protected areas and facilities must be expanded to include medical factories, masks factories and quarantine areas," said Bahrain's Justice Minister yesterday.

He called for global cooperation in directing humanitarian aid efforts considering the current situation triggered by the outbreak of the coronavirus (COVID-19).

The Minister of Justice, Islamic Affairs and Endowments, and National Committee for International Humanitarian Law (NCIHL) chairman, Shaikh Khalid bin Ali Al Khalifa, was speaking at a global symposium, titled "International Humanitarian Law in the Era of COVID-19", organised by the Judicial and Legal Studies Institution



A screenshot from the symposium in session

(JLSI) in cooperation with the NCIHL and International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC).

The Bahrain Red Crescent Society (BRCS) participated in the symposium, which focused on the humanitarian situation in the world, especially in conflict areas during the coronavirus

pandemic. It explored the roles of the Red Cross international movement, armed forces in assisting national authorities during efforts to tackle COVID-19, and Bahrain's legislative system in light of the new emblem law.

BRCS director general and acting general secretary, Mubarak

Al Hadi, said that the repercussions of the global pandemic might fuel further conflicts and wars in the world. Therefore, he believed that humanitarian and relief organisations have an important role in reducing its negative effects by providing effective responses to the repercussions.

He highlighted the impact of the pandemic on people living in conflict areas, who were burdened by years of war and destruction and the deterioration of essential services and displacement.

"International humanitarian law provides critical guarantees for those affected by armed conflict, even in light of the pandemic outbreak," Al Hadi added.

"Rather than declaring a state of emergency and closing borders, collective international action by activating the principles of international humanitarian law is necessary," Al Hadi said.

Bahrain, Turkmenistan discuss joint cooperation

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The Foreign Affairs Minister affirmed Bahrain's keenness to enhance bilateral cooperation with Turkmenistan for the benefit of the two friendly countries and people in a high-level bilateral consultation session held yesterday.

The meeting was chaired by the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Dr Abdullatif bin Rashid Al-Zayani.

The Turkmen side was chaired by Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs, Ra it Meredow, with participation from top foreign ministry officials from both sides.

Dr Al-Zayani said that this meeting will contribute to strengthening the trade, investment, energy, tourism,

culture and public health relations between the two countries. The two sides also exchanged viewpoints on regional and international developments and discussed the efforts to contain the repercussions of the novel coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic.

They also stressed the importance of preserving the security and stability of the region, joining efforts to stop the ongoing wars, confront terrorist organizations, and achieving peace and stability.

The virtual session focused on ways to activate agreements signed between the Bahrain and Turkmenistan, highlighting the importance of continuing efforts, coordination and exchange of visits between the two countries at various levels.