

Sea Treasure

● From a diving hobby to preserving Bahrain's historic pearl culture

● Abbas Ali Kitab reflects on 12 years in natural pearl diving

● A fading tradition kept alive through passion and resilience

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TDT | Manama



From left: A rare pearl shaped like a human eye, a large Sidayfee oyster, and pearl diver Abbas Ali Kitab with his son Fares at sea, showcasing Bahrain's enduring pearl diving heritage.

Bahraini pearl diver Abbas Ali Kitab, owner of Pearls Valley in Karzakan, reflects on his journey in the world of natural pearls in an exclusive interview with The Daily Tribune, sharing how a simple diving hobby evolved into a lifelong connection with one of Bahrain's most valuable natural treasures.

Kitab's story highlights the enduring cultural and historical importance of pearl diving in Bahrain, a tradition that once formed the backbone of the national economy. Today, while the industry has changed, natural pearls remain a symbol



Team celebrates first place victory at the HH Shaikh Nasser's Marine Heritage Sports Season 2020

of identity, craftsmanship, and heritage that continues to face modern challenges.

His journey began 12 years ago as a general diving hobby focused on fishing and exploration. Over time, his passion evolved into harvesting natural pearls through dives across Bahrain's historic pearl grounds.

Before the discovery of oil, Bahrain and the GCC relied heavily on pearl diving as a primary source of livelihood. He emphasizes that this heritage remains deeply respected today, with Bahraini pearls still considered among the finest in the world.

"Bahraini pearls are known for their natural purity and brilliance," he explains. "They are among the finest natural pearls in the world and do not require any artificial treatment or enhancement."

“The biggest challenge is competition with low-cost cultured pearls, as well as limited awareness of the uniqueness of Bahraini pearls”

— ABBAS ALI KITAB

Despite its cultural value, pearl diving remains a physically demanding and dangerous profession.

"Pearl diving is beautiful, but it is also one of the most dangerous professions," he says. "Divers face risks such as drowning, oxygen shortage, strong currents, and encounters with marine life."

What began as a passion eventually developed into a professional pursuit when Kitab and his five-member team secured first place in the Shaikh Nasser bin Hamad Al Khalifa Marine Heritage Sports Season 2020, competing in a modern pearl extraction category that honors traditional diving skills.

He adds that pearls come in a variety of shapes and colors, including white, green, and rare dark tones. One of his most unusual discoveries was a pearl shaped exactly like a human eye — a striking reminder of nature's unpredictability.

Bahrain, UK Review US–Iran Talks



H.E. Dr. Abdullatif bin Rashid Al Zayani



Yvette Cooper

● Both ministers emphasize importance of de-escalation

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Foreign Minister Dr. Abdullatif bin Rashid Al Zayani held a telephone conversation with Yvette Cooper, Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs of the United Kingdom.

During the call, both sides discussed the long-standing friendship and strategic partnership between Bahrain and the United Kingdom, and explored ways to further strengthen cooperation and coordination across various areas.

They also reviewed recent regional developments, including tensions involving Iran, reported hostile actions against Bahrain and other Gulf Cooperation Council states, and disruptions to maritime navigation in the Strait of Hormuz, along with their implications for international shipping, energy supplies, and global trade.

Actions

Both ministers emphasized the importance of de-escalation and called for an immediate halt to any actions that



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could further destabilize the region. They also stressed the need to ensure freedom of navigation through the Strait of Hormuz, given its critical importance to the global economy.

The discussion also covered ongoing US–Iran negotiations, which Pakistan was mediating. Both sides underlined the importance of continued consultation and close coordination between Bahrain and the United Kingdom at the United Nations Security Council, particularly during Bahrain's non-permanent membership and its presidency of the Council for April.

Court Overturns Absconding Report Against Worker

● Case was based on unfounded complaint

Rehab Mohammad
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The High Administrative Court annulled an administrative decision that upheld an "absconding" report against a worker, ruling that the case was based on an unfounded complaint.

The worker, represented by lawyer Ahmed Mayouf, had been reported by his employer to the relevant authority, which affected his ability to renew his residency and continue employment.

Court documents showed the worker legally chal-

lenged the report in November 2024, but his grievance was initially rejected and the decision upheld in December 2025.

Complaint

However, the court noted that the employer later withdrew the complaint and confirmed there was no objection to the worker transferring to another job.

The court found no evidence of unlawful absence or violation of work permit conditions, stating that the administrative decision was based on incorrect facts.

Consequently, the court cancelled the absconding report and all its legal consequences against the worker.

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