

New laws urged to protect SMEs owned by Bahrainis

'Govt should enact laws to end unfair competition'

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Tamer Taifoor

A call has gone out to create special rules and regulations to protect Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) owned by Bahrainis.

The head of Bahrain Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Samir Nass, said in the absence of rules and regulations SMEs owned by Bahrainis would head towards a crisis.

"Nearly 85 per cent of the SMEs in the Kingdom are owned by for-

eigners and now they are highly benefitting from the flexible visa system. There has to be a level playing field benefitting all entrepreneurs.

"We are seeking new laws to protect Bahraini entrepreneurs who own SMEs," he said.

"The Chamber is currently working on a comprehensive study on the effects of Flexible Visa and Free Visa on the local market and that the Chamber has formed a joint committee with the LMRA in cooperation with the Ministry of Labor.



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Informal employment in addition to flexible and free visa holders pose a danger to the national economy.

MR NASS

"The committee will be responsible for examining all as-

pects of this matter and its impact on the market and submitting its

results to the Board of Directors for submission to the responsible authorities."

He added: "Informal employment in addition to flexible and free visa holders pose a danger to the national economy."

He explained that the Chamber, in its last meeting with the President of Tamkeen Dr Ibrahim Janahi, called to address the inequality between Bahraini and foreign entrepreneurs.

"SMEs play a pivotal role in Bahrain's economic activity. Statistics show that more than 93

per cent of the industries in the Kingdom come under this sector."

The Minister of Industry, Trade and Tourism, Zayed Al Zayani, had said in a statement that the SME sector in the Kingdom of Bahrain is a vital sector and the main engine of economic growth.

He had added: "Human capital is a crucial point in achieving commercial success when we talk about the supportive environment for Bahrain's entrepreneurs and start-ups."

'Smile' organises acrylic painting workshop for cancer-stricken kids



Children showcase their painting skills.



Children with organisers at the event.

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Smile initiative, an initiative of Bahrain Future Society for Youth which provides psycho social support to children with cancer and

their parents in the Kingdom of Bahrain, held an "Acrylic Painting Workshop" for cancer-stricken children with cured peers that took place at the headquarters of the Society at Adlyia.

Acrylic painting workshop was held in cooperation with Abdulrahman Kanoo International School under the Abjad educational programme launched by Smile Initiative.

The Workshop was attended

by volunteer teachers of Abjad Programme and Mohamed Al Sankari, member of Future Society and head of Abjad programme committee.

He asserted that this workshop is meant to further sup-

port cancer-stricken children and help them with their studies during their healing journey until they go back to school again.

Moreover, he pointed that choosing this theme for the

workshop is to develop kids' skills on this type of paints were it is easy-used and waterproof colours that will make it easy for kids to learn drawing and painting techniques like blending and shading.

BTEA honours 185 tour guides



Shaikh Khaled with BTEA officials and tour guides who were honoured at the event.

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The Bahrain Tourism and Exhibitions Authority (BTEA) honoured 85 tour guides during a ceremony held at the Bahrain International Exhibition and Convention (BIECC). The event was held in the presence of the Chief Executive Officer of BTEA, Shaikh Khaled bin Humood Al Khalifa.

Certificates were distributed to the second batch of tour guides following

the successful completion of the comprehensive training program organized by the BTEA in collaboration with Tamkeen, United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) and the World Federation of Tourist Guides Associations (WTFGA).

"Through launching this initiative in collaboration with the UNWTO and WTFGA, the BTEA has increased the number of certified tour guides in the Kingdom to 185 in order to meet market needs. By having well-qualified tour

85

tour guides successfully completed a training programme organised by the BTEA.

guides, we aim to promote the Kingdom as the ideal tourist destination and further attract tourists from all around the world," Shaikh Khaled bin Humood Al Khalifa.

"In addition, training tour guides in the Kingdom comes in line with BTEA's overall strategy aimed at developing and strengthening the tourism sector under the slogan of 'Ours. Yours.', which contributes towards the Kingdoms economy and the 2030 Economic Vision," he added.

Involving both theoretical and hands-

on training of the candidates, the final week of the programme was dedicated to selecting the best candidates to be trained as trainers, in order to prepare the trainers for mentorship, providing the required leadership abilities and knowledge to train new applicants and recruits at the BTEA.

A total of 93 participants took part in the training course, with 85 tour guides successfully completing the programme, and a total of 14 which were trained to be trainers.