

# Broadening tourism horizons

Bahrain Tourism Exhibitions Authority launches representative office in Kuwait

Other than Kuwait, the BTEA has also launched representative offices in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, India, France, Germany, Russia and the United Kingdom.

A meeting was also held between Kuwaiti tour operators and their Bahraini counterparts, including representatives from a number of leading hotels, to discuss opportunities for co-operation.



Tourism officials from Bahrain and Kuwait with dignitaries at the launching ceremony.

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In line with its efforts to attract tourists from across the world to the Kingdom, the Bahrain Tourism and Exhibitions Authority (BTEA) officially inaugurated its latest representative office in Kuwait, which was announced during a press conference held at the Four Seasons Hotel, Kuwait.

Launching the office prior to the much-anticipated Formula 1 2018 Gulf Air Bahrain Grand Prix comes in line with the BTEA's efforts to attract large tourist groups to the Kingdom of Bahrain.

For the first time, the event will be held over a period of four days, featuring superstar DJ and record producer, Martin Garrix in addition to world-renowned producer, songwriter

and DJ, Kygo.

"The BTEA strives to promote the Kingdom of Bahrain's tourism, leisure and hospitality sectors; providing a fertile ground for foreign investment. Through the inauguration of our representative office in Kuwait, we aim to establish relationships with Kuwaiti tour operators and travel agencies in order to promote the Kingdom of Bahrain as a leading tourist destination that continuously hosts various

events and festivals that are suitable for all age groups," said the CEO of BTEA, Shaikh Khaled bin Humood Al Khalifa.

"We will be working closely with BTEA's representative office in Kuwait to increase the number of visitors to the Kingdom of Bahrain, further reaffirming its position as a tourism destination of choice with a number of new hotels, retail and leisure developments that are currently underway.

"We look forward to strengthening ties between Bahrain and Kuwait with an aim to increase the tourism influx which will contribute to the growth and development of the tourism sector and the overall national economy," said the Director of Tourism Marketing and Promotions at BTEA, Yousef Al Khan.

A meeting was also held between Kuwaiti tour opera-

**328,850**  
visitors arrived in the Kingdom from Kuwait, according to BTEA.

**"**  
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SHAIKH KHALED

tors and their Bahraini counterparts, including representatives from a number of leading hotels,

to discuss opportunities for co-operation in order to achieve their joint tourism related goals.

Bahrain has welcomed 328,850 visitors from Kuwait in 2018 with 247,959 tourists accessing the Kingdom through the King Fahad Causeway, 80,822 through the Bahrain International Airport and 69 through the Khalifa Bin Salman Port.

Other than Kuwait, the BTEA has also launched representative offices in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, India, France,

Germany, Russia and the United Kingdom.

The launch of the representative office comes in line with BTEA's strategic outreach programme to promote the tourism brand 'Ours Yours' aimed at showcasing the Kingdom as the ideal tourism destination to the regional and international markets and further promote the Kingdom's touristic offering as a main contributor to the overall economic growth in line with the Economic Vision 2030.



The representative office will facilitate the arrival of Kuwaiti tourists in the Kingdom.

## Workshop focuses on VAT challenges for SMEs



The panel discussion in progress.

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Harpreet Kaur

Adopting proper VAT procedures can take up to four months while careful planning will help SMEs avoid common pitfalls, VAT experts observed.

This came as Tamkeen held a workshop titled 'The Roll-out of VAT in Bahrain'.

The event, co-hosted by Tamkeen and Sage, with participation from other organisations

and relevant societies aimed at discussing the challenges involved in the implementation of VAT, especially for the SMEs.

The expert panel, moderated by Ibrahim Parwaz, Strategic Sales Manager at Sage Middle East included Dr Jarmo Kotilaine, Tamkeen's Chief of Planning and Monitoring, Dr Abdulhasan Al Dairi, Chairman of Bahrain SMEs Society, Dr Jassim Haji, Chairman of Bahrain Artificial Intelligence Society, and Husam Addin Abdelhafiz, Managing Partner at

KANZ.

In his presentation titled 'Digital Transformation in a Tax Economy', Mansoor Sarwar, Technical Director at Sage Middle East, shared with members of Bahrain's business community at the event that appropriate preparation would allow firms to make sure that they have sufficient time to implement VAT-compliant systems, from impact assessment through design and implementation to testing and operation.

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