

## Government 'hoping to reach a visa liberalisation agreement with Schengen countries'

TDT | Manama

The Bahraini Ministry of Foreign Affairs has been putting efforts in securing a visa liberalisation agreement with the countries of the Schengen area, Schengen Visa Info reported.

The website quoted local media reports, which said the country is attempting to secure Schengen visas-on-arrival for its

citizens or completely exempt the nationals of Bahrain from the visa requirement.

According to Lawmaker Mohammed Al Buainain, a group of MPs have recently held a meeting with officials of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to discuss visa liberalisation with the Schengen countries.

He also added that the Foreign Ministry and Interior Ministry will now go on discussions to replace

the current Bahraini passports with biometric passports, in order to meet the Schengen rule of granting visa-free entry only to travellers with biometric passports.

Previously, the speaker of the Bahraini House of Representative, Fawzia Zainal, had called on the Foreign Minister Khalid bin Ahmed Al Khalifa to push the European Union for the facilitation of visa requirements for Bahraini.

Currently, there are 62 world



countries under the Schengen visa-free regime, the citizens of

which can enter the 26 Schengen countries without obtaining a visa beforehand.

The process of reaching a visa liberalisation agreement with the block can be long and difficult, in particular for countries where human rights violation and corruption are an issue, the website pointed out.

"At the beginning of the process, the EU hands a so-called 'visa liberalisation roadmap' to

the country wishing to gain visa-free access.

"The map contains a number of criteria, sometimes up to a hundred, that the country must meet."

Turkey and Kosovo are two countries still in the process of reaching a visa liberalisation agreement with the EU, despite that the latter received the confirmation of having met all the benchmarks over a year ago.

● **Youth and Sports Affairs Minister Aymen Almoayyed, senior government officials visited the camp.**

● **HH Shaikh Nasser underscored the importance of the Youth City in promoting the opportunities for Bahraini youngsters to enrol at the job market.**

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Mohammed Zafran

Manama Youth City 2030, a summer programme to empower the youth, has come back bigger this year.

Organised by the Ministry of Youth and Sports, the tenth edition of Bahrain's biggest summer camp is in full swing at Bahrain International Exhibition and Convention Centre.

The event aims to improve the future of the youth of Bahrain by providing classes through which they learn and gain valuable skills.

It focuses on key growth areas for Bahraini youth, aiming to promote creative thinking among them and encourage talent in areas such as leadership, media, information technology, arts, languages, science and sport.

Youth and Sports Affairs Minister Aymen Almoayyed, senior government officials visited the camp yesterday and interacted with the youth attending the event.

"Hundreds of students are expected to take part in this programme, which is Bahrain's largest summer camp. Experienced teachers will teach various arts and sciences.

"The camp is categorised into many sections such as Art, Science, Leadership and Media. Classes for painting, leadership, public relations, cooking, fashion designing, technology, writing, video production, photography and other subjects are on," one of the organisers said.

"The students who take part



A training session on rock climbing in progress at the event.

in this summer camp will attain immense value as there are so many rich and valuable classes being provided. Youth City 2030 is unique because of the many different subjects that are covered under one roof," he added.

In a statement marking the launch of the 10th edition of the Youth City 2030 last month Representative of His Majesty the

King for Charity Work and Youth Affairs and Chairman of the Supreme Council for Youth and Sports (SCYS) His Highness Shaikh Nasser bin Hamad Al Khalifa said that the camp is a suitable place to focus on the initiatives of the national plan to promote belonging to the nation and boost values of citizenship.

He underlined the efforts made



Mr Almoayyed with University of Bahrain President Prof Riyadh Hamza, Tamkeen Chief Executive Dr Ebrahim Janahi and other dignitaries and senior officials at the event.



A Boeing 737 flight simulator at the camp.

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ORGANISERS

to groom Bahraini youngsters and empower them to meet the requirements of the upcoming phase of national work that necessitates exceptional multiplied efforts by all to achieve the Kingdom's vision 2030.

HH Shaikh Nasser underscored the importance of the Youth City in promoting the opportunities for Bahraini youngsters to enrol at the

job market thanks to the practical and scientific programmes which will be provided by the city to meet the labour market needs in the Kingdom.

He also pointed out the role of the Youth City 2030 in tapping on the creativity potential of Bahraini youngsters and enhance their participation in the Kingdom's development march.

## 'War of ideas' needed to confront extremism

London

Chairman of the Board of Trustees of the Bahrain Centre for Strategic, International and Energy Studies, Dr Shaikh Abdulla bin Ahmed Al Khalifa, has stressed that investing in strategic thoughts contributes effectively to bringing about the desired positive change by producing new inspirational visions and dynamics that would support peace, freedom and development, and at the same time, confront extremism and terrorism in all their forms.

Addressing the Gulf Research Meeting 2019, organised by the UK Cambridge University, Dr

Shaikh Abdulla said that the Gulf region is in dire, more than any other part of the world, for investing in strategic thought, and for waging a "war of ideas" to confront the theocratic and extremist ideologies, after the prevalence of differences at the expense of coexistence, and chaos at the expense of stability, as well as the increase in the number of failed states or those on the verge of collapse.

He noted that many theories have attempted to explain the current situation in the region, such as "Filling the Void" or "Creative Chaos", but the "Power" theory has dominated, and become the most dangerous as it

derives its "fuel", in most cases, from sectarian feelings, extremist ideas and hatred of the other.

In this regard, he pointed out that Iran is the most prominent example, as it has proved, four decades after its revolution, that it is not a natural state, with its expansion-based and crisis-mongering approach aimed at stirring up conflicts, as well as sponsoring and harbouring terrorism, citing its interference in the internal affairs of the region's countries, including Bahrain, where Iran-backed terrorist cells have been discovered.

He asserted that the Mullahs Regime in Iran and the Takfiri (accusing others of being



**Middle East region is currently going through a new crisis after the recent escalation in the Arabian Gulf caused by attacks on civilian oil tankers.**

DR SHAIKH ABDULLA

unbelievers in Islam) terrorism complete each other, despite their different names, as their doctrine and goals are the same-changing the world as per divine orders, which means, for both, that every terrorist act is legitimate and justified.

DERASAT chairman went on to say that the Middle East region is currently going through a new crisis as a result of the recent escalation in the Arabian Gulf region caused by attacks on civilian oil tankers, and there is evidence of Iran's responsibility over them.

The lecturer stressed that the Palestinian-Israeli conflict remains a permanent source of

tension, noting that Bahrain, out of its desire to be an influential part in the solution to the problem, has hosted the "Prosperity for Peace" workshop as an initiative aimed at enhancing development, education and the quality of life for peoples of the region, especially the Palestinians, as well as creating a suitable environment for peace.

Dr Shaikh Abdulla said that the region has, over the past decade, witnessed a wave of violent changes that led to nothing but the collapse of national institutions, the increase of savage sectarian and ethnic conflicts and the obstruction of development plans, thus making reforms more difficult.