

Initiative to stop youngsters from radicalising, on way

To be implemented in co-operation with legal and security bodies, study centres and universities

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● He said the initiative is of great significance since 49 per cent of Bahrain's young population is under the age of 29 years.

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A national initiative with an intention to stop youngsters in the Kingdom from subscribing to extremist ideologies will be implemented soon, it was learnt. Dr Shaikh Abdulla bin Ahmed Al Khalifa, Chair-



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DR SHAIKH ABDULLA

man of the Board of Trustees of the Bahrain Centre for Strategic, International and Energy Studies and Foreign Ministry Undersecretary, said the plan will be carried out in co-operation with institutions, legal and security bodies, study centers, universities, educational institutions and civil society in the Kingdom.

He said the initiative is of great significance since 49 per cent of Bahrain's young population is under the age of 29 years.

"All religions emphasise on tolerance and coexistence. But the danger lies in targeting the young with extremist ideologies," he said.

He highlighted the adverse effects of political, religious and intellectual extremism, praising Saudi Arabia's efforts to address intellectual extremism through the so-called "advocacy initiative".

Dr Shaikh Abdulla was speaking in the last episode of Youth Council Programme on Radio Bahrain when he made this remark.

"Extremist ideologies are instilled in the youth at some religious institutions and through some platforms and we must deal them with courage ensuring no terrorist is born in this country."

Dr Shaikh Abdulla said he considered Iran as the first patron of radical fundamentalism in the region, stressing that Bahrain has suffered a lot from the interference of Iran in its internal affairs along with funding and training of terrorist groups and organisations.

For his part, the Director of Public Information and Public Relations Department at the Ministry of Interior, Brigadier General Mohammad Bin Dayna, said the ministry has established the Joint Centre for Combating Terrorism in 2004 itself. "The ministry will launch several initiatives during the coming period, including 'advocacy initiative' of Saudi Arabia."

Brig Gen Dayna also rapped Al Jazeera Channel for using its platform for promoting terrorist organisations including Al Qaeda and Daesh.

3,000 non-Muslims attend Eid Open House



Special activities were arranged for children at the open house.



Special sessions were held on understanding the values emphasised by Islam.

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Mohammed Zafran

Thousands of non-Muslims attended the Eid Open House in Al Fateh Grand mosque in the past two days

Accepting the public invitation of Al Fateh Islamic Centre to join Muslims for Eid celebrations, around 3,000 non-Muslims visited the Grand Mosque in Juffair on the second and third day of Eid.

According to centre, the open house is being held with the aspiration of promoting peaceful coexistence and to spread the joy and spirit of Eid to non-Muslims.

Ghada Khafaghy, a spokesperson for the center told Tribune that the open house is made possible by the volunteers. "Since we have only five official tour guides, volunteers play an important role. We are depending mainly on them. We have around 100 volunteers who come to us whenever they have time. We have had a good number of volunteers committed to the open house."

Describing the tour, she said, "First we let them wear the Arabic traditional clothes to let them enjoy the experience. Whoever is not dressed appropriately for the mosque can change into this. But it is not necessary if they are already well dressed. But most people try the clothes on for

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GHADA KHAFAGHY

the experience."

"We have a section for children, such as for drawing, balloon shaping, arts and crafts, and anything kids like. Secondly we let them take a tour of the

mosque, we tell them about the basic things about the mosque itself. Then we have corners, we have a section to teach them about Muslim prayer, a section about Quran, a section for Arabic calligraphy and more."

She added the centre was working along with Discover Islam for the event. "Discover Islam has sent some volunteers, they also provide us with books."

Misconceptions

Removing misconceptions about Islam and Muslims is one of the positive outcomes of the open house, she said. "Our goal is not to convert anyone to Islam, that is not what we do, our

responsibility is just to share the message of our religion with others and to promote the idea of understanding and bridging the gap. But if any such cases of conversion come to us, we will still help them by connecting them to Discover Islam."

"I think one of the main outcomes of the open house is that non-Muslims have their misconceptions about Islam removed from their mind. Just yesterday I had a gentleman who told me that he was always worried about what Muslims think of him. He did not seem entirely comfortable around Muslims, I explained to him the reality, and how Islam teaches kindness towards others and assured him that he should feel welcomed," she said.

Non-Muslims share views on Eid Open House



I feel very welcome here, people are friendly and I have learned a lot about Muslims during Ramadan.

MICHELLE



You feel quite calm and safe during the holy month of Ramadan. It feels like a month for family bonding.

RODNEY



Hats off to those who were fasting when the temperatures were very high. I don't know how they managed.

GEORGE



Being in Bahrain during Ramadan has helped me understand Muslims better. It has been a great experience.

TANYA



I got to know the levels of dedication Muslims maintain during the holy month. It's been really impressive.

GAURAV



At Eid Open House, I learnt about Islam and Quran and the significance of the holy month of Ramadan.

SHILPI