

120 Years of Faith and Coexistence Marked in Bahrain

Church anniversary celebration coincides with 'Year of Isa Al Kabeer'

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On behalf of His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa, His Highness Shaikh Abdullah bin Hamad Al Khalifa attended the celebration marking the 120th anniversary of the National Evangelical Church in the Kingdom of Bahrain, organised in cooperation with the King Hamad Global Centre for Peaceful Coexistence.

At the beginning of the ceremony, HH Shaikh Abdullah bin Hamad conveyed His Majesty the King's greetings and appreciation to participants, praising the celebration of 120 years of the church's presence in Bahrain.

He noted that the occasion co-

incides with the royal directive naming this year as the "Year of Isa Al Kabeer" in honour of Shaikh Isa bin Ali Al Khalifa, recognised as the founder of Bahrain's modern state and a leader of institutional development in the Kingdom.

HH Shaikh Abdullah bin Hamad said the celebration reflects Bahrain's long-standing values of coexistence and tolerance among civilisations and religions, highlighting the Kingdom's historic role as a land of peace, love, religious harmony and cultural diversity.

He affirmed that under the leadership of His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa, Bahrain continues to stand as a nation of progress, civilisations, religions and cultures, where



all communities living in the Kingdom enjoy an atmosphere of peace, respect and religious tolerance.

HH Shaikh Abdullah bin Hamad also highlighted that the warm reception, the speeches

delivered during the ceremony and the participation of senior officials, religious leaders and church representatives reflected the strong ties shared with Bahrain, its leadership, and its people.



Bahrain Airport Services announces 'Friend' sponsorship of CPISP

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Bahrain Airport Services (BAS) has been announced as a "Friends Category" sponsor of the Crown Prince's International Scholarship Program (CPISP), underscoring growing private-sector support for the Kingdom's youth development initiatives.

The announcement was made during a meeting attended by His Excellency Shaikh Mohammed bin Essa Al Khalifa, Advisor for Political and Economic Affairs at the Court of the Crown Prince and Head of the Financial and Administrative Committee of CPISP, and Na-

beel Khalid Kanoo, Chairman of Bahrain Airport Services.

The sponsorship reflects BAS's continued commitment to social responsibility, focusing on empowering young Bahrainis and supporting educational advancement through one of the Kingdom's flagship scholarship programmes.

Role

Shaikh Mohammed bin Essa Al Khalifa praised CPISP's role in advancing Bahrain's educational pathway and investing in the development of highly skilled national talent prepared for future challenges.

He highlighted the continued



H.E. Shaikh Mohammed bin Essa Al Khalifa, right, with Nabeel Khalid Kanoo

support of His Royal Highness Prince Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa, the Crown Prince and Prime Minister, describing it as central to the programme's success and its contribution to long-term sustainable development goals.

He also commended CPISP sponsors for strengthening the program's impact, noting their contribution in enabling high-achieving Bahraini students to access world-class educational opportunities and return to serve national development.

Urges 'One Health' Action

Food Security, AI Focus in Bahrain's Paris Address

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Minister of Municipal Affairs and Agriculture, H.E. Eng. Wael bin Nasser Al Mubarak, said on Monday that the kingdom is strengthening its food security and veterinary systems amid rising global health and environmental challenges, during a meeting of the World Organisation for Animal Health in Paris.

Al Mubarak was speaking at the 93rd General Session of the World Organisation for Animal Health (WOAH), which brought together regional committee heads, international and regional organisations, and experts in animal health and global health security.

In his address, the minister said that Bahrain, under the leadership of HM King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa and HRH Crown Prince and Prime Minister Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa, continues to advance its national food security framework, upgrade veterinary services, and improve inspection and regulatory systems in line with sustainable development goals.

He praised the WOAH for its role in developing international standards, strengthening member state capacities, and supporting global efforts



H.E. Eng. Wael bin Nasser Al Mubarak speaks at the event

to address animal diseases, zoonotic infections, and antimicrobial resistance.

The minister warned that the world faces accelerating risks from biological threats, climate change, shifts in global trade, and growing demand for animal-based food products. He stressed the importance of the "One Health" approach, linking animal, human, and environmental health to improve the prevention of health crises.

He added that Bahrain is prioritising the development of veterinary services, early warning and surveillance systems, and biosecurity frameworks, while investing in digital transformation and artificial intelligence to enhance disease monitoring, risk analysis, and rapid response capabilities.

GCC tariff system applied

A 100-dinar threshold has been introduced for duties and VAT charges

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Bahrain's Customs Affairs announced updated rules on customs duties for personal shipments and postal parcels, aligning with a unified customs system across the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) by introducing new thresholds and tax conditions for imported goods.

The revised regulations apply to incoming personal consignments and postal packages, as part of broader legal amendments to the GCC's unified customs framework, aimed at standardising procedures across member states.

Under the new rules, ship-



ments valued at 100 Bahraini dinars or more will be subject to customs duties, plus a 10% value-added tax (VAT), depending on the goods type and the approved customs tariff schedule.

Customs Affairs Bahrain said the measures align with internationally recognised best practices in managing and clearing personal shipments and postal parcels.

The authority added that the updated procedures are designed to improve efficiency, speed up clearance times, and enhance accuracy in customs processing, while responding to the rapid growth of e-commerce and cross-border postal traffic.



UN Warns of Biodiversity Crisis

Bahrain highlights progress in afforestation and marine conservation

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The United Nations has called for urgent global action to protect biodiversity, warning that climate change, pollution, and the overuse of natural resources are pushing ecosystems towards crisis and threatening food security and livelihoods worldwide.

Marking the International Day for Biological Diversity, the UN said accelerated implementation of the Kunming-Montre-

al Global Biodiversity Framework is essential, stressing that governments, businesses, and communities must work together to restore and safeguard nature through coordinated efforts.

The warning comes as countries intensify efforts to meet biodiversity targets amid rising environmental pressures, including habitat loss and marine degradation.

In Bahrain, biodiversity and environmental sustainability have become key elements of

national policy, with expanded marine conservation initiatives and large-scale afforestation programmes aimed at strengthening ecosystem resilience.

A recent subregional dialogue under the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) held in Bahrain highlighted the need to improve biodiversity monitoring, reporting systems, and regional cooperation across Western Asia, while also addressing gaps in financing and technical capacity.

The kingdom has advanced its

environmental agenda through the National Afforestation Plan and the Bahrain Mangroves Initiative, with officials reporting the planting of 2.45 million trees and early achievement of mangrove targets.

The Supreme Council for the Environment (SCE), operating under the slogan "We salute the heritage, we protect the sea," has also introduced stricter marine protection measures, including efforts to reduce plastic pollution by promoting biodegradable fishing gear.