

big story

Riches from rags

● The used clothes donated by good people are sold to traders here who export it to countries having high levels of low-income population.

● Charity societies earn nearly BD30 by selling 100 kilos of used clothes to traders, according to sources.

TDT|Manama
Thamer Tayfoor

Many charitable societies are allegedly running a successful second-hand garments business and their capital is the generous minds of citizens and residents in the Kingdom.

Sources say once the boxes kept in the neighbourhoods get filled with used clothes donated by generous individuals, they are shipped to Africa and Levant countries hosting refugees before being sold in the local markets.

Speaking to Tribune, Ahmed Ali, who worked for a society, said, "The clothes donated by good people are sold to traders here who export it to countries having high levels of low-income population. In the second-hand dress market, a big box full of clothes, for instance about 100 kilograms, could fetch something near BD30."

He said different charities follow different methods when it comes to selling second-hand garments. "Some sell per kilo-

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AHMED ALI

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ABU SAUD

gram while some calculate prices on the number of boxes and there are also a few who would sell each and every cloth for 200 or 300 fils.”

“These traders who buy these garments from societies make huge money by shipping them to Africa, Jordan and Lebanon. The traders buy a second-hand abaya here for 200 fils and sell them in Syrian refugee camps in Jordan, Lebanon or Turkey for BD5. The profit they make is enormous.”

Tribune spoke to Abu Saud, one of the traders who buy clothes from these charities and export them to Jordan. “I buy second-hand clothes

from charities and they charge me per kilo. I sort them in my house before shipping them to Jordan. The profits aren't really high.”

“We buy 100 kilo clothes for about BD30 and the cost of shipping them is BD5. Add BD10 to it, which is the import duty in Jordan. This means we would have spent BD45 to sent our clothes to the distributor in Jordan. He sells them for BD70 and takes his profit as well.”

Mr Saud is said whatever he does is very much legal. “There is nothing illegal in this. I do business without violating the laws of Bahrain, Saudi Arabia and Jordan.”

Fayez, another exporter of second-hand clothes, said the traders make more money by exporting clothes to African countries. “Clothes are first shipped to Sudan and from there to other African countries. The business generates huge profits as they sell one piece for as high as 600 fils.”

He said though he is a businessman, he does some charity in the process. “Among the collected clothes we bought, if there are bad ones, I ask our distributors to give them for free to deserving people.”



The demand for used clothes is very high in African markets as well as Syrian refugee camps in Jordan, Lebanon and Turkey.



Many charity societies are making good money by selling used clothes collected from generous individuals



Used clothing boxes are a common scene across the Kingdom.



Sources say societies earn up to BD30 by selling 100 kilogram of used clothes.



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