

Speaker lauds deep-rooted, strategic Bahraini-Egyptian relations

Manama

Speaker of the Council of Representatives, Fawzia Zainal, has lauded the deep-rooted strategic relations between Bahrain and Egypt, strengthened thanks to the directives of His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa, and President Abdel Fattah El Sisi, of Egypt.

While receiving here the newly-appointed Egyptian Ambassador to Bahrain, Yasser Mohammed Shaaban, the Speaker said that co-operation across various fields and vital sectors enjoy the interest of the two brotherly countries, stressing that Egypt's security and stability are integral to those of Bahrain and the region.



Ms Zainal receives Mr Shaaban and other officials.

She highlighted the existing co-operation, co-ordination and complementarity between Bahrain's Council of Representatives and Egypt's House of Representatives at various regional and inter-

national parliamentary gatherings. She also highlighted the existing partnership between the legislative

institutions at the level of the secretariat-general. She wished the envoy every suc-

cess in carrying out his diplomatic duties to strengthen partnership between two countries.

Women constitute '40 per cent' of nation's private sector workforce

Women's number in the private sector workforce rose by 15pc in the past three years

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● **The Labour Ministry stated that concentrated efforts were placed to empower women and to ensure their employment.**

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The participation of women in the private sector workforce has risen from 25 per cent to 40pc in the past three years.

Women's involvement in the private sector has seen a major upswing in just three years, according to official statistics.

The participation of women in the private sector has grown by 15pc in the past three years, according to figures from the Ministry of Labour and Social Development.

The ministry stated that concentrated efforts were placed to empower women and to ensure their employment.

"Female employment in government sector is even higher, it has crossed 50 per cent," a ministry official said.

Bahrainis also make up 40 per cent of the national workforce and even reach 80pc in education and health services.

The ministry has also surveyed more than 5,000 Bahraini women who opted to work as part-timers, ever since the streamlined scheme was launched in the year 2015.

According to the ministry's statistics, Bahraini women also make 50pc of the overall newcomers who are employed for the first



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time in the private sector.

They also account for 70pc of work opportunities, which are provided by the ministry to female job-seekers through employment vacancy bank.

The ministry has also trained over 6,000 job-seekers from Sep-

tember 2017 to September 2019 – of whom 78pc of job-seekers are females.

A tribute was paid to Bahraini women in recognition to their achievements and dedication in serving the nation and building its bright future, on December 1,

6,000
job-seekers were trained by the Labour Ministry in the past two years.

last year, marking Bahraini Women's Day.

"I would like to express my sincere thanks and deep appreciation to every Bahraini woman who spares not efforts to serve her country, community and family," said Her Royal Highness Princess Sabeeka bint Ibrahim Al Khalifa, Wife of His Majesty the King and President of the Supreme Council for Women (SCW).

She stressed the importance of this national occasion, which was launched by His Majesty the King

11 years ago, thus becoming an official celebration among other national days.

The annual anniversary is being celebrated in tribute to Bahraini women in all walks of life – as mothers, educators, partners in national development and achievers in all productive sectors, dedicated more than ever to serving the nation and contributing to its progress and prosperity.

She commended all state institutions for activating programmes in the field of higher education and future sciences, praising women's academic achievements which entitled them to hold leading positions, obtain high degrees and gain membership in international centres.

She lauded Bahraini women's growing interest in the fields of future sciences and contribution to supporting Bahrain's digital transformation and knowledge-based economy.

Legislation for runaway expat employees retracted

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A new legislation passed by lawmakers last week making runaway expat employees pay for their air tickets to fly back home, was retracted yesterday.

Shura Council has voted to take back the proposal it passed with the intention of studying it further.

Last week, after a long back and forth discussions between the Parliament and Shura Council, the council had finally approved the proposal, which aims to force runaway expat employees to pay for air tickets to fly back home.

It had come despite reservations from the part of Labor Market Regulatory Authority (LMRA).

The Bahrain Chamber of Commerce and Industry (BCCI) had previously expressed its support for the proposal.

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The council aims to further study the proposal.

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CHAMBER

reason," the BCCI had previously stated this demand in its letter to the parliament.

The MPs argued that employers should not have to pay the

amount when the employee violates the contract.

The House passed the proposal in this regard, adding a paragraph to Article (27) of Law No (19) of 2006 on the regulation of the labour market.

Speaking at the Parliament, MP Ahmed Al Ansari said: "The worker is responsible for his actions from the moment he decides to violate the contract and run away. In this situation the employers' rights must be taken into account.

"The employer must not suffer the consequences of the worker's actions."

Bahrain ranked 42 globally on Global Opportunities 2020 Index

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The Milken Institute has ranked Bahrain third in the Gulf, and 42nd globally in the Global Opportunities Index 2020.

The United Arab Emirates has been ranked first in the Gulf and 26 globally, followed by Qatar (38th in the world), then Bahrain, the Sultanate of Oman (53 globally), Kuwait (58), and finally Saudi Arabia, which scored 66th on the international level.

The institute said that there are defects in the policies that guarantee the protection of foreign investors in the Gulf countries in general, explaining that although the GCC countries are intensifying their efforts to attract investments to diversify their economies, they are still retreating in many areas that hinder their progress significantly.

The Global Opportunities In-

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INSTITUTE

stitute, published annually, examines the economic and financial factors that affect foreign investment activities, as well as the commercial, legal and regulatory policies that Gulf governments use to drive investment.

The institute's report pointed out that this year's Global Opportunities Index is pivotal for the Gulf countries, with Saudi Arabia assuming the presidency of the Group of Twenty, and

Dubai hosting the Expo 2020, which indicates highlighting the growing economic development in the region.

The index indicated that a foreign investor can own up to 49 per cent only in some Gulf markets from consumer, retail, health care, services, communications and technology companies, and up to only 5pc of financial services companies.

It pointed out: "For example, non-citizens of the Gulf Co-operation Council are not entitled to own lands in Kuwait, and non-citizens may not own more than 5pc of the bank interest without the approval of the central bank."

It added: "The areas that do not qualify for the foreign investor include the fields of oil and gas extraction, fertiliser industry, fuel distribution, and real estate activities, except for special building development projects."