

MoU set to further boost tourism statistics system

BTEA signs MoU with IGA to implement fourth phase of tourism statistics development programme

Manama

The Bahrain Tourism and Exhibitions Authority (BTEA) has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Information and eGovernment Authority to implement the fourth phase of the 'Tourism Statistics Development' Programme.

Since 2015, BTEA has been working to develop a national tourism statistics system and the Tourism Satellite Account (TSA), in line with international recommendations and standards of the World Tourism Organization and the United Nations Statistics Division.

Before 2015, there were only rough and fragmented estimates about the tourism sector's performance in the Kingdom; without taking into account different kinds of tourism sources and tourism activities.

However in the three last years alone, by collaborating with various public and private entities, the Kingdom has developed sufficient information concerning the supply and demand in the tourism sector.

This milestone achievement was highlighted in the assessments carried out by delegations from World Tourism Organisation and the GCC Statistical Centre; where the continued progress

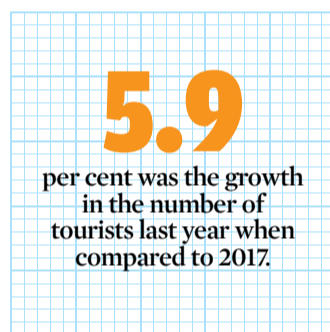


Shaikh Khaled with Mr Al Qaed after signing the MoU.

in tourism statistical reporting and establishment of new data gathering resources in the Kingdom of Bahrain were praised.

The Chief Executive Officer of BTEA, Shaikh Khaled bin Humood Al Khalifa, and the Chief Executive Officer of the Information and eGovernment Authority, Mohammed Ali Al Qaed, signed an agreement to implement the 'Tourism Statistics Development' Program for a full year 2019-2020.

The programme will include over a thousand tourism facilities located in different areas across



Bahrain for a whole year, measuring the production associated with accounts of industries serving incoming visitors in addition

to the number of employees in these industries with the percentages of Bahrainisation and ratio of females working in the tourism industry.

This phase will also focus in implementing a survey to track arrivals through Bahrain's gateways by interviewing a statistical sample of 30,000 people over 12 months, to take into account the seasonal changes of tourism demand; providing a timeline of spending as well as insight into the types of people and trips.

The statistical reports in 2018 revealed that inbound visitors

for tourism purposes has reached 12 million visitors, marking a 5.9 per cent growth compared to the year 2017.

The number of tourist nights spent by international visitors has increased by approximately 500,000 nights compared to 2017, and hotel room stays in four and five star hotels have also increased by about 17pc.

As for tourism trips from 2015-2018, statistics have revealed that there was an annual increase of about 600,000 trips to Kingdom generating approximately BD 100 million.

US-Bahrain total trade hit \$2.3 billion in 2018
TDT | Manama

In the first 10 months of 2018 alone, total trade between Bahrain and the U.S. reached \$2.3 billion, a statement issued by the US Embassy said.

This figure marks a 46 per cent increase over trade in the same period in 2017, which was worth \$1.6 billion.

Of the \$2.3 billion worth of trade through October 2018, Bahrain exports to the US were roughly \$0.8 billion, while US exports to Bahrain were \$1.5 billion.

During this time period, US exports increased by 98.5pc and Bahrain exports remained steady.

Among the top US exports to Bahrain were aircraft, boilers and machinery, vehicles, and boats.



Among the top Bahrain exports to the US were aluminium, oil, textiles, and plastics.

US aircraft exports have increased over 1,200 per cent and totalled \$584 million in this period.

Among the top Bahrain exports to the US were aluminium, oil, textiles, and plastics.

In fact, aluminium exports to the US increased by 9pc, worth \$560 million; oil increased by 27pc.

US Ambassador Justin Sibelius stated: "These updated trade figures from 2018 highlight the already-strong and still-improving commercial ties between the United States and Bahrain. We share a long-standing economic partnership focused on multiple sectors – including energy, finance, manufacturing, and trade – underscored by our Free Trade Agreement that has been in force for over a decade.

"This Free Trade Agreement has benefited both the American and Bahraini peoples, boosting opportunity and prosperity for both countries."

Gulf Air, Al Baraka hold talks



Gulf Air, the national carrier of the Kingdom, recently welcomed the executive management of Al Baraka Banking Group at the airline's headquarters in Muharraq. Both executive management teams discussed potential business co-operation specifically in geographical areas where the bank currently operates. The meeting also included discussions of new ideas to better serve customers of both the airline and the bank. Above, from left, Ammar Al Saad, Gulf Air Acting Chief Financial Officer, Captain Waleed Al Alawi, Gulf Air Deputy Chief Executive Officer, Tariq Kazim, Acting CEO of Al Baraka Islamic Bank- Bahrain, Adnan Ahmed Yousif, President and Chief Executive of Al Baraka Banking Group, Křešimir Kučko, Gulf Air Chief Executive Officer, Mohamed El Qaq, Senior Vice President, Head of Commercial Banking of Al Baraka Banking Group.

Promoting legislations 'vital to uphold human rights success'

TDT | Manama

The Assistant Foreign Minister, Abdullah Al Doseri, has stressed that the Kingdom attaches great importance to promoting legislation and laws that contribute to safeguarding the Kingdom's achievements in the field of human rights in accordance with the provisions of the Charter and the Constitution.

He noted that the Kingdom, under the reform approach of

His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa, made many achievements in the fields of political, civil, economic and social rights.

"These achievements include guaranteeing rights and freedoms, women and children's rights, education, communication, health and sustainable development."

He also highlighted the success of the last elections in the Kingdom, with a turnout of 76 per cent, which is the highest percentage in the histo-

ry of Bahrain, noting the win of Fawziya Zainal as the first Bahraini woman to become a Speaker for the Representatives Council.

This came as the Assistant Foreign Minister chaired the 22nd meeting of the High Coordination Committee for Human Rights, which was held today in the General Court of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, in the presence of a number of representatives from various ministries and relevant authorities.



Mr Al Doseri

The Committee discussed a number of topics on the agenda including the development of human rights work, based on the commitments on the Kingdom at the national and international levels, including co-operation with the United Nations and the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, and the development of a draft national plan for human rights aimed at supporting and developing national efforts in the field of human rights to

promote all civil, political, economic and social rights.

The Committee also reviewed the results of a number of national reports that were submitted by the Kingdom in fulfilment of its obligations under international and regional human rights conventions, such as the report of the Kingdom to the Committee on the Rights of the Child, the first periodic report of the Kingdom to the Arab Human Rights Committee, among many others.