

Bahrain's International Book Fair still on hold after seven years



Eman Shuwaiter, MP

Mohammed Darwish
TDT | Manama

Seven years after its last edition in 2018, Bahrain's International Book Fair remains

on hold, the Bahrain Authority for Culture and Antiquities (BACA) told Parliament, citing Covid-19 disruptions and delays in preparation.

In a written reply to MP Eman Shuwaiter, the authority said the fair is biennial, with the 18th edition held in 2018 alongside Muharrag's Capital of Islamic Culture events. The 19th edition, scheduled for 2020, was canceled due to Covid-19, and the 2022 cycle was also unable to proceed.

BACA said it has been working to revive the fair, preparing organisational studies covering technical plans, budgets, logistics, and funding, while contacting regional and international publishers. Electronic booking tools and private sector collaborations have also been developed to reduce costs.

Verify before hiring

Parliament moves to tighten expat work permits

● **MPs seek qualification checks before issuing expat work permits**

● **Committee backs coordinated vetting over internal LMRA process**

● **Unions support move, businesses say checks already exist**

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Lawmakers say work permits for expatriate workers should be issued only after verifying their qualifications. Parliament will debate a proposal this Tuesday

linking the Labour Market Regulatory Authority (LMRA) more closely with the bodies that verify academic credentials.

The Services Committee has recommended backing the amended wording, which replaces an earlier idea for an internal LMRA

committee with coordinated checks of academic qualifications across professional fields before permits are granted.

MP Jalal Kadhem, who submitted the original proposal, said the large number of expat workers in public and private sectors requires stricter screening. "All professional qualifications must be thoroughly checked to prevent forgery," he said. "This is a preventive step to ensure credentials are genuine, as some forge papers to work in the Kingdom."

In its reply, the LMRA said specialist roles already meet this objective, as such jobs require professional licences issued by relevant authorities, which verify credentials under their rules. "We do not grant a work permit for a role requiring a professional licence without that licence," the authority said. It added that checking academic certificates falls outside its legal remit. The proposal has drawn mixed

reactions. The Bahrain Chamber of Commerce and Industry opposed it, noting that specialised bodies already assess qualifications. Trade unions supported the move, with the General Federation of Bahrain Trade Unions citing certificate forgery as a criminal act, and the Bahrain Free Labor Unions Federation saying the change would boost employment for Bahrainis and strengthen national talent.

The Services Committee recommended approval of the amended proposal, citing public-interest grounds linked to the scale of expat employment and the risk of forged qualifications in sensitive roles.



This is a preventive step to uncover whether qualifications are genuine or not, especially as some forge qualifications and papers with the intention of working in the Kingdom

JALAL KADHEM, MP



MATRIX BIRTHDAY PARTY

SILVER PACKAGE

149

BHD

20 KIDS




INCLUDES

- ✦ Ninja Park, Roller Skating
- ✦ Kids Meal
- ✦ Party Hall With Basic Decoration





SCAN ME

JUFFAIR MALL (LULU)

Bangladesh Embassy commemorates International Migrants' Day & National Expatriates' Day

Manama

The Bangladesh Embassy commemorated the International Migrants' Day and National Expatriates' Day in a joyous atmosphere on Thursday.

The programme was chaired by the Ambassador of Bangladesh to Bahrain, H.E. Mr. Md. Rais Hasan Sarower, ndc. It witnessed the participation of a good number of foreign dignitaries, guests, and journalists, most notably, the IOM Chief of Mission to the Kingdom of Bahrain, H.E. Ms. Aishath Ihma Shareef, Chief of Organizations Sector at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Bahrain, H.E. Mr. Hatem Abdulhameed Hatem, and the LMRA Director of Partnership & Outreach, Mr. Fahad AbdulAziz Al Binali. Over a hundred members of the Bangladeshi community in Bahrain were also present during the program.

In his speech, H.E. Ambassador Mr. Rais Hasan highlighted the significance of the day and outlined the endeavours of the Embassy to ensure the rights and well-being of the Bangladeshi community in Bahrain. He thanked the community for playing an important role in the economies of Bangladesh and Bahrain through hard work and determination. He then stressed the importance of



adhering to the rules and regulations of Bahrain for upholding the image of Bangladesh. In the spirit of the International Migrants' Day and National Expatriates' Day, the Ambassador reaffirmed the Embassy's commitment towards serving the Bangladeshi community in Bahrain by providing timely consular and welfare services; organising mobile consular camps, monthly open house sessions, and awareness programs; and fostering strong relationships with Bahraini government entities and international organisations to ensure the welfare of Bangladeshis in Bahrain.

While delivering her remarks, the IOM Bahrain Chief expressed her appreciation to the Embassy for making a positive impact on the lives of Bangladeshi migrants in Bah-

rain. Similarly, the LMRA Director of Partnership & Outreach highlighted the importance of collaborative efforts for the continued protection and well-being of the Bangladeshis in Bahrain.

Following a short cultural dance segment by the students of Bangladesh School in Bahrain, the programme concluded with an award presentation ceremony, where few distinguished Bangladeshis were honoured with crests for their contributions to the community and their homeland. Students of Bangladesh School were also presented with certificates of appreciation by H.E. Ambassador for their outstanding results in board examinations. The programme was hosted by First Secretary (Labour) of the Embassy, Mr. Md. Mahfujur Rahman.

