

More than 4,500 take part in Holy Quran Grand Prix
Manama

Under the patronage of His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa, the final qualifications of the 25th edition of the Bahrain Holy Quran Grand Prix, held by the Holy Quran Affairs Directorate at the Ministry of Justice, Islamic Affairs and Endowments, concluded yesterday.

The major competition is co-organised by the Ministry of Justice, Islamic Affairs and Endowments and the Supreme Council for Islamic Affairs (SCIA).

Male winners will be honoured during the closing ceremony to be held during the holy month of Ramadan, while female ones will be honoured in April, under the patronage of Her Royal Highness Princess Sabeeka bint Ibrahim Al Khalifa, Wife of HM the King and President of the Supreme Council for Women (SCW).

Assistant Undersecretary for Islamic Affairs at the Ministry of Justice, Islamic Affairs and Endowments, Dr Mohammed Tahar Al Qattan, said that the number of participants had surged during the current edition, reaching a total of 4,611, including 2,083 males and 2,528 females.

He also said that the qualifications for other competitors, including school students, people with special needs, inmates of the General Directorate of Reformation and Rehabilitation, the public and non-Arabic speakers, had also concluded.

The assistant undersecretary pointed out that the prestigious competition is held in partnership with the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Interior, represented by the General Directorate of Reformation and Rehabilitation, and Labour and Social Development Ministry, which, he said, embodies the concept of community partnership and complementarity among public and private institutions.

Dr Al Qattan asserted that HM the King's patronage of the award over the past 25 years confirms the royal interest in supporting the Holy Quran memorisation, promoting its values in the society, and printing it.

Coronavirus awareness campaign 'in full swing'

Stringent steps in place to tackle virus threat in the Kingdom

● Visitors from five countries, Iran, Thailand, Singapore, Malaysia and South Korea have been banned from entering the Kingdom in light of coronavirus threat.

● The ministry has advised citizens and residents to follow WHO guidelines and avoid all but essential travel to areas, where coronavirus (COVID-19) has been detected.

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The Ministry of Health has stepped up efforts to spread awareness about coronavirus as they urge residents and citizens to adopt 'hygiene measures'.

The ministry has urged citizens and residents to take various measures to protect themselves from coronavirus.

The ministry sources said that educational campaigns are in full swing to create awareness in the public about the novel coronavirus.

The modes used to create awareness include traditional media, social media and even SMS campaign, which was recently done.

"Kindly be reminded to take the following precautions to reduce the risk of contracting the coronavirus (Covid-19): Wash your hands regularly and thoroughly using soap and water. Use alcohol-based sanitisers," the statement said.

"Clean and disinfect frequently used objects and surfaces such as door handles. Cover your mouth when coughing or



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sneezing, and dispose of used wipes properly.

"Avoid contact with people experiencing a fever or suffering from a cough," the ministry stated in a mass SMS campaign, which was sent out to Bahrainis and expatriates across the Kingdom.

Meanwhile, foreign visitors from five countries have been banned from entering the Kingdom as Bahrain takes up strict measures to prevent coronavirus outbreak in the country.

The authorities in Bahrain have decided to put in place three stringent steps to ensure that coronavirus is not spread in Bahrain.

The steps include banning entry to all foreigners who have visited five countries including Iran, Thailand, the Republic of Singapore, the Kingdom of Malaysia and the Republic of South Korea.

"The Ministry of Foreign Affairs, in co-ordination with the Ministry of Health

and the Ministry of Interior, has activated several procedures related to arrivals to the Kingdom in light of the outbreak of the Coronavirus (COVID-19)," the Ministry of Foreign Affairs statement added.

The steps include banning entry to all foreign visitors who have visited the Islamic Republic of Iran, the Kingdom of Thailand, the Republic of Singapore, the Kingdom of Malaysia and the Republic of South Korea



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MINISTRY STATEMENT

within 14 days of their date of arrival in the Kingdom.

Bahraini citizens, GCC citizens and Bahraini residents who have visited Iran, Thailand, Singapore, Malaysia or South Korea within 14 days of arriving in Bahrain will be subject to quarantine and enhanced testing procedures, recommended by the World Health Organisation (WHO).

The ministry has advised citizens and residents to follow WHO guidelines and avoid all but essential travel to areas, where coronavirus (COVID-19) has been detected.

MPs plan law to exempt SMEs from paying contributions to chamber

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Parliamentarians are considering a law to exempt SMEs from paying annual contributions to the BCCI.

The proposal was submitted by MP Hamad Al Kooheji and supported by MP Zainab Amir and MP Ibrahim Al Nafei.

The proposal aims to help SMEs, which are struggling financially by reducing fees wherever possible.

He said the proposed law is a practical step to reduce the burdens faced by SMEs.

Mr Al Kooheji said that the main goal is to help SMEs grow. "It is important to strengthen the private sector and SMEs are at the heart of the private sector.

"We need to reduce their burdens and help them grow while ensuring their stability."

Meanwhile, the Council of

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MR AL KOOHEJI

Representatives Speaker Fawziya Zainal stressed the crucial importance of small and medium enterprises in developing the national economy, revitalising trade, spurring growth and generating jobs.

This came as she received a delegation from the Bahrain Small and Medium Enterprises Society, led by Chairman Dr Abdulhassan Al Dirri.

She said that the legislative branch of government to implement the directives of His

Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa, stressing the council's keenness on enhancing the standing of businessmen and supporting their contribution to Bahrain's comprehensive development, in compliance with 2030 Bahrain Economic Vision and the goals of the Fiscal Balance in the Government Action Plan.

The speaker commended the edict, which was issued by the Cabinet recently on supporting the small and medium enterprises, reiterating the council's keenness on consolidating SMEs businesses.

Dr Al Dirri expressed thanks to the Speaker, commending the efforts she exerts along with lawmakers to provide all necessary facilities to spur economic growth and encourage productive families and small and medium enterprises.



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