

Court to announce verdict on plea in Qatar poll meddle case

Two defendants were sentenced by a lower court for illegally receiving money from a foreign country

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The High Court of Appeal yesterday announced that it will declare the verdict in the case involving two Bahrainis, accused of receiving funds from a former Qatari minister with the aim of hindering the recent parliamentary elections, on April 27.

As reported earlier by Tribune, the first defendant, who was a candidate in the parliamentary elections, that took place last November, was previously sentenced by the Fourth High Criminal Court to five years of imprisonment while the second defendant received three years of sentence.

According to an announcement made by the Terror Crimes

Prosecution on February 6 this year, the first defendant was ordered by the court to pay a fine of BD2,000, while the second defendant was fined BD1,000.

The details of the case show that BD12,500 was found in the suspects' possession upon their arrival to the Kingdom, from Qatar through Kuwait last October.

Investigations revealed that both suspects often received money from the former Qatari Interior Minister Abdullah bin Khalid Al Thani through their bank accounts or by frequently traveling to Qatar to receive the cash in person.

Court files showed that the first defendant received sums of money from the Qatari official to support his electoral campaign

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PROSECUTORS

for the 2018 parliamentary elections, held here last November.

It was also shown in the court that he received the money with the aim of winning the polls and serve the malicious Qatari agenda to harm the Kingdom's interests by affecting the work of the legislative institutions in Bah-

rain from inside the parliament.

Both defendants were arrested at Bahrain International Airport, where the Customs Department employees searched them and found the money in their possession.

During interrogation, the first defendant denied that he was attempting to hide the BD12,000 that was found in his possession, claiming that he "forgot" to declare it.

He also denied that he received the money from the Qatari official to support his electoral campaign, claiming that it was given to him "to fix rainwater insulation equipment".

A judicial permission was previously issued to control and record telephone calls between the suspects, which

confirmed the results of the investigations and led to their arrest.

Further probe and interrogation of the suspects also showed that both of them, in the period between the years 2013-2018,

received a total of BD235,804 from the same Qatari official, who's listed in an international terrorism list issued by the Anti-Terror Arab Quartet, which consists of Bahrain, Egypt, Saudi Arabia and the UAE.

Both suspects were found guilty for the charges of exchanging intelligence information with someone working for a foreign country to undermine the national interests, in addition to illegally receiving money without claiming it before the Customs Department.

Three months community service for dog torturer

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A man, who tortured a dog at his house in Bani Jamrah village a few weeks ago, was sentenced by the Low Criminal Court yesterday to perform three months of community service.

The defendant was arrested a few hours after he appeared in a footage showing him brutally torturing a dog and filming the incident.

He confessed to his crime during the interrogation, claiming that the dog had attacked his sheep.

The announced verdict came as an alternative punishment after the prosecutors urged to impose the toughest punishment, three months imprisonment, on the defendant.

After the footage was circulated on social networking sites, calls to amend the current law and toughen punishment for animal abuse has resurfaced.

Charity raft race raises over BD25,000

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Harpreet Kaur

The charity raft race organised by the Rotary Club of Sulmaniya at the Al Bander Hotel and Resort in Sitra managed to raise over BD25,000.

The 40th Annual Raft Race was held under the theme 'Challenge Disability', and hence, funds raised will be used in projects supporting that cause, providing aid to the disabled, support to the mentally challenged and promoting public awareness in the society.

The event also had many activities for the children including face painting, jumping castle, kids' playground and caricature artists.

Seema Baqi, the race chairperson and incoming club president told, Tribune, "The 40th Annual Raft Race has managed to raise over BD25,000.

"The Rotary Club of Sulmaniya will be working under the



Twenty-four teams took part in the event held to raise funds for charity.

theme of 'Challenge Disability' to support those mentally and physically challenged in Bahrain, and to change the society's approach. The event saw 24 teams representing different

companies and generous sponsors."

"Moreover, we are glad to see a good turnout of people including families. The race started with the men's open sea category, then

moved to the mixed teams in the lagoon, and the event ended with an award ceremony. Also, since 1976, the event has raised more than BD2 million for various charities," Seema added.

Kingdom to host InsurByte Conference

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Harpreet Kaur

Under the patronage of the Central Bank of Bahrain (CBB), Bahrain FinTech Bay (BFB) will host InsurByte Conference 2019, titled "Re-imagining Insurance" on the 12th and 13th of June 2019 at the Gulf Convention Centre.

Over 150 companies from over 25 countries, will be interacting and showcasing the latest initiatives, innovations and applications related to the insurance industry at the two-day conference.

InsurByte 2019 will host keynote speeches, panel discussions, fireside chats, hands-on workshops, networking sessions, and case studies from

prominent players in the InsurTech sector, as well as insurance professionals to foster synergies among market players to find solutions, and promote innovative InsurTech practices in a collaborative, open, and transparent manner.

CEO of Bahrain FinTech Bay, Khalid Saad stated, "Bahrain FinTech Bay is delighted to host the InsurByte Conference 2019. The insurance industry is ripe for disruption and is undergoing fundamental changes due to InsurTech companies that are effectively changing all aspects of the industry. InsurByte

aims to be the platform where such changes to the industry will be discussed by market players in an open, practical and collaborative manner."

Photo expo to showcase cultures, lives

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Outstanding stories from the Kingdom and well beyond captured through the lenses of 29 male and female photographers will go on display at Bahrain Photographic Society's first annual exhibition.

The "Cultures... Stories in Pictures" exhibition, co-organised by CAD World Art and Bahrain Art Gallery, will be inaugurated on April 25 at 7 pm at Art City at the City Centre and will be held under the patronage of iconic photography figure Abdullah Khan.

"The exhibition represents the essence of experiences within the Kingdom and the cultural and artistic travels of selected photographers to different countries that have diverse cultures," Bahrain Photographic Society President Shafiq Al Shariqi said.

"It is part of the society's support of artistic creativity and the enhancement of the visual cul-



Photos that will be displayed at the exhibition.

ture within the community and enrichment of the culture of the image. This explains why, thanks to the positive partnership with the head of the project Mahdi Jallawi, we opted to hold it at the Art City at the City Center."

Mr Al Shariqi reiterated that Bahrain Photographic Society is particularly keen on boosting the capabilities and potential of its young members and on consolidating their artistic presence abroad as they honour Bahrain in Arab and international forums.

"Last year was filled with achievements and I am thankful to all those who contributed to the success stories," Mr Al Shariqi said.

"The doors of our society will always be wide open for all young photographers. We are determined to make a difference in the development of the photographic experience in the Kingdom, and we call on the fans of art and photos to attend

the exhibition and to participate in the activities of the society."

Mahdi Jallawi, the representative of CAD World Art and Bahrain Art Gallery and the brains behind the Art City, hailed the cultural partnership with the Bahrain Photographic Society.

"Our aim is to invest in culture based on the belief in the importance of the cultural and artistic role in building the future of the Kingdom through moving art

from closed galleries to open public areas where people become have an active role in the new cultural scene," he said.

"That is how the concept of Art City was created."



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MR AL SHARIQI