

Plan to promote moderate religious discourse stressed

● The minister underlined Bahrain's longstanding pioneering role in instilling tolerance and coexistence, stressing the necessity of promoting open and moderate religious discourse.

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A strategy to promote religious discourse and moderation has been drawn up by the Justice, Islamic Affairs and Endowments Ministry.

Justice, Islamic Affairs and Endowments Minister Shaikh Khalid bin Ali Al Khalifa said



Shaikh Khalid

that the plan complies with His Majesty the King's vision, which advocates the values of moderate precepts.

He highlighted other national initiatives, which aim at consolidating national belonging and foster the values of citizens.

He cited the initiative launched by the ministry to

rationalise religious discourse, spread national values in various places of worship and religious institutions, and reduce trends of extremism and hatred of others.

The minister underlined Bahrain's longstanding pioneering role in instilling tolerance and coexistence, stressing the necessity of promoting open and

moderate religious discourse.

He highlighted the crucial role of the family, media and education in cultivating lofty values and patriotism among generations, stressing co-ordination in this regard with the Supreme Council for Islamic Affairs, the Sunni and Jaffari Endowments Directorate to train imams and khatibs.

Bahrain to establish regional anti-human trafficking centre

Centre will offer training on combatting trafficking to officials of Mena countries

● The centre will act as a forum allowing experts in the field of counter-trafficking to exchange their experiences and expertise.

● The establishment of the centre is the latest in a series of developments made by the government of Bahrain to combat trafficking in persons.

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Bahrain, in co-operation with the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), will establish a Regional Centre of Excellence for capacity building in the field of combatting trafficking in persons.

Dr Hatem Aly, the UNODC Representative for GCC, said that they have been working with the National Committee to Combat Trafficking in Persons (NCCTIPS) in the Kingdom for several years, and that the establishment of this centre will be a quantum leap in the field of combating trafficking in persons for the MENA Region.

The specifics of the co-operation was detailed in a Memorandum of Understanding, which was signed by CEO of the Labour Market Regulatory Authority (LMRA) and Chairman of the NCCTIPS, Ausamah Al Absi, and Dr Aly.

The centre, which will be housed at the LMRA's Expat Protection Centre in Northern Sehla, will serve as a platform for the setting the standards of and training for all aspects of combating trafficking for the Middle East and North Africa.

Additionally, the centre will act as a forum allowing experts in



Mr Al Absi after signing the contract with Dr Aly.

the field of counter-trafficking to exchange their experiences and expertise.

During the signing of the memorandum, Mr Al Absi stressed on the invaluable efforts and measures taken by the Kingdom to combat trafficking in persons, and to create a fair and safe working environment in Bahrain.

Bahrain's tireless efforts to combat trafficking resulted in sustaining its Tier 1 ranking in the US Department of State's annual Trafficking in Persons

“The centre is a testament to the Kingdom's investment in a human-led and hands-on approach to combat trafficking in persons.”

MR AL ABSI

Report for the second consecutive year as the only country in

the region to reach this tier, as well as other reports issued by the United Nations and other governments around the world.

Mr Al Absi added that the centre will establish and document world-class standards in the practices of combating trafficking, victim identification and assistance, and capacity building for the Middle East and North Africa region.

He went on to say that since Bahrain's initial ranking as a Tier 1 country in the US Traffick-

ing in Persons Report last year, there has been an increase of delegates from regional governments visiting Bahrain to have a first-hand look at how the Kingdom executes its anti-trafficking framework, and Bahraini officials have been sought out and invited abroad as trainers.

“Groups within the relevant Bahrain's official agencies have been trained to an international standard on all areas of combating this crime. Bahraini experts have been building a compendium of global experiences through local and regional workshops to refine their practice.

“And today, through the signing of the Memorandum of Understanding with the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, we are laying the foundation for the establishment of a regional centre of expertise and training in combating trafficking in persons.”

The centre is a testament to the Kingdom's investment in a human-led and hands-on approach to combating trafficking in persons, the official opined.

Mr Al Absi said he envisages that the centre will lead to an increase of expertise within the government by capacitating officials as UNODC certified trainers.

The establishment of the centre is the latest in a series of developments made by the government of Bahrain to combat trafficking in persons and the exploitation of vulnerable persons.

For his part, Dr Aly stressed the importance of Bahrain's new Centre of Excellence, stating: “The UNODC is keen on supporting this initiative that will set the nucleus of home-grown solutions based on relevant issues, standardise them, document them, and regionally implement them, thus creating the critical mass of officials and practitioners in the MENA region capable of effectively combating trafficking and exploitation.”

BD50 weekly draw for online traffic dept service users

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Mohammed Zafran

Residents who avail the online services offered by the General Directorate of Traffic stand a chance to win BD50 every week from next month onwards, it is learnt.

Authorities have announced that a weekly prize of BD50 will be given to chosen members of the public every week.

The initiative begins on first July and will last a year. “The General Directorate of Traffic has announced the allocation for one year a weekly prize of BD50, starting July for the users of the traffic e-services through the national portal Bahrain.bh or e-traffic application available to be downloaded in the smartphones,” the traffic directorate stated.

“In addition to e-government platforms at the General Directorate of Traffic and public places, Bahrain Credits “Imtiaaz” supports the initiative, and it is a step to promote more people to benefit from the e-traffic services that are updated regularly in co-operation with the Information and eGovernment Authority.

“It is worth mentioning that the e-traffic services include renewing driving licences, re-registering vehicles, paying traffic fines.”

This follows a recent campaign by the directorate, which saw law abiding motorists showered with gifts. As part of the campaign, citizens who have always followed the traffic rules were given gifts.

The group identified law abiding motorists, and gave them gifts vouchers, electronic gadgets and other gifts. The campaign was being carried out in partnership with Bahrain National Insurance, as well as Sadeem Cards, Credimax, LuLu Hypermarket, Sofitel Bahrain and Qadooa Sweets.

Business dinner held



Prominent businessmen and dignitaries attended a business dinner hosted by Pakistani Ambassador Afzal Mahmood at his residence.