news of hahrair

New law to curb free visa trading



Fines to go up from BD1,000 to BD8,000

The law aims to end trading in free visas while reducing the number of illegal expats.

Sources say the price of a free visa in the black market varies between BD1.200 and BD2.000.

TDT|Manama **Thamer Tayfour**

he Parliament will this week vote on a draft law that will impose stricter penalties on those involved in selling work visas.

According to the new law, fines will be increased from the existing BD1,000 to BD8,000 apart from one year imprisonment.

MP Adel Al Asoomi said the proposed with reducing the number of illegal expatriates who flee their work places.



In 2015, Nationality, **Passport and Residence** Affairs reported 2,587 residency violations that had occurred between 2013 and 2015 after conducting 759 inspections to different locations.

Sources say the price of a free visa law aims at eliminating visa trade along in the black market varies between BD1,200 and BD2,000.

Labour Market Regulatory Authority and insurance fees.

Khursheed, a Bangladesh national, told Tribune that he bought a free visa for BD1,200 from the black market and had to pay additional BD520 towards other expenses.

"I paid 370,000 Bangladeshi takas to get the visa. With that amount we can start a small business in our country. But many prefer coming to Gulf countries as they are land of opportunities."

"I bought the visa from an Asian, who works under the Bahraini supervisor. I am free to work anywhere until I pay BD50 a month to my sponsor. I was asked to tell cops that I had fled my workplace if arrested in order to rescue my original sponsor from paying a fine of BD1,000," he said.

Khursheed said it's not easy for 'free visa' expats to find jobs in the Kingdom. In addition, the buyer will have to pay "I now work as a cleaner at various





The proposed law aims at eliminating visa trade along with reducing the number of illegal expatriates who flee their work places.

MR AL ASOOMI

companies. My only aim is to earn the money spent on free visa before returning to my home country."

AbuAli, a Jordan citizen, had to buy free visa from the black market to come here after marrying a Bahraini women.

"At times expats are left with no other option to come here. I spent BD1,400 to get a work visa."

"I was hunting for jobs a whole year and couldn't get any. After a year, my sponsor informed me that he wouldn't renew my visa. So, I ended up paying huge fines for four months after which I found a job at a private school for a monthly salary of BD230. But at least I could legalise my stay here."

In 2015, Nationality, Passport and Residence Affairs reported 2,587 residency violations that had occurred between 2013 and 2015 after conducting 759 inspections to different locations.

Family reiterates plea for help

TDT|Manama **Muhannad Mansour**

ousing Ministry has been urged to immediately look into the condition of a dilapidated house in Karzakkan village, as the safety of its four Bahraini inhabitants, including a bedridden man, is threatened by its cracked walls and unstable roof.

A team from the ministry had visited the house in the small village which is located to the west of Hamad Town in the Northern Governorate.

The visit came few days after Tribune published the plea of the house owner, Hassan Habib, 65, earlier this month, as he appealed to the

authorities for assistance after being financially incapable of renovating the house or moving to a safer one. Mr Habib is a bedridden retiree who lives in the house with his wife and two children.

He confirmed that "an inspector from Housing Ministry visited the house and took pictures and notes, before promising that the matter will be urgently looked into".

"This restored our hope, but this feeling quickly turned into

ministry since then," Mr Habib added.

As MPs, it's the

core of duty to

link citizens with

the competence

authorities to

meet their needs

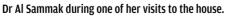
and requirements.

DR AL SAMMAK

Tribune yesterday spoke to the area's MP, Dr Jameela Al Sammak, who stressed that "each day that passes by without the walls of the house tumbling down on its residents is a miracle".

As reported earlier, Dr Al Sammak adopted link citizens with the competence authorities to authorities. She sent an urgent request to the Minister HRH Prince Khalifa bin Salman Al Khal- ment housing project that weren't handed over to placement.





a disappointment as we haven't heard from the Housing Ministry, demanding its interference to if a repeatedly emphasised on the importance of any beneficiaries", suggesting that one of the units either provide Mr Habib with a housing unit or cooperation between the executive and legislative could be allocated to shelter the family. She also instantly initiate revamping works at the house. authorities to serve citizens. If this is how the underlined that "the safety of Mr Habib and his "We didn't receive any response since then. ministry is responding to MPs, how is it expected family is the responsibility of ministry". We weren't even informed about the shyly visit to fulfill citizens' needs," Dr Al Sammak com-

of the inspector. As MPs, it's the core of duty to mented.

Mr Habib's house was built in the old-fashioned designs of Bahraini houses around 60 years ago. The MP earlier told that "there many housing The materials used in building such houses are the family's case and referred it to the highest meet their needs and requirements. The Prime units, mainly flats, in the nearby Al Louzy governdifficult to be repaired and usually require re-



The house can collapse anytime.