

Enhancing co-operation



The Committee on Khalifa bin Salman Award for Human Settlements signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Kailash Satyarthi Foundation for Children (KSFC) during a working meeting held yesterday in New York. The agreement aims at enhancing cooperation between the two sides in the fields of knowledge exchange and dissemination while serving the objectives of sustainable development, improving the quality of human life and advocacy of the common good of humanity, especially children. The agreement was signed by Shaikh Hossam bin Isa Al Khalifa, the head of Committee on Khalifa bin Salman Award for Human Settlements and Anjali Kochar, executive director, KSFC.

Saudi women flock to driving school as 'permanent residency clause' scrapped

Move follows reports of real estate agents charging exorbitant rates from Saudi women for permanent address documents

TDT | Manama
Thamer Tayfoor

Scores of Saudi women have begun flocking to the driving school in A'ali to apply for learner's licence after the 'permanent address requirement' was scrapped by the authorities.

The General Directorate of Traffic within the Interior Ministry had recently decided to allow Saudi nationals, who don't have a permanent address in the Kingdom to apply for their licence.

The move comes in a bid to facilitate the procedures for Saudi women and reduce their financial burdens following allegations of real estate agents exorbitantly charging them in return for 'permanent addresses'.

According to a Saudi daily, there's only one driving school to train women in the eastern province of Saudi Arabia, pushing hundreds of women to come



Thousands of Saudi women are expected to come to the Kingdom to obtain driver's licence as there is only one driving school in the Eastern Province of Saudi Arabia.

to Bahrain to learn driving and obtain the licence.

On their part, Bahrain Driving Instructors Society thanked the General Director of Traffic

Brigadier General Shaikh Abdulrahman bin Abdulwahab Al Khalifa and Driving Learning Director Colonel Mohammed Ahmed Mahmood for taking

such an "important" decision and responding to the society's pleas to facilitate the procedures of issuing driving licences for residents, especially Saudi women."

“They were badly exploited by some real estate agents, who rented small apartments for them in return of absurdly high rents. The decision will improve the driving instruction sector, which consists of over 800 Bahraini instructors.

MR AL ASFOOR

The society said in a statement issued yesterday: "The step is highly appreciated as it reflects the concerns and demands of trainees, whether citizens, residents or female citizens of Saudi Arabia."

Society President Ibrahim Al Asfoor said: "This important decision promotes equality of

treatment between Saudis and Bahrainis in government departments. It has a positive impact on driving instructors in Bahrain and the trainees from Saudi Arabia, especially women. It will also revive the tourism sector in Bahrain."

Mr Al Asfoor said the new procedure would eradicate the phenomenon of temporarily renting residences in Bahrain to Saudi women and other residents only to obtain driving licences.

He added: "Saudi female trainees were forced to rent apartments here and pay amounts of more than BD250 a month so they could be eligible for applying for driver's licence in the Kingdom."

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Closing arguments to be heard in Qatar conspiracy case

● Shaikh Salman has been accused of receiving money in exchange for revealing state and military secrets, including information about GCC forces in Bahrain.

● The case is connected to phone conversations dating back to 2011 between Qatari officials and senior members of Al Wefaq.

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The High Appeals Court has adjourned the trial of Shaikh Ali Salman,

“The cleric knew he was breaking the law by having contact with the Qatari government.

MR AL OUFU

the former secretary general of the now dissolved Al Wefaq National Islamic Society, who is accused of conspiring with Qatar against the Kingdom, to hear the Public Prosecution's closing arguments.

Three opposition members have been tried in connection with this case including two former Al Wefaq MPs – Hassan Ali Sultan and Ali Al Aswad.

They have been accused of spying on behalf of a foreign country. They were cleared by the High Criminal Court, but

Attorney General Osama Al Oufi lodged the appeal citing there was adequate proof to upturn their clearance.

Shaikh Salman has been accused of receiving money in exchange for revealing state and military secrets, including information about GCC forces in Bahrain.

The case is connected to phone conversations dating back to 2011 between Qatari officials and senior members of Al Wefaq. Al Oufi argued earlier that the cleric knew he was breaking the law by having contact with the Qatari government.

Recordings of conversations between the defendants and Qatari officials have already been played in court as evidence. The cleric is due to complete a four-year jail sentence in December for inciting others to break the law and sectarianism.

Fugitives nabbed in Kuwait back to jail

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Two men who fled Bahrain after being accused in many security cases have been sentenced by the High Criminal Court to five years behind bars each.

A third man stood in the same trial for helping the second defendant and was given three years in prison.

The first and second defendants were wanted in connection

“The first suspect is said to have dressed and worn make-up to impersonate his sister, whose ID was used to facilitate his escape from the Kingdom.

PROSECUTORS

with security cases in 2011, but they managed to flee the

Kingdom. The first suspect is said to have dressed and worn make-up to impersonate his sister, whose ID was used to facilitate his escape from the Kingdom.

The second man reportedly used his cousin's ID card which had a picture similar to his face in his attempt to flee.

They were arrested by Interpol although they tried to legalise their stay in Kuwait by leaving for the UAE and returning back using their original IDs.

CBB raises key interest rate

Manama

The Central Bank of Bahrain (CBB) has decided and effective immediately to raise its key policy interest rate.

The CBB's key policy interest rate on the one-

week deposit facility was raised from 2.25 per cent to 2.5pc.

The CBB has also decided to increase the overnight deposit rate from 2pc to 2.25pc and adjust both the one-month deposit rate from 3pc to 3.25pc, and the lending rate from 4pc to 4.25pc.