

Southern Governorate programmes discussed



The meeting in progress

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Minister of Interior General Shaikh Rashid bin Abdulla Al Khalifa yesterday received Southern Governor His Highness Shaikh Khalifa bin Ali bin Khalifa Al Khalifa.

HH the Southern Governor presented a report on the progress of work, service projects and programmes that are being implemented in the Southern Governorate, in coordination with concerned authorities, in follow-up to the directives of the Interior Minister to work on the needs of citizens

and strengthen communication channels with all groups of society, as well as enhance activate social partnership through modern technologies, within the framework of enhancing precautionary measures to combat the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic.

The Interior Minister expressed his thanks and appreciation for the efforts of HH the Southern Governor and all those in the governorate working to enhance communication with citizens and identify their needs, in order to improve the services provided.

Government projects tackled in ICT meeting



A screen shot of the online meeting

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Project developments and purchase requests of government entities worth an estimated BD4million were among the topics discussed yesterday in the 36th Information and Communication Technology Governance Committee (ICTGC) meeting, chaired by Information and eGovernment Authority (IGA) Chief Executive Mohammed Ali Al Qaed.

Al Qaed praising the continued cooperation and coordination between governmental entities, which have allowed for the deployment of advanced technologies and systems that have helped improve the quality of performance.

Among the most important strategic purchase requests discussed during the virtual meeting is the national system to digitize and automate correspondence between government organisations.

The project is expected to reduce printing costs and raise communications efficiency between entities.

The meeting covered improvements to eGovernment channels aimed at raising beneficiary satisfaction levels through the introduction of a virtual assistant system on the national portal bahrain.bh.

The members also addressed the Ministry of Education's requests for public schools to support the technical requirements for remote learning.

The committee further discussed the introduction of a professional licensing system for individuals and healthcare establishments at the National Health Regulatory Authority, and the supply of necessary programmes and devices to a number of government entities to ensure the continuity of providing services.

The committee continues to hold monthly meetings remotely via Microsoft Teams, as such modern platforms have efficiently supported the continuity of business in the government sector, at the same time reducing costs, saving time, and facilitating the sharing of documents between agencies.

Bahrain, Sudan relations hailed

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His Majesty the King's Diplomatic Affairs Advisor Shaikh Khalid bin Ahmed bin Mohammed Al Khalifa received yesterday Sudan Ambassador Ibrahim Mohammed Al Hassan.

The Sudanese diplomat expressed appreciation of the positions of Bahrain, led by His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa, and its steady keenness on strengthening cooperation between the two countries.

Ambassador Al Hassan wished the Kingdom further progress and prosperity.

Shaikh Khalid stressed the importance of the deep-rooted relations between Bahrain and Sudan, and expressed his



Shaikh Khalid with Ambassador Al Hassan

satisfaction with their bilateral cooperation across all areas.

He reiterated Bahrain's sup-

port to Sudan's security and stability, and its solidarity with all the efforts and measures that

fulfill the aspirations of the Sudanese people for development and prosperity.

Deputy PM issues edict on LMRA fees exemptions

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Deputy Prime Minister and Ministerial Committee for Financial and Economic Affairs and Fiscal Balance chairman Shaikh Khalid bin Abdulla Al Khalifa issued yesterday an edict exempting businesses adversely affected by the repercussions of the coronavirus (COVID-19) from paying some fees imposed by the Labour Market Regulatory Authority (LMRA).

The edict is in line with the directives of His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa to mobilise national efforts to confront the impacts of the pandemic at the local level, and to protect the health and safety of the citizens and residents, along with the continuity of the Kingdom's programmes to enhance development.

It is also in line with the decisions of the government, led by His Royal Highness the Prime Minister Prince Khalifa bin Salman Al Khalifa, and that of His



The Deputy Premier

Royal Highness Prince Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa, Crown Prince, Deputy Supreme Commander and First Deputy Prime Minister, to slash some fees imposed by LMRA on the issuance and renewal of all kinds of one-year work permits, and

all monthly fees related to them by 50 per cent for three months, starting from July.

HRH the Crown Prince's decision also stipulates that all business owners who are involved in the businesses that have been most affected by the impacts of COVID-19, as will be determined by an edict by the Deputy Premier and Ministerial Committee for Financial and Economic Affairs and Fiscal Balance chairman, will be exempted from those fees for three months, also beginning from July.

The edict issued by the Deputy Premier stipulates that business owners whose businesses have been stopped completely or partially due to the

pandemic impact up to now will be exempted from the issuance or renewal of the work permits fees for the first year of the validity of their permits.

They are also exempted from paying their monthly fees for three months, starting from July.

The sectors covered by the edict include travel and aviation, hospitality and restaurants, personal services (salons, gyms and entertainment halls), transportation and communications, rehabilitation and training (including kindergarten), retail (not including food), administrative services (public relations, media, and event organisation), in addition to local newspapers and magazines.

Other sectors that have been affected by the impacts of COVID-19 may benefit from the provisions of the edict, with the exception of financial sector institutions, telecommunications, scientific, technical and professional activities, university education and schools.

The edict requested LMRA to issue a list of exempted commercial activities in accordance with the classifications they have adopted.

The edict aims to maintain sustainable growth, in general, and achieve the stability of the labour market for Bahrain's small and medium-sized enterprises, in particular.

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Export ban issued for certain face masks

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Minister of Industry, Commerce and Tourism, Zayed R Al Zayani issued yesterday a decision banning the export of certain types of medical face masks for a period of three months.

The decision stated that it is forbidden to export N95 and FFP3 face masks without prior

permission from the Industry Ministry, reports our sister paper Al Ayam.

According to the decision, severe punishment will be given to anyone who violates the provisions of this decision.

Last April, the Industry Minister issued a decree banning the export of all types of medical masks for three months.

Thief arrested after stealing prescriptions, stamps from hospital

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An individual has been arrested for stealing prescriptions and stamps from a local hospital, the Ministry of Interior announced last night.

The General Directorate of Criminal Investigation and Forensic Science's director general reported the apprehension of the 30-year-old suspect.

After receiving information on the incident, an investigation was carried out, which resulted in the identification and arrest of the individual, the director general said.

He added that the stolen items were seized.

Necessary legal measures are being taken for the referral of the case to the Public Prosecution, the director general noted.