

Locals show concern over rising number of beggars

Citizens and expatriates should pay 'zakat' to charitable organisations, say Islamic scholars

Zahra Ayaz
TDT | Manama

Ramadan is approaching, and locals are concerned about beggars seen in malls, parking lots, and Juffair food streets.

While some are genuinely in need, there are a large number of women carrying small children and run elaborate begging syndicates.

Last year, Muharraq police cracked down on more than 70 beggars, and after taking legal measures, they were deported as most of them were expats.

The Daily Tribune has earlier reported the issue of beggary in Manama, Gudaibiya and streets of Muharraq and the inconvenience they cause to citizens and residents. Women carrying children enter shops asking for money from shopkeepers and customers.

Several reports state that begging has become lucrative for many in the Gulf, especially foreigners. A recent report by Gulf News says that Dubai po-



Faraz Ahmed

lice have arrested beggars with Dh40,000 along with other Arab and foreign currencies during Ramadan.

However, locals and expats told Tribune that they are not seeing it as a crime but as a social problem.

Lina Stahl, volunteer and owner of 'Box Forward', said: "We want to help those in need and who are genuinely struggling at this time of the year. Of



Beggary is a growing social problem

course, begging is not a crime and since they are poor and not well off, they ask money from people, which is totally accepted especially in Ramadan since it's the month of giving.

"There are many families who are coming from reasonably good families, you may never know their personal problems. However, I believe people should also not take advantage of Ramadan."

Speaking to The Daily Tribune, local resident Faraz Ahmed said: "People should not give money to beggars who stand near stoplights, houses and on streets.

"Giving them money hinders the work and efforts of anti-begging authorities trying to clamp down on beggars.

"Those with documents stating they are suffering from medical problems are exempt and it



Lina Stahl

is okay to give them money but not from 'zakat' money because the extent of their medical problems is not known to the general public."

"For instance, despite having an illness, they may still be capable of working but choose to beg instead," he added.

The study stressed the citizens and expatriates should pay 'zakat' to charitable organisations instead of to beggars.

Derasat launches survey measuring awareness of genetic disorders

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The Bahrain Center for Strategic, International and Energy Studies (Derasat) has launched a survey aimed at measuring citizens and residents' awareness regarding a number of genetic disorders.

The survey launched sheds light on the following syndromes: Down, Marfan, and Klinefelter.

The survey sample aims to collect data from all segments of society.

It also intends to identify the extent of societal awareness towards these genetic disorders and knowledge of their prominent symptoms and to examine the importance of early detection during pregnancy, and challenges facing some carriers of these diseases in conceiving.

Furthermore, measuring the awareness and importance of mental health support in aiding patients suffering from one of these three syndromes, their spouses, families, and relatives are to be assessed.

The results of the survey shall be announced in a specialized symposium held by Derasat later this year on the topic featuring local and international experts.

The survey comes as an initiative by Derasat in promoting topics of importance to the general public. It is launched in both Arabic and English and can be accessed via the center's official platforms. It is also accessible via a specialised QR code.

Book launch ceremony



The Bahrain Authority for Culture and Antiquities (BACA) yesterday launched the French version of the book "Bahrain Fort: The Ancient Port and Capital of Dilmun" by its author Dr. Pierre Lombard. The launch ceremony was hosted at the Bahrain Fort Site Museum on the sidelines of the celebration of the International Day of Francophonie. The event was attended by BACA President Shaikh Khalifa bin Ahmed bin Abdullah Al Khalifa, the French Ambassador to the Kingdom of Bahrain Jerome Cauchard, in addition culture and media figures.

97 merchants pledge to fix food prices during Ramadan

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Ninety-seven merchants have pledged to fix commodity prices and not raise prices during Ramadan, according to Khaled Al Amin, head of the Food Wealth Committee.

Using these terms, it will support purchasing power, market stability, and consumer rights.

Al Amin assured citizens and residents that all foodstuffs are available during Ramadan, emphasising that there is no shortage of different foodstuffs in the local market.

He urged people not to store goods, particularly during Ramadan, in a video broadcast by the Bahrain Chamber of Com-



Khaled Al Amin

merce and Industry (BCCI) on its official Instagram account, saying, "The goods available in the markets are sufficient until after the holy month."

Al Amin also stated that, in collaboration with the Ministry



This will support purchasing power, market stability, and consumer rights.

of Commerce and Industry, all facilities for the smooth flow of goods within the local market were provided, and he congratulated everyone on the occasion of the blessed month.

Bahrain keen on UPI linking for faster payment

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Bahrain has expressed interest in India's retail payment system and held preliminary talks with the government about a possible collaboration.

"It (UPI-PayNow linkage) is a good example. We have interest in it but we haven't got to the stage of saying it would be done yet. But initial discussions have happened," Abdulla Adel Fakhro, Minister of Industrial and Commerce told Indian media.

"During the discussion, Indian government officials were open to sharing their experience on the technology. QR code-based merchant payments through UPI apps are already enabled in Singapore and UAE."

This is in line with the recent integration of India's Unified Payment Interface (UPI) and Singapore's PayNow payment system.

Bahrain is interested in investing in all sectors, particularly in those related to food, manufacturing, information and communication technology, petrochemicals, and research and development.

Training programme ends

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The national training program to enhance the capacities of those involved in the protection of human rights in the criminal justice system has concluded.

Public Prosecutor Dr Ali bin Fadhl Al Bouainain attended the closing ceremony which was held at the Crowne Plaza.

The event was also attended by UN Development Programme Resident Representative Firas Gharaibeh, prosecutors, judges, public security officers and other officials.

The Special Investigation Unit (SIU) organised the training programme in collabora-

tion with the Royal Academy of Police and the Institute of Judicial and Legal Studies.

Addressing the event, Dr Al Bouainain in achieving to achieve the Kingdom's future vision for the promotion of human rights.

"The unit has become the nucleus of continuous and effective cooperation between all concerned national institutions and agencies to create an integrated work system that ensures the application of the highest standards and principles of human rights, in light of the fruitful cooperation with the United Nations Development Program," he said.

Productivity down by 30% in most sectors during holy month

Tofoof AlMansoor
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Productivity decreases by 30% during the month of Ramadan in all sectors, including administrative fields, financial and public services, except for sectors that require continuity of production and services, such as factories, Batelco and Alba.

This was according to productivity expert Dr. Akbar Jafari who added that this affects the national economy directly and hinders the contribution of companies and individuals to economic growth.



Dr. Akbar Jafari

Dr. Jafari explained that the reasons do not relate to fasting and lack of nutrition, but rather to behaviours and attitudes that

people exhibit during the holy month.

Most tend to suffer from lack of sleep, and this leads to fatigue and exhaustion which affects the employee's motivation, hence the low productivity.

He said that there must be bodies dedicated to conducting a study on productivity during Ramadan and to what extent it damages the economy of the kingdom.

Dr. Jafari stated that awareness has to be raised to change these patterns and obtain higher productivity.