

Bahrain debates the way forward

BAHRAINIS are being invited to attend a debate this week to discuss the country's economic stability and its political developments.

The Bahrain Debate initiative is being organised by a group of young Bahrainis who aim to create a culture of dialogue on political, social and economic issues.

The event, titled Society and the Political Economy, will be held on Wednesday at Al Oruba Club in Juffair, starting from 7pm.

Confirmed speakers include Bahraini academician Muneera

By SANDEEP SINGH GREWAL

Khalifa, political assistant to Al Wafaq National Islamic Society's secretary general and former MP Khalil Al Marzooq, National Democratic Action Society (Wa'ad) youth office head Ahmed Abdulameer, and a member of Al Fateh Youth Coalition (FYC).

However, organisers are still trying to rope in other political analysts and social experts to take part in Wednesday's event.

"The idea is to encourage the culture of debate and speak about the different ideas

through this open forum," said an organiser.

"It is important to have a representation that includes members from the government, political societies and other voices to discuss a wide range of issues."

Members of the public can attend the debate, which will also feature a question and answer round.

It is the second edition of the Bahrain Debate following a session that took place at the University of London, which focused on Bahrain's political crisis and the outcome of last month's national elections.

"The event will focus on the impact of fall in oil prices, history of the Bahraini society before and after independence, role of religion and women, and other important economic issues," explained the organiser.

"The objective of the second session in Bahrain is to create stronger links between civil society groups, as we have invited social and political actors to take part in the debate."

The GDN reported on December 3 that the National Unity Assembly (NUA) and the Bahrain Human Rights Watch Society (BHRWS) pulled out of

the first debate in London, citing a "hidden political agenda" and unsuitable location as the reasons for their decision.

However, the organiser yesterday told the GDN this time they invited members of the FYC – a breakaway of the NUA.

"A member from the NUA was invited but he did not attend the debate in London, so this time we have a representative from the Al Fateh Youth Coalition as a confirmed speaker," he said.

For details, e-mail thebahraindebate@gmail.com. sandy@gdn.com.bh

Football match details plea by ex-serviceman

A FORMER serviceman from the UK who was posted to Bahrain more than 50 years ago is appealing for information about a long-forgotten football match.

Mr J Walker, who did not give his first name, sent the GDN a hand-written letter from his home in Manchester asking if anyone might remember the game – played in 1960 between Manama and Juffair – or had any photographs of the "very important day".

"From October of 1959 to May 1961 I was serving in Bahrain," said the 77-year-old in his letter.

"Another young man serving there at the same time was also a qualified referee, who was asked to officiate at a football match, and he asked me to 'man the line' as one of the linesmen."

Mr Walker described the match as a "big occasion" that attracted "hundreds of supporters".

"As I remember, we had our photographs taken with a member of the Bahraini royal family," he said.

Wonderful

"It was a very important day in my life, and for the 54 years since that wonderful time I've regretted not having acquired a copy of this photograph."

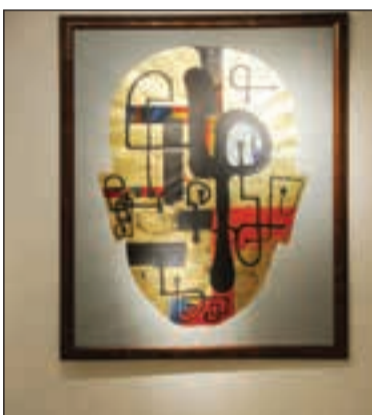
Apparently, a report of the match was published in a newspaper of the time – pre-dating the first GDN by some 18 years.

However, Mr Walker cannot recall the newspaper's name and does not know anymore about the occasion – except that other football teams who had been successful that season were also being presented with trophies.

"I do understand that this is almost impossible," he said.

"I know that all this happened a long time ago, but this 77-year-old man would be very happy for any information whatsoever."

If anyone is able to provide any information about the football match, or knows of any photographs taken on that day, please email gdnnews@gdn.com.bh



More than 50 paintings, sculptures and drawings featuring work of French-Romanian artist Stefan Ramniceanu went on display last night during the opening of an art exhibition at the Bin Matar House. The Dialogues exhibition will run until February 22 from 9am to 1pm and 4pm to 7pm, Saturday to Thursday. Above, Mr Ramniceanu, left, with guests at the exhibition. Above left, some of the exhibits.



Shahrazad Bazaar

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