



# Alba Labour

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## Alba Labour Union Congratulates, His Royal Highness, PM and Sends him Cable



Alba Labour Union congratulates, His Royal Highness, the Distinguished Prime Minister on the occasion of being awarded the Austrian First-class Order of Golden Fleece. Page2

## Alba Oasis for Aluminum Remnants



Alba's green oasis which was opened by the guidance of Her Royal Highness, Princess Sabeeka bint Ibrahim Al-Khalifa has turned into a landfill site. The oasis was granted many awards on environment.. (page 18)

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**Comrade George Mavrikos**  
**The General-Secretary of the WFTU**

### Alba Union Participates at South Africa



### 'Alba vows probe into labour union 'irregularities





# Alba Labour Union Congratulates, His Royal Highness, PM, on being Awarded Austrian First-class Order of Golden Fleece

Alba Labour Union has sent a cable of congratulations to His Royal Highness, Prince Salman bin Khalifa Al-Khalifa on being awarded the Austrian First-class Order of the Golden Fleece presented by the Royal Habsburg family and the Hollabrunn City Council of Austria, in recognition of his efforts to protect societies, his dedication to support and foster humanitarian activities, international peace and relations among nations as well as his noble values and personal commitment to achieving citizens' welfare and promoting global peace.

The cable of congratulations was as follows:

In the name of Allah,  
Your Royal Highness, Prince Khalifa bin Salman Al-Khalifa,

may Allah protect you, Distinguished Prime Minister, May Allah's peace, mercy, and blessings be upon you.

It is our honour and pleasure, on behalf of Alba workers, to express our heartfelt congratulations and utmost pride and love to your Esteemed Highness on the occasion of being granted the Austrian First-class Order of the Golden Fleece by the Royal Habsburg family and the Hollabrunn City Council of Austria, in recognition of your considerable efforts to protect societies and dedication to support and foster humanitarian activities, international peace and relations among nations as well as your noble values and personal commitment to achieving citizens' welfare and pro-



His Royal Highness, the PM

moting global peace. This award brings great pride to the Kingdom of Bahrain and its loyal citizens, which is a sign of respect to your highness and our beloved country as well as an international gratitude to your unlimited

achievements in different fields and especially the humanitarian field. This award has stressed your constant efforts, which is sign of international pride to the Kingdom of Bahrain in addition to the other achievements.

## Al-Hujairi, General Secretary of Alba Labour Union, Participates at Nationalization of jobs' Symposium

Comrade Yasser Al-Hujairi, General Secretary of Alba Labour Union, Chairman of the Bahrain General Federation of Metal, Mechanical and Electrical Industries and Chairman of the Central Committee of Bahrain Free Labour Unions' Federation, has participated in the national symposium on "the Nationalization of Jobs and the Good Utilization of the Arab Labour in Light of the Changes in the Arab Region". The symposium started on Tuesday in the Egyptian capital, Cairo. It will be held for three consecutive days, from Tuesday to Thursday, Oct 20, at Holiday Inn City Stars in Cairo city. The aim of the symposium is to introduce the programs and policies of the nationalization of jobs and their role in overcoming the developmental challenges along with their effects on immigration and



o During the symposium



o Yasser Al-Hujairi

movement. The aim also includes discussing the multi-dimensional and party news as well as trying to find ways to help make developmental policies to the countries that export and import and increasing the benefits of immigration. This symposium has been held to keep up with the international developments

and their influence on labour issues at the Arabian and international levels as well as to respond to social demands and especially the changes witnessed by the Arab region due to developmental challenges (e.g. poverty and unemployment) and also to stress the interests of the Arab Labour Organization regarding immigration issues and Arab labour utilization.



# 'Alba vows probe into labour union 'irregularities'

Aluminium Bahrain (Alba), one of the largest and modern aluminium smelters in the world, has promised to launch a thorough investigation into the alleged irregularities by the company's labour union board members and take necessary corrective steps where required. The company announcement comes in response to the recent statements that have appeared in various

social media channels linking the board members to the irregularities. Alba's chairman of board of directors Shaikh Daij bin Salman bin Daij Al Khalifa said the company remains committed to the principles of corporate governance and will not tolerate any violations relating to the laws of Bahrain or rules and regulations within the company



## Alba Labours



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**All the articles  
posted represent  
the opinions of  
their writers**

# Ahmed Janahi: We'll always Remain the Voice of the Weak

## Management Tries to Keep us Silent, But Nothing will Stop us from Continuing to Preserve Workers' Gains

Who took advantage of their position and why? This question arises. In order to get rid of its problems, the management attacks unionists by restricting their freedom while performing their duty to workers. It tries to get rid of them, follows a hush policy with them and restricts their freedom by means of arbitrary administrative resolutions (i.e. arbitrary transfer at any time and to any place in the company). This is what the management did with the unionist, Comrade Ahmed Ismaeel Janahi, who narrated his story to "Alba Labour Newsletter" in an interview.

As for the injustice he suffered, Ahmed Janahi said: "I was informed about the transfer resolution to the Central Workshop in less than a day, Monday, 10/10/2016 at 2:00 pm, knowing that Tuesday and Wednesday were Ashura holidays. I was asked to start work at the Central Workshop on Sunday, 16/10/2016, without assigning my duties, which I used to perform for long years, to my successor. Can you tell us about the reasons and person behind this resolution?"

I've been transferred to another workplace without any notice, as I didn't apply for this job, according to the company regulations. In addition, I've not been transferred to a workplace that occupationally or educa-

tionally suits me, as my previous workplace was related to purchase agreements and the workplace that I've been transferred to by the management is related to maintenance plans, a job that I don't have any experience in and have never performed before.

Furthermore, Ahmed was asked about his response to this resolution, which he considers unfair to say: "I sent a letter to my new manager at the Central Workshop Department to express my grievance on this sudden arbitrary transfer, which is an act of revenge for my union role in the field of safety. I've been transferred without prior notice, the thing which doesn't comply with the conditions and legal administrative system at Alba company. As for his demands and the role of the management to resolve this administrative dilemma, he said: "When I asked for a written notice of that, which is common, the Executive Officer refused to provide me with a copy of the PAF or my transfer letter. He just sent me an E-mail to inform me that I was removed from my position without any reference to the reason or new position, which violates the simplest rules of transfer in the company. This proves that this transfer is out of revenge for my union role and a response to what was mentioned in the newsletter of Alba Labour Union



o Ahmed Janah.

about the safety conditions in the company and my objective protests to improve the company's safety.

Ahmed was also asked about his vision, impression and the management's position to reply: "The simplest administrative procedures of transfer, which are within the regulations of the company, were not followed. I didn't express my desire to be transferred to another position and I wasn't even consulted about transfer to a position which suits my qualifications. I wasn't asked about my experiences, the places I worked in before and the places that I can leave a mark in.

What future actions will you take? "We discussed the issue with the Bahrain Free Labour Unions' Federation and the World Federation of Trade Unions. Also, there is a solidarity campaign led in the Arab and international union media. Moreover, Alba Labour Union led a solidarity campaign on social media and there might be other

movements in the future.

Why did they punish you this way?

"Because I took action against consistent practices of the company's management, as it covers up accidents and prevents sick workers from transferring to more convenient departments; however, it gives them sick leaves so that they remain unpaid when they take all their days off. The union's Board of Directors has asked me to legally defy these practices, the thing which put the management in an awkward position. Therefore, it took the transfer resolution to restrict my activities and punish me for defending workers.

How do you feel now?

It's clear they couldn't hush us by evidence. This is a very simple thing I can give to workers, who elected me to represent them and defend their rights, and not to represent the management. Alba workers are free and I can't be a slave to those who target them.



# «WFTU SOLIDARITY MESSAGE WITH THE ALBA LABOUR UNION»

Athens, Greece - 18 October 2016

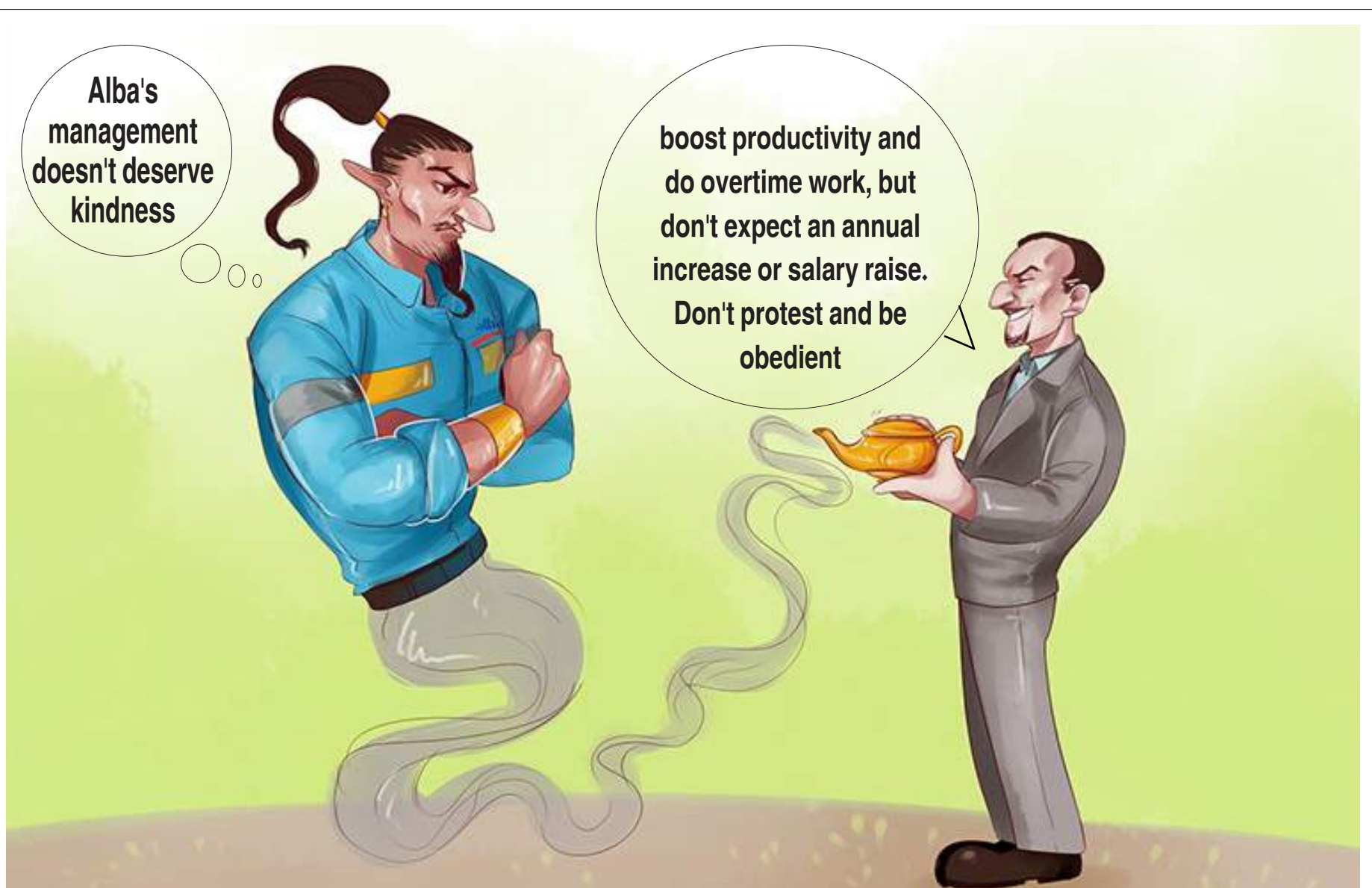
The World Federation of Trade Unions, representing 92 million workers in all over the world, expresses its solidarity with our brothers from Alba Labour Union in Bahrain and especially with our brother Ahmed Janahi. Ahmed has been illegally attacked and removed from his critical job by the management of the company because of his Union Activities

We, as WFTU, we call upon the company to abstain from any attack to our fellow Unionist's Otherwise, we will take action before International Organizations like the ILO

**!Brother Ahmed is not alone**

**!Long live Struggle, Internationalism and Unity of the world working class**

The Secretariat





# Alba Labour Union Meets General Directorate of Traffic Representatives



o During the meeting

The Chairman and some Board Members of Alba Labour Union met with representatives of the General Directorate of Traffic, who were led by First Lieutenant Khalid Jassim Al-Mogahwi, the Head of Traffic, to discuss the traffic jams which workers get stuck in while driving to and from the company. The Board Members discussed all the traffic problems related to the project of developing Alba and Nuwaidrat Roundabouts by giving a brief description of the official work timings and the number of workers who drive to work and the buses provided for workers. The representatives of the Directorate of Traffic expressed their willingness to cooperate for the sake of ensuring a smooth traffic flow and giving priority to Alba workers during the peak hours. They also pointed out that the Directorate is doing its

best to serve the users of this area by drawing up a plan consistent with the phases of the development project to ensure a smooth traffic flow. Ali Binali, the Chairman of Alba Labour Union, extended his greetings and thanks to the officials of the General Directorate of Traffic presided by His Excellency, the Interior Minister, Lieutenant-General Shaikh Rashid bin Abdullah Al-Khalifa and Colonel Shaikh Abdulrahman bin Abdulwahab Al-Khalifa, who is acting General Director of the Directorate of Traffic, for their considerable efforts and continuous cooperation to serve the interest of the public as well as Alba workers.

Alba Labour union makes every effort by contacting and meeting all the concerned parties with the de-

velopment project to arrive at solutions, which help reduce the traffic congestion suffered by workers.



o memorable picture



o Alba and Nuwaidrat Roundabouts.





## Useless Management System in Arab Societies



There was a hard-working ant. Every morning, it was going to work full of energy, happiness and strong will. It was very productive. When the lion saw her working with this efficiency without supervision. It said to itself: "if the ant was working with all this energy without supervision, then how would be its level of productivity if I appointed a supervisor to it?". Therefore, the lion appointed a cockroach general supervisor of the ant's performance.

The cockroach's introductory resolutions were as follows:

1. Implementing a system of attendance and leave.
2. Employing a secretary to make reports.
3. Employing a spider to manage archives and monitor phone calls.

The lion was happy with the cockroach's reports, so it asked the latter to develop them by adding charts and data analyses to present them in the next board meeting.

Therefore, the cockroach did the following:

1. Bought a computer and laser printer.
2. Employed a fly to head the IT Department.

The hard-working ant did not like the administrative aspects of the new system and the time- and effort-wasting meetings.

When the lion felt there was a problem in performance, he decided to:

1. Change the working methods of the department.
2. Employ a grasshopper for its experience in administrative development.

The introductory resolutions of the grasshopper were as follows:

1. Buying new furniture.
2. Buying a carpet to make employees feel at home.
3. Employing a personal assistant to help the grasshopper formulate developmental strategies and set the budget.

After the lion reviewed employment costs and found out that it was necessary to reduce expenses, he employed an owl financial advisor.

The owl analysed the situation for three months and filed a report to the lion stipulating that the department was hugely overstuffed.

Thus, the lion decided to dismiss the ant.

This is the real meaning of restructuring and this is how productivity falls, by bad management.

## Workers' Grievances never Ending

After five months of the third annual assessment on 15/2/2016 and the strong response to the reckless resolution of the management to restrict the assessment rating to 0.7 out of 1. Workers rejected this resolution; therefore, they collectively and unprecedentedly filed grievances, as the number of genuine grievances reached 563, according to the company's system. However, the company's management does not adopt its own system, as even half of these grievances have not been considered yet. The management neglects this important issue which directly affects the feelings and performance of workers. When the HR Department is asked to resolve this problem, they always say they would not change anyone's assessment for any reason even before considering the cases and factors. Until today, no meetings have been held on any grievance over being taken to the second stage. Some managers plead with workers to cancel their grievances and tell workers this issue was out of their hands, as these are instructions given by the Higher Management. This means this assessment does not reflect workers' performance and is just a model to fill out forms according to a personal decision by a person who does not even know the names of workers, how their performance is or what their laborious tasks are. After the management referred 260 workers to early retirement without recruiting substitutes, the tasks which need to be performed by two workers have been performed by only one worker. Sometimes, a worker performs more than one task to tackle the acute shortage of workers and especially in light of the absence of the managers capable of confronting the Higher Management and informing them of the company's situation.

Alba Labour union detected many violations and mistakes in the assessment process starting from the use of pencils and leading up to erasing the assessment ratings by correction pens to reach the maximum rating of 0.7, according to the management's orders. In some departments, managers assessed workers while they were on leave and forged their signatures. Also, there were many other violations which are against the system of the company's management. If the management, which has devised the grievance and assessment schemes, is itself violating and not adopting it, then who will apply it?!

## On the Occasion of Teachers' Day

# National Union Signs Joint Cooperation Agreement with Bahrain Teachers' Union



o the agreement



o While signing the agreement

On the occasion of the World Teachers' Day on October 5, 2016, the National Union was honoured to sign a joint co-operation agreement with the Bahrain Teachers' Union. The National Union was honoured by the visit of the delegation of the Bahrain Teachers' Union in its headquarters at Gulf Air Company led by Ms. Safiya Mohammed Shamsan, the chairwoman of the Bahrain Teachers' Union, Mr. Jamal Al-Junaïd and Mr. Ibrahim Al-Ghanim, who were hosted by the chairman of the National Union, Ahmed Al-Kuwaiti. This joint agreement has been made to strengthen the relations between the National Labour Union of Gulf Air and the Bahrain

Teachers' Union for the benefit of workers.

The brotherly meeting between the representatives of the two unions showed the close relationship between Bahrain's workers. The discussions included the union situation at the Bahraini, Arabian, regional and international levels in light of the current developments. Mr. Al-Kuwaiti, stressed the role of each union in promoting the stability, development and unity of the workers of the Kingdom of Bahrain. The two unions expressed their willingness for mutual cooperation and coordination to face the challenges of the union activities at the local, Arabian, regional and international levels.



النقابة الوطنية لعمال طيران الخليج  
National Labour Union of Gulf Air



As an addition, during the meeting, bilateral issues were discussed to activate the principles of the mutual cooperation between the two unions as well as the ways of strengthening the relations to serve workers. The two parties have agreed on the following:

1- Strengthening the rela-

tions between the two unions.

2- Promoting the bonds of friendship and solidarity between the union movement for the benefit of the Bahrain's workers.

3- Exchanging visits and periodic meetings between the two unions to make sure the training courses for labour union leaders and the members of the unions are run.

4- Uniting the visions and viewpoints in the local, Arabian, regional and international forums.

5- Exchanging expertise when organizing events and activities.

6-Making periodic agreements for the executive and educational programs on a yearly basis.







## Person of Bright Smile Departed

By: Abdullah Al-Moaraj

she was always smiling and greeting everybody from a distance in addition to her support and help despite the challenges and difficulties she faced by the administrative staff, whom she worked with, along with the harassments she suffered for years, since the prior Executive Management has been changed, by transferring her from one department to another. She was persistent in the face of the arrogance and greed of managers. Yes, she is the powerful woman, the Executive Secretary of the Marketing Department, the late Suhair Abdullah. Suhair departed without saying good bye! She was driving to work half an hour before the official working time, was keen to arrive before everyone in the department and was trying her best not to arrive late. Suhair regarded the workplace her second house; however, the destiny decided to take her forever. She departed with pain due to the harassments she continuously faced by managers besides the pain of sickness, which she suffered for a long time. She was always pretending that she was of good health just not to bother her colleagues and not to gain their sympathy. Suhair was strong like steel, as she tolerated the powerful people who forced her into early retirement by claiming that her performance was not good. In spite of all this, she tolerated until God decided to take her forever.

Her suffering was faced by indifference from decision makers, whether from the unjust insurance company or the company's management, who harassed her without any mercy or respect to her years of loyal service in the company and to her dedication to work even in her last few days. They even punished her when she was in her deathbed by saying: "This is the last time for her to get treatment in a private hospital. Next time, she has to be taken to a government hospital". This had been said by one of the management representative before the deceased died as if she were getting treatment at his expense!!! Those people are totally deprived of humanity; however, we believe that God never forgets and oppressors will earn what they deserve. Suhair, may God bless your soul and grant you the highest levels in Paradise. May God grant your family and beloved ones patience and fortitude! We belong to God and to him we shall return.

## Respect First



A worker of the Medical Department, who is famous and respected by his colleagues at Alba, went to Alba Labour Union to talk about the bad treatment he got from a doctor of the Medical Department, who has verbally abused him whenever he could.

The doctor of the Medical Department accused him of being responsible for his lab coat's loss. Therefore, the worker was looking for the lost coat though he was not asked to, as it is not one of the tasks of this worker to search for this doctor's stuff and clothes.

After searching, the lab coat was found in the closet and not taken by the worker as falsely accused by the doctor by means of abusive words in the presence of his colleagues. Then, instead of thanking him for finding the coat, the doctor treated the worker with contempt. Therefore, he went to the representatives of workers, the members of Alba Labour Union, to complain about the terrible situation at the Medical Department due to this arrogant doctor's abuse to workers. After 20 years of loyalty and dedication to the company, the worker has felt disappointed to get these insults and bad treatment every morning by the doctor, not to mention the false accusations and obscene language as well as the extra tasks. After the worker was at the Potroom for long years, where he had an accident for carrying a machine which has affected his vertebrae, he has been transferred to the Medical Department for office job so that the workload is less. However, he has been assigned extra tasks, which are inconsistent with his job and qualifications, as he sometimes finds himself like a farmworker or cleaner. He was narrating this with tearful eyes due to regret at what has happened to him.

Furthermore, this worker has not been promoted yet despite his loyal service in the company and his academic degree, which he got from a prestigious university abroad. He sacrificed everything to get a promotion and therefore a higher salary and position at Alba; however, he is still of Grade 7 despite the existence of vacancies. Thus, he is helpless about his future in the company, as he has been abused rather than being promoted.



# Safety Trips !!

There is a traditional proverb that roughly has the meaning of "if it was good, people would have kept it".

This proverb is said when the owner of something no longer needs it, so they either throw it away or donate it to others. This is what currently happening to some safety workers of production and maintenance departments. Some safety coordinators complained that they were being neglected by their managers and were not given the chance to join developmental and educational projects, even the internal and external short courses. A number of safety coordinators have been surprised that

they were invited to a conference in some country and their presence was semi-obligatory with an indirect warning from the management about the necessity of attending the conference, as those who would not attend, would be deprived of another chance. However, they discovered their attendance was just for increasing the number of attendees. When there is an event in a vital tourist country, every member of the management, whether related to safety or not, rushes to attend this event so that we do not discover when and who made the invitation. When will this marginalization to this group of employees stop?!



## Workers corner

Articles

Messages

Problems

Poetries

This corner is for the workers to convey their messages to the officials, publish their articles and express their problems. A White space, with honest words, from the workers' suffering

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## Crisis of Female Workers' buses in South Gate



Female workers were surprised by the resolution of the Security and Safety Department to change the current women's bus stop to men's bus stop next to Awal building knowing that this area is crowded by Alba workers, contractors and moving cars and trucks, in the morning and afternoon. This type of crowding might lead to damage or accidents. Some female workers complained to Alba Labour Union

and therefore the latter asked the Security and Safety Management to resolve this issue. When the Security and Safety Department was asked to make a hazard assessment to reconsider the resolution of transferring the bus stop, one of whom came up with an evil, complex and costly idea to complicate the crisis further by posing obstacles. However, this is not a real problem and its solution is easy and affordable.





## Stop Wasting Alba's Money on Tours and Conferences ◀

The Executive Management of Alba was among the sponsors of the 31st International Aluminum Conference in Madrid, Spain, on Sept 27-29, 2016. This caused workers' indignation, as a large number of Executive Managers are always sent abroad for conferences and tours knowing that two or three managers are enough. They are delegations representing the company and not a group of tourists travelling the world under the pretext of attending conferences, which cost thousands of Dollars for airline tickets, the residence in luxurious hotels and various tours. The catastrophe was that the

same number of Executive Managers attended the 7th GCC Aluminum Meeting on Tuesday, 4/10/2016, at the Sofitel Hotel in Dubai, UAE. This costed thousands of Dollars represented in business class tickets and the residence in five-star hotels while workers are being deprived of their gains. These travels shed light on the Executive Management's attempts to provoke workers. We cannot deny the significance of attending the International Aluminum Conference, which is an international event that got participants from the major pioneering companies of Aluminum, and being a silver sponsor to it as well as the GCC Aluminum Meeting. However, the mem-

bers of the delegation representing the company has to be logical. On the other hand, workers are shocked by these actions because while the Management tries to deprive workers of gains, grades and promotions by means of austerity measures, it spends large amounts on other things. Workers are filled with regret on their situation and say to themselves: O, Management, have mercy on us and stop extravagantly spending the company's money!!".



# The Arab Mind



**By: Abdullah Khalifa**

The Arabic culture relied on myths to rise after the regression caused by the Arabic retrofit culture in the 19th century, the royal liberal regimes. National military regimes and the secular enlightenment are being excessively widespread without thinking about Islamic, ancient and humanitarian cultures. It was difficult and dangerous for the uneducated tribes of the Arabian Peninsula to seek knowledge and the reasons for existence. Some middle-class people represented in craftsmen and culturalists sought knowledge about existence and the way of controlling it.

Nations do not understand nature and society in a metaphysical way because this depends on intuition, which is the simplest form of thought.

Intuition is closely related to Arabs and Muslims because they are not of high levels of industrial and educational production. Also, magic and religion are associated with this low-level of development. The great efforts of Arab and Muslim scholars contributed in distancing people from nature and society at the beginning of civilization. Linguists and philosophers helped shape the Arab objective and critical mind, which searches for the components of everything and how it was brought to existence, be it the human body, a planet, star or any other physical objects.

Humanitarian sciences were not apart from natural sciences, as they were the basis of it. Morphology and syntax as well as the roots of language and the Arab social life led to the development of the Arabic language in terms of vital expressive and derivational abilities created by naturalists, doctors, astronomers and chemists.

Mathematics has been changed by means of adding zeros to the numbers and therefore making them easier and infinite, since this branch of science is infinite. Algebra has been changed too by means of finding unknowns from known values. Engineering has developed through the interaction with the Greek culture. Finally yet importantly, chemistry and physics started to develop with the development of craftsmanship and industries.

Nevertheless, are these sciences distant

from witchery, especially when they were first discovered?

As it is known, Jabir ibn Hayyan took the science of chemistry from the Alexandrian school, which followed the hypothesis that elements could be transformed into each other. Along with chemistry, ibn Hayyan took a plenty of the Hellenic philosophy and magic principles as well as mysticism and the Iranian spiritualism. (Collector of Arabs' scientific history, Dr. Mohammed Abdulrahman Marhaba, 2nd edition of Owaidat publishings in 1988, page 315). Having knowledge about object dimensions is related to the productive forces in society and their manifestations in scientific research, especially the development of crafts, laboratories, scholars' specializations as well as the various smelting, sounding and testing tools. Thus, there were no serious arguments about industry and science:

(Arab and Muslim scientists mixed gold with silver and covered utensils with anti-oxidant and rusty tin. They also utilized their chemical experience in making perfumes, textiles and candles). The Global Arabic Encyclopedia, page 460. Research methodologies were limited and the ruling class tended to monopolize in light of the economic surplus, the thing which led to the adoption of the consumer industries related to the wealthy. The philosophical movement did not make thorough analyses about nature and society. Any cosmic object, be it a planet, star, etc., which had not been studied thoroughly and left people with shallow knowledge about it, led to myths and misunderstandings in the Arab civilization. Natural sciences were led by the goals of the upper-class, as money is spent on medicine, pharmacy and astrology rather than other sciences. Types of awareness such as religion, philosophy and science could not thoroughly study objects in terms of their varieties and smaller elements. They also could not understand the more developed processes of objects, social life and intellectual phenomena.



# Who is Saad?



**W**ho is this obscure unionist who revealed lots of the secrets of union work to the Bahraini society and chose to express his perspective on union work on a blog. This might irritate many people including semi-unionists who sold their conscience to buy positions. We cannot figure out why "Saad" has not revealed his identity yet and if "Saad" is his real name or a nickname, probably. Then, who is Saad, who decided to expose union opportunism? Is he a person or movement?

Is Saad afraid of revealing his real name and identity? whom is he afraid of? Recently, many people have been tired of the inactivity of unions; therefore, nothing would stop them from saying the truth.

## If you cannot Beat them, Join them

**Oct. 24, 2016**

There is a huge difference between changing your stances and changing your principles if you were considering yourself an experienced politician.

In the afternoon of Mar. 17, 2016, the second day of the general conference, which is the day of contesting elections, one of the candidates lost his temper after he discovered one of the retired under-secretary-generals received 15 nomination forms, as he used to do in the previous conferences. The forms were for the preparation of the allocation list to be given to the "new herd" in the conference since they do not know about the names of the people who had been told to attend to guarantee votes. This incident was supposed to reveal to this candidate the truth of these so-called free and impartial elections. It also revealed the truth which he was avoiding to say, perhaps out of shyness. However, at that moment, everything was

against his interest to join the Secretariat-General.

The non-inclusion of his name on the allocation list by his society was for an apparent reason and most people described his nomination as only an envious reaction to the election of a member of his union to Board Member by the allocation team. In a year, this member has become a Board Member and then a member of the collocation list of the Secretariat. Certainly, this candidate could claim he was a candidate of reform and was not supported, which made many people vote for him and then regret their decision. Many people supported him and enabled him to win the election; however, his resignation and return by "instructions from supreme authorities" revealed the truth. This revealed the fact that the election process is for the benefit of parties and individuals at the expense of workers' benefits without any consideration of the principles they claim to have in events like (The Youth Day, Great Union Day and Woman's Day).

After several months, the principles were exposed by the events. Therefore, the real principle was "if you cannot beat them, join them!" after rigging the elections of Balcesco Trade Union upon instructions and publishing fake achievements on the media as well as pretending to forget what happened before his and everyone's eyes to keep his contradictions under the pretext of "workers' interest" hidden. Common Question: Was the election of 4 or 5 members of the Secretariat-General, who are from the same village, by coincidence?

**Latest News about the Federation:**

- Meeting between the Secretariat-General and the Crown Prince followed by another news and then the usual saying: "We are not an Executive Authority", as a typical justification.
- Defamation case from the Secretariat-General filed against the unionist, Ali Binali, will be thrown away soon.

**Point to Ponder:**

It is difficult to have sight in a blind society. (Jose Saramago)

**Blog link :** [/https://saad1973.wordpress.com](https://saad1973.wordpress.com)



# Heart of the Matter

Alba workers are fed up with the false lectures of the company's management in the main hall at Alba.

Workers consider Alba's Management a band which praises managers and high-ranking employees.

At the end of the Heart Meeting, Safety Meeting, where a red heart was used, a member of the Management tore the Heart Logo into two pieces and said he would be sad if any worker had an accident.

Why did we not see this compassionate care about the safety of workers when a worker had his leg burnt in an accident??

On the contrary, the Management tries to cover up accidents or force workers to claim they had no accidents to keep a false safety record based on campaigns of covering up accidents by means of giving workers two choices: Either take accident responsibility or claim it did not occur by returning to work after three days of the accident in order not to affect the safety record, which has been a heavy burden to workers. The

safety record has been just for improving the company's image and not for creating an accident-free environment.

Alba, by the leadership of this management, has been like an ogre that wants to be granted prizes, which are secretly bought, at the expense of the health and safety of workers. After each award, managers take trips to celebrate their success in accident cover-ups and workers' abuse before they resort to their union.

After that, what happens to the workers who had accidents is not of importance, as the Management does not change their jobs and their sick leave is unpaid. Then, the HR Department kills all their hopes of being transferred to a more convenient job after an accident Alba's management did not document for the sake of the Chief Executive Officer's CV. This Officer would claim in his next meeting that he reached five million hours without any accidents. In fact, they are five million lies at the expense of workers' rights.



## Medical Department at Alba ..Management Exploits Medicine

The doctor calls sick workers, on their personal numbers, not to ask about their health, but to extort them to claim they are of good health. The doctor tells them: "You have to come to the Medical Department and ask for removing your name from the rehab list" or "it isn't of your interest to keep your name on the rehab list". The doctor, who should have been capable of not mixing between his position and department, obeys the management, which considers workers spare parts, instead of sincerely performing their work.

The scheme starts with giving the sick worker long sick leave not for treatment, but for exhausting all his sick leave and staying at home unpaid. The doctor negotiates with the worker to work while he is unable to do so just to get a salary.

The Medical Department has turned into a reason to help the Management apply the American Cowboy Policy on workers. All this is done to force sick workers into early retirement though their sickness is due to the unhealthy work environment at Alba, which has affected their health at a young age.

The Management grants these workers small amounts to get rid of them, though it is the reason for their sickness.

Alba's management uses its power on the workers who have always supported it. When the right time comes to reward these workers by treating them and changing their jobs, the mask of this American Cowboy Management falls off.

Perhaps, the Management thinks it can punish sick workers for their insistence to be transferred to other jobs; however, it is committing a big mistake that will cost it a lot.





## Opening of Dr. Eman Dental Center

Under the patronage of Alba Labour Union, the Board Members of the union participated, in a joyful atmosphere, in the opening of Dr. Eman Dental Center in East Riffa. This participation is out of the union's concern about workers' health and is a contribution to provide full care to its members. The participation and interest of Alba Labour Union in the

opening of this center, which is one of the most important medical centers in Bahrain, is due to the existence of an experienced cadre in the field of dentistry, in general, and surgical dentistry, in particular, besides the latest laboratory equipment of surgical dentistry and Dr. Eman's concentration on providing the center with the latest therapeutic appliances

and dental implants. Moreover, the center has an exclusive offer to Alba Labour Union on medical insurance, the treatment of the union members and their children as well as the provision of necessary care. Alba Labour Union paid tribute to the health services provided by the center in addition to the sophisticated equipment which are of high global levels.





# Contractor's Workers Used to Humiliate Alba Workers

The Management trains many contract workers for jobs, which are permanent to Alba workers. Since the establishment of Alba, we have never seen any of the contractor's workers exploited for major jobs at the Potroom, Casthouse and Carbon as what is happening now. The Management spends thousands of Dinars to train the contractor's workers; however, these workers decide to work in other companies or return to their countries due to their low salaries. Thus, the Management starts to train new workers of a new contractor.

The policy of nationalizing jobs and giving them to the contractor is a useless policy, which would cause great loss to Alba. The latter is a national company which should take the responsibility for recruiting graduates along with the other major national companies which are responsible for training and recruiting graduates.

Is it reasonable that the national company, Alba, trains the contractor's workers for permanent jobs and not temporary ones to nationalize these jobs and keep these skillful people who can manufacture aluminum? The Management's scheme revolves around repeating



small experiments. However, the application of this scheme in the various departments is an act of ingratitude towards this country, represented in the government and people, who made great efforts for the success of Alba and the other industrial companies.

No doubt, this vision negatively affects Alba's future status in the Bahraini industrial society in terms of being able to produce productive generations of workers, craftsmen and engineers, who are considered builders of the future of Bahrain. Alba's negligence of this role is due to the management's inability to imagine the future of Bahrain. The sig-

nificance of Alba does not only centre on its ability to earn income but also on its ability to provide job opportunities and jobs directly and indirectly related to the companies surrounding Alba. These jobs should be nationalized at the major company, Alba, and the surrounding companies.

Since Alba Company does not undertake this role, the government solely takes responsibility through the public sector which tries to find annual jobs for thousands of graduates. Alba's Management has a negative role in terms of the contribution to solve the training and recruitment problems.

## Managers' Marathon of Wasting Working Hours

Lucky times are irreplaceable and especially when it comes to enjoyable marathons and activities outdoors or in the company's parks for spending a good time with colleagues.

However, it is unacceptable when these activities are held during the official working hours, which costs the company a lot. A clear example would be the time-wasting marathon, the so-called "anti-breast-cancer", which is inconsistent with the current situation of the company and should not have been organized by the Executive Managers.

No doubt, spending two hours in this marathon reflects on productivity, as this wastes the official working hours. Therefore, by spending

two hours in this marathon followed by not less than an hour for rest and then another hour for lunch, the concerned manager is left with a not-bad number of other working hours.

How can these managers waste time at the expense of the production process this way? How will they evaluate the workers who waste working and production hours if they themselves are the ones who irresponsibly waste working hours?

The company pays a large amount for each manager's working hour; however, it applies austerity measures on workers by means of compelling the heads of departments to deprive workers of good ratings in the annual increase as well as promotions and

incentives by not giving good ratings to the workers who are committed to the working hours and productivity. On the other hand, we find this injustice directed only against workers. Why does Alba Company waste all this time and money at the expense of workers' efforts???

It would have been better if the Executive Management had organized the marathon with the concerned department after working hours at Alba Club or some other walkway. It would have positively affected the reputation of the company by means of having participants from the society, which falls under the social responsibility of the company along with the other committed companies to the society!!!

# Alba Lost Flower - Suhair

## Her Death Affected All



The death of the worker, Suhair Abdullah Ali Saleh, who had been working as an Executive Secretary at the Marketing Department, brought grief to all the departments of Alba Company. She died on a blessed day, Friday, Sept 9, 2016.

This powerful woman coped with all her difficulties. She was persistent in the face of all the Management's actions in terms of marginalizing her and changing her job. Suhair will not be forgotten at Alba and will remain in our hearts. Those who were against her could not break her will. Death declared her triumph against them.



## Example for Working Women - Suhair

I was shocked when I received the news of the late Suhair's death on the phone. Her death was a shock to all. Five days before her death, we were talking and laughing in the office and on the same day, I dropped her home and were talking all the way. She was always talking about her daughters' stories at school and her sufferings with the disease.

Her journey in life ended with being an Executive Secretary at the Marketing Department. Suhair was respectful and liked by everyone. She was hopeful and cheerful despite the difficulties she was facing. When she was asked: "How are you?". She had always smiled with hope, patience and contentment, and said: Praise be to God!

I was dealing with the deceased on a daily basis, as she was the secretary of the department. I knew her for three years and our relationship was strong. I considered her a sister and friend rather than a colleague.

We had never seen Suhair weak. She was an example of a strong Bahraini woman, as she was patient and loyal to her work in addition to her capability to cope with her dis-

ease. She was not taking any rest. Despite the pressure and responsibilities at work, she was striving for the sake of the future of her daughters, Mariam and Noor. She really loved her daughters and was doing her best to provide them with a decent and happy life.

I cannot imagine the department without her. After her death, it is very hard for me to go to her office. She filled the place with happiness. When I was visiting her office, she used to welcome me with pleasure. I always feel that her soul still exists in the office. She had a pure soul and was helpful and generous to everybody. Suhair departed from this life as a result of the fatal sickle-cell disease.

Suhair departed, but left a mark on my heart and mind. I learned a lot about life and hope from her, as she was an example of a strong Bahraini woman. I have not seen anyone else with such an amount of patience and tolerance. She was an example of a loyal, generous and hard working person. May her soul rest in peace!



By: Reem Moosa

**Death does not hurt the dead; it hurts the living – Mahmood Darwish.**



# How Alba Oasis Turns into Landfill Site

No doubt, the guidance of Her Royal Highness, Princess Sabeeka bint Ibrahim Al-Khalifa, wife of His Royal Majesty and President of the Supreme Council for Women, of exploiting nature to the utmost brought Alba good results. Alba has become an example of a pioneering company in the region and world. Her Highness stressed the importance of preserving the surroundings of the company to the Management and referred to the environmental role of Alba Company in terms of providing a healthy work environment. She also pointed out the actions which should be taken, by such a major national company pioneering in the field of aluminum, should take. In addition, she stressed the company's role in boosting and developing the national economy by the protection of the environment and wildlife since the company is located in a strategic area and desert environment. Her Highness emphasized the importance of preserving the environment by the company and encouraged Alba to keep up its environmental activities until all its goals are achieved by means of adopting a complete environmental



o Opening of the Princess Sabeeka Oasis on March 10, 2009

consisted of plants and trees; however, Her Highness gave guidance to the company's management about the significance of increasing the green space and replacing the widespread *Conocarpus* trees in the company with palm trees. She gave advice regarding this issue because *Conocarpus* trees consume a large amount of water by searching for

Princess Sabeeka Oasis went through several developmental phases: The plantation of trees and other types of plants as well as agricultural crops (e.g. flowers and vegetables). Also, the oasis contains a large artificial lake, which has been a habitat to migratory birds and many kinds of fish that the birds live on. On Dec. 15, 2013, in line with the celebrations of the National Day and the Anniversary of the Accession of His Majesty, the king to the Throne, the celebration hall, which directly oversees the artificial lake, was opened. Moreover, recently, domestic animals have been brought to the oasis to represent a real natural environment in one of the major pioneering industrial companies of the world. A dream has come true after the transformation of a dry land to a productive environment by virtue of the concerted efforts as well as the directions of Her Highness. Princess Sabeeka Oasis is one of the unique green oases in the Kingdom of Bahrain which exists in an industrial company to increase the green space at Alba out of commitment to the environment. In 2003, Alba was awarded ISO 14001 Certification on environmental policies for its commitment to environmental standards, which make Alba an environmentally friendly industrial



o Alba's awards on environmental preservation

policy inside and outside the company. The oasis was made on Tuesday, Mar. 10, 2009, when Her Highness paid a historic visit to Alba Company to open the green oasis, which was named after her. At the beginning of the project, the oasis

it in the groundwater in addition to destroying to the infrastructure through this search. The company followed the directions of Her Highness from that moment until the replacement project was almost done.



# *Despite Awards of Environment Protection*

**Before**



**After**



company.

Regrettably, this did not last so long, as the company's management has recently taken a large area of the Princess Sabee-ka Agricultural Oasis to change it from a green productive land into a barren land for rubbish. This area was reclaimed for the plantation of seasonal crops such as edible vegetables and leaf vegetables. The inappropriate resolutions of the company's management of giving up on the project of increasing green spaces and preparing the western area of the oasis to be a site for aluminum remnants. The company's management is unaware of the consequences of such a resolution. Utilizing the western area of the oasis for aluminum remnants will have a very bad effect by means of turning the green land into a barren one due to the odour, which will destroy the agricultural crops, as well as affecting workers, as there are nearby rest areas and restaurants, not to mention the negative effect on the surrounding factories and companies.

The company's management cannot imagine the seriousness of such an action by means of overtly destroying green spaces without any concern for the efforts put to make this oasis. Why have we reached the point where the environment is destroyed by poisons and aluminum remnants for some Dinars?!

**The management's turned the oasis into a landfill site**





## Alba Labour Union Participates at 17th WFTU Congress in South Africa

### Speech of Basem Kuwaitan



Good day dear comrades brothers and sisters  
I am here unfortunately to tell you that our comrades workers are being either killed or insulted in different parts of the world. Killed in non sense wars all over the world, being forced to megrate in very difficult and dangerous conditions and they are being killed by forcing them to work under unsafe fatel working conditions without any proper protection equipments. we continue to receive cascades of our loved workers and we are really worried about those workers regardless of their nationality, race, color, religion or any other way they wants to believe that we are divided by.

Dear commarade., though the working forces are the heart of developing countries but there are lots of challenges that the working class is facing and lots of undscribe difficulties specially in our beloved Palestine as workers there are great example on how the aggressive imperial forces are operating, as there and on daily basis workers are being humolated by these invading forces.

We as working class leaders if we did not watch the situations carefully and follow the progress of escalating attacks on the workers rights all over the world and take the proper actions to stop these attacks, we will be seeing our selves losing more and more of our legitimate rights and here we should be inspired by the land that we are staying on today, South Africa the contrary and the people that gave us the hope, carriage and draw our path toward decent life even if the struggle took long.

At the end I would to thank COASTO and WFTU for organising this conference which is a great opportunity to reunite and to show our support to each other and to show everyone that we will not keep quit when it comes to our rights.



The delegation of Alba Labour Union headed to Durban, South Africa, to participate in the 17th general labour congress of the World Federation of Trade Unions (WFTU) under the slogan "Struggle – Internationalism – Unity" with the aim of satisfying the needs of modern workers by fighting poverty and the wars started by the savage capitalism. The delegation consisted of four Board Members: Basem Kuwaitan, Yasser Al-Hujairi, Abdullah Ali and Abbas Ali. Basem Kuwaitan, the leader of the delegation, pointed out the importance of Alba Labour Union's participation in the congress which consists of unionists from all over the world, as this global forum helps workers tackle the issues facing the working class, which are either related to economy, politics or society. Basem also stated that at this stage,

workers have to be united against capitalism, poverty, unemployment, etc. by striving for the progress of the international labour movement with the help of the WFTU, the legitimate representative of the global working class. The opening session of the congress started on October, 15 and will continue till October, 8, as hundreds of delegates of labour unions from 111 countries will arrive in Durban, South Africa, to enthusiastically participate in the congress. It is expected that 1200 delegates from the public and private sectors with the rates of 31% and 69%, successively, would participate in the congress. Moreover, Alba Labour Union associated with the WFTU since 2008. We wish the representatives of Alba Labour Union all the best in undertaking their union task by active participation at the 17th WFTU Congress and hope they have a safe trip back home.







### Speech of Comrade George Mavrikos

Secretary-General of the WFTU



**T**he comrades of South Africa, the country of Mandela, Mabhida, Mitsile as well the heroes of the working class and child martyrs to strive against discrimination and capitalism.

Dear the comrades of South Africa, we, on behalf of 92 million members of the World Federation of Trade Unions (WFTU), who struggle in 125 countries all over the world, extend our thanks to you for hosting this historic congress. Workers, employees, unemployed people and retirees as well as the men and women in all over the world, we promise you that the real concerns of this congress will be the problems of workers and people as well as the duties of labour unions in addition to the ways to achieve the key demands of simple families.

Dear colleagues,

It is our duty and commit-

ment to hold a democratic, united, class oriented and internationalist congress. It is also our duty to hold a congress which honours the internationalist struggle of the WFTU and to respond to the current and future demands of the working class in the world.

The active participation in the discussions and suggestions prior to the congress on the essential documents prepared by the Presidential Council and the vast propaganda make us optimistic about the results of the congress by means of the resolutions that can help shape a bright present and future to the union movement.

This 17th general congress is held at the time when the international position towards nations and workers has been more complex.

The long and rich experience of the international union movement shows that the staff in high-ranking positions is very precious to the WFTU and its real power is represented by the nations and fighters, who strived under harsh con-

ditions in their workplaces and sacrificed their time for the freedom of the working class. The staff of the WFTU, who strives to overcome the challenges faced by the working class and resist the serious attacks against unions, deserve our support, as these issue that were taken up have helped this new generation of staff to develop and gain experience.

Yesterday was the 71st anniversary of the establishment of the WFTU. Today, we start our new year in Moses Mabhida and Nelson Mandela's country, as the WFTU General Congress is a good event to bring union leaders, ANC and SACP together.

The WFTU will continue to be firm in order to support you, the African people and the lower class people in every African country to achieve victory.

The African continent is the continent that has produced several revolutionary leaders.

This will be hard but fair and essential struggle. Remember that since 1945, the WFTU has been your union

organization and will continue to support you. We are proud of our history.

We are proud of the martyrs of the WFTU over 71 years.

We are proud of internationalism, anti-imperialism and anti-capitalism, which are characteristics of the WFTU. We are proud of the young unionists who have been joining the WFTU.

We will leave the youth a union movement more effective, ideological as well as solid and regulatory. All of us have to be committed in this seventeenth congress, which hopes to celebrate the eightieth anniversary of the establishment of the WFTU that represents 100 million members, to make this federation more powerful in terms of members and purposes. Let me conclude this speech by a call to the next generation of unionists:

You should have faith in the working class and our fair struggle.

Faith will make you heroes in struggles.

Faith will grant you power to overcome difficulties.

Thank you.



# Accidents and Injuries during the Month of September 2016

Date	Place	Details of the accident	Notes	Evaluation	Results of the investigation
3/9/2016	Casthouse VDC 10	The operator was checking for any water leakage and while he was descending from stairs from casting station to pit cover platform, his right feet twisted.	Advised to refabricate new one according to engineering specification	Minor Injury	Found that the step size is not according to engineering standard
3/9/2016	Reduction Maintenance NKM Crane	While Electrician was troubleshooting a breakdown in NKM crane, he opened two adjacent panels' doors. Suddenly the door closed by itself on the his right hand causing minor bruises.	Advised to fix locking facility and provide wooden step	Minor Hand Injury	Due to Strong magnetic lead to retract any metallic objects
4/9/2016	Reduction Line 5 PTA Crane 19	Alba employee was performing anode change activity using PTA 19, suddenly the power get off in the whole set, the employee attempt to get down through the emergency ladder, while coming down accidentally his right elbow hit the steel ladder stopper causing severe pain to the employee.	Advised to remove the locking facility since it is creating hazard	Minor Injury	Found inadequate modified design of ladder locking facility
8/9/2016	Casthouse Mould Shop	While the employee was washing drinking glass, it slipped from his hand and broke causing deep cut wound to his right hand.	Advised the management to ensure that substandard type of glass are not used in their vicinity	Minor Injury	Found was the type of glass used is not suitable for drinking water
14/9/2016	Workshop & Maintenance Services	While the contractor employee was cleaning the Alkaline Tank by using the water pressure jet, Some amount of water mixed with the Alkaline splashed on his face causing eye irritation.	Emphasized on ensuring the compliance with PPE and provide the face shield for this task	Minor Eye Injury	Found that lack of knowledge and improperly eye protection was used
19/9/2016	Casthouse VDC.6	While DC operator inspecting the DC6 unit, he was walking on the grating plates, his foot fall into the gap witch is depth 85 cm causing minor bruises and hand swollen.	Emphasized on giving more attention to maintenance of equipment flooring	Minor Injury High & Potential Nearmiss	Found that the grating floor was not fixed properly due to inadequate maintenance
20/9/2016	Operation Support Services Reduction Cell 4213	While the contractor employee was adjusting the distance between the shell and the cradle by using steel wades, the worker asked his colleague to push the shell from other side by the forklift to tight it in its position. Unfortunately worker did not remove his fingers at the time, which got caught between the cradle and the shell, resulting to injury to his fingers.	Emphasised on close supervision on the contractors	Minor Injury	Lack of contractor workforce experience and supervision on critical activities



# How to Wake up Early Feeling Energetic?

Here are 10 Helpful Tips

## After Waking up in the Morning



Keep the alarm away so that you are obliged to get out of bed to turn it off



Drink a glass of water after waking up to compensate for the fluids you lost at night



Take a cold shower to help activate the nervous system, brain and the entire body



Let light into your room after waking up



Have a tasty healthy breakfast to give you the energy you need for the day



## Before Going to Bed



Make your room as dark as possible and turn all the lights off



Don't have dinner immediately before sleeping. Have it early



Keep your mobile phone away and don't hang around social media applications



Go to bed early to wake up more easily



Take a short walk before going to bed or do some light exercise. The results are almost the same







By: Mohammed Al-Murbati

Abdulrahman Al-Baker has said in his book "Exile from Bahrain, pages 40 – 42, Treasure House Publishing": I visited the ruler of Bahrain for an hour, when I was one of the close persons to him, to listen to my opinions and financially aid the Bahrain Voice Newspaper".

I asked him: What happened about equalizing the income



o A. Rahman Al-Baker

with the Bahrain Petroleum Company? He replied: The issue is still being discussed by the British and the company. I said: we have to lead a campaign against them in "Bahrain Voice". He replied: "Wait until I know about their intentions". I said: What do you think of the oil pipes that are passed by Bahrain from Dhahran for refinery and Bahrain doesn't benefit from them? It's said your father granted the petrol pipes to King Abdulaziz. Life's changed now and you can say this is one of the people's demands, so it's better to start our campaign this month. Therefore, I have to work on the campaign by this week. He said: let me think. I replied: There is something important

# History of Labour Federation Establishment in Bahrain

that has to be done, establishing a labour union, which will be considered a great gift to the people.

He said: let me think and come back after three days.

After three days, I revisited the ruler of Bahrain, upon his request. He told me: I prefer to launch a campaign in "Bahrain Voice" on the Saudi pipes and if it was successful, I promise to help you establish a labour union.

I responded: This might take a long while because negotiations on the Saudi oil pipes needs some time. He said: Each action paves the way for another action, so if we conducted a campaign in the issue that will be issued after a week, it will do us good. Stress the demand of imposing an annual tax not less than 6 million Rupees and leave the rest to me.

After days, the ruler called me to say: I think you changed your mind about establishing a labour union and even calling the company's manager to discuss the issues that concern traders and workers' benefits in Bahrain?

**British stance on the union**  
Al-Baker has said: "Belgrave, advisor to the government of Bahrain, immediately headed to Riffa to make sure the ruler of Bahrain knew about the interview with the representative of Bapco Company. The ruler's reply was affirmative. However, Belgrave did not raise the issues of the labour union establishment and benefits of domestic traders because this is against his policy, as the government of Bahrain was importing everything from London by its agent there.

## Company's approval of all demands

The company expressed its approval of all the demands put forward by the government and were Al-Baker as long as they give up their demand of labour union. As mentioned in the book, "the company will agree on all the demands provided that they give up the dangerous demand of establishing a labour union, which affects the interests of the petroleum company in a dangerous way".

### Fear of communists

Al-Baker has said in his diary on page 58 of Treasure House Publishing: "When I was in Beirut, one of the people suggested that I go to Cairo so that I ask officials for help regarding the development of the labour situation in Bahrain and the Eastern Province, Saudi Arabia. This idea was on my mind for some time, which can easily be achieved in Bahrain because of the rapid labour development and popular awareness". He has also added: "There were fears of having communists in the base, as some labour leaders had a tendency to communism at that time".

## Immediate establishment of union

Many political movements had risen to confront the authority movement, the thing which obliged the leadership of the authority to take precautionary steps and accelerate in establishing a union before others expand their authority and labour base. In this regard we will provide you with an extract of Notification (15) of the authority: "When the officials of your executive authority noticed this mismatch between the perspectives of

these movements, they realized they realized the importance of taking the following decisions: 2- The immediate establishment of a labour union consisting of 12 deputies representing all the ranges of the working class. The latter has to be protected by law and to have a special fund. This union's tasks are to improve the conditions of workers and employees and defend their rights.

## Confusion between unions and federations

(May 21, 1955) when we view the course of historical events regarding the union movement, we notice they share the same source, the authority or their leaders and not workers. Therefore, the resolution to promptly establish a labour union was the authority and not workers' for fear of the other movements. As a result of having sufficient knowledge of the nature of union work, we notice confusion between the union terms and mechanisms. When the authority was inviting to the immediate establishment of a labour union in Notification (15), we can notice that there is contradiction between the late notification and Notification (19). Extract of Notification (19): The authority considered inviting the general assembly of the supreme executive body and all the representatives of people, labour union federations, the youth and businessmen to a general conference.

Demands of supreme executive body of national federation authority The executive committee has been assigned to formulate the demands of the higher executive authority, which focus on the following:

1- Establishment of a legislative council.

2- Enactment of a public law in the country, both criminal and civil.

3- Authorization to form a labour union.

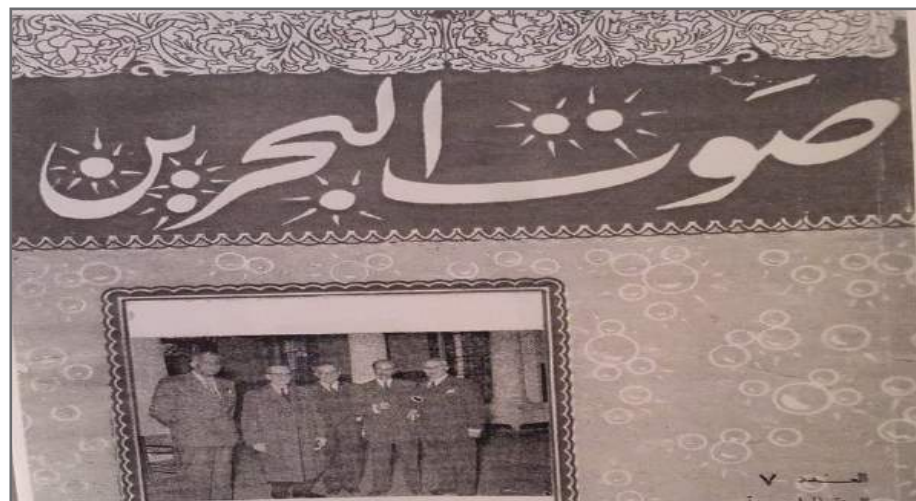
4- Establishment of a supreme court for issue and termination.

Secret agents of colonists Abdulrahman Al-Baker has said: "When I was in Beirut, some people suggested that I go to Cairo so that I ask officials for help regarding the development of the labour situation in Bahrain and the Eastern Province, Saudi Arabia.

I decided to travel to Cairo where I stayed for 15 days. I could not meet with any official and there was only one editorial board chaired by Al-Tahawi and Tuaima, whom I could not get in touch with. Finally, I was advised to call Ahmed Saeed, Director of the Voice of Arabs' Radio, who can lead me to the concerned party. In Cairo, I met Ahmed Saeed, who met some of the Bahraini youth before and said he had longed to see me; however, I found him indifferent, as the first thing he said was: you, the owners of the Bahrain Voice Magazine are accused of being secret agents of the colonists. Announcement of first labour union in Bahrain (April, 1955) Abdulrahman Al-Baker has said: "In the

midst of all this chaos, we decided to establish a labour union without getting permission of the government and before the labour law was enacted. The union got an overwhelming response from workers, as they were enthusiastically participating in it. We did not expect this response, which indicates labour awareness and the effect of a labour union, page 86". On 17/3/1955, the British political agent of Bahrain submitted a note to the secretary of Supreme Executive Body on behalf of the British minister of foreign affairs in response to the body's note on 21/2/1955. It stipulated the following: the British government, as it was shown in all over the world, understands and supports the demands of all people and encourages them to have progressive governments. The first article of the letter was as follows: 1-His Highness has declared his intention to enact a labour law for all the labour activities and affairs in Bahrain. The British government, as you know, delegated one of its high-ranking employees, Mr. Osley, Expert of the Labour Affairs of the Middle East, to make an introductory visit to Bahrain to give his opinions on this issue. The employee will revisit Bahrain to express his opinions and experiences regarding the enactment of this law.

Note of British Minister for



o Voice of Bahrain Magazine

#### Foreign Affairs on Labour Committees

The following is an extract of the committee statement of the British Minister for Foreign Affairs:

There are sufficient means of expressing ideas and wishes as well as people's participation in the management system: 3- Old committees such as the traders' committee, Waqf, Agricultural committee, etc. 6- Labour committee, which includes representatives of employees and employers. Union impediment

Al-Baker has said: "It was supposed that a labour law was enacted and workers' rights were officially recognized by means of a labour union before the end of the current year. However, the stubbornness of some opportunistic employers delayed the enactment of this law until now".

#### First labour statement in history of Bahrain

On Friday, Feb 23, 1956, the first labour statement was issued, which contained their

most important demands: The enactment of a labour law and official recognition of the union organization.

Upon the decision of the executive authority members of the Bahrain Federation of Workers and Business Owners on Feb 15, 1958, the federation had been optionally dissolved despite the government and British agent's objection.

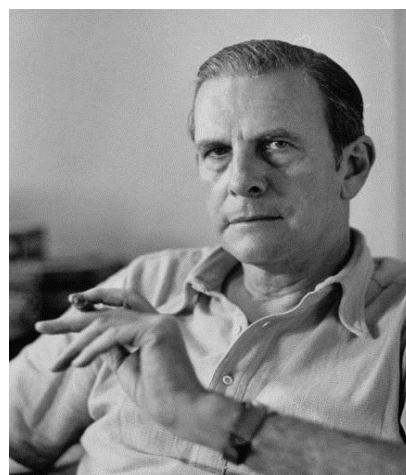
Notice: Smith promised to consider the resolution to dissolve the federation and respond to it. Yousif Al-Shirawi was assigned the task of delivering the response of Smith via a telephone call with Taqi Al-Baharna. Al-Shirawi informed Al-Baharna that His Highness, Shaikh Salman bin Hamad Al-Khalifa, had preferred not to dissolve the federation, which means the government of Bahrain and British authorities objected the dissolution of the federation.

#### Justifications for federation dissolution

Some sources indicate that the resolution to dissolve the federation was due to the prohibition of the labour activity at that time and in this regard, Mr. Taqi Al-Baharna has mentioned the justifications for this resolution: "The goals of the federation have been fruitless and the members realize the importance of closing the office. Then, Mohammed Qassim Al-Shirawi was assigned to inform Smith and hand him a copy of this resolution".



o W. Smith & his wife



o Charles Belgrave



# Chairman of GFTU and GARMCO Trade Union Sold Union for the Post of Manager

Workers defense is something inbuilt that we die for and not something to live at the expense of



o Mgr Moh'd Aryan, former Chairman of GARMCO Trade Union



o Document used for selling GARMCO workers

Unionists might face harassment and challenges to impede their union activities and even make them lose their job. On the other hand, some unionists use their privileges for their own sake without any consideration of union, ethical and humanitarian covenants. An example of this kind of unionists is the one who abandoned workers to be an ally of the management and become a manager after he was a chairman of a union. This unionist can more easily do workers wrong because he is totally aware of their problems and points of weakness. Mohammed Jassim Aryan did not hesitate to abandon Garmco workers for the sake of the privileges of being manager. He is not a real unionist because he exploited workers to gain what he wants and forgot that the company's management is in turn exploiting him for its own benefits. Aryan neglected the fact that Garmco's management might dismiss him after few days, as managers are paid more than other workers. Therefore, dismissing one manager equals dismissing ten or more workers. The question then arises, "Why would the management keep you, former union chairman?" . You have to admit that you a Joker Card that will be used only for a limited time.

Mohammed Aryan, the Chairman of the election conference of the General Federation, you made a hasty decision about your new position due to temptation. Sincere unionists would never be tempted by such a position because they are not led by greed.

This news was not shocking to us, as we do not expect much from the members of a labour union which sold its conscience to political associations. We consider you a twin to your predecessors at the Bahrain General Federation of Trade Unions.

There is a serious psychological disorder called "schizophrenia", a severe and chronic mental disorder which affects the patient's behaviour, thought and comprehension. We cannot affirm that this quick transformation of Mohammed Aryan from the Chairman of Garmco Trade Union to a manager at Garmco falls under schizophrenia; however, psychologists firmly warn about this disorder since patients might harm themselves or others!

This is no stranger to Aryan, as many members of the Bahrain General Federation of Trade Unions are opportunists and perform the union work to occupy high-paying positions at the expense of the workers who have elected them.

If you have no shame, then do whatever you wish!

# Labour Market Imbalances

If formal declarations and studies stress the importance of the stability of the Bahraini labour market, an essential step to economic development, the correction of the labour market imbalances largely depends on providing job opportunities, relating education to development, finding solutions to free-visa workers as well as allowing foreigners to lease shops, which is a widespread phenomenon.

As for the free-visa workers' phenomenon – for example – since it is a matter of interest to the government nowadays, it can be resolved only by reconsidering the reasons. The law should be enforced and penal measures should be taken against lawbreakers. The law should be applied to everyone without any exception, as some employers exploit free-visa workers by paying them without employment. Honestly speaking, visa trading has been very popular among the rich, which reminds us of the slave market! According to the local press, the officials of residence and work permits have estimated that there are around 60 thousand free visa workers in Bahrain.

In turn, escape notifications and work permit cancellations are among the methods followed by traders, who issue permits to expats and sell them in the black market instead of employing them, according to the press.

Moreover, escape notifications, which are used for repudiating illegal workers, reached 1600 in one year.

The Minister of Labour and Social Affairs, Jameel Humaidan, talked about a governmental plan to solve the problem of free-visa workers in Bahrain. He indicated that many authorities participated in formulating the plan such as the Ministries of Interior and Health as well as the Labour Market Regulatory Authority. Mr. Humaidan said in the "Work Environment in Bahrain" Symposium: The "Flexible Permit" Program, a procedure included in the plan, was approved by the government, but yet has not been applied. It serves the range of free-visa workers exploited by those who have business licenses (Al-Ayam, Volume 10042, Oct 6, 2016).

We cannot say this plan or any other plans will definitely help bring stability to the labour market and reduce free-visa workers. The aforementioned minister stated to Al-Ayam Newspaper on May 9, 2015: "The phenomenon of free-visa workers is complex and widespread not only in Bahrain, but also in other GCC countries because when solutions are suggested, many people follow misleading methods". Also, he explained, regarding the elimination of this phenomenon: "Anything that brings benefits to some people cannot be eliminated and from the late experience, we found that while trying to find solutions,

the phenomenon reoccurs". Thus, there are imbalances that affect the stability of the labour market, which need a viable strategy of applying the law to everybody. It is unfair not to punish and prosecute those who obtain benefits by misleading methods like favouritism and abusing positions and authorities.

It is important to point out the phenomenon of leasing business records because the prevalence of this phenomenon is of the same importance as the free-visa workers' because they are closely related to each other by means of exploiting expatriates and brokering, which is a dangerous phenomenon widespread in Bahrain and other GCC countries.

As for leasing business records, Hameed Rahma, Undersecretary for Commercial Affairs at the Ministry of Industry and Commerce said: "the ministry referred around 30 cases related to the exploitation of records to the Public Prosecution from 2005 to April, 2016 (Al-Wasat, May 15, 2016). In spite of all this, the phenomenon will remain complex and especially if the leased business records appear to be owned by legal workers, however, in secret, leased to expatriates for a monthly payment, which is difficult to prove. Regardless of this, we do not have to be pessimistic since our attempts can lead to practical solutions.



By: Fahad Al-Mudhky



# Between Al-Fadhel and Al-Hatab



written by  
**Hamad Al-Shehabi**

This happened in the first half of 1881 when a stranger lived in an old house between Al-Fadhel and Al-Hatab areas in Manama. The stranger was in his late forties with straight long grey hair, which he often used to hide under his Ghutra (i.e. traditional headscarf). He worked as a mason and sometimes a Gargoor (fishing trap) maker. He was going to the traditional shops in Manama to buy meat and fish to cook them himself and spread good aroma in the area through his window. He was calm, graceful and of medium height. When he encountered men, he used to raise his eyebrows and when he encountered women, he used to wear a gentle smile as a way of greeting. Although he was old, he still was handsome. Mostly, he used to spend the evening by sitting in front of Uncle Abduljalil Abdulqader's house, the prestigious and powerful man, as if he were observing something in the house or assigned a task. This irritated one the uncle Abduljalil's sons, so he went to the man though his mother tried to stop him by saying:

"You can't disappoint this man who came from Hadhramaut". The 25-year-old boy stopped and looked at his mother to ask her: "How did you know he is from Hadhramaut?".

She replied:

"There is nothing secret from women. It's said his name is Saeed and he's travelled to our country to capture something! Only God knows what it is. Therefore, don't bother yourself by repelling him because he repels people, but can't be repelled against.

The son said:

"He's calm and pathetic. Even when a fly settles on his eyelid, he doesn't respond to it. However, on the other hand, he sometimes gets on nerves". The mother: Laughing, yes! However I advise you not to bother yourself and

just to step forward to greet him.

When the son greeted him, Saeed said: Your mother behaved well!

The son replied: By giving me this piece of advice?

Saeed: Yes she knows what you don't know about.

This bewildered the guy.

More than ten evenings passed and Saeed was still sitting in front of uncle Abduljalil's house. One day, an old woman called Hamda came out of the house. She was over a hundred years! The old woman was that 15-year-old girl who was abducted from Hadhramaut city. When Saeed saw her, he opened his eyes wide out of surprise as if he had achieved victory. He was looking at her while she was walking and when they became closer, both were studying each other. Their hearts were beating fast, so the old woman stepped closer towards Saeed and delightfully said:

"I heard a stranger has moved to the area; however, I didn't expect he was you, Saeed! I can't believe my eyes that I've reached this age and you're still young and active".

Saeed said: my age hasn't been changed.

They were talking to each other and many of the neighbours opened their windows to know what was going on between Saeed and Hamda. When Hamda moved closer to him, Saeed raised his hand, with tearful eyes, and put it on his head. Thunder boomed in the sky and they got wet in the rain. The residents of the area were watching all this until the thunder, which was accompanied by lightning, roared to scare them and make them move backwards. When the thunder and lightning were over, the residents discovered Saeed and Hamda disappeared without leaving any footprints in the mud.





# Gulf Workers News Agency

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## Non-renewal of Residence Permits

The Assistant Undersecretary of the Citizenship and Passport Affairs, Mazen Al-Jarrah, announced the non-renewal of the residence permits of 100 thousand expatriates, servants and cooks, for owning driving licenses, which worsens the traffic crisis. The law prohibits foreign servants and cooks from having driving licenses. Consequently, the competent authorities will call on those having driving licenses with their sponsors to change their careers into drivers within two months.

## Dismissal of Workers

The Future Newspaper dismissed 47 workers including journalists, editors and administrative staff without the knowledge of the Ministry of Labour, which is illegal. The ministry realizes the financial situation of the institution, but is surprised by the fact of not consulting it beforehand. Accordingly, the ministry opens its doors to applicants and emphasizes on the importance of informing it of any dismissals.

## AIDS and Hepatitis among Expats

Tarut Police Station detected expatriates suffering from AIDS and hepatitis after they illegally arrived in Libya and have worked in restaurants, butcheries and bakeries. After the expatriates underwent medical tests, it was revealed that 2 of them suffered AIDS and 4 suffered hepatitis.

## Workers Get their Demands

1500 workers at the Egypt International Company for Ceramics in Quesna, Monufia Governorate, resumed working after the Ministry of Manpower succeeded in ending their strike and resolving the problem. The ministry communicated with the workers and company management and reached an agreement of granting the workers their legitimate demands. Consequently, everyone is at peace and there are no problems.

## AC Purchase without Balance

A consultant at the Ministry of Justice revealed the details of the accusation of the Secretary-General of the Khartoum Union of the Water Authority Workers of purchasing 400 air conditioners and issuing a cheque for 86 thousand Pounds without balance to an air conditioning company. The consultant while appearing as a defence witness before the Azhari Criminal Court in Khartoum, stated that she did not find a configuration certificate.

## Germany: Police Kills Refugee

The German police killed an Iraqi refugee in a refugee camp in the capital, Berlin for attacking a Pakistani refugee with a knife to revenge the latter's sexual assault against his little daughter. The police stated that the 39-year-old Iraqi refugee died of gunshot wounds.

## Workers Close Highway

A number of Asian workers closed a highway in a protest against the death of their co-worker as a result of the unavailability of an ambulance to immediately take him to the hospital after suffering a heart attack. Local reports have shown that several workers of an oil company assembled near 52 Km – Al-Abdali Road after the death of their co-worker in the hospital and closed the road to protest against the unavailability of an ambulance.

## Lowering Minimum Wage

The Council of Ministers issued a decree stipulating for the decrease of the daily minimum wage from 30 to 26 thousand Lebanese Pounds under the pretext of a financial error in the decree issued in 2012 when the tasks of the Ministry of Labour were assigned to Charbel Nahas. There are demands for revoking the new decree, which will be reconsidered within two weeks by the Shura Council. This decree is a dangerous precedent of the violation of rights.

## Restoring Oil Crescent

Foreign workers of the oil crescent welcomed the latter's restoration by the Libyan National Army expressing their satisfaction for this step which helps improve the security situation. They were also surprised by the statement of foreign countries regarding the withdrawal of the Libyan Army from the oil ports and their support of the militias controlling them.

## Unionists Denounce Workers' Abduction

Six workers of the Public Transport Authority have been imprisoned in an unknown place for five days, the thing that is condemned by unionists and described as an unprecedented abduction in the history of labour movement. Security forces arrested the six workers who called for strike demanding increased financial dues, late at night, along with a labour leader, who organized the strike.

## Increase of Salaries

The Sudanese Workers' Trade Union Federation stated that there will be a significant increase of salaries in next year's budget and a minimum wage which parallels living costs according to the five-year economic program. The federation also pointed out the significance of the participation of the union movement in all economic affairs.

## Brazilians Discover Giant Snake

A giant snake of 10m length was found in a building site in northern Brazil after an explosion in one of the caves in Altamira, Para. Construction workers discovered this huge snake, which is around 400 kg and one-meter diameter.

## Government Sector Salaries Won't be cut

The official spokesman for the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Khalid Al-Rubeian, stated in a press release: "The government does not intend to review or reduce the incentives and wages of employees". This official denial has been issued after the rumour of cutting the wages and salaries of the public sector employees had been spread on social media.

## Dismissal of Pregnant Employees

The Chairman of the General Confederation of Lebanese Workers, Maroun El-Khaouli, hosted a delegation from the Union of Female Employees to discuss the problem of wrongful dismissal of Lebanese female employees to replace them with Syrian employees especially after the dismissal of two pregnant employees within a week, the thing which violates the Lebanese regulations regarding pregnant employees.

## Abduction of 3 Foreigners

Militants have abducted three foreign workers, two Italians and a Canadian, of the Italian Conicos Company in Ghat. No party claimed responsibility for the abduction process, however, the spokesman for the Council of Representatives in Tobruk, eastern Libya, Ahmed Al-Mesmari, accused Al-Qaeda of this deed.

## Jamal Abdunnasser's Anniversary

On the occasion of Jamal Abdunnasser's death anniversary, Egyptian workers, in general, and textile workers, in particular, appraised Jamal, the leader of industrial development, for establishing companies, which are still active, such as Ghazl Al-Mahalla and Kaf El-Dawwar Textile. They also pin their hopes on the government to achieve industrial development.

## Establishment of Workers' Cooperatives

The Chairman of the General Federation of Khartoum Trade Unions, Hisham Al-Tom, announced the establishment cooperative and providing a hall to workers at the beginning of 2017. He stated that the federation seeks to provide services and has already succeeded in achieving many successes such as providing the sacrifices of Eid Al-Adha and Ramadan food baskets as well as increasing the salaries of Khartoum workers.

## Fatalities in Taiwan and East China

The Megi Tornado in China caused the death of a resident of a coastal city after causing the death of 4 people in Taiwan in which a million people were suffering an outage. This tornado was preceded by two other tornadoes hitting China within two weeks. Schools and shops were closed for two consecutive days in the island. In addition, the authorities confirmed 500 injuries.

Kuwait

Lebanon

Libya

Egypt

Sudan

Worldwide

# Suspension of Arab Workers' News Agency was Coincidence

## If Ghassan Ghosn Wins Election without Election Program



o Arab workers' news agency

مهمات سفر محمد بدران من ٢٠١٢ لغاية ٢٠١٦	1,930
مهمات سفر العاملين بالاتحاد ٢٠١٤	1,320
مهمات سفر العاملين بالاتحاد ٢٠١٥	1,560
مهمات السائقين بالاتحاد ٢٠١٤	600
مهمات السائقين بالاتحاد ٢٠١٥	1,320
<b>مستحقات اخرى</b>	
مصاريف وكالة الانباء	6,900
اجور السكرتيرة / وكالة الانباء	1,500
النقابة العامة للزراعة / مصر	5,000
التقرير الاقتصادي للمؤتمر	1,500
تذاكر سفر	7,000
<b>مجموع المستحقات</b>	<b>96,53</b>

o Document of the ICATU expenses

## How will be Future of International Confederation of Arab Trade Unions

The good relationship between the International Confederation of Arab Trade Unions (ICATU) and the new Secretary-General, Ghassan Ghosn, has changed. Since Ghosn has occupied his new position, his movements have raised the concern of those loyal to union work bearing in mind that the ICATU is an umbrella to Arab unions; therefore, each setback will affect Arab unions and their members, hard workers. This makes the suspension of the Arab Workers' News Agency, which has been the focus of international attention something of great importance in the first weeks for Ghassan Ghosn to be Secretary-General of the ICATU. Therefore, was the suspension of the Arab Workers' News Agency Ghassan Ghosn's first mistake? Who is the reason behind this suspension?

When someone occupies a position, they seek an election program which can serve the position as much as possible and keep pace with their predecessors. They also try to maintain what they have acquired and not to ruin them. Where is the election program of Ghassan Ghosn? What can he say about what suddenly happened to the agency before an elite of good people made it work again? The many questions to the Secretary-General of the ICATU, Ghassan Ghosn, put him under pressure, the thing which made him give up his decision to stop the agency at the pretext of a technical fault. It is obvious that there was no technical fault and this is due to a sudden decision by Ghassan Ghosn to save some money. Has Ghosn forgotten that the news of workers' sufferings

and problems are worth more than the money he wants to save? Whom does he want to save money for? Does he want to establish charities? Or does he want this money for himself?! Some people might ask why we are angry at the new Secretary-General of the ICATU and why we are raising this issue though it



o Ghassan Ghosn

has been resolved, as the agency is working now and publishing news as usual! After profound thinking about this mistake, which seems to be intentional and the result of reckless per-

sonal decisions by Ghassan Ghosn, we found that many dire problems will be arisen. The Secretary-General is still on the threshold and did not take any step forward; however, he took a step backwards by the decision of closing the Arab News Agency, which has many users, without showing any consideration to them. Ghassan Ghosn, former Export Manager of the TMA Cargo Company and current Secretary-General of the ICATU, should reconsider his actions and not mix between his former and current positions. In union work, there is no chance to take personal decisions and waste workers' gains for the sake of money!

Document of the expenses of the ICATU. Arab Workers' News Agency. Ghassan Ghosn.





## Shortcomings of iPhone 7

- 1- Headphone socket is missing, instead a single socket is provided for both the charger and the supplied wireless headphones.
- 2- Main button is insensible to gloves, even those special for smartphones.
- 3- Home button is replaced with a non-clicking touch sensor with haptic feedback
- 4- Black iPhone 7 is prone to scratches and dirt.
- 5- Last week, there were many complaints about the battery life, as it is shorter than that of iPhone 6s.
- 6- Airplane mode does not support the Internet. Apple has admitted this problem and is working on it.
- 7- iPhone 7 generates strange noises, whether from the processor or headphones.

## YouTube" without Internet Connection"



Google has announced the releasing of a new application, YouTube Go, which enables users to exchange and watch video clips without an Internet connection. The new application will be first used only in India and then in the rest of the world.

The application enables users to save video clips to watch them later, without Internet connection, and allows them to exchange videos with domestic users without asking for personal data.



## Selfie Pay" in" Europe

MasterCardGroup has announced the releasing of a new method of payment using a selfie in 12 European countries before it becomes globally available in 2017.

The group talked about this method of payment in February at the Mobile World Congress in Barcelona, which is already in practice in Holland, Canada, and the US.

MasterCard owners can approve payments via their mobile phones through the fingerprint scanner or facial recognition feature from selfies, according to this group's statement.

## BlackBerry" Quits Designing Phones"

BlackBerry has announced that it would stop designing its own phones; therefore, one of the most popular smartphones will no longer exist in the market.

The Independent Newspaper pointed out that BlackBerry was one of the largest and most outstanding smartphone companies in the world; however, it announced not designing its own phones and outsourcing instead.

By this statement, BlackBerry puts an end to all predictions. Other companies like Apple and Samsung will gradually take the place of BlackBerry.





## Union Highlights

While the world is progressing a lot, some managers ask workers to write their correspondences and reports!

\* \* \* \* \*

An administrative manager's leg was twisted; therefore, he immediately went to the Medical Department, where the doctor checked his leg and told him it was broken without taking an X-ray. The manager was not convinced about the doctor's diagnosis, so he headed to a private hospital to find out that he suffered a minor bruise. Was there an authority who documented the incident and made reports? There is a Bahraini proverb that roughly says face the consequences of your actions.

\* \* \* \* \*

Some managers are never held accountable or given any tasks. They even do not read bosses' books though they are friendly with the Higher Management. Their only task is to spy on other managers and send documented reports to their bosses.

\* \* \* \* \*

We cannot figure out whether this company produces, manufactures, smelts or promotes aluminium. It might be collecting scrap from other aluminium companies. Perhaps, the company is in search for treasures in the leftover of others.

\* \* \* \* \*

The charity committee does ironic things by being indifferent about workers' sufferings. For example, the worker who had spent over 15 thousand Dinars to treat his father was given a donation of only BD 300!

\* \* \* \* \*

Covering up accidents is an old habit; however, now, this habit is being practiced to satisfy the Executive Management, which is a real problem.

\* \* \* \* \*

The "Heart" project has been released by the management to show that it is concerned about workers' safety. Does this concern also include salaries and allowances? Or are these just hollow claims?



## Federations of Union Movement, we Hope Everything is Alright

Ghazi Al-Hamar

On the 18th of October, 2016, the Middle East and North Africa Retirement Conference was held. It was sponsored by the Central Bank of Bahrain and organized by the Takaad Savings and Pensions. Many local newspapers promoted this conference and stressed its importance, which contained 350 delegates from many countries and international organizations such as the World Bank, actuarial institutions and the Bahrain Economic Development Board as well as the Insurance Authority besides representatives of the private and public sectors. This regional conference was held to discuss pension funds and their future in the region. Also, as mentioned by local newspapers, the officials of this conference discussed the challenges of the minimum pensions, growing interest in early retirement and, most importantly, the government representatives' hints about reviewing the current salary system, raising the retirement age to 65 and reducing benefits! Until this moment, we do not know about the suggestions and advice of the World Bank representatives.

Anyway, this conference revolved around retirement schemes, pension funds and topics about retirees' living. It was strange that the two federations of union movement and their representatives were not present. Moreover, the two federations did not leave even a comment about this conference, as if it had not concerned the working class and the destiny of retirees. We cannot find any justification for the two federations', the General and Free Federations, absence from the conference; however, we hope we are mistaken about our judgement on them. They are left with two choices: Either claim they applied to participate in the conferences, but were rejected, which is frankly impossible, or tell the public they did not bother to attend the conference as even listeners or spectators of retirees and the labour movement issues or decisive issues concerning the future of workers and the union movement. It is really strange and denunciatory that at the time when these federations were keen to attend conferences abroad and be representatives and chairpersons, they neglected the con-

ference held in their country and gave the cold shoulder to issues concerning workers' rights and gains. How can this be consistent with the principles and slogans of defending the working-class rights and gains. It is known that the Bahrain General Federation of Trade Union (BGFTU) has a committee for retirees and the Bahrain Free Labour Unions' Federation (BFLUF) fostered the National Federation of Retirees. Therefore, retirees are an integral part of the union and labour movement and it is unfair that these two federation do not strengthen their role by defending their rights and gains. Retirees are of large numbers and need to be defended because their rights and gains are endangered to reduction in the short term by means of regulations and legislation which are not in the interest of this developmental social group. The non-participation of the two union federations in the conference at any pretext and their request to join the Social Insurance Organization do not have a justification other than being indifferent about union and labour rights as well as neglecting duties and responsibilities. It is worth mentioning the initiative of Alba Labour Union to represent retirees some years ago and its key role in establishing the National Association of Retirees as well as holding their constituent conference in the presence of delegations of international organizations. However, regrettably, this Association has faced obstacles from everywhere, as it is not covered in the Labour Union Law, the Ministry of Labour has not welcomed its establishment and constituent conference and the worst of these obstacles is that it does not get any support from our representatives to make it legitimate though they are aware of the legislative obstacles. Besides, the BFLUF, which represents the National Association of Retirees, keeps watching helplessly. The story is long and tragic, so we cannot narrate it. We tried to bring this story to attention; however, it was given the cold shoulder.