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30 September - 6 October 2006 • Vol. 1 Issue 5 • www.alaintimes.ae • 2 Dhs

Proudly published every Saturday by Alpha Beta Publishers, Al Ain

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Schools' affiliations with embassies may end soon

Change is imminent - The UAE education system is to be reformed

Al Ain Times report

Officials within the Education department in Al Ain told The Al Ain Times there is no information yet on the change of rules about community schools run by their respective embassies. However, school circles in Al Ain say the possibilities are that foreign schools will have to sever links with the embassies.

They were commenting on media reports that the Ministry of Education (MoE) has decided to scrap the system of foreign schools affiliated to and run by diplomatic missions in the country as part of its efforts to reform the public and private education.

"The information is not new. We heard it last year that schools affiliated with embassies will have to run like other private schools but so far there has been no official indication. We don't anticipate it will happen after the academic year has begun," says a school administrator on the condition of anonymity.

There are Indian, Pakistani,

Palestinian and other schools that are run by embassies.

"We have no information or official communiqué about de-linking schools from the control of their embassies," said Mehmoūd Younis from the Department of Education in Al Ain.

A Dubai newspaper reported last Tuesday that change is imminent.

"The decision was taken in coordination with authorities concerned with the aim of coordinating efforts to improve the performance of all private schools in the country by placing them under the direct supervision of the MoE," said the Khaleej Times quoting reliable sources.

According to the newspaper the licenses of these schools would only be renewed for the remaining period of the current academic year in order to pave the way for the implementation of the proposed amendments to the private education law and by-laws.

The change of the law will not only effect the administrative control but



Ahmed Bin Darwish Dagher Al Marar, the Managing Director of ADIB inaugurating the new Al Ain branch

will have other implications for syllabus and curricula and educational system they are attached to, prompting some school authorities to believe that the change will not come in the middle of the current academic session.

"The de-linking of schools from their embassies will not affect the viability of these schools," one school administrator told The Al Ain Times. "The schools already have local boards consisting of community representatives and also have become financially independent," he added.

According to KT sources, the amendments have been discussed for some years

and were not based on an instant decision to move the community schools under the purview of the ministry.

There are around 18 schools affiliated to embassies, 8 schools in Abu Dhabi, 8 in Dubai, one in Sharjah and another in Ras Al Khaimah. There are Iranian, Japanese, Russian, French and German schools", the source indicated.

In Al Ain, according to the Education department, both Pakistani and Palestinian schools are under the control of their embassies.

Diplomatic sources in the UAE are unaware of any changes and say they have not received any such indication.

YOUR STARS INSIDE!

ABU DHABI ISLAMIC BANK OPENS 6TH BRANCH IN AL AIN

Abu Dhabi Islamic Bank (ADIB) officially opened its sixth branch in Al Ain at the Al Yahr area. "The opening of the new branch comes in line with the ADIB strategy to provide its services across the largest geographical region within the UAE," says an ADIB spokesman.

The Al Yahr branch is the third opened in Al Ain this year making the total number of branches six in Al Ain.

The opening ceremony was performed by Ahmed Bin Darwish Dagher Al Marar, the Managing Director of ADIB. Those who were present include Khaled Al Suwaidi, Member Board of Directors at ADIB, Saeed Atiq Al Dhaheri, the Manager of the new branch and other senior officials of the Bank.

"The new addition to ADIB's branches only proves the vigilant expansion strategy that the Bank has adopted throughout the year," said Mr. Ahmed Bin Darwish after performing the opening ceremony.

SHOPPERS' RUSH AND TRAFFIC JAMS DURING RAMADAN

During the early days of Ramadan markets in Al Ain are witnessing a big shoppers' rush and roads are having traffic jams that are rare in the garden city. Most supermarkets are reporting a 15 to 20 per cent increase in customer traffic and are working extra time to cope. Meanwhile, customers are complaining of high prices for vegetables and fruits and some other essential goods but vendors are blaming this on the wholesale markets in Dubai and Abu Dhabi for any price hike. (Detailed story inside on p 5)

Funds approved for new roads in Al Ain

3-KM ROAD FROM AIN AL FAYEDHA TOWARDS AL WAGAN TO BE BUILT

The Abu Dhabi Executive Council has sanctioned funds for the expansion of the internal road networks in a number of neighborhoods of Al Ain.

In its weekly session held on Monday night under the chairmanship of its president General Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, Abu Dhabi Crown Prince and Deputy

Supreme Commander of the UAE Armed Force, the Council reviewed progress reports submitted by local government departments on execution of projects, development of services and upgrading of Abu Dhabi government performance.

The internal road network project for some of Al Ain suburbs, as approved by the Executive Council, includes

construction of infrastructure facilities such as drainage systems, surface run-offs, lighting and pavements in Al Hayer, Al Shuaiba and Zakher residential areas as well as an intersection at the entrance of Ain Al Fayedha resort.

The project further includes the construction of a 3-km road from Ain Al Fayedha roundabout towards

Al Wagan village and other sundry works such as parking lots, service roads, storm water drainage systems and pavements at different areas.

The Council also approved the development and extension of buildings and classrooms at the Higher Colleges of Technology for men and women in the emirate of Abu Dhabi. (courtesy WAM)

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