

Qatari Emir Ratifies Decision on 35 Goods

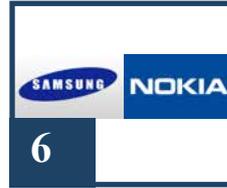
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Qatari Emir Ratifies Decision on 35 Goods

DOHA - Emir HH Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani ratified recently Cabinet's Decision No. 24 of 2016, which exempted 35 goods from the Provision of Law No. 8 of 2002, which regulates the work of commercial agents. The decision will make the market more competitive as these items will be free to be imported by any dealer.

Prime Minister and Interior Minister HE Sheikh Abdullah bin Nasser bin Khalifa Al Thani said that ratifying Decision No. 24 of 2016 will contribute to establishing a competitive business environment in Qatar and will encourage the private sector to participate in the state's development plan in accordance with Qatar National Vision 2030.

Minister of Economy and Commerce HE Sheikh Ahmed bin Jassim Al Thani said ratifying the decision was only done after conducting a comprehensive study of the competitive state of the Qatari consumer market.

He said that the decision will support the Ministry's effort in combating monopolies and regulating prices, particularly as Qatar has adopted a free-market approach. He said that liberating a number of products from commercial agents will make the food products sector more competitive, and that will reflect on the prices.

The Minister said that the decision exempted a list of 35 goods and a number of crucial consumer products that are considered a priority for all citizens and residents. He added that services will also improve as old agents look to fend off competition from new ones.

The freed items include powder milk, evaporated milk, milk derivatives, baby food and milk, poultry and poultry products, meat and meat products, egg, rice flour and related products, fish, marine foods and products, all types of tea, coffee and related products, sugar, honey, juice, beverages, mineral water, table salt, all type of pastries, biscuits, chocolates, sweets, ice cream, potato chips, frozen and packed foods; all type of nuts, tomato paste, corn chips and grains, beans, cooking oil, fats, baby diapers, detergent powder, all type of tissues, aluminum foil, and personal cleaning items.

According to Article 2 of the Decision, the Ministry of Economy and Commerce will carry out the law and cross out a list of 35 goods from the records of commercial agents.

Source: The peninsula Qatar Website

Increase in Patent Examination Fees in Syria

DAMASCUS – The Syrian Minister of Interior Trade and Consumer Protection issued the Ministerial Decree No. 1540 on June 30, 2016, which stipulates that the official examination Fees of patents to be filed in the name of foreign companies have been increased in Syria.

The ministerial decision has entered into force in Syria on July 1, 2016.

Source: AGIP Official Website (Agip.com)



Foreigners Can Now Own 100% of Wholesale, Retail Businesses

Cabinet also approves 2.5% tax on undeveloped urban land

JEDDAH — Foreign investors can now own 100 percent of retail and wholesale businesses in Saudi Arabia. An approval to this effect was granted by the Council of Ministers of the Kingdom on the 13th of June.

The Cabinet, chaired by Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques King Salman, also approved a tax on undeveloped urban land, Minister of State, Member of the Cabinet and Acting Minister of Culture and Information Dr. Aasem Saeed said in a statement carried by the Saudi Press Agency.

The rules permitting full foreign ownership of retail and wholesale operations were originally announced last September where the ownership ceiling was previously set at 75 percent.

“The decision is in line with the Kingdom’s Vision 2030 to ease restrictions on ownership and foreign investment in the retail sector to attract regional and international brands, contributing to the creation of job opportunities for citizens in this sector,” said the Cabinet statement.

The Cabinet also approved 2.5 percent annual tax on the value of undeveloped land designated for residential or commercial use.

The tax will be applied in stages to owners of plots exceeding 5,000 square meters. The measure aims to help resolve a shortage of affordable housing in Saudi Arabia by putting more unused land on the market where it can be acquired by developers. The Ministry of Housing will collect the tax and fines imposed for violation of the rules.

The Cabinet also restructured the Board of Directors of Saudi Arabian Airlines headed by a president appointed by an order of the prime minister.

It will have as members the Director General of the General Organization of Saudi Arabian Airlines and four people representing government agencies, and five people representing the private sector to be appointed by the Cabinet.

Their membership duration will be for three years, which can be renewed once.

The appointment of the Chairman of the General Organization of Saudi Arabian Airlines, and members of the Board of Directors will be on the nomination of the Chairman of the Council of Economic and Development Affairs (CEDA).

The Cabinet decided that the Minister of Transport will be the Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Saudi Railways (SAR), and that the company will be the owner of the infrastructure of the projects for transport of rail lines linking the cities of the Kingdom.

Source: Saudi Gazette Website





Nokia and Samsung Expand their Intellectual Property Cross License

ESPOO, Finland - Nokia and Samsung have agreed terms to expand their patent cross license agreement to cover certain additional patent portfolios of both parties. According to Nokia, this agreement is in addition to the outcome of the arbitration between the two companies that was announced on February 1, 2016.

The agreement announced today expands access for each company to patented technologies of the other and reinforces Nokia's leadership in technologies for the programmable world. With this expansion, Nokia expects a positive impact to the net sales of Nokia Technologies starting from the third quarter of 2016.

With this expanded agreement, Nokia Technologies' annualized net sales related to patent and brand licensing is expected to grow to a run rate of approximately EUR 950 million by the end of 2016.

“With intellectual property portfolios from Nokia Technologies, Nokia Networks and Alcatel-Lucent, Nokia has a wealth of technologies relevant to mobile devices and beyond,” said Mr. Ramzi Haidamus,

president of Nokia Technologies. “We welcome this expanded agreement with Samsung which recognizes the strength of our assets, and we continue to pursue new licensing opportunities across a number of diverse industries.”

Nokia Technologies is Nokia's advanced technology and licensing business. Formed in 2014, TECH builds upon our solid foundation of industry-leading licensing and technology R&D capabilities. By focusing on Digital Health, Digital Media, Brand Licensing and Patent Licensing, TECH is expanding the human possibilities of the ever-evolving world of technology. In 2015, Nokia Technologies launched OZO, the world's first virtual reality (VR) camera designed for professionals.

Nokia is a global leader in the technologies that connect people and things. Powered by the innovation of Nokia Bell Labs and Nokia Technologies, the company is at the forefront of creating and licensing the technologies that are increasingly at the heart of our connected lives.

Source: AG-IP News



QDB Launches SME Rating and Accreditation Program

DOHA– Qatar, Development Bank (QDB) has announced the launch of the SME Rating and Accreditation (SRA) program to help entrepreneurs and SMEs capitalize on contracting opportunities and improving business processes.

“This program is an important pillar in the system of support that we offer to SMEs, which enhances our efforts in support the efficiency of the Qatari national economy and its diversity,” said Executive Director of QDB Advisory Mr. Hamad Al Kubaisi. [QDB SRA press conference]

As per Tender Law No. 24 of 2015, a law regulating tenders and auctions in Qatar, QDB has taken the initiative to localize the supply chain and support local SMEs through SRA and Tender Bond Exemption Service to reduce Qatar’s value leakage and progress towards a sustainable industrial development approach.

Gaining access

Through the implementation of the new program, QDB aims to help SMEs gain access to government, semi-government

and private business opportunities. Through the rating process, SMEs will also be able to understand internal gaps and challenges related to their business and institute required improvements, enhancements and interventions to enhance their business performance, supported by QDB through its suite of programs.

SRA will be an independent third-party certification issued by QDB. The main objective is to conduct a holistic analysis of the business, entailing an assessment of the business model, the management, industry and financials through rating and a more specific assessment of the business’ ability to deliver on contracts.

Source: Bq-magazine.com



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