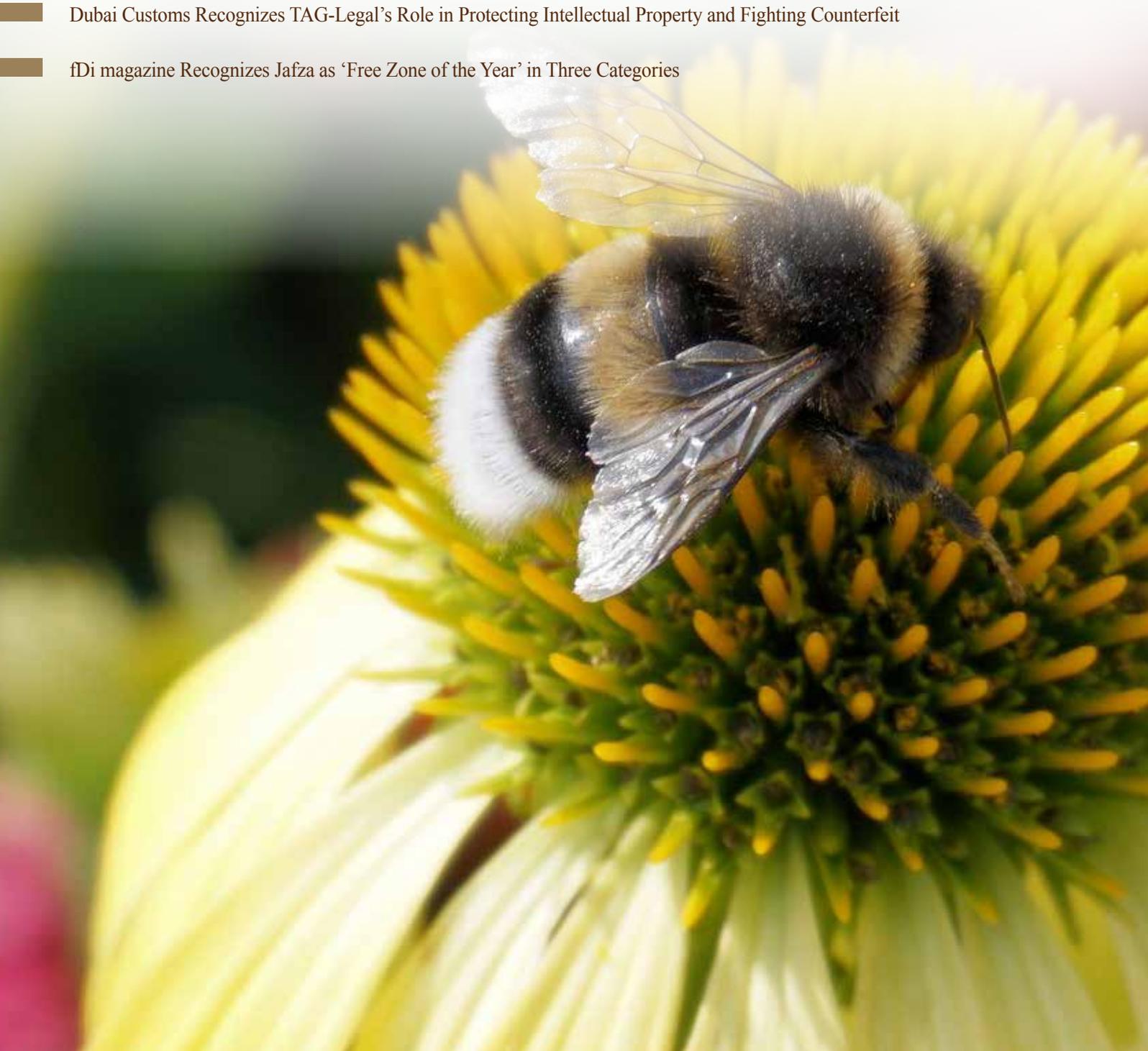


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IN THIS ISSUE



3

Dubai Customs Recognizes TAG-Legal's Role in Protecting Intellectual Property and Fighting Counterfeit



7

Central Bank Approves Expansion of Financial Activities of Banks and Financial Institutions



4

fDi magazine Recognizes Jafza as 'Free Zone of the Year' in Three Categories



8

All Qatari Shops and Service Providers Must Employ Arabic Speakers



5

1,097 New Companies Registered in Qatar



9

Khalifa Issues HR Law in Abu Dhabi



6

The Long-awaited Trademark Law Finally Implemented in Saudi Arabia



10

Oman to Scrap "No Objection Certificate" for Workers Switching Jobs

Dubai Customs Recognizes TAG-Legal's Role in Protecting Intellectual Property and Fighting Counterfeit

DUBAI- Talal Abu-Ghazaleh Legal (TAG-Legal) has been presented recently with an honorary shield by Dubai Customs entitled “Together for Better IP Protection” to acknowledge the exerted efforts by the organization to enhance the protection of Intellectual Property and its continuous cooperation with the Customs in fighting counterfeit.

Dubai Customs has invited TAG-Legal on October 24 to discuss the issues related to trademarks protection and the followed procedures and measures to prevent entrance of counterfeit products into the country.

The Customs asserted that the enforcement of Intellectual Property protection is a shared responsibility between the governmental and private parties in the country where he extended his gratitude for TAG-Legal team's efforts in this regard and their continuous support and cooperation with the governmental bodies in general and the Customs in specific.

Source: TAG-Legal News.





fDi magazine Recognizes Jafza as ‘Free Zone of the Year’ in Three Categories

LONDON- Jebel Ali Free Zone (Jafza), Dubai and the UAE’s flagship trade and logistics hub for the wider Middle East region and Africa, has been recognized by the UK-based fDi magazine as ‘Free Zone of the Year’ under three categories.

Among the awards, Jafza won ‘Free Zone of the Year – Large Tenant – Middle East’ and was also commended for its efforts in ‘Infrastructure Development’ and ‘Facilities Upgrades’.

The free zone was selected for these coveted recognitions for its innovative initiatives to support start-up organizations; its continued focus on upgrading infrastructure to keep pace and efficiently meet rapidly changing requirements of the investors and for building an eco-system that encouraged companies to continuously expand their operations in the free zone.

Sultan Ahmed bin Sulayem, Group Chairman and Chief Executive Officer of DP World and Chairman of Ports, Customs and Free Zone Corporation said: “Jafza’s win recognizes its initiatives to support trade and logistics in the UAE and acknowledges our efforts to build infrastructure and provide services that facilitate the expansion of businesses based here.

“Jafza has been continually supporting its customers in their investment plans, enabling them to reach new and emerging markets, regionally and globally. Under the directives of His Highness Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Vice President and Prime Minister of the UAE and Ruler of Dubai, to diversify the national economy, Dubai has been successfully attracting investments to develop various sectors. The Emirate has taken giant strides in implementing creative and innovative technology in order to achieve the objectives of the Dubai Plan 2021.

Jafza is home to over 7,000 local and international companies, including 100 companies on the Fortune 500 Global list, that have set up regional headquarters in Jafza to serve the Middle East, West Asia, Africa, countries of the CIS and the Indian sub-continent. The Free Zone is strategically located between two of the largest entities for logistics in the region — Jebel Ali Port and Al Maktoum international Airport — allowing easy movement of goods.

Source: Jafza.ae

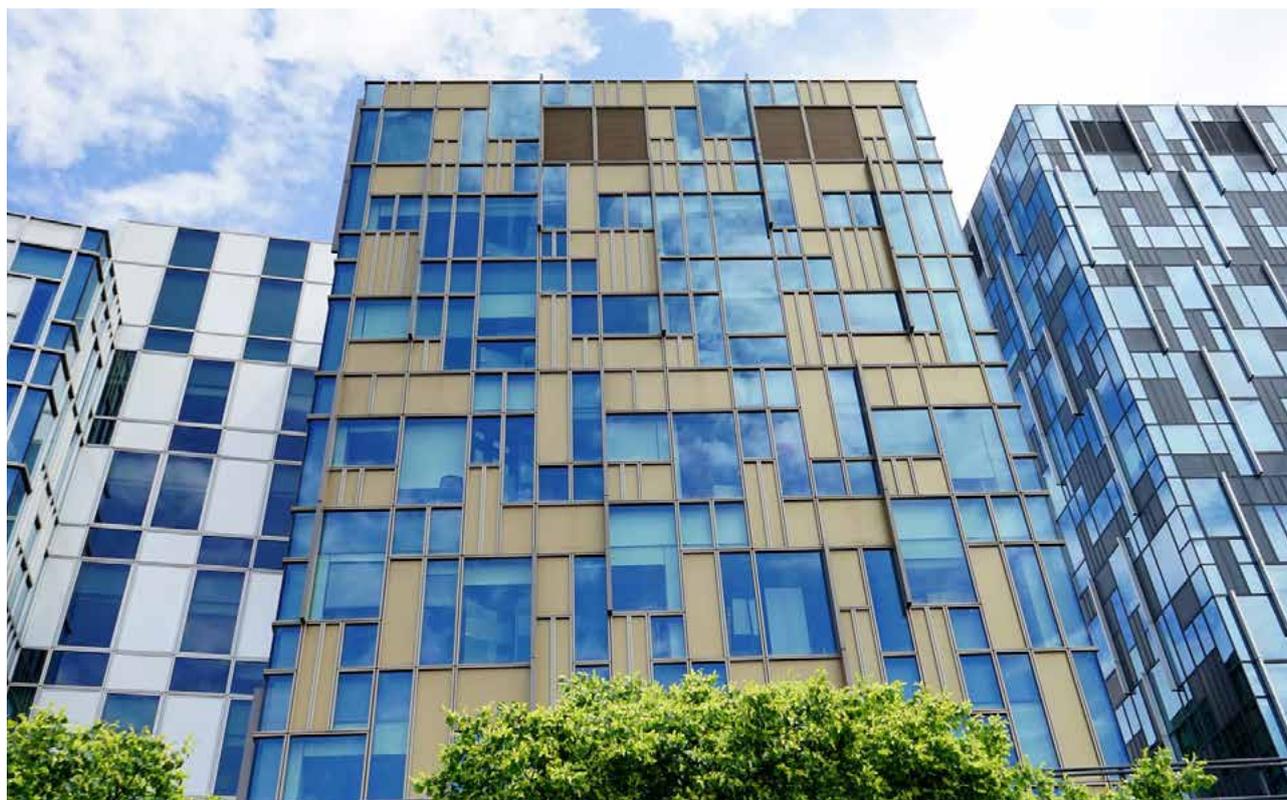
1,097 New Companies Registered in Qatar

DOHA- The Ministry of Economy and Commerce (MEC) has registered 1,097 new companies in September, according to the monthly Business Progress Report of the Commerce Sector. The total number of companies closed during that month was 203, representing 18.5 percent of the newly registered companies. The total number of new key commercial records reached 742 and the new subsidiary commercial records were at 355.

The percentage of the registered limited liability companies reached 60%, while 24% of the companies were registered in the category of Single-Person Company and 15% in the category of individual corporations. Contracting companies topped the list of the most commonly used activities, with 259 commercial records issued in this field.

In construction materials trading, 112 commercial records were issued, while for restaurants and groceries, a total 124 commercial records were issued.

Source: The Peninsula Qatar





The Long-awaited Trademark Law Finally Implemented in Saudi Arabia

The Saudi Trade Mark Office has finally announced the adoption of the unified GCC Trademark Law and its Implementing Regulations which became effective as of September 29, 2016.

Under the new Law, significant changes have been imposed in Saudi Arabia including the addressed hereunder:

A new USD 267 official fee has been imposed for filing complaints and the deadline for filing has been shortened from 60 days to 30 days

A new USD 534 official fee has been imposed for opposing trademarks and the deadline has been shortened from 90 days to 60 days

The Regulations have set a 60-day deadline from the notification date for submitting a counter-oppositions

The deadline for appealing complaints has been extended to 60 days, while the deadline for appealing oppositions remained the same (30 days)

A new USD 267 official fee has been imposed for hearing each session The Law was published in the Official Gazette along with its Implementing Regulations on July 1, 2016 to come into effect within 90 days of publication pursuant to the Royal Decree No. M/51 which was issued on May 27, 2014.

The GCC Trademark Law has been approved by the GCC Committee since 1996 as the GCC countries became aware of the importance of setting a unified law for enforcing IP protection in the region. But in order for the law to be implemented, each of the six states must issue its local Regulations to approve and implement the law.

By this, Saudi Arabia joins Bahrain and Kuwait in enforcing the GCC trademark Law, while the remaining three states of Qatar, UAE, and Oman are expected to publish their Implementing Regulations soon.

Source: TAG-Legal News.

Central Bank Approves Expansion of Financial Activities of Banks and Financial Institutions

ABU DHABI - The Board of Directors of the Central Bank of the UAE has approved applications of banks and other financial institutions operating in the UAE for the expansion of their activities and opening new branches.

The approval was granted as per the applicable law and regulations concerning each individual activity at the Board's 9th meeting for 2016 under the chairmanship of Khalifa Mohammed Al Kindi, Chairman of the Board.

The meeting was attended by Khalid Juma Al Majid, Deputy Chairman, Mubarak Rashed Al Mansoori, the Governor, and Board members, Younis Haji Al Khoori, Khalid Mohammad Salem Al Balama, Khalid Ahmad Al Tayer, Hamad Mubarak Buamim, as well as Mohamad Ali Bin Zayed Al Falasi, Deputy Governor, and a group of senior Central Bank staff.

The Board reviewed the Monetary Operations and Reserves Management Department's report, which includes the macro-prudential ratios of the banking sector, and liquidity indicators in the banking sector.

The meeting also reviewed a report presented by the Banking Supervision Department on exchange houses operating in the UAE.

The Board completed the discussion of the remaining topics listed on its agenda, as well as other topics and took appropriate decisions in this regard.

AAMIR/Majok

Source: Emirates News Agency (WAM)



All Qatari Shops and Service Providers Must Employ Arabic Speakers

DOHA- All businesses that sell items or provide a service in Qatar must now employ at least one Arabic speaking staff member to assist customers.

A circular issued by the country's Ministry of Economy and Commerce detailed the new rules, which also require Arabic to be the primary language for service-related establishments, according to Doha News.

Product receipts, warranties, shop signs and information labels must also be available in Arabic, but can also be offered in other languages.

Businesses will have until March 2017 to comply with the new regulation and will be subject to inspections following this, the publication said.

The regulation is expected to impact retailers, hotels, malls, help lines, beauty salons, service centers, car dealerships and other businesses.

It is being introduced because of the "growing incidence in the use of foreign languages" by businesses.

The Ministry said this resulted in a lack of transparency and information for Arabic customers.

Arabic is Qatar's official language, however, 90 percent of the population is made up of expatriates.

Much of the country's retail staff is also non-Arabic speaking and the new regulation is expected to impact smaller shop owners in particular.

Qatar previously issued regulation requiring all shops to issue receipts in Arabic in 2012.

It has also recently looked to promote the wider use of the Arabic language.

In February the state Cabinet approved a draft law requiring all ministries, official organizations and public schools and universities to use Arabic in communications.

Source: Gulfbusiness.com



Khalifa Issues HR Law in Abu Dhabi

ABU DHABI – In his capacity as Ruler of Abu Dhabi, President His Highness Sheikh Khalifa bin Zayed Al Nahyan has issued the Human Resources Law which regulates all matters concerning human resources from the appointment of the employee until the end of his service.

The law will be enforced on civil servants in government entities of the emirate of Abu Dhabi. However, all or some of its provisions may be applicable - as per resolution by the chairman of the Abu Dhabi Executive Council - to government companies.

It also makes it mandatory for government employers to recruit people with disabilities in jobs suitable for their health conditions and according to quotas set by the emirate's Human Resources Authority. Under the law, government departments should allow their eligible employees to enroll in the national military service.

The law introduced some new rules and regulations regarding theoretical and practical training and development of employees which will allow them to perform their jobs properly, as well as the appointment of Emiratis on a part-time basis.

The legislation allows government employers to introduce flexible working hours according to specific criteria to be set by the implementation regulations and reward distinguished employees with a yearly bonus subject to the executive council's approval.

Prospective fathers will be entitled to a three-day parental leave while prospective mothers will enjoy a fully paid maternity leave for three months and can leave the workplace for two hours daily to take care of their babies for one year from the date of delivery.

WAM/tfaham

Source: Emirates News Agency (WAM)



Oman to Scrap “No Objection Certificate” for Workers Switching Jobs

MUSCAT- Oman is reportedly planning to remove the requirement for expatriate workers in the country to obtain a No Objection Certificate (NOC) from their employer to change jobs.

Times of Oman cited the Ministry of Manpower advisor Said bin Nasser Al Saadi as saying that the government was seriously considering removing the requirement.

“We will remove the NOC option. It will be removed,” he was quoted.

Recent changes of allowing expatriate workers more freedom in the UAE and the upcoming overhaul of the Kafala system in Qatar reportedly are prompted plans.

Workers who fail to obtain a NOC when leaving their employer are currently banned from returning to Oman for two years.

However, Al Saadi suggested the sultanate’s new labor law, which is being finalized, would be more flexible and was designed to attract investment to the country.

Restrictive labor policies were one of several factors deemed barriers to doing business in Oman in the recently released Global Competitive Index 2016-2017 by the World Economic Forum.

Reports in August also suggested the NOC system, which was made mandatory in mid-2014, was being exploited by companies.

Legal advisors in the country were quoted as saying employers were forcing workers to give up their end of service gratuity in exchange for the certificate.

“Modifying labor laws will certainly impact onerous cost and legal hurdles that inhibit free market competition and allow Oman to get repositioned as a regional destination for business owners,” Al Saadi was quoted as saying.

Ahmed Al Hooti, an Oman Chamber of Commerce and Industry member, suggested protection should be put in place for Omani businesses if the law is changed.

“There are hundreds of thousands of Omanis working in the private sector and some of them run their own businesses. If the rule is waived without taking them into consideration, they will have a lot of competition from expatriate workers, so we must protect them,” he said, according to the publication.

Source: Gulfbusiness.com



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