



Iftar giveaway for workers

Three thousand workers from various sectors gathered under one-roof for an Iftar kit distribution event, said to be the kingdom's first large scale community-led initiative of its kind. The programme, held

on Friday at an open-air space in Tubli, was organised by One Bahrain Hospitality's community outreach programme Together We Care, and symbolised unity and solidarity among the local workforce.

The event was inaugurated by Capital Governorate information and follow-up director Yousef Lori. Other attendees included ministry officials, One Bahrain Hospitality representative Anthony Poulos,

volunteers, social service organisations, media representatives, organisational leaders and business owners. Above, Mr Lori, standing tenth from right, with other attendees at the event.

Bestseller guide to doing business in GCC unveiled

By NADER ADNAN

THE highly anticipated new edition of a book aimed at enhancing understanding between western and Arab business mentalities is now on the shelves.

Don't They Know It's Friday, the bestseller by author Jeremy Williams, has in recent years become the definitive guide for anybody looking to do business in the GCC.

First released in 1998, the book, now in its fourth edition, shares Mr Williams' first-hand experience and knowledge of the way of life in the region.

It not only addresses cross-cultural aspects, but also debunks common myths and misconceptions and provides a comprehensive introduction to the region.

"The book is designed so that

you can dip in anywhere," Mr Williams told the *GDN*.

"You can jump in anywhere and it cross-references you left and right all the time, so you don't have to read it in a logical way because it guides you.

"It's mainly for western people who don't know, or understand, the Gulf way of life; that's the purpose of it."

Mr Williams has more than 40 years under his belt in the GCC and Arab regions in a long military, diplomatic and business career.

He has been helping westerners engage in businesses with the Arabs, especially Bahrain, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, the UAE, and Oman, for more than 20 years.

Through 'Handshaikh', a

British cross-cultural training company that he started 30 years ago, he provides customised business seminars, briefings and induction training for western and other organisations wishing to improve communication with their Arab colleagues, clients and counterparts.

Mr Williams had the idea to write *Don't They Know It's Friday* during his time as a defence attaché at the British Embassy in Abu Dhabi in the 1990s.

"A million people used to come to the embassy to ask for advice," he said.

"For me it was easy to explain society in Bahrain and the GCC and how it all works.

"The book itself developed from a simple A4 handout. It developed basically from people coming to the embassy and asking basic questions: 'Which chair do I sit in?' 'How will he negotiate?', 'Is Islam important?' and I thought 'Don't you know these things?'

"I gave a lecture at the Nad Al Sheba Racecourse in Dubai, where an Arab banker recommended I turn the A4 handout into a book. That is how it all started, and I am very grateful to him."

After gathering information from the book, utilising his own experiences from his time at the embassy, not just with westerners but also with Arabs.

He mentions the Arab hospitality, and wrote the book respectfully, discreetly and politely, with the aim to ensure not all Arabs are put in the same basket.

In the book, he discusses the GCC and Arab process of decision-making, the centralisation, organisational structures, influence of religion and hierarchical structure.

He also urges western businesses to be patient, stay close to Arab colleagues – become a genuine friend and make time to sit quietly with them.

The new version of the book now has some updated and revised details, and Mr Williams has expressed his pride in it.

"I hope I've done a service to both western business people and to GCC Arabs, many of whom I know extremely well," he said. "I think that I've done it respectfully and helpfully, and that seems to be the response I'm getting.

"The new edition of this book is one that I have written very carefully, and although it is mainly designed for foreigners, I do hope the Arabs enjoy it as well."

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Mr Williams

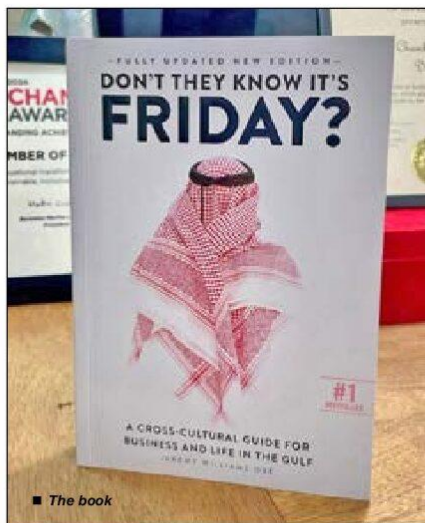
Quick Quiz



1. What was the name until 2018 of the southern African country that is now known as Eswatini?
2. Which sea is between Corsica and the Gulf of Genoa?
3. What sort of creature is a pompano?
4. Eindhoven is the fifth largest city of which European country?
5. Torino is the Italian name for which Italian city?

ANSWERS

1. Swaziland
2. Ligurian
3. Ray-finned fish
4. The Netherlands
5. Turin



The book

Bygone Bahrain



This historic picture of a Handley Page 42 aircraft at Bahrain Airport was taken in the early 1930s

A nostalgic trip through the GDN and Gulf Mirror archives