

Bahrain Journalists Association wants help for journalists who lost their job

The BJA, an umbrella for Bahrain-based journalists, said that it was ready to assist all former *Al Waqt* staff as they negotiate with the media outlets.

- By Habib Toumi, Bahrain Bureau Chief
- Published: 17:58 May 3, 2010

Manama: Bahrain Journalists Association (BJA) has urged the media establishments and groups in Bahrain to hire the journalists who lost their jobs after *Al Waqt* daily shut down.

"We call upon all the media companies to benefit from the skills and experience of the technical, administrative and editorial staff of *Al Waqt*," the BJA said. "The companies can at the same time contribute to alleviating the anguish of the staff who have several financial commitments," the BJA said hours after *Al Waqt* announced that it was closing down for lack of funds.

The BJA, an umbrella for Bahrain-based journalists, said that it was ready to assist all former *Al Waqt* staff as they negotiate with the media outlets.

"We deeply deplore the decision taken by *Al Waqt* board to close down, and we hope that the staff will be paid their dues within the confines of the law," the association said.

Al Waqt on Monday said that it was publishing the last edition after its board on Sunday afternoon agreed to liquidate the newspaper for lack of funds. In a moving editorial published on the front page, *Al Waqt* thanked its readers and supporters and bid farewell.

The paper founded in 2006 has been struggling to get advertisements in a small and highly competitive market.

The paper had had to drop pages, cancel several contracts with local and international columnists and remain without an editor for months.

A Kuwaiti businessman last year injected cash to help redress the situation, but his efforts were short of the funds required to re-launch the paper.

Bahrain has now six papers in Arabic (*Akhbar Al Khaleej*, *Al Ayam*, *Al Wasat*, *Al Watan* and *Al Bilad*) and two in English, *Gulf Daily News* and *Bahrain Tribune*.

A daily paper, *Al Meethaq*, turned into a weekly after it failed to secure enough money to publish every day. All newspapers in Bahrain are owned by private businesses

© Gulf News 2010