

Bahrain

Cabinet approves memorandum on the exchange of tax reports between relevant countries

On 4 January 2021, in a meeting chaired by HRH the Crown Prince and Prime Minister, the cabinet approved a memorandum from the Ministerial Committee for Legal and Legislative Affairs regarding exchange of tax reports between relevant countries, which is in line with Bahrain's commitment to international standards and transparency of tax disclosures.

Click [here](#) to read more.

Ministerial decision prescribes fees of issuing tax certificates, licenses for tax representatives/tax agents and submission of tax appeals

Ministerial Decision no. 33 of 2020 has been published in the official gazette on 7 January 2021 to prescribe the fees for issuing tax residency certificates, licenses of tax representatives / tax agents and submission of tax appeals.

The table below specifies the types of services and corresponding fees.

<u>Service category</u>	<u>Prescribed fee (BHD)</u>
Issuance of tax certificate	50/-
Issuance or renewal of license for tax representatives and tax agents – valid for 3 years	300/-
Submission of an appeal to the Tax Appeals Review Committee. In the case of multiple appeals on decisions or procedures within the same request, the fee will be charged for each decision or procedure appealed separately.	50/-

VAT action points on conversion of an SPC to a WLL

On 28 September 2020, Decree 28 of 2020 was published amending certain provisions of the Bahrain Commercial Companies Law (Law 21 of 2001). One of the key amendments is in relation to the conversion of all existing Single Person Companies (SPCs) to With Limited Liability (WLL) companies by 31 March 2021.

For an SPC which has been or will be converted to a WLL company, the VAT registration details will also need to be updated to align them with the updated Commercial Registration (CR) certificate.

Click [here](#) to read our detailed Tax Alert.

Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (“KSA”)

General Authority of Zakat and Tax (“GAZT”) discovers manipulation of financial statements

GAZT has discovered manipulation in certain companies’ financial statements through the electronic platforms and GAZT is of the view that such companies have been reporting false data to reduce due taxes.

GAZT intends to impose penalties on the violators. Further, such companies may also be penalized by the Saudi Organization for Certified Public Accountants (“SOCPA”) for the violations.

GAZT will sign a memorandum of understanding with SOCPA to report violations. In addition, GAZT is also coordinating with the Ministry of Commerce to get all companies and enterprises’ financial statements through the “Qawaem” portal.

Click [here](#) to read more.

GAZT receives 162,869 registration applications for Real Estate Transaction Tax (RETT)

On 10 January 2021, GAZT reported that it has received 162,869 registration applications so far for real estate transaction tax since the issuance of Royal Decree A84 in October 2020.

Click [here](#) to read more (in Arabic).

GAZT continues inspection of businesses to identify non-compliance with tax obligations

GAZT is continuing its inspections of businesses to identify non-compliance with tax obligations. More than 3,000 inspection visits have been made in KSA, resulting in the discovery of 793 violations. GAZT has also reported receiving 194 calls from taxpayers.

Click [here](#) to read more (in Arabic).

GAZT reminds excise taxpayers to file their returns by 15 January 2021

GAZT has reminded taxpayers subject to excise tax to file their November and December 2020 returns no later than 15 January 2021 to avoid any late filing penalties.

Click [here](#) to read more (in Arabic).

Oman

Oman Tax Authority (“OTA”) issues list of zero rated food items

An executive decision has been issued by the chairman of OTA outlining a list of 94 food items subject to VAT at the zero rate. The list includes meat, fish, poultry, dairy products, fresh eggs, vegetables, fruits, coffee, tea, cardamom, grain, olive oil, sugar, baby foods, bread, bottled drinking water and table salt.

Click [here](#) to access the executive decision (in Arabic).

Click [here](#) to access the list of the food items (in Arabic).

The above is for general information only and is not intended to address the circumstances of any particular scenario. Please seek professional advice in relation to your particular circumstances.

For a detailed discussion on how the above updates may impact your business, [contact us](#).

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