

Union of the Poor

One of the newspapers recently published a report on the real estate situation, the rise and fall of its prices and its occupancy rates. A well-written report by a diligent editor. The next day on the same page, I read the response on that report by the Real Estate Union, of which I am a member. The amount of anger and objection on the accuracy of the figures couldn't be unseen, but this is not my concern here. I had an interview with a journalist from one of the real estate pages where I spoke about The Promenade, a mall in Hawally. This guy, with his journalistic talent managed to change the direction of the interview to other subjects like my opinions about the local market and future insights, as well as real estate exhibitions and the transparency and honesty about what these exhibitions offer to the public. My opinion was that the real estate market was not totally black and white nor pink perfect as some would imagine it to be. With regard to real estate exhibitions, they sell nothing but air and promises. One type of the projects they advertise are only drawings of apartments with the dream of transforming agricultural land into residential properties, apartments and ready-made villas. Just like Okaz open market, it is run by professional salespersons, women and men, all trying to sell you something. But what caught my attention were his questions on how to protect consumers from that marketing campaign, and he was completely right asking this question. The poor consumer is surrounded from all sides, and everybody is looking at the citizen's pocket, like trade unions that preserve the interests of its founders, banks that compete to lend money, landlords who want to sell or rent their properties, and agencies running advertising campaigns here and there. The solution is to raise awareness and education for the consumer because no one has