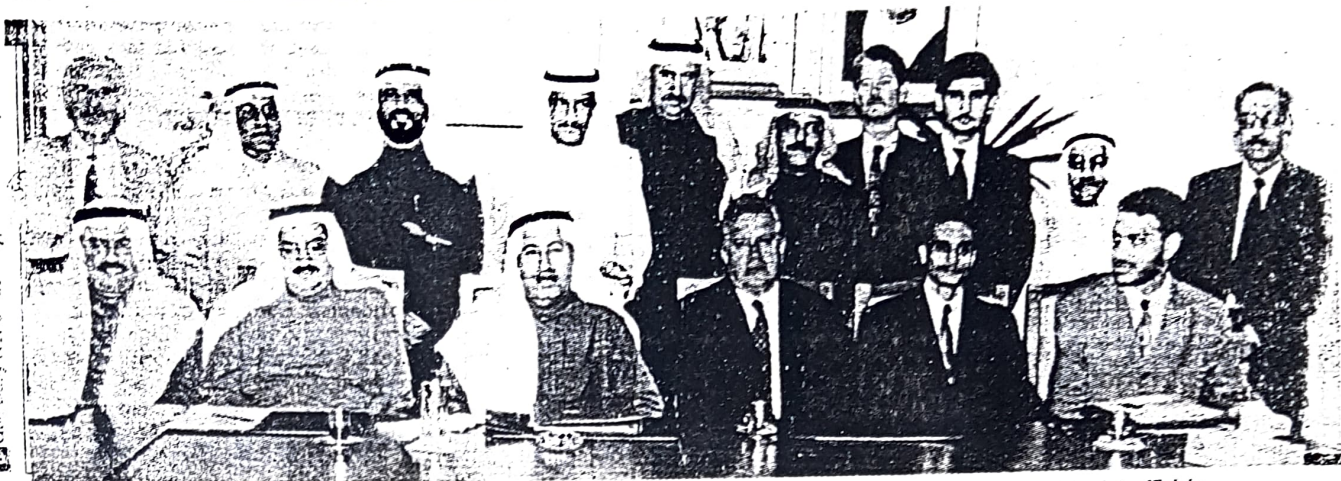


# BD1M DEAL SIGNED

Gulf Daily News, Tuesday, 13th February 1997



■ Mr Al Sho'ala, sitting, third from left, and Mr Al Bassam, sitting, third from right, after the signing ceremony, with other officials

BAHRAIN'S move to promote itself as a regional training centre of excellence was endorsed by a Saudi firm yesterday, with a deal to set up a BD1 million multi-media training and learning resource centre.

Al Khobar-based ImageSystems' president Mohammed Al Bassam signed the agreement with Labour and Social Affairs Minister Abduinabi Al Sho'ala.

Following the signing ceremony at his office, Mr Al Sho'ala said this was the first major investment in Bahrain in the field of training by a private sector group from another GCC country.

"This reflects Bahrain's increasing role as a regional centre for training and human resources development," he said.

## ● Saudi firm endorses Bahrain training centre move

By SOMAN BABY

"This is also a demonstration of the spirit of oneness among the GCC states and of the effective implementation of the GCC resolutions to promote training facilities for nationals so as to make them more effective contributors in economic growth and development."

Mr Al Sho'ala said the centre would offer courses and programmes that would benefit the entire Gulf region.

Mr Al Bassam said a location for a building for the centre was now being identified.

"We hope to start functioning within six months. We are grateful to the support and encouragement given by the Labour and Social Affairs Ministry," he said.

Managing director Moyez Kassam said the courses were being developed jointly with the Industrial Training Corporation of the US and LJ Technical Systems of the UK.

"Unlike conventional training centres, the new institute will adopt a multi-media supported self-learning method," he said.

"The centre will establish itself as a unique model in developing the English

language proficiency and technical skills of GCC nationals, especially in the areas of computers and management.

"It will initially offer training programmes in industrial safety, technical and vocational skills, business management and professional development skills, office application skills in information technology and English language for industrial and commercial applications."

Mr Kassam said courses in instrumentation, engineering and micro-processor technology would be added later.

"The duration of each course will range from six hours to 300 hours, and all of them will match international standards including the National Vocational Qualifications of Britain," he said.

ImageSystems was also represented at the signing ceremony by marketing support and technical specialist Waqqas Asif and regional marketing manager Majeed Sharaf.

Top Labour and Social Affairs Ministry officials including Assistant Under-Secretary for Labour Affairs Shaikh Abdulrahman bin Abdulla Al Khalifa, Assistant Under-Secretary for Planning and Training Abdulrahman Zavani and Assistant Under-Secretary for Social Affairs Sadiq Shehabi were present on the occasion.

The ministry hosted a luncheon reception in honour of Mr Al Bassam and his delegation at the Diplomat Hotel.

# Move on hotel centre hailed

● Bahrainis 'need not worry about their jobs'

By SOMAN BABY

ing (SCHCT) chairman Abdulnabi Daylami said the new move would help increase the level of Bahrainisation in the hotel and catering sector.

"We have been really looking forward to such an important step which will revitalise the centre and the quality of its programmes," he said.

"The running of the centre by an internationally-renowned institute like Mancat will encourage the Specific Council to sponsor more Bahraini students to the centre, thereby cutting the costs involved in sending many students abroad for training.

"Because of the new move, we will be revising our training plan for this year."

Mr Daylami said he was hopeful that the privatisation of the centre would also encourage more Bahraini students to take up a career in the hotel industry.

"The Specific Council will extend all support to the Government in its endeavour to upgrade the quality of training provided in the hotel and catering industry," he said.

"We hope the move will encourage other sectors also to privatise their training activities."

General manager of National Hotels Company, Abdulrahman Al Morshed said all hotels in

LEADERS of Bahrain's tourism and hotel industry have welcomed the Government decision to privatise the Hotel and Catering Training Centre (HCTC) in Muharraq.

A British group, headed by the Manchester College of Arts and Technology (Mancat), signed a memorandum of understanding with Labour and Social Affairs Minister Abdulnabi Al Shio'aa on Sunday to take over the centre with an initial investment of \$2 million (\$D756,000).

Assistant Under-Secretary for Tourism Dr Kadhem Rajab described the move as a step in the right direction.

"We have a tourism industry which is known for its high standard of service," he said.

"We believe that an institution of international reputation like Mancat, which is taking over the centre, can help further upgrade the quality of those services.

"The new arrangement will also enhance the status of HCTC as a regional training centre, catering to the increased needs of the hotel and catering industry."

Dr Rajab, who is also the vice-chairman of the board of trustees of HCTC, confirmed that the existing staff at the centre, most of them Bahrainis, had nothing to fear under the new move.

"They will either be retained at the centre or employed elsewhere," he said. Specific Council for Hotel and Catering Train-

Bahrain would welcome the Government decision with "open arms".

"The hotel industry in Bahrain has been grumbling for many years about the poor quality of students graduating from HCTC," he said.

"It is a fact that we have been dissatisfied with the HCTC products.

"As a man involved with the activities of the SCHCT since its inception, I have always been

sad to see that the HCTC graduates failed to meet the requirements of Bahrain's hotel industry.

I am, therefore, thrilled at the new Government move," said Mr Al Morshed, who was chairman of the Specific Council for seven years and is currently its vice-chairman.

He said the hotels in Bahrain would be delighted to extend all support to the new management of HCTC.



Students under training ... bright futures



Dr Rajab ... right move



Mr Daylami ... encouraged



Mr Al Morshed ... thrilled