

## ●UN agencies thanked for backing government employment drive

# Women get jobs pledge

BAHRAIN is committed to the training and integration of more women into the mainstream of the country's economic activities, Labour and Social Affairs Minister Abdulnabi Al Sho'ala said yesterday.

He also thanked the United Nations agencies for supporting the Bahrain Government's drive to promote employment opportunities for women.

Mr Al Sho'ala was speaking at the first graduation ceremony at the Bahrain Training Institute.

He presented certificates to 39 graduates from the first two groups.

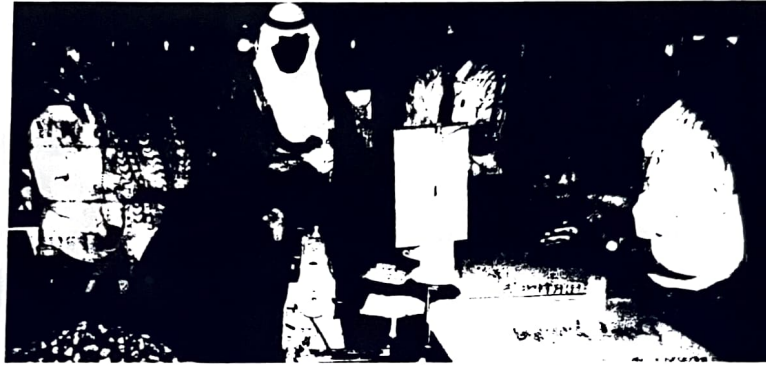
By SOMAN BABY

"The graduates are the first group of women from the centre to enter the employment market," he said.

"This is also in consonance with the Government's policy of providing equal training and job opportunities for women."

Mr Al Sho'ala said Bahrain's drive to help women to be economically active had been fostered by the Micro Start project, under which \$1.5 million (BD567,000) was granted to Bahrain by the UN Development Programme, to help people start small businesses.

"Bahrain is one of the first countries to be recognised



■ Mr Al Sho'ala being briefed on the programmes at the Garments Training Centre

under this project designed to enable people, especially women, to establish small and commercially viable business enterprises," he said.

Mr Al Sho'ala urged the graduates to benefit from the scheme and become a part of the business community.

"Our goal is to make women more skilled, capable and productive so that they can play a more positive role in the human resources development process in Bahrain," he said.

Mr Al Sho'ala thanked the UN Industrial Development Organisation, UNDP, Oil and

Industry Ministry, Bahrain Chamber of Commerce and Industry and various garment factories in Bahrain which had supported BTI in establishing the Garments Training Centre.

BTI director Dr Najj Al Mahdi said the BD300,000 centre would be further expanded to include tailoring classes.

"Garment factories were considered to be one of the most difficult industries for Bahraini women to enter," he said.

"We have been able to overcome the problem through the

support of various agencies.

"The Garment Committee at the Bahrain Chamber of Commerce and Industry at the Labour and Social Affairs Ministry are working in close co-operation to further expand the programme."

Dr Al Mahdi said a total of 65 girls had joined the third group, which started their eight-week training earlier this month.

"The majority of the graduates have been offered jobs by various garment factories in Bahrain," he said.

UN resident co-ordinator and UNDP resident representative, Dr Faysal Abdel-Gadir praised Bahrain's initiative in undertaking projects aimed at integrating women into the country's economic and social development programmes.

He talked about the importance of the garment sector in the light of the globalisation process.

"The quota system enjoyed by the developing countries which are members of the World Trade Organisation will expire in the year 2005," said Dr Abdel-Gadir.

"This will create new challenges for the developing countries. Training of women in the garment sector is one of the measures to meet those challenges."

Bahrain Chamber of Commerce and Industry garment committee chairman Hamad Abul praised BTI for the professional excellence shown in its training programmes.

"As Bahrain is now developing textile manufacturing industries, the centre should also focus on textile training programmes," he said.

Mr Al Sho'ala and other Labour Ministry officials later toured the centre.

Graduates are: Mona Habib Edress, Basemah Ali Ahmed, Zahra Jawad Abdulla, Fatima Abdulla Nasser, Shabarban Mohammed Jasum, Shammeh Jaffer Hussain, Basool Baqer Abdulla, Hissa Salman Ali, Mona Jaffer Alafoo, Ghaniva Salman Ali, Rogaya Mahdi Rashid, Eberesam Abdul Ahmed, Zainab Abdulla Ibrahim, Bushra Mohammed Abdulla, Sabah Yousef Abdal, Sharban Sayed Ali Omran, Nada Jasum Nasaif, Rokaya Ali Ibrahim Al Setrawi, Zainab Abdulla Mohammed, Zainab Kadhem Ahmed, Fatima Hassan Ali Al Seaba, Fayzah Ali Mohammed Al Aradi, Mona Juma Mohammed Mousa, Mona Mohammed Ali Hamed, Maja Eakander Mohammed, Rana Ahmed Yousef Mansoor, Safiya Shukhrila Mohammed, Salwa Ahmed Nasser Ahmed, Shera Ali Ghuloom Ali, Suda Abdulla Jawad Ali, Marham Abdulla Easa, Marham Jaffer Mohammed, Zahra Khalil Ibrahim, Fatima Jaffer Firdaus, Amal Ali Hassan Ibrahim, Aysha Yousef Ahmed Salman, Zahra Rajab Mahdi Rajab, Mahdeya Salman Rashid and Laila Yousef Mohammed Al Aradi.

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