

BAHRAIN CHOSEN FOR PIONEERING UK SHOW

By **INDIRA CHAND**

BAHRAIN is to be the venue for a pioneering British exhibition, to be held next year.

The event is among initiatives being taken to bolster commercial ties with Bahrain, said British Board of Trade president and Cabinet member Ian Lang.

He said Bahrain had done well in diversifying its economy and Britain, with its experience in many sectors, looked forward to building upon the strong bilateral trade relations.

Although bilateral trade has been "fairly flat" in the past two years, there were indications that it was increasing, he said.

Mr Lang, who was leaving Bahrain this morning after a three-day visit, was speaking yesterday during a Press conference at the Regency Inter-Continental Hotel.

"Bahrain is a much respected trading partner for Britain and is the gateway into other Gulf countries," said Mr Lang.

"I hope that British compa-

● London bid to bolster commerce

nies and their Bahraini counterparts will seize the opportunities that our initiatives offer them for increasing trade between our two countries.

"Bahrain had diversified its economy well from oil and gas into other sectors from heavy industry to financial services.

"Britain has experience and expertise in many of these sectors and these new measures will build upon our strong trade relations," said Mr Lang.

The pioneering Best of British Design exhibition will be held at Le Royal Meridien Hotel from February 25 to 28, he said.

Mr Lang said his discussions with HH the Amir Shaikh Isa bin Sulman Al Khalifa and Prime Minister Shaikh Khalifa bin Sulman Al Khalifa had included the proposed exhibition, being organised by the British Department of Trade and Industry



■ British Ambassador Ian Lewty hosted a reception last night in honour of the visiting president of the Board of Trade Ian Lang. At the event, at Mr Lewty's residence, is Commerce Minister Ali Saleh Al Saleh, second from left, with from left, Labour and Social Affairs Minister Abdunabi Al Sho'ala, Mr Lang, Mr Lewty, First Secretary Norman Cameron, Assistant Under-Secretary for Commerce Mohammed Al Tajir.

(DTI) in agreement with Bahrain's Commerce Ministry.

The exhibition would be staged under the patronage of the Premier, he said.

It will feature state-of-the-art technologies in many fields, including aerospace, oil and gas, electronics and consumer goods.

"The aim is to show what is powering Britain's leadership in key areas of design achievement," said Mr Lang.

"In specific areas of industrial and consumer product design, Britain's performance is simply unrivalled." He said the exhibition was "very well subscribed", with more than 50 British com-

panies taking part. The event, the first of its kind, was a "special one for Bahrain", said Mr Lang.

"It will present an ideal showcase to GCC businessmen wishing to see the best of British design," he said.

"I hope this will be a further mark in the development of our trading relationship."

The event will be open to all business visitors from 10am to 1pm daily and to the public from 5pm to 8pm on February 27 and 28.

The DTI was also arranging for a group of Bahraini managers to attend a business marketing course at the University of

Reading, said Mr Lang.

The course, from September 23 to 23, is funded by the DTI and is aimed at transferring proven management skills to companies in Bahrain.

Mr Lang hoped trade ties between Bahrain and Britain would be further strengthened in the future. He said the European Union (EU) would not prove to be an obstacle in this further development.

"Britain has particularly strong links with Bahrain and the GCC," said Mr Lang.

"We want the EU to be an open market for the rest of the world."