

Top Indian institute to set up base in Bahrain

A MAJOR Indian educational institution plans to establish its first overseas operations in Bahrain by January next year.

The institution will cater to all residents in the Gulf region, said J B Saksena, officer on special duty at the Birla Institute of Technology (BIT) based in Ranchi, India.

Mr Saksena said that there was immense potential to establish such a presence in Bahrain.

"Bahrain's status as an international centre for trade, commerce and finance has seen the establishment of several international organisations in the country," he said.

"The current drive of the Government to consolidate its position as the regional centre for training and human resources development is underlined by its helpful attitude and incentives.

"Encouraged by such a trend, BIT is proposing to set up an institute to offer a series of courses and programmes."

Mr Saksena was speaking shortly before he left Bahrain, after extensive discussions with Labour and Social Affairs Minister Abdulnabi Al Sho'ala, other officials at the Ministry and executives at Mohammed Jalal and Sons, which is likely to be involved with the project.

He said that his institute was delighted to find the right coun-

●Technology courses to be offered

try to locate its first overseas operations.

"The courses offered by BIT in Ranchi have been extremely popular with the non-resident Indians (NRIs) in the Gulf," he said.

"It is a matter of pride that the alumni of the BIT occupy positions of responsibility and importance in governments and undertakings of the public and private sectors all over the world and it is even more pleasing to note that many of them are in Bahrain."

Mr Saksena said that Mr Al Sho'ala had underlined that professional courses were in great demand.

"He explained that the GCC governments were committed to promoting the skills of its citizens through improved educational, training and human resources development programmes," said Mr Saksena.

"In addition, Bahrain's open policy and the understanding shown by the Ministry have enthused us to look ahead with a



■ Mr Al Sho'ala, centre, with, from left, Capital Commercial Services chief executive Manoj Megchiani, Mr Saksena, Mr Megchiani and Mr Zayani

positive plan of action."

Mr Saksena, who is the retired registrar of BIT prior to his current assignment, said that the courses offered by BIT have been extremely popular.

These include all disciplines in engineering, electronics, pharmacology, management and even such highly specialised courses in Rocket Engineering, reportedly the only institution in India to offer such a course.

The benefit of the expertise and experience gathered can be made available to the residents of the Gulf, he said.

Mr Saksena said that BIT was likely to begin operations in Bahrain from January next year.

He is expected to return to Bahrain in September along with BIT Vice-Chancellor Emeritus H P Pande to sign a memorandum of understanding with the Labour and Social Affairs Ministry and Mohammed Jalal and Sons, which has shown interest in a joint venture.

The proposed institute in Bahrain will also offer at the next phase, training programmes in a number of vocations.

Mr Saksena said a study was being undertaken to determine the areas, he said.

Mr Al Sho'ala said authorities were delighted that a prestigious institution from India was in the process of selecting Bahrain as

its regional base to cater to the growing needs of education, training and human development resources in the region.

"I am sure the initiative taken by BIT will be suitably rewarded both in terms of response and commercial viability," he said.

"Bahrain welcomes international institutions of proven track record to take advantage of the enormous market potential."

Mr Al Sho'ala said the Ministry had launched an aggressive marketing campaign in this connection and several educational institutions, training institutes and others connected with the sector in Europe, US, the Middle East, the Far East, Australia, New Zealand and the Indian sub-continent have shown interest.

"While we will provide all assistance and support, the concern is for quality and integrity, in keeping with Bahrain's status as a centre of excellence," said Mr Al Sho'ala.

Nevin Megchiani, general manager, technical and automotive division of Mohammed Jalal and Sons, which has been promoting the BIT courses and enrolment procedures in the Gulf, said that his organisation was very happy that BIT was strongly committed to opening an institute in Bahrain.

"The move will be a significant milestone in the field of education, training and human resources development in the region," he said. "I am happy that the institute has chosen Bahrain for its regional presence.

"This will prove to be a great boon not only for GCC nationals but also for NRIs who have been demanding a higher percentage of allocation of seats," he said.

He said that all details relating to admission of students in Bahrain and other GCC states will be worked out with the concerned authorities.

During his stay here, Mr Saksena also held talks with other senior Ministry officials including Assistant Under-Secretary for Planning and Training Abdulrahman Zayani and Assistant Under-Secretary for Social Affairs Sadiq Al Shehbi. BIT director Dr Naji Al Mabdi and Mohammed Jalal and Sons director Sami Jalal.