

TRAINING DRIVE

MANAMA: Bahrain is about to launch an international campaign promoting it as a regional training centre.

Labour and Social Affairs Minister Abdulnabi Al Sho'ala said Bahrain had already proved successful in attracting international and foreign companies ready to open regional training offices.

Next month the country will launch its own international promotions campaign.

Mr Al Sho'ala was speaking at a semi-

● Bahrain to launch global campaign

By AHDEYA AHMED

nar, organised by the ministry, titled Developing the Policies, Plans and Programmes of Vocational Training in Bahrain.

The one-day event was held at the Bahrain Conference Center, Holiday Inn.

"Although we have not yet started promoting Bahrain as a regional training centre, we have begun getting response from international training organisations

and companies supporting our strategy and plan," said Mr Al Sho'ala.

"In a few days, we will announce the names of some of the companies who have completed their procedures and will open their training offices in the country.

"Next month we will start promoting and marketing Bahrain in the US and Switzerland as a regional centre for training."

He said the development of manpower was important for the development of the economy.

"Manpower is the backbone of development and the concern given to manpower varies from one country to another according to its economic and social capabilities," said Mr Al Sho'ala.

"It also depends on the country's technology and scientific development. Although technology development has given much of the task to machines for production purposes, development still depends

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Training drive boost

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on human abilities and efforts.

"Based on this fact, Bahrain is concerned about its manpower and ways of training and improving their standards."

He said the ministry had been working towards implementing policies and legislations, which provided training opportunities to Bahrainis in the public and private sectors.

"The ministry has also been working on providing them with different job opportunities," said Mr Al Sho'ala.

"Based on the importance of manpower, the ministry has also contributed in providing suitable job atmospheres.

"The steps we took towards reaching our aims included reconstitution of the High Council for Vocational Training, which has become more active now.

"Members of the council are experienced and have qualifications with which they can contribute in offering better training opportunities to Bahraini workers."

Mr Al Sho'ala said the council also played a major role in organising social activities and programmes, which in-

involved training.

He said other steps taken by the ministry was the reconstitution of the Bahrain Training Institute (BTI) board.

"The members are responsible for developing the institute's programmes and expanding on its capabilities," he said.

"We also strengthened relations between the institute and other training centres and institutes in the private sector.

"We also co-operated with the Education Ministry and we have reached a point at which we know what the job market requires and what is the role of

each of us."

Labour Affairs Assistant Under-Secretary Shaikh Abdul Rahman bin Abdulla Al Khalifa said the seminar highlighted the importance of vocational training and the preparation of Bahraini manpower in different jobs.

"Preparing Bahrainis to take over different careers and to be able to train also, will increase production in different fields," he said.

Shaikh Abdul Rahman said the general school education was not enough to prepare the youth for the job market.

"Vocational training is needed for preparing youth to meet the economic and social needs of the country through different services," he said.

"The development of any country is based on the standard of training it offers. Vocational training is also important for facing technology changes."

Shaikh Abdul Rahman said the Government had established vocational training centres to accommodate a large number of trainees.

"The Government has also laid plans for these centres and provided them with facilities they need," he said.

BTI director Dr Naji Al Mahdi said providing special legislations were not enough for achieving development.

"Development is also based on human resources. Therefore, companies and organisations, which contribute to the development of Bahrain should have sufficient and qualified human resources who will support general development," he said.

"The Labour Ministry has played a major role in providing such human resources, but changes that have occurred in the job market have made it necessary to take another look at the laws and legislations, which were issued concerning training."

Dr Al Mahdi said amendments should be made to these laws and legislations so they can meet the social, cultural, economic and training needs of the job market.

He said relations and co-operation between training institutes and centres should also be strengthened.

"There should be more co-operation between them so that they can exchange experience and ideas that will help meet the requirements of the job market," said Dr Al Mahdi.

General Committee for Bahrain Workers chairman Faisal Fulad suggested forming a high council for industrial training.

"Industrial education stops at industrial education schools," he said.

"We lack institutes, which give industrial education and certificates higher than school certificates, but of a lower standard of university degrees.

"Having such institutes will achieve several goals, an important one is that there will be a smaller load on the job market, because it will take time for these youth to graduate and they will be involved in the job market gradually."

Such institutes, said Mr Fulad would also help establish several local industries.

Bahrain Chamber of Commerce and Industry board member and vice treasurer Hamad Abul said the chamber had always showed support to companies and organisations, which gave importance to training programmes.

"The chamber supports such organisations, because it believes that these companies and establishments help provide the job market with what it needs and this in turn increases production and export," he said.

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■ VISIT ... Labour and Social Affairs Minister Abdunabi Al Sho'ala yesterday visited Sanabis Co-operative Society where he was briefed by society chairman Abd-All Abbas on the society's activities and its plans to build new premises. He was accompanied by Ministry Under-Secretary Shaikh Ahmed bin Sager Al Khalifa and the Assistant Under-Secretary for Social Affairs Sadiq Shehabi.