

New initiative to make Bahrain model economy

Implementation of educational reforms kicks off tomorrow

Mehmood Rafique
Business Correspondent

Bahrain is set to launch the “implementation of the national education reform initiatives”, an integral part of the national reforms initiated by His Majesty the King, Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa, to make the Kingdom a model economy in the region.

The education initiative will kick off at an event to be held at the first public school of Bahrain in Muharraq tomorrow. Education reforms, one of the integral pillars of the national reforms, are aimed at bringing the highest

international standards to the already advanced education and training sector in the Kingdom.

Under the patronage of Shaikh Mohammed bin Mubarak Al Khalifa, Deputy Prime Minister and chair of the Education Reform Project Board, the Education Development Board has invited over 400 guests to the ceremony, including ministers, Parliament members, public and private sector officials and the media. The implementation of international standards will take the sector to world-class level.

The Deputy Prime Minister will underscore the Kingdom’s education vision, explaining the purpose of the initiatives and outlining the targets of bringing the sector in line with global

standards. The launch event will be at Al Hedaya Al Khalifiya School in Muharraq, Bahrain’s first official school, chosen for its symbolic place in Bahrain’s education history.

Tomorrow’s announcement is the culmination of two years’ work and the start of the critical implementation phase. In June 2005 Crown Prince Shaikh Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa, Economic Development Board chairman, hosted a workshop for all stakeholders including leading political, economic, business and civil-society representatives in the Kingdom.

The workshop was covered extensively by Bahraini newspapers and television, marking the start of the project and forming the core for the

initiatives. Other speakers at tomorrow’s event are Minister of Education Dr Majed Al Noaimi who will deliver a presentation detailing the initiatives, and EDB chief executive Shaikh Mohammed bin Essa Al Khalifa who will introduce the international partners picked to help with the process.

The initiatives focus on a set of innovative programmes designed to improve all three sectors of the education system: schooling, vocational and higher education. They aim at enabling the education system to produce highly talented individuals with a wide range of expertise, equipped with leadership, creativity and communication skills.



Labib Matta...quality service

Nuetel Com. launches new VoIP service

Business Correspondent

Nuetel Communications, a telecom provider in Bahrain, has launched Mobiline, a new service enabling subscribers to access its international VoIP services from their mobile phones without Internet access or special software. The service allows subscribers to enjoy the low-cost and quality of international calling from their mobile phones.

Subscribers simply dial a local access number in Bahrain (1602 5555) which then authenticates their mobile number, allowing them to call virtually any number in the world with major savings compared to their mobile carriers. “Consumers can subscribe to Mobiline by sending an e-mail to info@nuetel.com or calling Nuetel’s customer service.

“Consumers will then be issued with a Pin (personal information number) where they have the option to automatically link to their mobile number so that the next time they call no authentication is required. The service can be pre- or post-paid with a bill generated at the end of the month. In the case of post-paid service, a security deposit will be required,” said Labib Matta, Nuetel chief executive officer.

Intensive training for 70 Alba employees

Business Reporter

The Aluminium Bahrain (Alba) has decided to impart an intensive training programme to equip 70 employees of is power operations and maintenance divisions with wherewithal to operate gas turbines used in its power stations.

The month-long programme would be conducted in association with the USA-based Energy Trainers International.

Alba employees will be trained on various technical modules pertaining to operating the GT 13E2, the state-of-the-art turbines of the power generation industry designed to meet the requirements of the largest modern smelters in the world, be it auxiliary, fuel firing, instrument and control systems.

“Alba training aims to update all its employees in all departments and improve



HR DEVELOPMENT: Employees at the Alba training centre.

their performance, including engineers, operators, and technicians who are directly responsible for operations and production. We also conduct management development programmes for the

the industry. Towards that end, Alba has a comprehensive training centre that is fully equipped with the necessary infrastructure and is run by an experienced and qualified team, he added.



Isa Khalil...experience

supervisory staff,” said Isa Khalil, the training manager.

Khalil said the effort was to update the employees with the latest developments in

BIPEX 2007 from Nov. 28

Bahrain Society of Engineers (BSE), supported by the Bahrain Chamber of Commerce and Industry, will

organise the fourth edition of the Bahrain International Property Exhibition 2007 (Bipex ‘07), at Bahrain International Exhibition Centre from November 28 to 30 under the patronage of Shaikh Khalid bin Abdulla Al Khalifa, minister of the Prime Minister’s Court.

With numerous exhibitors from the real-estate, property-development as well as real-estate consultancy and financing sectors across the region and other nearby countries, the show is expected to offer visitors the full spectrum of services

required to facilitate the process of real-estate investment.

“Our aim is also to spotlight development in the Kingdom, bringing investors to Bahrain,” said Mohammed Khalil

Alsayed, BSE president. “As part of the marketing strategy, we have already appointed many media partners, including newspapers, magazines and TV channels, for

marketing this show within a wide spectrum of audiences. The last exhibition, last November, received about 8,000 visitors, and this time we are expecting a wider response from exhibitors and visitors from Bahrain, GCC and other parts of the world.”



Alsayed...strategy

BIBF executives to attend US development programme

KVS Madhav
Senior Business Reporter

A group of 10 executives of the Bahrain Institute of Banking and Finance (BIBF) left for the University of Virginia, Charlottesville, United States, to attend a two-week executive development programme. They also attended a weeklong foundation programme at the Institute itself before embarking on the overseas study programme. The programme offered by the Darden Graduate

School of Business Administration, University of Virginia in association with BIBF is tailored to equip executives with necessary leadership and management skills with real life applications to enable their organisations compete in the new economic scenario.

“The programme has proven immensely beneficial to both the participants and their sponsoring organisations,” said Dr. Mohammed Al Khozai, Head, Academic & Executive Learning Centre at BIBF. “Over the past decade, it has

helped many Bahrainis find their way up the ladder in their organisations by developing their individual strategic leadership and management skills. The programme also enables them meet up with their executive counterparts to share common interest issues and exchange experiences.”

Husain Al Ajmi, BIBF’s Learning Centres Head said there could be no better investment for an organisation than in its human resources, as the global market turned increasingly competitive.



LEADERSHIP SKILLS: BIBF executives before leaving for the US.

KINGDOM OF BAHRAIN
MINISTRY OF ELECTRICITY & WATER
PURCHASING & SUPPLY DIRECTORATE

The Directorate of Purchasing & Supply hereby invites Qualified Contractors for Measured Term Contract to the following Tenders :

	Tender No.	Project Title	Initial Bond (BD)	Document Fees (BD)	Closing Date
1	222/2007/5310 (10000000)	UNDERGROUND & DIVERSION OF HV O/H LINES AT QURAYA-BLOCKS 547	500/-	15/- (Cheque)	04/07/2007 1:30pm
2	223/2007/5310 (10000011)	N/W DEVELOPMENT FOR AHMED AL QAED, SEEF BLOCK 428	500/-	15/- (Cheque)	04/07/2007 1:30pm
3	224/2007/5220 (10000040)	REPLACEMENT OF MAINS & S.PIPES IN ZALLAQ VILLAGE BLOCK 1057	500/-	15/- (Cheque)	04/07/2007 1:30pm
4	225/2007/5220 (10000050)	REPLACEMENT OF PIPELINES AL MANAMA, AL MUTANABI AVENUE BLOCKS 309 & 310	500/-	15/- (Cheque)	04/07/2007 1:30pm
5	227/2007/5220 (10000080)	REPLACEMENT OF SERVICE PIPES AT JARI AL SHAIKH - BLOCK 924	500/-	15/- (Cheque)	04/07/2007 1:30pm

- Tenderers who are eligible to supply/provide the goods/ services/ works specified above are kindly requested to Collect the appropriate tender documents from the Purchasing & Supply Directorate, Room 107, Ground Floor, Ministry of Electricity & Water, Diplomatic Area, Manama, from **Thursday 14th June 2007** between 08:00 AM To 12:00 PM after submission of a Cheque for the non-refundable fees specified above, until **Thursday 21st June 2007**. An Initial Bond should be enclosed for the amount specified above or at a rate of 1% of the quotation value whichever of the amount is lesser, provided that no initial bond's value shall be less than BD 100/-. Ensure that the Initial bond is in a form of Certified Cheque/Bank Guarantee or Insurance Policy, valid for the duration specified in the tender documents.
- Quotation should be deposited in the tender box provided at the Tender Submission Office, 7th Floor, Tender Board Office at Al Moayyed Tower, before 1:30 After Noon on the tender closing date.
- All tenders are in compliance with the government tendering & purchasing regulations issued in Decrees Nos. 36 & 37 of 2002 and its executive regulations.
- The following conditions should be complied with:
 - Enclose a copy of the Commercial Registration Certificate valid for the current year, and related to the subject tender.
 - Submit the quotations on Form No. TB 02 - tender submission.
 - Enclose a copy of Certificate of Compliance with the Employment Percentage for Bahraini Manpower issued by Ministry of Labour.
 - Ensure to stamp with the official seal on all the original documents and copies thereof, which form part of the offer.
 - This announcement is to be read as part of the Tender Documents.

All public tenders related to the Purchasing & Supply Directorate are published on the Ministry's website: <http://www.mew.gov.bh> as well as the Tenders Board website: <http://www.Tenderboard.gov.bh>

High jobless rate linked to low HRD and productivity

Yauvapa Siri wattasit
Business Reporter

Failure to extensively incorporate a market-oriented educational system into the increasingly dynamic and competitive domestic labour market is the key reason behind the current unemployability of the Bahraini workforce, stated Dr Ahmed A. Hameed A. Ghani Al Shaikh, vice-president of human capital development for the Labour Fund (LF), at a seminar on “Labour Market Reform-the Singapore Experience” in the Bahrain International Exhibition Centre on Monday and conducted by a group of experts from the Singapore Co-operation Enterprise (SCE). According to the vice-president, only a fifth of prospective local job seekers are turning to vocational training with most opting for an university education.

On the other hand, in many developing countries, up to three-fifths of their labour force choose occupational skills training over conventional higher academics. In Bahrain’s tight labour market and more specialised and technology-driven economy, where the possession of vocational talent is trumping that of sole academic excellence, figures signify that the remaining four-fifths of the Kingdom’s



BIJU HARIDAS

SEMINAR: Quek Aik Teng, Gog Soon Joo, and other SCE consultants recommend heavy emphasis on human capital development for success of Bahrain's labour reforms.

graduates are not meeting minimum requirements of numerous private-sector employers, making them a second choice for employment by business managers.

“From what our recent labour-market research shows, the lack of adequate vocational skills-development among Bahraini job applicants has left them in the dust when it comes to competing with expatriates, especially in the area of productivity. Employers are then compelled to hire more expat workers, for they tend to view Bahraini employees as non-contributors to or non-enhancers of their basic operational efficiencies,” Dr Al Shaikh said.

“The perpetual absence of a standardised

licensing system for occupational credentials, which comes hand in hand with the insufficient initiative to expand the local skill base, turns a lot of specialised labour sectors, such as industrial, mechanical and construction work, into low-paying, low-value jobs. This deters potential Bahraini employees in these sectors from acquiring such jobs, further exacerbating the country’s unemployment problem. Using the Singaporean tripartite labour-market reform model in which all relevant government agencies, including the Ministry of Education, trade unions and private-sector employers concurrently create and implement conducive labour policies through a unanimous determination of present skills gaps in the market, we can solve a major part of Bahrain’s unemployment predicament through the model’s capacity to improve the competitiveness of the local workforce labour skills, productivity levels, wage rates and marketability while eventually transforming Bahrain’s industries with more knowledge-based and capital-intensive employers.”

Seminar on accounting standards

The Bahrain Accountant Association (BAA) will host a seminar on Saturday at Crowne Plaza on International Accounting Standards Board (IASB). The event will be led by Richard Martin from the Association of Certified Chartered Accountants, Mohammed Jaffar Shubbar, the private sector support manager from the Labour Fund, and Khalid Alrayes,

senior officer from the Bahrain Development Bank.

All of speakers are considered to be experts on the subject, and, observers say, it promises to be an exciting seminar. A BAA spokesman said: “IASB has recently released an exposure draft for SMEs (small and medium-sized enterprises) and has invited comments

from its various correspondents. “In this regard, BAA is organising the upcoming seminar on the exposure draft and its implications for SMEs in Bahrain from an accounting and auditing requirements perspective. One of the purposes of the event is to identify participants on the topic and update concerns that participants may have.”