and Social Affairs Ministry.
While unemployment is a global phenomenon and a problem that confronts all the countries of the region, Bahrain has taken the lead in addressing the connected issues with a note of urgency.

Although the rate of unemployment, at 1.8 per cent, is low by any standards, the leadership of Bahrain and the Government are determined to reduce this.

Labour and Social Affairs Minister Abdulnabi Al Sho'ala says the immediate task is not only to find employment for nationals, but also to ensure

that they are properly placed.
"While the total number of people graduating from schools and colleges is placed between 7,000 and 8,000 each year, about 6,000 young men and women seek employ-ment," he said.
"This is indeed a great

challenge, but our efforts have already begun to yield the desired results.

"Involvement of the private

"Involvement of the private sector is imperative for the success of our programmes."

Statistics made available by the ministry indicate that more than 6,000 Bahrainis have

been found jobs, this year.
The share of Bahrainis in the Government sector is now about 90 per cent, the highest among the GCC states.

It is therefore apparent that the private sector should play a

JOBS DRIVE A PRIORITY

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seeking employment.
Their positive response is well matched by the efforts of the Ministry to ensure that Bahrainis are offered maximum analysment proportion. mum employment opportuni

ties.
The persistent high demand for expatriate labourers is also due to the fact that they accept lower salaries, since their overheads are also lower than their Bahrain counterparts.
As a part of the measures to

encourage employment of Bahrainis and remove such disparities, the Ministry has announced an increase in the

cost of issue and renewal of work permits to BD100 and BD150 respectively, from January 1, 1996. "Training and human resources development are twin aspects, occupying our attention," said Mr Al Sho'ala. "Apart from the

'Apart from the programmes and course offered by the Vocational
Training Council and the
Bahrain Training Institute, we
appreciate the efforts of
companies which have taken
up the task seriously.

"Expenditure incurred on training must be considered to be a sound investment, since a well trained workforce is an

Major organisations such as the Arab Shipbuilding and Repair Yard (ASRY), Aluminium Bahrain (Alba) Bahrain Airport Services, (BAS), Bahrain Petroleum Company (Bapco), Bahrain National Gas Company (Banagas), Bahrain National Oil Company (Banoco), Bahrain Telecommunications Company (Batelco), Gulf Air, Gulf Petrochemical Industries Company (GPIC) and Yusuf bin Ahmed Kanoo, have training centres with all the

appropriate facilities.

The programmes offered at the centres of these 10 companies have helped them to achieve a high percentage of nationals, who are all well

trained.
These organisations have allocated a total amount of allocated a total amount of BD18.5 million for training for the current year, while the amount spent by them during the five year period covering 1990-1994 was BD81 million.

They are among the most commercially successful companies in the country, said

Mr Al Sho'ala. "Even as we intensify efforts to develop our own human resources, the intention is not to make expatriates

redundant," he said.

Bahrain, like other countries of the GCC region, is

undergoing a process of economic restructuring. The "problem of unemploy-ment can be solved with Bahrainis placed in suitable jobs and with the effective utilisation of their contributions, the economy itself will expand, with additional job opportunities created.
"The converse is also true.

Unless all our nationals are gainfully employed, economic growth will be affected.

"Therefore, both in the short and long term perspectives, it is imperative that the problem the Gulf. "The Government is keen to witness the early incorporation of such institutes, in order that of unemployment is solved. There is no other alternative. the training needs of the entire

region are appropriately addressed and met." Mr Al Sho'ala said Bahrain

Hi-tech learning path to the future

Mr Al Sho'ala also

highlighted the intensified co-operation and co-

co-operation and co-ordination with the other GCC States on the subject of improved employment and training facilities for all nationals.

This strongly reflects the growing awareness of the connected issues, he added.

The role of expatriates is also significant in the process of human resources develop-

ment.
They are now required to bring with them new and higher levels of expertise and be able and prepared to impart this expertise to their national

counterparts, through on-the-job training as a formal human resources development

programme.
"They should also realise the realities of the situation

the realities of the situation and participate more actively in ensuring that nationals are properly trained to perform their jobs, "said Mr Al Sho'ala. "Training is yet another aspect which has been engaging our attention," he said.

said.
"There is a need to improve

the existing standards and facilities in order that the process of human resources

development will be more

meaningful and useful.
"Such a need is also felt in

all the GCC States as a part of the drive towards optimisation

Bahrain is ideally suited to

function as a regional training

The Ministry will support

track record, keen on establish-

and encourage international training institutes of proven

ing their presence in the country.

"We are currently in the

process of identifying

renowned international

their presence in Bahrain, said Mr Al Sho'ala.

institutions, with proven track record to examine the possibilities of establishing

"Owners and managers of such institutions are being

appraised of the immense potential available, since our aim is not only to serve the

needs of Bahrain but the entire Gulf region as well.

"With its strategic geographic location and other services and facilities, Bahrain

is ideally suited to function as the regional training centre of

of employment opportunities

and improved training facilities."

would welcome international expertise in promoting a

regional training centre.

Both in the short and long term perspectives, a need exists to develop indigenous

The abilities of Bahraini nationals in such jobs as carpenters, plumbers, airconditioner mechanics, masons, construction person nel and instrumentation, civil, electrical and electronic engineers must be promoted,

he said.
The existing institutions such as the Bahrain Training Institute, the Bahrain Institute Institute, the Bahrain Institute of Banking and Finance and the Hotel and Catering Training Centre and those managed by the private sector, are all popular and well known for their high standards of courses and programmes

programmes.
The presence of other training institutes would be beneficial not only to Bahrain, but also to the entire region, said Mr Al Sho'ala.

In addition, international manufacturers and suppliers of goods and services are also being encouraged to set up their training centres in Bahrain.
The Toyota Motor Corpora-

tion, of Japan, has often been cited as an example.

The Toyota Training Centre, since its establishment four years ago, has trained a large number of service personnel employed throughout the Middle East and the Indian Sub-Continent, at its centre in

Encouraged by its success, the facility was recently expanded.
"Our current efforts are

aimed towards the creation of a better system of recruitment, a better system of recruitme selection, training and placement of nationals, whereby dependence on expatriate labour is progres-sively reduced without producing a serious drop in efficiency or a loss of economic competitiveness," said Mr Al Sho'ala.

The Government is aware that such an achievement is possible only through well planned and skillfully implemented schemes of manpower training and placement.

"Training programmes which are carefully designed and implemented to the highest possible standards, effectively linking to the needs of the economy, have a good chance to succeed."





more positive role in

optimising employment

opportunities, says Mr Al Sho'ala.

competent and willing to

undertake larger responsibili-ties and perform jobs to suit their qualifications and aptitude."

Mr Al Sho'ala said there was a perceptible change in attitude among those

Sho'ala.
"The dependence on expatriate labour has been high since the boom years of the 1970s," he said.
"We now have a sizable Bahraini workforce, extremely competent and willing to



CONGRATULATIONS TO HIS HIGHNESS THE AMIR ON THE 34TH ANNIVERSARY OF HIS ACCESSION. ALSO WARM GREETINGS TO HIS HIGHNESS SHAIKH ISA BIN SULMAN AL KHALIFA, THE AMIR; HIS HIGHNESS THE PRIME MINISTER, SHAIKH KHALIFA BIN SULMAN AL KHALIFA; HIS HIGHNESS THE CROWN PRINCE, AND COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF, **BAHRAIN DEFENCE FORCE** SHAIKH HAMAD BIN ISA AL KHALIFA; AND THE PEOPLE OF BAHRAIN ON THE OCCASION OF NATIONAL DAY



أوكاسان العالمية (الشرق الاوسط) ش.م.ب معفاة Okasan International (Middle East) E.C.

س ب ١٠٢١٢ المنامة_البحرين تليفون ٣٠٢٢٠ تلكس ٥٧٩٦/٧٧٩٠ فيساملي P.O. Box 10212, Manama, Bahrain. Tel: 530220 Fax: 530160 Tix: 7795/6