



■ Mr Al Sho'ala and officials of his ministry with Dr Pande, fifth from right, managing director of Mohammed Jalal and Sons, Jalal Mohammed Jalal, fourth from left, Mr Saksena, second from left, and Mohammed Jalal Trading general manager Nevin Megchiani, left.

Top Indian institute to set up centre

By SOMAN BABY

ONE of India's top technological institutes is to set up its first overseas training centre in Bahrain early next year.

The Birla Institute of Technology (BIT), based in Mesra, Ranchi, in Bihar state, is setting up the centre as a joint venture project with Mohammed Jalal and Sons, with the support of the Labour and Social Affairs Ministry.

Plans for the project, which is estimated to cost about BD7 million over the coming five years, were finalised by the visiting BIT team during their talks with Labour and Social Affairs Minister Abdulnabi Al Sho'ala and other ministry officials.

BIT vice-chancellor emeritus, Dr H C Pande, said the proposed institute in Bahrain would serve as a centre of excellence, serving the entire Gulf region.

"We have been encouraged by the support given by the minister and his team to set up a technical training institute of international standard which will help meet the needs and priorities of the Gulf region," he said.

Mr Pande said the institute would initially launch a two-year higher technical diploma programme in view of the immediate needs of the region.

A four-year regular engineering degree programme in computer engineering and electronics will also be included in the first phase.

Strategic

It will be followed by programmes in pharmaceutical sciences and management.

Dr Pande said Bahrain had the potential to host a number of international ventures in view of its strategic location.

"However, there is a shortage of local technical manpower," he said.

"We feel that technology is the engine of development. Technical training in education should be viewed in terms of its contributions to developing more industries.

"The proposed institute will, therefore, house an industrial training and prototype development centre."

Dr Pande said the institute would develop an entrepreneurship development programme which would pave the way for better job opportunities for Bahrainis.

"We will eventually develop at the institute a base for research into areas directly relevant to the region, including the exploitation of non-conventional energy sources such as solar energy, ocean energy and wind energy," he said.

BIT advisor J B Saksena said the institute was proud of its association with Mohammed Jalal and Sons.

"Non-resident Indian students from Bahrain were the first group outside the country to benefit when BIT reserved 10 per cent of its seats for NRI students in 1990," he said.

Minister for meeting on GCC labour

LABOUR and Social Affairs Minister Abdalnabi Al Sho'ala yesterday left for Oman, heading Bahrain's delegation to the fourth meeting of the GCC ministerial committee for economic and social planning in Muscat.

The committee will set up a plan for its future programmes in the fields of planning and development to keep abreast of the regional and international economic changes.

The meeting will also discuss the GCC Supreme Council's resolution on the employment and easy movement of GCC national manpower for work in the production and services sectors.

The ministers will tackle the possibility of linking economic planning with the social planning as well as linking the statistical bodies in the GCC member states.

They will study means of better handling data technology.

The meeting will also focus on the experiment of privatisation in the GCC member states and the global attraction towards free trade of goods and services.

Bahrain's delegation comprises Acting Under-Secretary of Labour and Social Affairs Shaikh Abdul Rahman bin Abdulla Al Khalifa, Bahrain's Ambassador to Oman Shaikh Mohammed bin Ali Al Khalifa, Assistant Under-Secretary for Social Affairs Sadiq Al Shehabi, head of economic studies at the Finance and Economy Ministry Khalifa Al Binali and director of the minister's office Sabah Al Dossary.