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Hi-tech education to match jobs market

MANAMA: Tailor-made college courses to cope with modern technology and match skills to Bahrain's job market were urged yesterday by the Prime Minister.

Graduates could be re-qualified to better fill existing vacancies, he told Education Ministry officials when he visited them yesterday.

Shaikh Khalifa bin Salman Al Khalifa held talks with the minister,

under-secretaries and directors.

He was briefed on their plans and programmes for this academic year.

The Prime Minister said that the education system has already enjoyed big successes.

The Prime Minister also directed officials to make up for a shortage of teachers and to hire more through the educational missions division at the Education Ministry.

Picture - Page 12

GLOBAL TRADE HUB

MANAMA: Bahrain will soon host a global centre to attract more foreign direct investment throughout the region, it was announced yesterday.

The Investment Policy Centre for Middle East and North Africa (Mena) will be supported by Paris-based Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD).

Bahrain's proposal to host the centre was unanimously accepted by OECD, which brings together the world's 30 richest countries, said its deputy director Rainer Geiger.

Mr Geiger is in Bahrain to take part in a three-day meeting of Mena government representatives and the OECD, aimed at developing policies to attract investment in the region. The meeting is hosted by the Economic Development Board (EDB).

EDB chief executive Shaikh Mohammed bin Isa Al Khalifa, who opened the meeting at the Diplomat Radisson SAS Hotel, said the centre would be set up in Manama soon.

"About 15 to 20 experts will

work at the centre initially to gather data on investment, carry out research and publish reports," he noted. OECD has set up five working groups to formulate a national reform agenda and an action plan.

Bahrain is code-sharing with Turkey in the group which studies taxation for investment.

Bahrain and Egypt are the first two countries from Mena which have identified their key priorities for investment related reforms for one year.

Pioneering role - Page 33

A world first...

By SOMAN BABY

MANAMA: The new Bahrain World Trade Centre (BWTC) will incorporate the first towers in the world to generate their own electricity using wind turbines, it was revealed yesterday. It will harness wind power to produce about 35 per cent of its requirements.

Three wind turbines, each supported by a 30-metre bridge spanning between the two towers, will be installed at a cost of BD1 million.

The "wing" profile of the towers will channel the airflow through the turbines, said DTZ Middle East regional manager Robin Williamson.

"The BWTC will become the first building of its kind in the world to integrate turbines with a commercial tower structure," he told a Press conference.

The BWTC's unique architecture has been inspired by traditional Arabian wind towers, said W S Atkins and Partners Overseas principal design architect Shaun Killa. The BD 35 m BWTC is scheduled for completion in summer next year.

Full report - Page 15

An artist's impression of the BWTC with the wind turbines

The world this morning

MP's property seized

MANAMA: An MP's real estate has been seized and may be auctioned off if he fails to pay a BD388,429 fine. The High Civil Court earlier found him guilty of issuing dud cheques worth hundreds of dinars. The verdict was later upheld by the Court of Appeal. The Executive Court has also ordered that the MP be barred from leaving the country and a quarter of his parliamentary salary will be seized. The case has been referred to the Court of Cassation as a last resort for the defendant.

Investor seeks compensation

MANAMA: A Gulf investor whose bid to buy the Marina Club fell flat, is seeking BD30 million compensation.

The General Organisation for Social Insurance chairman is negotiating with Gosi's defence lawyers on ways to reduce the BD450,000 fees they are requesting, sources told our sister paper *Akhbar Al Khaleej*.

Bahrain-Yemen sign security pact

SANAA: Bahrain and Yemen last night signed a security agreement aimed at fighting terrorism and exchanging intelligence. Under the accord, the two countries will co-operate in "combating crime and terrorism, swapping intelligence, training, and exchanging expertise". The pact was signed by Interior Minister Shaikh Rashid bin Abdulla Al Khalifa and his Yemeni counterpart Rashad Al Alimi.

Picture - Page 12

Huge power cut hits Los Angeles

LOS ANGELES: A huge power cut hit most of Los Angeles yesterday and emergency services were put on an immediate alert. The authorities were unable to immediately explain the cause of the blackout which hit a zone from North Hollywood, through Burbank, the centre of the sprawling city down to southern Los Angeles. The power cut affected power to the Los Angeles police department headquarters but the fire department said it had not suffered a major impact. A special plan for the emergency services had been put into action, officials said.

New 'no-frills' airline

KUWAIT CITY: No-frills carrier Jazeera Airways, Kuwait's first private commercial airline, will start operations next month with flights to five Middle Eastern destinations, including Bahrain.

"We are proud to announce that the official launch of the airline will be in late October as scheduled and we are currently taking in bookings for flights on November 16 and beyond," chairman and CEO Marwan Boodai said yesterday.

Boodai said the airline would initially provide 30 flights per week to Bahrain, Dubai, Damascus, Amman and Beirut. This will rise later to more than 75 weekly flights with the addition of Egypt, Saudi Arabia and India.

Jazeera Airways was formed last year after the government said it would open up the sector for competition, and it will be latest commercial airline to make its regional debut.

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