



## New curricula for Arab accountants

Initiative led by Talal Abu Ghazaleh

By A Staff Reporter

### Sharjah

Arab accountants will for the first time gain qualifications in accordance with international requirements from next year under an initiative led by the Talal Abu Ghazaleh Group, its chairman claimed last week.

The move is aimed at enabling professionals to export their services, as well as import the services of others, he explained.

The examinations will start in November 2001, in line with the new curricula as provided by the International Committee on Qualifications, Abu Ghazaleh stated.

He was on a brief visit to review his group's operations in the country, and to address senior academics at a function held earlier under the patronage of His Highness Dr. Sheikh Sultan bin Mohammed Al Qasimi, Member of Supreme Council and Ruler of Sharjah, on challenges in academia for the Arab/Asian region.

"All curricula should now be examined, developed and formulated on a global basis, and should be a joint effort between the academic and the business community, as should also the move for international accreditation agencies, with both being set in the context of the global economy," he observed.

Widely acknowledged as the father of the accounting industry in the Arab world, he stressed the importance of putting in place all the infra-structural requirements needed to convert this region into a truly knowledge-based society.

"Digital communication and the World Wide Web have added a new dimension, and the virtual university is now a practical reality. We need to face up to this challenge, else we risk losing an opportunity which may not return," he warned.

He called for greater cooperation and coordination between the private and state sectors in the region through the creation of a 'Coordinating Council', suggesting this could work in conjunction with the United Nations and other international organisations in the drive to create a knowledge society.

"We desperately need an Arab knowledge-based economy initiative which would establish a permanent body on information technology and the knowledge economy to which Arab governments and businessmen could go for assistance," he noted.

Another key challenge is to step up the pace of technology transfer into the region, especially in industrial development, he observed.

Tying up tech transfer with intellectual property, he added: "We have launched another initiative to develop a specially designed degree level programme for different specialists such as lawyers, scientists, engineers and trademark registrars working in the various fields of intellectual property."

On a related note, he stated that the Arab Society for Intellectual Property (Asip) — which group company Abu Ghazaleh Intellectual Property (Agip) helped found — is seeking to sign cooperation pacts with universities and other institutions in the region.

Reverting to the exams due to start next November, he added that to facilitate the move towards upgrading professional skill levels in Arab accountancy, all the necessary text-books are being rewritten in accordance with the global requirements.

Moreover, the updated Dictionary of Accounting and Business, containing all accountancy as well as IT, e-com and other emerging world trading systems related terminology, would be issued in January, he said.