

Muscat Daily :2ed August,2011

# Decline in govt-sponsored student numbers hits NHI

Ministry-sponsored students have fallen from 400 in 2008 to 130 now

**Our Correspondent**  
Muscat



H H Sayyid Tarik

Dwindling government-sponsored trainee numbers is behind the RO71,000 loss posted by the National Hospitality Institute (NHI) in the first half of 2011, company chairman H H Sayyid Tarik said in a filing to the Muscat Securities Market (MSM).

Following difficulties in filling the Ministry of Manpower-sponsored space, the company has taken the decision to 'reduce these resources' for the ministry's courses and diversify its products and offerings instead.

As per the institute's estimates, ministry-sponsored numbers have fallen from 400 in 2008 to approximately 130 students currently, meaning the NHI has expanded its pool to attract students from a wider scope, including self-funded students, trainees who receive charitable funding and employees whose employers sponsor the training.

In his statement to shareholders, H H Tarik described the min-

istry's stance as 'illogical,' given the "current scenario in Oman where young Omanis are looking for jobs" but often struggle due to lack of skills.

He said, "Your company has excellent resources suitable for this kind of vocational skill training and has many thousands of past alumni to prove its effectiveness in this area.

"For many members of the public it is a source of confusion that so many private clients with often higher demands see the value in your company's services



whilst the ministry does not."

However, the NHI has embarked on a programme of innovation - with the company's first-half RO71,000 loss an improvement on the RO125,000 loss it made in the first half of 2010.

Robert MacLean, NHI princi-

pal, said, "We have been innovative in terms of coming up with new products. We now attract corporates, for team building programmes in the kitchen, as well as children's programmes on the culinary side. We also conduct English-language training at hotels."