

F1 GRAND PRIX FANS EYE BAHRAIN

MANAMA, APR. 12, 2007 (BNA) - AROUND HALF BILLION CAR RACE FANS FROM ALL OVER THE WORLD WILL HEAD TO BAHRAIN CIRCUIT TOMORROW TO WATCH THE THIRD ROUND OF 2007 F1 THREE-DAY RACES. THE RACE, HELD IN BAHRAIN FOR THE FOURTH TIME, IS CONSIDERED THE BIGGEST SPORT EVENT IN THE MIDDLE EAST AND EXPECTED TO BE AS SUCCESSFUL AS THE PREVIOUS ONES.

THE SPRING WEATHER THAT BAHRAIN AND THE GULF REGION ENJOY THESE DAYS WILL ADD FLAVOR TO THE CHAMPIONSHIP AND DRAW MORE VISITORS TO THE KINGDOM.

PREPARATIONS MADE FOR THE GRAND PRIX INCLUDING VARIOUS CULTURAL AND SOCIAL ACTIVITIES HELD ON THE SIDELINES OF THE EVENT, LIKE YALLA BAHRAIN CAMPAIGN, WILL THEMSELVES INCREASE THE NUMBER OF SPECTATORS.

SUCH INCREASE HAS ALREADY BECOME OBVIOUS WITH 25 PERCENT MORE TICKETS SOLD OFF THIS SEASON.

OVER 100,000 SPECTATORS ARE EXPECTED TO MARK THEIR PRESENCE THROUGHOUT THE THREE-DAY CHAMPIONSHIP DUE TO INTERNATIONAL MEDIA COVERAGE OF SUCH RACES.

ON ITS PART, THE MINISTRY OF INFORMATION HAS MAPPED OUT PLANS TO COVER THE RACE AND REMOVE OBSTACLES FOR CORRESPONDENTS, JOURNALISTS AND MEDIA MEN SO AS TO HIGHLIGHT BAHRAINS HIGH CAPABILITY TO HOST MAJOR SPORT EVENTS ON ITS LAND AND PROJECT ITS IMAGE WORLDWIDE.

SUCH GREAT INTEREST IN F1 GRAND PRIX RACES STEMS FROM THEIR BEING THE BIGGEST ANNUAL SPORT EVENT HELD IN THE GULF AND THE MIDDLE EAST.

INDEED, IT IS THE PEAK OF THE CAR RACE SPORT IN THE WORLD AND ENJOYS GREAT POPULARITY FOR IT IS THE THIRD MOST POPULAR SPORT AFTER THE SOCCER WORLD CUP AND THE OLYMPIC GAMES.

IT IS EXPECTED THAT THE 2007 F1 RACES WILL BRING ABOUT FURTHER ECONOMIC AND TOURISM BOOM IN BAHRAIN.

ACCORDING TO OFFICIAL STATEMENTS, THE BAHRAIN INTERNATIONAL CIRCUIT (BIC) BY HOSTING THE FIRST ROUND OF 2006 F1 RACES BOOSTED THE NATIONAL INCOME BY 8.

3 PERCENT AND GENERATED 394 MILLION DOLLARS, THE EQUIVALENT OF 3 PERCENT OF THE GDP FOR THE KINGDOM AS WELL AS IT LED TO THE CREATION OF AROUND 400 FULL-TIME JOBS.

THAT PERIOD ALSO WITNESSED FULL HOTEL OCCUPANCY AND REMARKABLE ACTIVATION OF THE TOURISM AND TRAVEL SECTORS WHICH BOTH EMPLOYED A TOTAL OF 38,000 PEOPLE TO CATER FOR THE VISITORS WHO FLOCKED TO BAHRAIN TO LIVE THE EXCITEMENT OF F1 RACES AND KNOW ABOUT THE COUNTRY.

THE INCOME GENERATED BY THE KINGDOM IN 2006 APART FROM BIC PROFITS WERE PUT AT 284 MILLION DOLLARS DISTRIBUTED AS FOLLOWS: 81 MILLION FOR ACCOMMODATION, 21 FOR TRAVEL AND TRANSPORT, 109 FOR MISCELLANEOUS SALES AND 72 MILLION FOR LEISURE ACTIVITIES.

ON THE OTHER HAND, THE PUBLICITY MARKET WITNESSED A GREAT BOOST AS ACCORDING TO OPERATING AGENCIES THE DIRECT AND INDIRECT REVENUES GENERATED FROM F1 ACTIVITIES ATTAINED 5 MILLION DOLLARS, COUPLED WITH A 10 TO 15 PERCENT INCREASE IN THE VOLUME OF ADVERTS AND A LARGE NUMBER OF NEW JOB VACANCIES.

IN A MOVE REFLECTING BICS REPUTATION IN INTERNATIONAL MOTOR RACE CONTESTS AND ITS OUTSTANDING STATUS IN THE MIDDLE EAST, FORMULA ONE MANAGEMENT COMPANY EXTENDED THE DEAL WITH BIC TO HOST FURTHER ROUNDS OF F 1 GRAND PRIX RACES TILL LATE NEXT YEAR.

IT IS TO NOTE THAT BAHRAIN INTERNATIONAL CIRCUIT WAS OPENED IN 2004 AND COST 150 MILLION TO CONSTRUCT.

IT IS ONE OF THE LONGEST CIRCUITS IN THE WORLD.

IT IS 5,410 KILOMETERS LONG AND 13 TO 17 METERS WIDE WITH 12 TURNS, FIVE TO THE LEFT AND SEVEN TO THE RIGHT.

BIC PROCEEDS HAVE SO FAR NEARLY QUADRUPLED ITS CONSTRUCTION COST WHILE ESTIMATES PREDICT THAT, BY THE END OF 2007 CONTESTS, THE CIRCUIT WILL HAVE BROUGHT IN AROUND 1 BILLION.

FORMULA ONE RACES UNDOUBTEDLY SHED LIGHT ON BAHRAINS POTENTIALS AND ENHANCE ITS SPORT STATUS.