

BCC'S CHILDREN

A brief report on the activities of the bank's training academy at Karachi by Bakhtiar Khawaja, Instructor, Training Academy, Karachi.

“You are the children of BCC because it was in BCC that your professional life began,” declared our president while talking to a batch of officers who had just completed the short credit and marketing course organised at the London Academy in February 1980. The group, which was inducted into the bank in 1976, had been the first ever to be trained at the Karachi centre.

Following the same analogy, it would be correct to say that the Karachi Training Academy is the birthplace of these ‘children’, because it is here that they are nurtured, educated, disciplined and groomed in the BCC tradition.

The story of the Karachi Training Academy began in 1975. After the initial thrust by our bank, the need was felt for a team of energetic and hard-working young officers to sustain the rapid growth of the organisation in the short term and to become torch bearers in the future. The methodology of trainee officer selection was finalised and it was decided that they should be trained within the bank. For the job of establishing a training institute the president selected Aftab Hussain who, with his M.Com from Punjab and DBA from Italy, had to his credit 16 years of experience with United Bank, including seven years as training manager at their staff college.

Mr Hussain joined us in 1976 and was asked to pick his

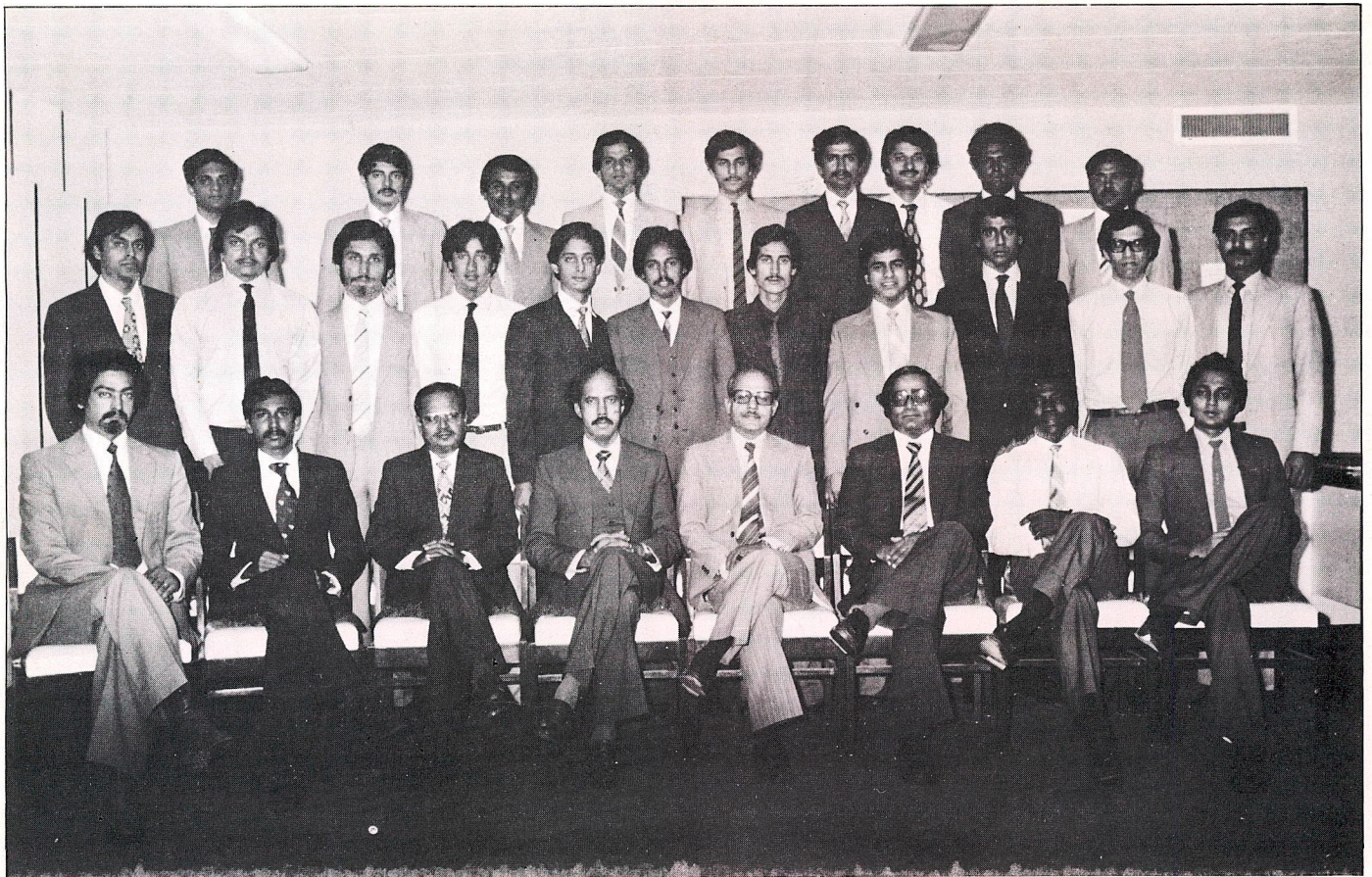
team. The training of the first batch was arranged with Habib Bank Staff College, under his supervision. Meanwhile, the fifth floor of National Bank’s modern building on Clifton Road was rented and preparations commenced for establishing the training centre.

The next recruit was myself. I had graduated from the London School of Economics and, having worked with United Bank as a branch manager, was at the time lecturing in their staff college. I joined the bank on January 1 1977 and on the same date the formal training of the second batch started.

In March 1977 the two trainers were joined by another valuable addition – Amiruddin Nuruddin, with six years of experience with Ford Rhodes (Chartered Accountants) and three years in the foreign exchange section of the Habib Bank.

The latest faculty member is Mr Alam, who joined the bank in October 1980. An MBA from Karachi, Mr Alam has more than 12 years’ experience with Habib Bank including seven years as instructor at their staff college.

We are also helped by organisations like the Institute of Business Administration, Pakistan Institute of Management, Institute of Bankers in Pakistan and other financial and business organisations.



Courses

Apart from imparting technical knowledge to the trainees, an important task facing the trainers is the mental shaping and personality development of the group, preparing them to meet the challenges of their assignments around the globe. "We have to make them realise that BCC is different from other banks," says Mr Aftab, "and that they have to be different from ordinary bankers."

The centre's main activity is a comprehensive training course which runs for six months and trains fresh officers in all the fields of branch banking. So far six such courses have been conducted. Over 100 officers have been trained by the centre under this scheme and are presently working in various branches around the world. These courses have now started to have international participation, and the sixth batch includes one officer from Sri Lanka and one from Nigeria.

A short training course was also conducted in 1978 for BCC officers with some experience. This was an abbreviated version of the comprehensive course and had global participation.

The training centre was also the venue for the first short credit and marketing course directed by Iftekhar Karim in August 1979 for the bank's middle level management from various regions.

Other activities

Trainee officers from outside Karachi are housed in two hostels close to the centre. These houses are fully furnished and all the necessary facilities have been provided. Naturally, trainee officers actively participate in the centre's social and sports activities, and play in BCC Karachi's cricket and table tennis teams.

Tours and excursions are also organised by the group, with the help of the centre. More interesting, however, are the informal dinner and entertainment evenings organised by officers in Karachi at their own homes. It is here that

people can get to know each other and local musical talent is often discovered!

The future

Random reports from the regions indicate that the trainee officers are doing an excellent job. But, as Mr Aftab says, "What we have done so far is just the beginning and now we are gearing ourselves to cater for the training needs of the whole bank." The feeling expressed by the instructors is signified by the comment: "We love our bank; we are proud of it and what it stands for. We want to show the world that we shall achieve in ten years what other banks have achieved in a hundred and we are preparing our boys to do just that."

