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Kingdom of Saudi Arabia,
P.O. Box 65697 Riyadh 11566
Tel: +966 11 2931193
Fax: +966 11 2931170
www.albawani.net

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CULTURAL CLUSTERS



An artist's impression of teamLab Phenomena Abu Dhabi on Saadiyat Island, with the four museums in the background.

Three world-class museums; an immersive, multi-sensory venue; the first SeaWorld outside the US; and an interfaith complex are among the many cultural and entertainment destinations taking shape in Abu Dhabi, as the emirate continues to diversify its economy by exploring its real estate and industrial potential.

THE UAE capital is clearly focusing on its vision to position the emirate as a centre for creativity and innovation and enrich its cultural landscape – and the most recent project launches reaffirm this goal.

Pivotal in this ambition is the Saadiyat Cultural District, which will be one of the world's pre-eminent cultural destinations. It currently hosts the renowned Louvre Abu Dhabi, while other world-class museums such as Zayed National Museum and Guggenheim Abu Dhabi are under construction. The district will also be home to the Abrahamic Family House, which will comprise three religious spaces in one complex – a mosque, a synagogue and a church.

The latest launches announced for this cultural hub include teamLab Phenomena Abu Dhabi – an immersive, multi-sensory venue – and the Natural History Museum Abu Dhabi. For those who dream of a home near these museum destinations, the emirate unveiled the Louvre Abu

Dhabi Residences early this year which was followed more recently by the Grove District which boasts views of Zayed National Museum, Louvre Abu Dhabi and Guggenheim Abu Dhabi.

This apart, Abu Dhabi has major industrial ambitions; at the end of June, the emirate launched the Abu Dhabi Industrial Strategy to position itself as the region's most competitive industrial hub. In line with this strategy, the government will invest AED10 billion (\$2.72 billion) to more than double the size of Abu Dhabi's manufacturing sector to AED172 billion by 2031 by increasing access to financing, enhancing ease of doing business, and attracting foreign direct investment.

This is in line with Operation 300bn launched last year, under which the country seeks to boost the industrial sector's contribution to its gross domestic product to AED300 billion in 2031, up from AED133 billion in 2021.

The emirate, meanwhile, continues to maintain its position as a pioneer in the re-

gion, having been the first to launch a city focusing on clean energy, sustainability and a hub for research and development to realise greener, more sustainable urban development – namely Masdar City; the UAE section of the GCC railway with Etihad Rail; and the first Arab nation to build a nuclear plant.

TRANSPORT & LOGISTICS

Work on the UAE National Rail Network is progressing at an accelerated pace, with more than 75 per cent of the construction completed on Stage Two of the project since the launch of this stage 30 months ago.

The ambitious AED50-billion Etihad Rail project aims at establishing an integrated system for transporting goods and passengers across the UAE. Currently a freight service, the rail network will introduce passenger services to connect 11 cities within the UAE, allowing travel on trains travelling at speed of 200 km/h from Abu Dhabi to Dubai in 50 minutes, and

from Abu Dhabi to Fujairah in 100 minutes (see Page 21).

Meanwhile, AD Ports Group, the region's premier facilitator of logistics, industry, and trade, is establishing one of the region's largest multi-category wholesale food trading and logistics hubs in Khalifa Industrial Zone Abu Dhabi (Kizad).

Covering a land area of 3.3 sq km in Kizad, the Regional Food Hub – Abu Dhabi will be one of the largest of its kind in the GCC. It will feature trading pavilions, logistics services, refrigerated and ambient warehouses, critical government services, waste recycling facilities and various other support amenities and services.

POWER & WATER

Unit Three of Barakah nuclear plant, a multi-unit nuclear energy plant located in the Al Dhafra region of Abu Dhabi, is currently being prepared for operation following the completion of its construction late last year. The unit is on track to start up and deliver clean electricity in 2023, joining the first two units which are already operational and provide clean energy to the national grid for homes and businesses across the country.

Meanwhile, a number of utility projects are being developed in partnership with the private sector. These include the Dh3.2-billion Al Taweelah independent water plant, the first phase of which has newly launched operations. Developed by Emirates Water and Electricity Company (Ewec) and Saudi Arabia's Acwa Power, the reverse osmosis plant is now producing 454,600 cu m of desalinated water a day, which is 50 per cent of its total capacity.

Other major projects in this sector are the Shuweihat S4 and the Mirfa 2 water desalination plants. Late last year, Ewec had issued requests for qualifications (RFQs) for the development of the independent water project at Shuweihat, some 250 km west of capital Abu Dhabi. The Shuweihat S4 Project will desalinate seawater using RO desalination technology to produce up to 70 million gallons per day (MGD) of potable water, sufficient to meet the water demand for 125,000 households.

Ewec has also issued RFQs for the 80 MGD Mirfa 2 IWP.

REAL ESTATE

According to the Department of Municipalities and Transport's (DMT) latest



report, Abu Dhabi's real estate market has continued to grow, driven by investor optimism, registering 7,474 property transactions amounting to more than AED22.51 billion in the first half of this year.

The top five areas in terms of the numbers and values of real estate transactions during the first six months of 2022, were Yas Island with transactions worth AED1.8 billion followed by Saadiyat Island with transactions worth AED 1.2 billion. With AED1 billion, Al Shamkha came in third, Al Reem Island came in fourth with AED872 million, and the Khalifa City came fifth with AED 310 million.

The real estate sector in Abu Dhabi, as with Dubai, has been on the upswing thanks to government initiatives, economic growth and improved market sentiment. According to full-service real estate services company Asteco, the real estate market

remained strong during the second quarter despite global headwinds and rising inflation concerns. In fact, geopolitical tensions experienced globally raised the position of the Emirates as a safe destination to visit, live, work, invest in, and study, it stated.

Around 1,300 residential apartments were delivered in Abu Dhabi in Q2, spread across different areas with the focus being on Al Raha Beach and Al Reem Island. Whilst there was a significant rise in new project launches during the first half of 2022, several others have already progressed to the planning stage and are expected to start construction within the next six to 12 months. A total of 3,400 apartments are expected to be completed by the end of this year in the emirate, the report said.

In response to the surge in demand for

property, a large majority of Abu Dhabi developers are now embarking upon new residential and mixed-use projects. This apart, numerous residential and mixed-use projects located within the investment zones are expected to start construction this year, the report said.

According to Asteco, sales prices for high quality villas as well as apartments on Saadiyat Island and Yas Island have increased by up to 15 per cent compared to the same period last year.

The development of property on Saadiyat and Yas islands continues apace, while a new area of focus is the AED10-billion Jubail Island, located between these two islands. The project is owned by Abu Dhabi-based Jubail Island Investment Company (JIIC), which last month unveiled plans for Ain Al Maha village, the latest waterfront residential neighbourhood featuring 240 villas (see Page 14).

Among the latest projects to be launched at Yas island is 'The Sustainable City' – Yas Island, to be jointly developed by Abu Dhabi developer Aldar Properties and Dubai-based Diamond Developers. The

Sheikha Fatima Park ... newly redeveloped with a focus on the well-being of Abu Dhabi residents and visitors.



fully sustainable and unique community will span an area of 397,000 sq m in Yas North and is being developed at a total cost of AED1.8 billion. Work is scheduled to begin in Q4 with a 30-month completion target (see Page 18).

A new addition to the entertainment offerings on Yas Island – which is already home to Ferrari World and the Yas Marina

Circuit – is SeaWorld Abu Dhabi, the first new SeaWorld marine-life park outside the US. Work on the project is well advanced. The next-generation park will also include the UAE's first dedicated centre for marine research and education.

Meanwhile at Saadiyat Island, Aldar Properties intends to build the 'world's



More than 38 years in civil contracting for commercial and residential buildings in the Kingdom



مقاولات أحمد عيسى الإنشائية
AHMED ISA CONTRACTING CONSTRUCTION

Tel: +973 17 552 234 | Fax: +973 17 554 429
P.O. Box 30633, Kingdom of Bahrain

Email: ahmedessa_aec@yahoo.com | aecont@hotmail.com

Aldar Properties is building the world's first Louvre-branded residences at Saadiyat Island.



first Louvre-branded residences. Located within Saadiyat Grove, the developer's iconic AED10-billion landmark destination, the Louvre Abu Dhabi Residences will boast 400 apartments including exquisite studios, one-, two- and three-bedroom units and five exclusive penthouses.

Spanning an area of 242,000 sq m, Saadiyat Grove will offer immersive retail, entertainment, and leisure spaces. It will feature 3,000 residential units, two hotels and co-working spaces for new enterprises and start-ups.

Aldar continues to spearhead development at Saadiyat Island and has recently acquired 6.2 million sq m of prime land located on the east side of the island valued at AED3.68 billion for a mixed-use project. The integrated community will include 2,700 units, most of which are villas, with an estimated gross development value of AED15 billion.

The developer has several developments under way in Abu Dhabi including Al Gurm, Noya, Yas Acres and Alreeman II.

Al Gurm, a series of archipelago-style islands over a total of 105,000 sq m, is a luxurious and secluded beachfront community on the southwest side of Abu Dhabi's main island. Work is in progress on the second phase of the project, comprising 71 new plots which are available exclusively to UAE nationals.

Also open exclusively to UAE nationals is the second phase of Alreeman II development, known as Fay Alreeman, an AED2-billion masterplanned residential community in the Alshamkha area of Abu Dhabi. Fay Alreeman will comprise 554

villas available in three- to six-bedroom layouts. Handovers are expected to commence in the final quarter of 2025.

Aldar Properties has also launched the third phase of the Yas Acres gated community comprising The Magnolias, a premium residential development featuring 312 spacious villas and townhouses, which are scheduled for handover in Q3 2024. This comes following the success of the first two phases of the flagship development.

Also at Yas Island, Reportage Properties has started construction work on Diva featuring 736 new residential units. The project is targeted to be handed over by the end of 2024.

Another major island development is the \$2.2-billion Reem Hills gated luxury community project on Reem Island, the first phase of which is due for completion in December 2024. Reem Hills comprises a private beach, man-made hill, islands, canal, retail and community facilities including parkland, schools, mosques, community centres, restaurants and leisure areas.

Reem Hills villas are located amongst lush greenery on a man-made hill with exclusive beach access,

Meanwhile, Abu Dhabi's latest waterfront dining and entertainment destination Al Qana – which opened its first attractions including a mega aquarium and Bridge Lifestyle Hub, a world-class landmark fostering natural and holistic wellness, late last year – is developing additional recreation spaces and a cinema which are due to open soon.

The key retail and leisure destination, being developed by Al Barakah International

Investment, is also home to the region's largest aquarium, as well as indoor and outdoor fitness facilities, retail and dining outlets, and a marina.

INDUSTRY

One of the largest industrial construction projects completed late last year in Abu Dhabi was the expansion of Emirates Global Aluminium's (EGA) Taweelah smelter. The expansion added 66 new reduction cells to the three potlines at Al Taweelah, boosting production capacity by some 78,000 tonnes of hot metal per year.

The expansion was completed in three phases. The first phase was commissioned in April, and the second in July. The final phase saw the installation of 14 new reduction cells at Potline 3.

Meanwhile, the emirate is also taking a pioneering role with its ambitions for green hydrogen projects, which are currently in the techno-feasibility stage. Abu Dhabi National Energy Company's (Taqa), in partnership with local entities is spearheading the development of two projects. The first project with Emirates Steel for a large-scale green hydrogen project will enable the production of the first green steel in the Middle East and North Africa (Mena) region. The second project is a partnership with Abu Dhabi Ports to develop an industrial-scale green ammonia manufacturing and export facility in Abu Dhabi.

Another major industrial project is the AED22-billion fourth Borouge facility (Borouge 4) being developed by Abu Dhabi National Oil Company (Adnoc) and Austrian chemical giant Borealis.

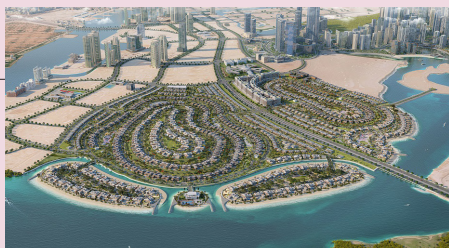
The new plant will enable the next phase of growth at the Ruwais Industrial Complex by supplying feedstock to Abu Dhabi Chemicals Derivatives Company (Ta'ziz), enhancing local industrial supply chains and boosting In-Country Value opportunities. Scheduled to be operational by the end of 2025, the plant will produce 1.4 million tonnes of polyethylene, boosting the company's total annual polyolefin production to 6.4 million tonnes, making Borouge the world's largest single-site polyolefin complex.

Meanwhile, Ta'ziz and India's Reliance Industries have agreed to launch Ta'ziz EDC & PVC, a world-scale chemical production partnership at the Ta'ziz Industrial Chemicals Zone in Ruwais. ■

ABU DHABI AT A GLANCE

Package name	Owner	Status*	\$ Million **
Abu Dhabi International Airport – Midfield Terminal Complex	Abu Dhabi Airports Company (Adac)	Commissioning	2940
Abu Dhabi International Airport – Midfield Terminal Complex Airside	Adac	Construction	602
Abu Dhabi International Airport Expansion – Overview	Adac	Commissioning	7080
Abu Dhabi Qaryat Al Hidd Development	Saadayat Development Investment Company	Construction	450
Al Dhafra 2 GW Photovoltaic Solar Plant	Emirates Water and Electricity Company (Ewec)	Construction	1700
Al Reeman – Overview	Aldar Properties	Construction	1000
Al Riyadh City – Overview	Modon Properties	Construction	1800
Al Riyadh City – Phases 2 & 5 – Infrastructure	Modon Properties	Construction	626
Al Riyadh City South – Phases 3 & 4 – Infrastructure	Modon Properties	Construction	530
Barakah Nuclear Power Plant	Emirates Nuclear Energy Corporation (Enec)	Commissioning	24400
Block 7 Innovation Hub	Block 7 Investments	Design	1900
Ethylene Dichloride & Caustic Soda Plant	Shaheen Chem Investments	Feed ITB	1000
Guggenheim Museum	Abu Dhabi Department of Culture and Tourism (DCT), Solomon R Guggenheim Foundation	Construction	1200
HVDC Subsea Transmission System	Abu Dhabi National Oil Company (Adnoc)	Construction	4000
Jubail Island Development – Overview	Jubail Island Investment Company (JIIC)	Construction	2720
Khalifa Port and Industrial Zone Expansion – Overview	AD Ports	Construction	7200
Mafraa Al Jubail and Souk Al Jubail	JIIC	E&P	1360
Makers District – Overview	Imkan Properties	Commissioning	800
Makers District – Phase 1 – Pixel	Imkan Properties	Commissioning	545
Masdar City – Overview	Abu Dhabi Future Energy Company (Masdar)	Construction	22000
Project Wave	Adnoc	EPC ITB	2500
Reem Mall	Agility, National Real Estate Company, United Projects for Aviation Services	Construction	1200
Ruwais Derivatives Park – Chemicals Handling Terminal	Ta'ziz	Feed ITB	600
Ruwais Waste Heat Recovery	Adnoc Refining	Construction	600
Saadayat Island Roadworks	Aldar	E&P	544
SeaWorld Abu Dhabi	Miral Asset Management	Construction	1000
Taweelah 200 Million Imperial Gallon IWP	Ewec	Commissioning	844
Ta'ziz Cogeneration Plant (Project Volta)	Abu Dhabi National Energy Company (Taqa)	EPC ITB	500
Trans-Emirates Rail Network – Overview	Etihad Rail	Construction	50000
Trans-Emirates Rail Network – Phase 2 – Package A – Ruwais & Ghweifat	Etihad Rail	Commissioning	895
Trans-Emirates Rail Network – Phase 2 – Package B – Tarif & Saih Shuaib	Etihad Rail	Construction	750
Trans-Emirates Rail Network – Phase 2 – Package C – Dubai and Jebel Ali Port	Etihad Rail	Construction	750
Trans-Emirates Rail Network – Phase 2 – Package D – Sharjah to Fujairah & Tawyeen	Etihad Rail	Construction	500
Trans-Emirates Rail Network – Phase 3 – Dubai to Northern Emirates	Etihad Rail	PMC	11000
Waste-to-Energy Plant – 900,000 Tonnes	Taqa	Feasibility Study	600
Yas Bay – Overview	Miral	Construction	2500
Yas Island Sustainability City	Aldar Properties, Diamond Developers	Project Announced	490
Yas Island Water's Edge	Aldar Properties	Commissioning	653
Zayed National Museum	Department of Culture and Tourism (DCT)	Construction	1000

* E&P = Engineering and procurement; EPC ITB = Engineering, procurement and construction invitation to bid



Consultant	Contractor	Start date	End date
Aecom, Hill International, KBR	HLG Contracting, Trojan Holding	2008-Q1	2022-Q4
-	L&T Construction	2012-Q3	2022-Q4
Parsons	Al Habtoor Engineering Enterprises/BIC Contracting, Al Jaber & Partners Construction & Energy, Fibrex Company, L&T Construction, Murray & Roberts, Oderbrecht, Taylor Woodrow Construction Dynamics, Trojan Holding	2005-Q1	2022-Q4
Khatib & Alami	Shapoorji Pallonji & Company	2018-Q1	2022-Q4
-	China Machinery Engineering Corporation (CMEC), Electricite de France (EDF), Jinko Solar	2018-Q1	2023-Q4
Hill International	-	2019-Q1	2025-Q4
-	Al Geemi & Partners Contracting, Nael & Harmal Hydroexport (NBHH), National Projects & Construction (NPC), Nurol Group, Saif Bin Darwish, Tristar Engineering & Construction	2017-Q4	2022-Q3
-	NBHH, Saif Bin Darwish	2020-Q1	2022-Q2
-	Nurol Group, Tristar Engineering & Construction	2020-Q1	2022-Q3
Lightbridge Corporation, Lloyds Register Energy, Thorium Power, Worley	Doosan Heavy Industries & Construction, Hyundai Engineering & Construction, Korea Electric Power Corporation (Kepco) Samsung C&T Engineering and Construction Group	2008-Q1	2024-Q1
-	Serba Dinamik International	2020-Q1	2024-Q2
-	-	2017-Q4	2023-Q4
Aecom	Alpha Dhabi Holding, Besix	2006-Q3	2025-Q1
-	EDF, Kepco, Kyuden International, Samsung C&T Corporation	2013-Q1	2025-Q4
Lead Development	Arabian Construction Company, CSCEC	2019-Q2	2025-Q4
Bechtel Corporation	Al Jaber Transport & General Contracting, China Harbour Engineering Company (CHEC), Habtoor Leighton Group, National Marine Dredging Company, Saif Al Khaili Group, System Construct	2006-Q1	2030-Q4
-	CSCEC	2019-Q1	2025-Q4
Ramboll	China Nantong Sanjian Construction Group (CNTC)	2017-Q2	2022-Q4
Ramboll	CNTC	2017-Q4	2022-Q1
Worley	Al Faraa General Contracting, Brookfield Multiplex, Six Construct	2007-Q4	2026-Q4
-	-	2021-Q1	2025-Q1
Mace Group	Ghantoot Group, Itinera	2012-Q1	2022-Q3
-	-	2021-Q1	2026-Q1
-	Samsung Engineering Company	2015-Q1	2023-Q3
-	-	2019-Q3	2022-Q4
EllisDon, Louis Berger Group	ALEC	2016-Q4	2022-Q4
-	Abengoa, Acwa Power, Sepco III	2017-Q4	2023-Q1
-	-	2022-Q1	2024-Q1
Aecom, Atkins, Egis Group, Parsons	China Railway Construction Corporation No.5 Company, China Railway Construction Corporation (CRCC), China State Construction Engineering Corporation (CSCEC), Dodsai, Ghantoot Group, L&T, Maire Tecnimont, National Projects and Construction, Power China, Saipem, SK Engineering & Construction	2008-Q4	2025-Q4
-	CSCEC, L&T, Power China, SK Engineering & Construction	2012-Q3	2022-Q2
Egis Group	CRCC, Ghantoot Group	2018-Q1	2025-Q4
Egis Group	CRCC, Ghantoot Group	2018-Q1	2025-Q4
Egis Group	CRCC, Ghantoot Group	2018-Q1	2022-Q4
Egis Group	-	2012-Q1	2025-Q4
-	-	2020-Q2	2024-Q1
Faithful + Gould	BAM International, Fibrex Construction Group, San Jose Group	2017-Q2	2022-Q4
-	-	2022-Q1	2024-Q2
EllisDon	Trojan General Contracting	2017-Q3	2022-Q2
Aecom	Besix, Trojan Holding	2013-Q1	2022-Q1

** List includes projects worth over \$450 million only.

Source: DMS Projects

Jubail homes rise amidst mangroves



Ain Al Maha village, the latest waterfront residential neighbourhood to be unveiled at the Jubail Island project.

CONSTRUCTION work is on-going on multiple fronts on the AED10-billion (\$2.72 billion) Jubail Island, a scenic residential community development that sprawls over an area of 5 million sq m amidst mangrove forests and coastal estuaries and boasts more than 30 km of waterfront in Abu Dhabi.

Eng Abdulla Saeed Al Shamsi, Operations Corporate Director of Jubail Island Investment Company (JIIC), the owner of the project, tells *Gulf Construction* that 95 per cent of infrastructure has been completed while 40 per cent of the villas are under construction.

Late last month, JIIC flagged off the construction of new townhouses within its premium residential community at Souk Al Jubail within the development.

In tandem with these developments on site, JIIC last month unveiled details of Ain Al Maha village, the latest waterfront residential neighbourhood to be added to the Jubail Island project.

Being developed and managed by LEAD Development, Jubail Island will be home

to an idyllic collection of six residential village estates located between Yas Island and Saadiyat Island. Nestled among the mangroves' breath-taking natural beauty and rich biodiversity, the landmark community will offer residents comprehensive amenities, seamlessly blending sustainable living, luxury, and wellness in a striking new addition to Abu Dhabi's real estate landscape.

The development will offer bespoke picturesque residential areas and community facilities involving a gross floor area (GFA) of 1 million sq m.

Currently taking shape on site are 400 villas as part of the first phase of the residential construction while work is also in

progress on the extensive infrastructure that will support a series of vibrant communities. In addition, work has newly been launched on the Jubail Marina and the Souk Al Jubail townhouses.

JIIC now expects to award the contract for the construction of Souk Al Jubail apartments in November 2022 as well as push ahead with the construction of 220 additional villas, Al Shamsi reveals.

The overall development manager of Jubail Island is LEAD Development. A number of reputed consultants have been enlisted to ensure a world-class project including US-based Parsons as the infrastructure consultant; EHAF, EDSA, AE7 and Arquitectonica as design consultants;



95 per cent of infrastructure has been completed while 40 per cent of the villas are under construction

— Eng Abdulla Saeed Al Shamsi, Operations Corporate Director of Jubail Island Investment Company

and Broadway Maylan and Woods Bagot as master-planning consultant.

LATEST LAUNCH

With some 90 per cent of the current inventory sold out, the new Ain Al Maha residential district will offer a total of 240 waterfront villas alongside an Estuary Park and water channel. The project is scheduled to be completed in Q1 2025 and will also include a world-class school, a mosque and shopping and dining facilities within two community centres.

Spanning 153 hectares on the southern edge of Jubail Island, the village will comprise a series of premium sea view residences, offering spectacular views of the mangroves on the island.

The project will also include enhancing the coasts and natural water channels for Ain Al Maha, developing the area into an 'island within an island' so that half the villas will face the waterfront.

A vital feature of the village is the parks and children's play areas. Spanning over 92,000 sq m, the parks allow residents and visitors to live a healthy lifestyle by enjoying a stroll and participating in sports activities in the specialised areas that include a purpose-built running track and athletic courts, Al Shamsi says.

As well as homes, the village will include two landmark community centres offering a combination of shopping, dining, education, and medical facilities. A 2,500-sq-m retail complex and a world-class school will be among the facilities at one centre, while the second will sit within the heart of the village and include a mosque and a community centre.



The 66-berth marina is targeted for completion in mid-2023.

CONSTRUCTION

Work on the infrastructure of this massive development began with the award of an AED800-million-plus contract to Gulf Contractors Company (GCC) in January 2019. The scope of works includes the construction of infrastructure for all villages including roads, utilities, ground improvement, electrical substation; infrastructure for the Souk Al Jubail townhouses; and Jubail Island bridge and offsite utilities. GCC is expected to complete its contract in April 2023.

Meanwhile, Arabian Construction Company (ACC) is building the first phase of 400 modern and Mediterranean-inspired villas under a contract awarded in March 2021, which is due for completion in the fourth quarter of 2023. The project will offer three- to six-bedroom villas on vast land plots ranging from 1,300 sq m

to 6,000 sq m. The villas are distinguished by their large spaces, elegant architectural designs and modern interiors to reflect a sophisticated and sustainable lifestyle. In addition, the villas feature external facilities including a kitchen, driver's room and majlis.

In addition, work has just been launched on 150 townhouses which will be part of the premium community at Souk Al Jubail, under an AED 220-million contract awarded to China State Construction Engineering Corporation Middle East (CSCEC) in June. Souk Al Jubail will comprise a series of walkable residential neighbourhoods, amphitheatre, plazas and green spaces with playgrounds.

Scheduled for completion by March 2024, the project will involve the construction of townhouses offering two, three or four bedrooms built to the highest quality and standards.

The contractor's scope of work also includes a range of infrastructure works including sub-structure, superstructure, MEP works, finishing, facade and landscaping.

Also in June, Al Dhafra Pipeline & Contracting Company (APCC) was awarded an AED40 million deal to build the project's 66-berth marina, which is targeted for completion in mid-2023.

One of Abu Dhabi's leading ground engineering contractors, APCC will be responsible for the construction of the quay wall and associated infrastructure along the marina's edges and platforms.

The marina is being built as part of the



Construction work is in progress on multiple fronts at the Jubail Island project site.

grand Marina District within Marfa Al Jubail. The waterfront district's concept and schematic design are in progress with AE7. Set for launch October 2022, the Marina District will consist of 41 elegantly designed townhouses and 18 spacious apartments located in one block, amid some of the UAE's most beautiful landscapes and surrounded by mangroves and wildlife.

The townhouses will feature two typologies including one and two-storey units, with both, the townhouses and apartments, available with up to three bedrooms, offering up to 290 sq m of space.

As well as luxury residential space, Marfa Al Jubail will offer comprehensive amenities, anchored by a luxury yacht club complex and a boardwalk containing restaurants, alfresco cafés, and eateries.

Expected to be handed over by mid-2024, this new destination will provide residents and visitors with a luxury waterfront destination built along a stretch of shoreline overlooking the Abu Dhabi skyline.

Among the first distinctive features to be completed on the project was the "Jubail 360" deck, which stands 9 m tall on the hill of Marfa Al Jubail. The deck, completed in January this year, will provide visitors with a 360-degree view of the island.

Located beside the JIIC sales office, Jubail 360 will provide the customers with the opportunity to have a closer look at the construction progress as it develops into a



community in the capital.

Another strategic landmark completed in May this year was the main bridge linking Jubail Island to Sheikh Khalifa bin Zayed Al Nahyan highway (E12).

The bridge stands 140 m long and serves as the main entrance to the island, helping facilitate movement in and out of the island. The construction of the bridge commenced in August 2021.

The bridge will provide easy, direct access to Jubail Island as well as proximity to public parks, open spaces and cycling tracks. It will also link the different villages within the island with each other as well as facilitating movement between the two sides of the island, including the Jubail Mangrove Park, Jubail Pura Eco Retreat and the marine activities and the rest of the existing developments on the island.

As part of the bridge development, in-

telligent traffic signal systems have been introduced as well as streetlighting, pedestrian signals and speed control systems.

HIGHLIGHTS

"Jubail Island is one of the most spacious and low-density master-planned developments in the UAE and located within a protected natural environment of

stunning beauty. Its surrounding ecosystem supports a diversity of wildlife and its unique intertidal marine setting provides a welcome habitat for a diversity of wildlife," says Al Shamsi.

The island development, which is expected to be home to more than 10,000 residents, will offer a choice of luxurious, elegantly designed villas, apartments and townhouses, all meticulously positioned ample distances apart to allow for optimum privacy and comfort, he says.

The luxurious homes are inspired by their natural surroundings with spacious rooms and open spaces.

Jubail Island will feature a range of retail, coffee shops, restaurants, entertainment, and recreation facilities including a business centre, a sports centre, parks, schools, supermarkets, nurseries, a community club, specialised clinics, and other commercial establishments. ■



FOLLOWING the success of its pioneering project in Dubai and a fully-functioning community in Sharjah, Diamond Developers is set to break ground later this year on its first project in the UAE capital when it launches work on a fully sustainable development on Abu Dhabi's Yas Island in partnership with Aldar Properties.

In an exclusive interview with *Gulf Construction's* Bina Goveas, Salah Habib, Chief Executive Officer of Diamond Developers, says: "The Sustainable City – Yas Island (TSC Yas) is set to be our first project in the UAE capital, a fully sustainable live-work-thrive community. The construction is on track to begin in the last quarter of 2022, and we aim to have it completed by mid to end 2025."

The development, which involves an investment close to AED1.8 billion (\$490 million), will complement Diamond Developers' portfolio of sustainable communities across Dubai, Sharjah and Oman, and in turn contribute to Yas Island's diverse residential, retail, and entertainment offerings.

"Beyond infrastructure, we see this as an investment in our future through social, environment and economic sustainability – through this upcoming project, we aim to demonstrate how social, environmental and economic sustainability work hand in hand, to bring a joyful lifestyle for over 4,000 residents," he says.

"We are very excited to have joined forces with such a reputable entity as Aldar Properties, that has made big contributions to the development of Yas Island and the UAE capital in general," Habib adds.

The Sustainable City – Yas Island community will cover 397,000 sq m of land in North Yas, and will be home to 10 residential clusters made up of around 864 units comprising one-, two- or three-bedroom condos as well as three- and four-bedroom townhouses.

The heart and lungs of The Sustainable City – Yas Island is the "green spine", which will consist of quiet and active open areas, playgrounds, community facilities such as swimming pool and outdoor gym stations, and bio-domes for food production, to name a few.

Residents of the community will have easy access to a supermarket, pharmacy, beauty salons, F&B outlets, gym, nursery,



Yas Island set to host Sustainable City

and a mosque, amongst many other amenities. Similar to Diamond Developers' other developments in Dubai and Oman, TSC Yas will also feature an autism centre, with experienced rehabilitation professionals. In addition, the community will also offer an equestrian centre housing 30 stables in addition to an arena and a small animal sanctuary.

For the development of The Sustainable City – Yas Island, Diamond Developers is looking to renew partnerships with some of the most established and renowned consultants and contractors it has worked with previously, capitalising on their expertise and the rapport it has already established with them, says Habib.

He continues: "Our development has been designed to showcase a high-quality design approach entailing clean energy

production, resource efficiency, low environmental impact, and a strong connection to nature. For example, at The Sustainable City – Yas Island, vehicles will have limited access to the periphery in order to maximise pedestrianised spaces and support the concept of shared parking.

"We will also provide better and more sustainable opportunities for space utilisation, mitigating the urban heat island effect through landscape and light-coloured construction materials, whilst incorporating energy production through solar panels throughout the city.

"We are enabling a habitat that allows people to live well, while also doing their part towards the environment. To make this a reality, we are investing in various systems and technologies across food, energy, water, products, mobility and waste,

All the condos and townhouses in TSC Yas will be equipped with home automation systems to control critical energy loads.



whilst monitoring consumption and practices across all.

“For example, on the food front, we are investing in Net Zero Carbon (NZC) farming systems, technologies and production to ensure self-sufficiency and promote farm-to-table solutions, which ultimately minimises waste.

“To preserve energy, we’re relying on



Habib ...
“construction is on track to begin in the last quarter of 2022.”

demand side management and renewable energy to design our community. We’re also deploying energy management solutions to optimise distribution. Additionally, we’re designing the development in a way to reduce per capita water demand and are adopting smart tools as well to optimise irrigation water management.”

ENERGY

Taking the UAE’s year-round sunny climate into consideration, Diamond Developers found that utilising 100 per cent renewable energy systems will be adequate to power the city. It plans to equip all rooftops and car parks with photovoltaic (PV) solar systems to supply residential units and common areas. An estimated 10.57 MWp PV solar capacity will be installed on rooftops and parking to achieve the project’s Net Zero Energy (NZE) goal.

“This is by no means an easy goal to achieve,” Habib stresses. “However, by using the latest technology of high-efficiency PV modules, and advanced inverter technology with higher production and greater reliability, we are confident that residents of TSC Yas will live comfortably with all-time access to clean energy, with reduced energy bills.”

In addition, Diamond Developers will ensure that the impact of direct solar radiation on residential units is minimised and north-facing condos and townhouses receive adequate daylight.

“Keeping track of the project as whole, as well as individual residents’ energy consumption is a key factor in maintaining TSC Yas’ effectiveness and constant clean power supply. Monitoring and reporting programmes will be put in place for operators and residents to keep energy consumption levels in check. Furthermore, net metering systems will be put in place, giving solar energy credits to residents who have spare energy and add it to the grid. This power can be ‘taken back’ when the solar plants are not functioning, during the night for example,” he explains.

Furthermore, all the condos and townhouses in TSC Yas and will be equipped with home automation systems to control critical energy loads.

“It’s a common misconception that living sustainably relies solely on the power source supplying the community. In reality, it’s a fair split between infrastructure and lifestyle of the community. Within The Sustainable City – Yas Island, we’ve

The “green spine” ... the heart and lungs of The Sustainable City – Yas Island.





A wide road in The Sustainable City – Yas Island.

taken vast measures within our infrastructure, residential units, and public spaces, to ensure maximum efficiency in power consumption.

“When it comes to mobility, we’re promoting walkability, use of bikes and scooters, and deploying smart charging to encourage the adoption of electric vehicles (EVs). We’re also facilitating car sharing and supporting zero emission transport.

Diamond Developers is also aiming to produce a percentage of the community’s food requirement within the boundaries of The Sustainable City – Yas Island.

Finally, the developer is also looking at minimising waste, through reduction, reuse, and recovery. “For example, we are reducing construction waste through various design and construction methods. We also aim to encourage our communities to reduce household waste generation which can have a ripple effect. We’re investing as well in the necessary mechanisms to ensure effective waste collection and disposal services, while also monitoring waste management,” Habib says.

In developing TSC Yas, Diamond Developers is looking to draw heavily on its experiences and learnings from previous projects such as The Sustainable City Dubai, and the upcoming Sharjah development.

“Considering The Sustainability City Dubai is our longest standing sustainability project, we use it as a benchmark to improve various environmental factors – such as electricity and water consumption, waste, carbon output, food production, and solar energy output – within TSC Yas,” he says.

Apart from the Sustainable City projects in Dubai, Sharjah and Abu Dhabi, earlier this year Diamond Developers unveiled The Sustainable City Yiti in the sultanate in partnership with Oman Tourism Development Company (Omran Group). Construction has started and the project is expected to be completed in 2025.

In addition, Habib says Diamond Developers has a number of projects at different stages of development worldwide.

“We are also looking at some exciting opportunities further afield in Asia, Africa, and North America. There is keen interest from governments and investors from the region and the world to replicate our sustainable model, and we receive a large number of delegations every month who want to explore these opportunities,” he remarks.

So, to what does Habib attribute the suc-

cess of the brand?

He elaborates: “The success of TSC lies in the community itself – a cohort of like-minded people who are striving to live better, minimise their impact on the planet, and leave a positive legacy for the generations to come. This sense of community togetherness seeps into everything we do, and our cities are built on a philosophy of social inclusion with an emphasis on well-being and a connection with nature. This can be seen through our wide range of services that allow residents to live, work and thrive within the community, such as the green areas and farm, education centers and leisure facilities. In fact, The Sustainable City Dubai was recognised as the ‘happiest community’ in the GCC at the Gulf Real Estate Awards for the fourth year running – this summarizes the beauty of being part of it.

“From a commercial viability point-of-view, our model is proof that sustainability can be achieved at no additional cost to developers and residents, while providing in-country value and sustainable impact to the circular economy. Our quality materials and building processes ensure lower maintenance and running costs, meaning a large reduction for residents and partners that is sustainable.”

Habib adds that Diamond Developers’ mission is to spearhead a way towards net-zero carbon living through inspiring, enabling and empowering its partners all over the world to adopt sustainable solutions and to embrace sustainability knowledge initiatives. ■



All rooftops and car parks will be equipped with PV solar systems.

Key milestone on \$13.6bn rail network



The 1-km bridge runs parallel to the road link, connecting Khalifa Port to the mainland.

ETIHAD Rail, the developer and operator of UAE's rail network, has achieved a major construction milestone in the country's AED50 billion (\$13.6 billion) railways programme by successfully connecting Abu Dhabi's Khalifa Port to the mainland with the construction of the emirates' first rail marine bridge.

The UAE Railway Programme is the largest integrated system for transporting goods and passengers across the country. It comprises three key projects: the freight rail, which includes the Etihad Rail freight services; the rail passenger service that aims to connect 11 cities – starting from Al Sila in the western region of Abu Dhabi emirate to Fujairah; and the Integrated Transportation Service, where an innovation centre will be established to ensure the integration of the smart transportation solutions.

At a speed of 200 km/h, the passenger service will connect the 11 key cities within the UAE taking passengers from Abu Dhabi to Dubai in 50 minutes, and from Abu Dhabi to Fujairah in 100 minutes. By 2030, the number of passengers is expected to reach more than 36.5 million annually, according to Etihad Rail.

A light rail network will be connected to the rail passenger system to facilitate transportation within the UAE cities.

"The 1-km bridge, which runs parallel to the road link, will help improve the flow

of goods to the region, and reduce shipping and trade costs," said Khuloud Al Mazrouei, the Deputy Project Manager for Etihad Rail, while proving the latest project update in a video shared on social media.

Al Mazrouei said the connection was completed with the installation of the last of the 100 T-beams.

A first of its kind in the network, the marine bridge is being constructed by a total of 320 workers, clocking more than 1 million manhours so far, in compliance with the top environmental and global standards. The team faced several challenges while building the bridge in a marine environment and managed to tackle them successfully, she added.

"We have installed all the T-beams for the marine bridge, which will connect Khalifa

Port with the network. This achievement was completed after installing the last T-beam for the bridge, which extends over 1 km, bringing the total number of T-beams to 100," she explained.

According to her, the railway will link the principal centres of trade, industry, manufacturing, production, logistics, population and all the major import and export points of the UAE, as well as forming an integral part of the GCC railway network.

"The most important feature of this bridge is that it runs parallel to a road bridge of the same length, which connects the mainland of the emirate of Abu Dhabi with the sea container terminal," remarked Al Mazrouei. "This ensures a smooth flow of tidal currents along the sides of the port and preserves the coral reefs."

In May, Etihad Rail had announced that 75 per cent of the work on the network had been completed. Construction has been divided into two stages, the second of which includes four packages. The bridge is being built as part of Package B of the second stage.

Etihad Rail's network will run for 1,200 km across the UAE, from the border of Saudi Arabia to Fujairah.

Once operational, the service is expected to carry more than 36 million people annually by 2030.

Stage One of the 1,200-km network – which extends across the UAE, from the border of Saudi Arabia to the border of Oman – began operations in 2016. This 264-km stretch has helped transport some 42 million tonnes of granulated sulphur from Habshan and Shah to Ruwais on behalf of Adnoc, resulting in some 2.55 million trucks being removed from the road, saving both costs and reducing environmental pollution. ■



At a speed of 200 km/h, the passenger service will connect 11 cities within the UAE.

AICC looks to spread its wings in region



AICC has built 271 villas for the East Hidd housing project.

HAVING expanded its capabilities vertically in the Bahrain market, Ahmed Isa Contracting Construction (AICC) is now looking to broaden its horizons by setting up a joint venture with a major UAE construction company, according to a top executive of the veteran contracting firm.

“Entering a joint venture may open doors and lead to future work in Abu Dhabi,” Khalid A Latif, General Manager, Ahmed Isa Contracting Construction, tells *Gulf Construction*.

“In addition, since most of Bahrain’s governmental projects are funded by the GCC countries in line with the Marshal Plan, AICC is looking to expand its capabilities to carry out different types of projects and participate in these projects,” he adds.

Classified as a first-class contracting firm, AICC is set to mark four decades of service to Bahrain’s construction sector in April next year. The gamut of services it offers covers demolition, construction, and maintenance which the company has carried out for a variety of commercial, industrial, religious, and residential projects in the country.

“We have recently been concentrating on specialisation in the construction sector by expanding our capabilities to include steel reinforcement buildings, and producing hollow blocks of different sizes as well as

insulation blocks such as sandwich and IMSI blocks at our own block factory. In addition, we have also set up a carpentry workshop and steel fabrication facilities for rods and other steel products,” Latif adds.

AICC has recently added a second production line with a capacity of 17,000 blocks daily, which has boosted the total capacity of its block factory to 41,000 blocks per day.

This growth was achieved despite the Covid-19 pandemic, which has impacted businesses worldwide.

“The past few years have not been easy for the company, due to the pandemic. In general, the company has suffered from the impact of the pandemic through the increase in costs, additional expenses and delays in delivery of material as well as its effect on the well-being of our employees.

“Thanks to the precautionary measures taken by the company and its commitment to the guidelines set by the health authorities – giving top priority to the health

and safety of its employees – and also to careful planning while anticipating changes, the company has successfully completed its projects and achieved growth,” Latif remarks.

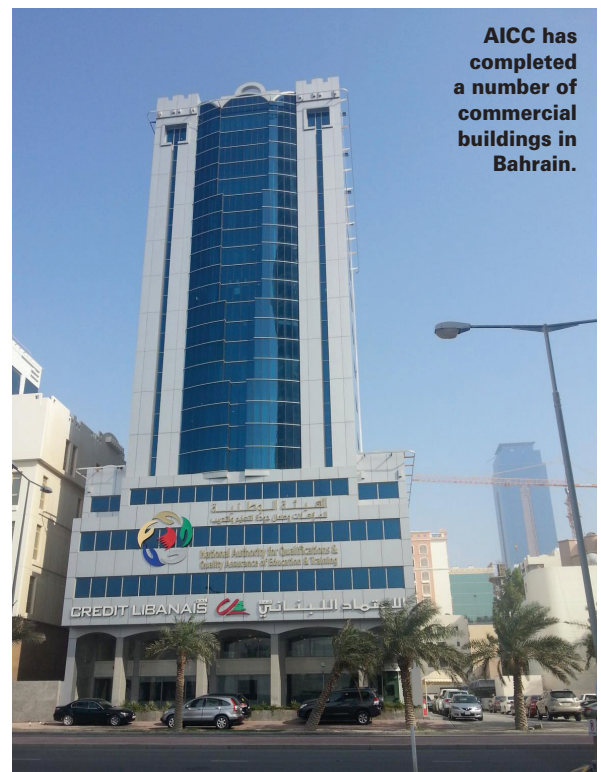
Among the key projects successfully completed by AICC during the Covid-19 pandemic was the construction of 271 villas at East Hidd for Bahrain’s Ministry of Housing under a BD11.25-million (\$29.6 million) contract. The project was handed over at the end of June last year.

AICC is currently engaged in another major project for the Ministry of Housing involving the construction of 119 villas at East Sitra under a BD3.625-million contract. The contractor commenced work on the project in October last year and is expected to complete it by the end of January 2023.

Commenting on the challenges of these projects, Latif says: “In general, the only challenge during both these projects was the Covid-19 pandemic which has a direct effect on material supply and work progress.”

AICC is now keenly eyeing growth in the region.

“Currently our main focus is on becoming well known in the GCC region. In addition, creating a business relationship will lead to us participating in more projects,” he concludes. ■



AICC has completed a number of commercial buildings in Bahrain.