

# Gulf Construction

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## BAHRAIN

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**AL BAWANI**



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Bilaj Al Jazayer ... a key project being spearheaded by Edamah.

**A future-focused \$30-billion Strategic Projects Plan launched late last year could catapult Bahrain's construction sector to new heights. However, the kingdom – already bruised by the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic – realises that it will need private sector support to achieve its ambitions.**

**A**MBITIONS run high in Bahrain which announced a future-focused \$30-billion Strategic Projects Plan late last year to steer the country towards economic recovery and sustained growth over the long term.

To drive this plan forward, the kingdom will increasingly turn to the private sector – a validation of this is the tender for Phase One of the much-awaited Bahrain Metro project announced in November, where the preferred private partner will work on the development on a design, build, finance, operate, maintain, and transfer (DBFOMT) basis. Also, the Bahrain Northern Link Road will be developed on a public-private partnership (PPP) basis (*see Tenders*).

The estimated \$3-billion metro is among the multi-year projects on the Strategic Projects Plan. The plan represents one of Bahrain's most significant injections of capital investment and will drive the Economic Recovery Plan, designed to enhance the long-term competitiveness of the country's economy, and stimulate post-pandemic growth, said Deputy Prime Minister Shaikh Khalid bin Abdulla Al Khalifa, while announcing it in November.

Among the 22 projects outlined in the plan are five cities situated on newly-developed islands, which will increase Bahrain's total land area by more than 60 per cent; a 'Tourist City', a series of resorts in the southwest of Bahrain; and the largest 'Conference City' in the Middle East, which will be part of the New Bahrain International Exhibition and Convention Centre, officials said.

Other key developments include the new 25-km, four-lane King Hamad Causeway, which will run parallel to the existing Bahrain-Saudi link; and the Sports City, a complex that will house the largest sports stadium in the country and a multi-purpose indoor sports arena.

Following the announcement of the Strategic Projects Plan, Shaikh Salman bin Khalifa Al Khalifa, the Minister of Finance and National Economy, said: "Bahrain is emerging from the pandemic with a bold ambition that looks beyond economic recovery to a more prosperous future. This transformative investment will raise education and lifestyle opportunities for young people and provide quality health-care, homes, and career paths for them as

the progress into adulthood."

While the Covid-19 pandemic has dealt a serious blow to both project schedules and costs, the construction sector has been limping resolutely forward over the past year, bolstered by government efforts to keep the cogs of the industry turning.

Major projects such as Phase Two of the Bahrain Airport Modernisation Programme, \$6-billion Bapco Modernisation Programme, Alba expansion (*see Regional News, Page 6*), the new expo centre, various big-ticket social housing projects and roads and sewerage project have been ongoing, while entities such as Bahrain Real Estate Investment Company (Edamah) – the real estate arm of the kingdom's sovereign wealth fund Bahrain Mumtalakat Holding Company – have been spearheading growth with their business-as-usual approach. Several infrastructure projects financed by the GCC Development Fund have been ongoing, bringing the cumulative total value of projects awarded under the fund to \$5.63 billion, according to a Ministry of Finance report.

Among the striking projects completed



in Bahrain last year were the 10,000-spectator-capacity Dana Amphitheatre, built 15 m into the ground of the Sakhr desert, and a new cathedral in Awali.

Early shoots of recovery have been witnessed over the past year, among them an uptick in contracts awards and a growth in real estate transactions. Bahrain awarded a total of 1,070 tenders worth BD1.3 billion (\$3.42 billion) during the first six months of last year, despite the difficult economic conditions triggered by the Covid-19 pandemic, according to data released by Bahrain's Tender Board.

Of this, the lion's share was for oil sector projects worth BD696 million, followed by aviation (BD179 million) and the construction and engineering consultancy (BD155 million). The total value of the tenders awarded grew by 60 per cent from BD820 million in the first half of 2020.

The GDP from construction increased to BD233.45 million in the first quarter of 2021 from BD232.80 million in the fourth quarter of 2020, according to the Ministry of Finance. In the long term, the country's GDP from construction is projected to trend around BD246.98 million per quarter in 2022 and BD253.15 million in 2023, according to projections by Trading Economics, an information technology and services platform.

## METRO

The Bahrain Metro will be implemented as an integrated PPP project and prequali-



**The new terminal at Bahrain International Airport ... Phase Two works in progress.**

fication bids were invited in late November from global and regional developers for the first phase of the 109-km-long network. The deadline for submitting the pre-qualification bids has been set at March 2.

The first phase will comprise an elevated corridor with two lines with a total length of 29 km and 20 stations extending from Bahrain International Airport to Seef, linking both to Manama and the Diplomatic Area.

The project will have an initial capacity of 5,000 passengers per hour per direction (PPHPD) with the scope to increase it to 23,000 PPHPD for each line. The overall project will comprise four lines, which is set to be implemented in multiple phases.

## AIRPORT

Construction work is ongoing on the second phase of the \$1.1-billion Bahrain Air-

port Modernisation Programme (AMP), following the completion and launch of operations of the first phase.

Phase Two is 82 per cent complete, according to Hill International, which is providing project management services for the AMP.

Bahrain International Airport officially launched operations at its new 207,000-sq-m passenger terminal at the end of January 2021 (*see Page 40*).

Apart from the airport expansion, a new Cargo Express Village is to be built at Bahrain International Airport. The key facilities include a warehouses zone spread over a 12,500-sq-m area; two power substations; a landside access road from Al Rayya Highway; a car parking zone and security guard house in addition to water tanks and pumping station and an emergency gate.

## HOUSING

As part of the Government Action Plan (GAP) which stipulates the construction of 25,000 housing units to address Bahrain's social housing requirements, thousands of new homes are being built in new cities, most notably in Salman City (formerly known as Northern Town), East Sitra and East Hidd.

The massive Salman City covers 740 hectares on the northwestern coast of Bahrain and is designed to house around 15,600 families on 10 islands. Some 2,000 housing units were distributed to beneficiaries at the end of last year.

Current plans entail the construction of a total of 1,382 flats on Island 12 of the city as part of a project worth BD123 million (\$324 million) that is targeted for completion by the second quarter of 2023.



**Bahrain Metro ... tenders have been invited from developers.**



The East Sitra Town project, which is now under construction, will offer 3,000 residential units once completed. The first project of its kind being implemented by Bahrain in collaboration with China, it is being carried out in three phases to serve about 20,640 citizens.

A further 520 homes are being built in East Hidd by the Ministry of Housing under a fund from Kuwait Fund for Arab Economic Development (KFAED).

Plans have also been launched by Eskan Bank for the development of Al Ramli Housing project, comprising 400 apartments and a retail area in its initial phase.

Meanwhile, private developers have joined in government efforts to meet the housing requirements of Bahrain's citizens. For example, Naseej has signed an agreement with Ithmaar Holding to develop a BD40-million residential project in the northern governorate area of Barbar. The project, which will come up on a 150,000-sq-m area, will comprise 400 units and is mainly targeted at the beneficiaries of the Ministry of Housing's Mazaya programme.

### TOURISM PROJECTS

In line with the kingdom's goal of increasing the contribution of tourism to GDP to 11.4 per cent in 2026, Edamah has embarked upon a number of major projects such as Bilaj Al Jazayer, a mixed-use development on the country's south-west coast, close to the Bahrain International Circuit. Encompassing 1.3 million sq m of land with a 3-km beachfront, Bilaj Al Jazayer will feature resorts, residential villas and apartments, food and beverage outlets, offices, and retail and entertainment offerings.

The kingdom's sovereign wealth fund has recently signed up Minor Hotels, an international hotel operator, to develop two 110-key upscale hotels – Avani and Tivoli hotels – at Bilaj Al Jazayer, which are scheduled to open in 2024.

Another key Edamah development is Sa'ada, an important heritage project which will link Muharraq's existing historical setting with the waterfront via an iconic bridge. Phase One has been opened and includes 34 shops, 36 marina bays, and 200 car-parking spaces. Future phases include the revitalisation of the historic bus station and post office, open plazas, more retail outlets, and a multi-storey car-park.

In November, Bahrain launched a new tourism strategy for 2022–26. In line with these plans, the Bahrain Tourism and Exhibitions Authority is developing a diving waterfront, the Bahrain Bay beach project, and the Qalali waterfront. Among the resort projects targeted for completion by January 2023 are the Mantis Hotel and Resort on Hawar Islands; the Jumeirah Bahrain Bay Resort; the Tourist City project, in addition to the Bilaj Al Jazayer Beach and Saada projects.

A major project catering to the MICE

segment is the New Exhibition and Convention Centre project coming up on a 309,000-sq-m area in Sakhir (*see Page 42*).

While the retail sector has suffered a major setback due to the pandemic, one landmark waterfront shopping destination has taken the bold step of announcing an expansion. The iconic Avenues – Bahrain is embarking on its Phase Two expansion, estimated to be worth BD60 million, which will include 218 stores and restaurants, two entertainment zones, a supermarket,



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and a 1,330-slot basement car-park.

Phase Two is projected to be completed by Q4 2023. The development also saw the recent opening of the 192-key Hilton Garden Inn-Bahrain Bay hotel which is connected directly to the mall.

## REAL ESTATE

Five new offshore cities are to be built to increase urban areas in Bahrain by more than 60 per cent, with hundreds of square kilometres of land allocated for the construction of residential and tourism facilities, as part of the Strategic Projects Plan. These plans alongside the recent launch of the National Real Estate Plan 2021-24 by Bahrain's Real Estate Regulatory Authority (RERA) are designed to position Bahrain as a premier destination for real estate investment, while promoting its growth and development.

There has been an increase in activity in the real estate sector over the past year. Bahrain witnessed an impressive growth in property transaction volumes for the first quarter which rose by 36 per cent to hit \$600 million, compared to 2020's figure of just over \$440 million, according to the Survey and Land Registration Board.

According to the report, just under 3,000 properties were sold across the kingdom during the first three months, up 51 per cent over 2020.

There were also indications that demand has been increasing for larger homes. Propertyfinder's Bahrain unit recorded an in-



**Salman City ... addressing the kingdom's housing needs.**

crease of 2.3 per cent for apartment leads, and a 23 per cent jump in leads for villas listed for rent when compared month-on-month for June 2021, highlighting that most users of the site are searching for a bigger space with added amenities.

Among the major real estate developments under way in Bahrain, much of the action has been at Diyar Al Muharraq, which has been regularly announcing new projects and progress on infrastructure works and housing units. Last month, its eponymous developer announced that Al Kobaisi Group has invested in residential plots within its integrated city located off Muharraq island, while AD Ports Group has signed an agreement to set up new cruise terminal there (*See Gulf Construction's Digital Edition, Page 69*).

Meanwhile, significant developments have been under way at Marassi Al Bahrain at Diyar Al Muharraq, which is being developed by Eagle Hills Diyar. Among the new residential projects launched within the development is Marassi Park and Address Residences, Marassi Vista.

Also being built off the coast of Muharraq governorate is Dilmunia, taking shape on a man-made island. Early last year, the \$1.6-billion mixed-use development witnessed the opening of Phase One of the Dilmunia Canal – Bahrain's largest man-made water canal. Phases Two and Three, which continue northwards, are expected to finish by the end of 2022.

Meanwhile, in the heart of the capital Manama, the iconic Bahrain Financial Harbour (BFH), a major live/work/play destination being built on the waterfront, is now in its third phase of construction with third-developers building residential, leisure, hospitality and office properties within the development. GFH Properties is developing Harbour Row and Harbour Heights with over 1,000 luxury apartments and townhouses, food and beverage (F&B), leisure and retail units. Another developer First Energy Bank – now known as Sayacorp – is building its new headquarters, which will comprise offices, 98 hotel apartments to be operated by Hilton and several F&B outlets. Both the tower and the Conrad Residences are due to open by the end of 2022.

Meanwhile, at the prestigious Bahrain Bay, work is in progress on Onyx Bahrain Bay, a twin-tower development which will feature 700 apartments; and Golden Gate Development among other mid-rise and high-rise complexes. ■



**Work is in progress on a number of mid-rise and high-rise buildings at the prestigious Bahrain Bay.**



# BAHRAIN AT A GLANCE

Package name	Owner	Status	Budget*
100 MW Askar Solar Power Plant	Electricity and Water Authority (EWA)	Engineering & Procurement	130
Al Dur Independent Water & Power Project (IWPP) – Overview	EWA	Construction	6,000
Al Dur Independent Water & Power Project (IWPP) – Phase 2 – Power Plant and Desalination Plant	EWA	Construction	2,000
Alba – PS5 Fourth Block Extension	Aluminium Bahrain (Alba)	Engineering & Procurement	100
Bahrain International Airport Modernisation Program – Overview	Bahrain Airport Company (BAC)	Construction	1,100
Bahrain Marina – Phase 1 – Five Star Luxury Hotel	Amlak International Investment	EPC ITB	250
Bahrain Marina – Phase 2 – Aqua Park	Amlak International Investment	EPC ITB	200
Bahrain Metro	Ministry of Transportation and Telecommunication (MTT)	Design	2,000
Bahrain Offshore Wind Generation Project	EWA	Feasibility Study	100
Bilaj Al Jazayr Beach Development – Overview	Bahrain Real-Estate Investment Company (Edamah)	Construction	1,200
Busaiteen Link Causeway (New Manama to Muharraq Bridge)	Ministry of Works, Municipality Affairs and Urban Planning	Construction	300
Diyar Al Muharraq Housing Development	Kuwait Finance House (KFH), Diyar Al Muharraq	Construction	500
Diyar Al Muharraq Development – Overview	Diyar Al Muharraq	Construction	3,180
Durrat Marina	Durrat Khaleej Al Bahrain Company, Tameer	Construction	1,500
East Hidd Housing Project – Phase 2 – 498 Plots	Ministry of Housing	Construction	45
East Sitra Town Development	Ministry of Housing	Construction	700
GCC Railway Network	MTT	Design	15,400
Golden Gate Project	Gmata Group	Construction	200
Harbour Heights	Gulf Holding Company (GHC)	Construction	650
Hasabi Waterfront Development	Manara Developments Company	Design	1,800
Hilton Hotel Bay and Residences	Hilton Worldwide, King Faisal Corniche Development Company (KFCDC)	Design	66
Integrated Sport City Stadium	Ministry of Youth and Sports Affairs, Bahrain	Design	450
King Abdulla Bin Abdulaziz Medical City	Ministry of Health (Bahrain), Arabian Gulf University (AGU)	Construction	1,000
King Hamad Causeway (Bahrain-Saudi Link)	MTT	Design	4,500
Layan Project	Bin Fageeh Real Estate Investment Company	Construction	80
Marassi Al Bahrain	Eagle Hills Diyar	Construction	400
North Manama Causeway Project – Phase 2 – 2.4-km Causeway	Ministry of Works, Municipality Affairs and Urban Planning	Construction	500
Sahel Beach Resort & Spa Development	Mumtalakat Holding Company, Dubai Properties	Construction	545
Southern Governorate Housing Development	Ministry of Housing	Construction	220
Southwest Sewage Treatment Plant (STP)	Ministry of Works, Municipality Affairs and Urban Planning	Design	400
Symphony Al Tijaria Tower	Commercial Real Estate Company	Construction	45
The Harbour Row	Gulf Finance House (GFH)	Commissioning	150
Tubli STP Expansion – Phase 4 – Secondary Treatment Unit Upgrade	Ministry of Works, Municipality Affairs and Urban Planning	Construction	410
Waste-to-Energy Plant	Ministry of Works, Municipality Affairs and Urban Planning	Feasibility Study	480
Water Bay	Bin Fageeh Real Estate Investment Company	Construction	2,500
Water Garden City	Albilad Real Estate Investment Company	Construction	975





Consultant	Contractor	Start date	End date
Not Yet Appointed	Acwa Power, Mitsui, Al Moayyed Contracting	2017-Q3	2022-Q2
Mott MacDonald Indonesia	Hyundai Heavy Industries, Gulf Investment Corporation (GIC), Acwa Power, Siemens, Sepco III, Sidem, Suez Energy International, Mitsui, Al Moayyed Contracting	2007-Q1	2024-Q4
Not Yet Appointed	Acwa Power, Mitsui, Siemens, Sepco III, Sidem, Al Moayyed Contracting	2008-Q4	2022-Q2
Not Yet Appointed	Mitsubishi Corporation – Sepco III	2020-Q1	2023-Q4
Hill International	CIMC Tianda, Vanderlande Industries, TAV Construction, Arabtec Construction, Amana Pipeline Construction	2009-Q1	2022-Q1
Bruce Shaw	Al Hamad Construction & Development Company	2014-Q2	2024-Q1
Bruce Shaw	Not Yet Appointed	2015-Q3	2024-Q1
Not Yet Appointed	Not Yet Appointed	2015-Q3	2025-Q4
Not Yet Appointed	Not Yet Appointed	2018-Q2	2023-Q1
Haji Hassan Group, Mohammed Salahuddin Consulting and Engineering Bureau (MSCEB)	Nass Contracting, Al Hassanain	2008-Q1	2024-Q1
Not Yet Appointed	Boskalis Westminster Al-Rushaid, Boskalis Westminster Contracting	2014-Q2	2022-Q2
MSCEB, Adel Ahmadi Associates	AlHidaya Constructions, Down Town Construction Company	2010-Q4	2022-Q4
Hisham Abdulrahman Jaffer, SSH International Consultants	Middle East Contracting and Trade Centre (Metco), Nass Contracting, Dadabhai Construction	2006-Q1	2022-Q2
Not Yet Appointed	Tamcon Contracting, United Marine Trading Company, Master Construction Company	2006-Q1	2025-Q4
Not Yet Appointed	First Kuwaiti General Trading & Contracting Company	2011-Q1	2022-Q4
Aecom	CMEC Corporation	2014-Q4	2026-Q4
Systra Consulting, Khatib & Alami	Not Yet Appointed	2005-Q2	2025-Q4
Not Yet Appointed	Al Jameel Construction S.P.C	2018-Q2	2022-Q2
Cowi, KEO International Consultants	Al Hamad Construction & Development Company	2007-Q1	2022-Q4
Not Yet Appointed	Not Yet Appointed	2017-Q1	2023-Q3
Not Yet Appointed	Not Yet Appointed	2017-Q2	2024-Q4
Not Yet Appointed	Not Yet Appointed	2016-Q2	2025-Q4
Not Yet Appointed	Hafeera Contracting, Al Fouzan Trading and General Contracting Company	2011-Q1	2022-Q3
Not Yet Appointed	Not Yet Appointed	2005-Q1	2027-Q1
Projacs International	Al Taitoon Contracting	2014-Q1	2022-Q2
Not Yet Appointed	Cebarco, Dadabhai Construction, Shapoorji Pallonji & Company	2015-Q2	2023-Q2
Bahrain Northshore, Hyder Consulting	Ahmed Mansoor Al A'Ali	2006-Q1	2022-Q4
Not Yet Appointed	Nass Contracting	2005-Q1	2022-Q4
Ministry of Housing (Bahrain)	Naba International Commercial Enterprise, Tamcon Contracting	2012-Q3	2022-Q4
Not Yet Appointed	Not Yet Appointed	2018-Q1	2025-Q4
—	Fundament SPC	2016-Q4	2022-Q4
Not Yet Appointed	Almoayyed Contracting Group	2015-Q4	2022-Q2
P2M Berlin, KEO International Consultants	Tecton Engineering and Construction, Azmeel Contracting & Construction Corporation, Cebarco, Bluewater Bio, WTE Wassertechnik	2012-Q4	2022-Q1
Not Yet Appointed	Not Yet Appointed	2009-Q3	2024-Q4
Projacs International	Al Jameel Construction	2015-Q2	2022-Q2
URS Scott Wilson	Al Door Excavation & Building Contracting, Royal Boskalis Westminster	2008-Q3	2022-Q2

\* List includes projects worth over \$45 million only.

Source: DMS Projects



# Terminal Phase Two nearly complete



**Phase Two includes construction of three Multiple Aircraft Ramp Systems (MARS) stands with piers, four remote stands and related airside infrastructure.**

**C**ONSTRUCTION work has well advanced on Phase Two of Bahrain International Airport's \$1.1-billion airport modernisation programme (AMP), following the launch of operations at the first phase of the new terminal building in January 2021.

Phase Two includes the demolition of the eastern part of the old terminal building to facilitate the extension of the new terminal building concourse and works at the landside areas. It also includes construction of three Multiple Aircraft Ramp Systems (MARS) stands with piers, four remote stands and related airside infrastructure, according to Hill International, a global project and construction management firm, which is providing project management services for the AMP.

These works started after the old terminal facility was decommissioned in February 2021.

"Phase Two works are progressing in full swing and are planned to be completed in March 2022," Uzair Wasif, Vice President and Project Director of Hill International, tells *Gulf Construction*.

"Phase Two is 82 per cent complete. With the completion of this phase, the terminal building will have 12 MARS aircraft stands," he points out.

Bids have been opened for the demolition of the remaining portion of the old terminal with seven contractors having responded to the request for proposals (RFP), according to the Tender Board.

According to Wasif, this contract is expected to be award in late January 2022.

The Airport Modernisation Programme is the largest development in Bahrain's aviation sector and is part of the kingdom's Economic Vision 2030. It aims to enable increasing the passenger handling capacity at the airport to 14 million per year from the current nameplate of nine million per year.

The project is funded by Abu Dhabi Fund for Development (ADFD). Bahrain's Ministry of Telecommunication and Transportation (MoTT) is the client and Bahrain Airport Company (BAC) is the client's representative. ADPi is the design consultant and a joint venture of Arabtec/TAV is the main works contractor.



**Phase Two is 82 per cent complete. With the completion of this phase, the terminal building will have 12 MARS aircraft stands**

Work on the programme commenced in mid-2016. Phase One comprised a new 210,000-sq-m terminal building featuring premium-class check-in halls, check-in desks, passport control booths, E-gates, security lanes, a 9,000-sq-m duty-free retail space, premium-class lounges, food and beverage zones and 24 departure gates. The project involved the erection of nine MARS aircraft stands and included ancillary facilities such as a central utility complex, multi-level car parking and related





Phase Two works are under way at Bahrain International Airport.

airside and landside facilities, says Wasif.

Five packages were critical to meeting Phase One's handover date, he says, noting the team procured these packages on a design-build basis, which used a traditional design-bid-build delivery method, prior to the award of the main contract. The five design-build packages were: Baggage Handling System (BHS), Information and Communication Technology (ICT), Security and Screening Equipment (SSE), Passenger Loading Bridges (PLB), and Horizontal/Vertical Transportation Systems (HVTS).

### COVID-19 IMPACT

The Covid-19 pandemic presented several challenges and on site, this meant ensuring proper personal protection equipment (PPE) was always available and in use, and that labourers were screened for symptoms daily before beginning work. This helped to protect the workforce and minimise the risk of the virus spreading, says Hill International.

From a planning and management perspective, Hill coordinated with the MoTT, BAC, vendors, and contractors to find workarounds to supply chain bottlenecks

and to maximise work during available hours.

"Much like the entire aviation industry, we had to adapt quickly to the new normal of Covid-19. We needed to make certain we were doing everything we could to help keep the project moving," says Sharif Makki, Hill's Director of Operations and Contracts Manager for the project.

Prior to the official opening of the new terminal, BAC meticulously checked the operational readiness of the Phase One facilities to ensure the safety and wellbeing of passengers and staff at the new facility. ■



The terminal building was completed under the first phase of the AMP.



# Expo centre marks milestone



NECC ... fast nearing completion. INSET: A perspective of the centre.

**W**ORK on Bahrain's New Exhibition and Convention Centre (NECC) in Sakhir is making good headway, with the halls now structurally complete, according to its main contractor, the Bahrain-based Cebarco.

Located next to the Bahrain International Circuit – which was also built by Cebarco in 2004 – the new expo centre is expected to be completed this year (2022).

The project comes as part of the Bahrain Tourism and Exhibitions Authority's (BTEA) efforts to stay ahead of the competition and meet the kingdom's needs in the meetings, incentives, conferences and exhibitions (MICE) sector. Additionally, the new exhibition and convention centre is expected to be the largest "Conference City" in the Middle East.

Work has continued non-stop on the site despite the coronavirus pandemic since the foundation stone for the project was laid in January 2020, marking the commencement of above-ground construction works on the new expo centre.

The scope of Cebarco's BD83.6-million (\$220.4 million) contract entails the construction of the exhibition and convention centre that is being built on a 309,000-sq-m plot of land. The 149,000-sq-m main building includes 10 exhibition areas, totalling 95,000 sq m, along with dedicated

areas for retail and events. The facility will also include a 4,500-sq-m conference hall divided into three separate hi-tech rooms, in addition to 27 small- and medium-sized conference and meeting rooms with the capacity to accommodate approximately 4,000 guests.

Two VIP majlis and a parking lot that can accommodate 1,600 vehicles are also part of the master development. In addition, the parking facility of the proposed Bahrain Sports City, which will be built adjacent to it, would also be used to accommodate the large number of visitors that are expected at the exhibition centre during the major events that it will host.

German consultants Tilke Engineers and Architects, which designed and supervised work on Bahrain International Circuit, is responsible for the design and supervision of the state-of-the-art exhibition centre.

All the exhibition halls at the centre comprise steel structures, while the conference halls and meeting rooms will be a mixture of concrete and steel structures.

The concrete works are almost completed at the expo facility while internal road works, paving and sewage networks are nearing completion.

Commenting on the progress of work on site, CEO of Cebarco Peter Sellers tells *Gulf Construction*: "Physical completion structurally is probably at 75 per cent, and

by value at around halfway through. The halls are progressing very well and ahead of schedule and are already structurally complete with the conference hall following on early 2022."

Sellers points out that there have been some reconfiguring of the operations of the building and Cebarco is currently working on this activity with the engineer and end-user to smoothly integrate changes into the construction sequence.

Elaborating on this aspect, he says: "Projects always evolve, particularly when operators are appointed. We are working with the client and the team from the Ministry of Works to accommodate the changes and we attempt, wherever we can, to provide early warning on price changes and the implications of changing design. So far, we have assisted with many ideas and we are working constantly with all stakeholders to achieve their aspirations."

A number of KAR Group companies – of which Cebarco is a part – are also engaged on the NECC project including Kartec, a mechanical and electrical engineering and contracting company; KAR TC, which specialises in tower cranes; KAR Facades, which provides building façade solutions; Marmara/Aqua Art, which is supplying bathroom solutions; and KAR Trading, which is providing solutions for many of the architectural works. ■



# Cebarco gears for 2022 with optimism

**W**ITH Bahrain having reinforced its commitment to developing its strategic projects by flagging off the prequalification process for the much-awaited Bahrain Metro project, the country's construction and real estate sector can look ahead at the New Year with optimism, says Dr Khalid A Rahim, Chairman and CEO of KAR Group of companies.

"The Bahrain Metro project will have a significant knock-on effect on the market not only with supplementary construction associated with the metro such as car-parking, access bridges, incoming supplies but also in complementary developments such as shopping facilities, connecting roads, and residential and office construction closer to the metro stations," he tells *Gulf Construction*.

Dr Rahim is a veteran in the industry



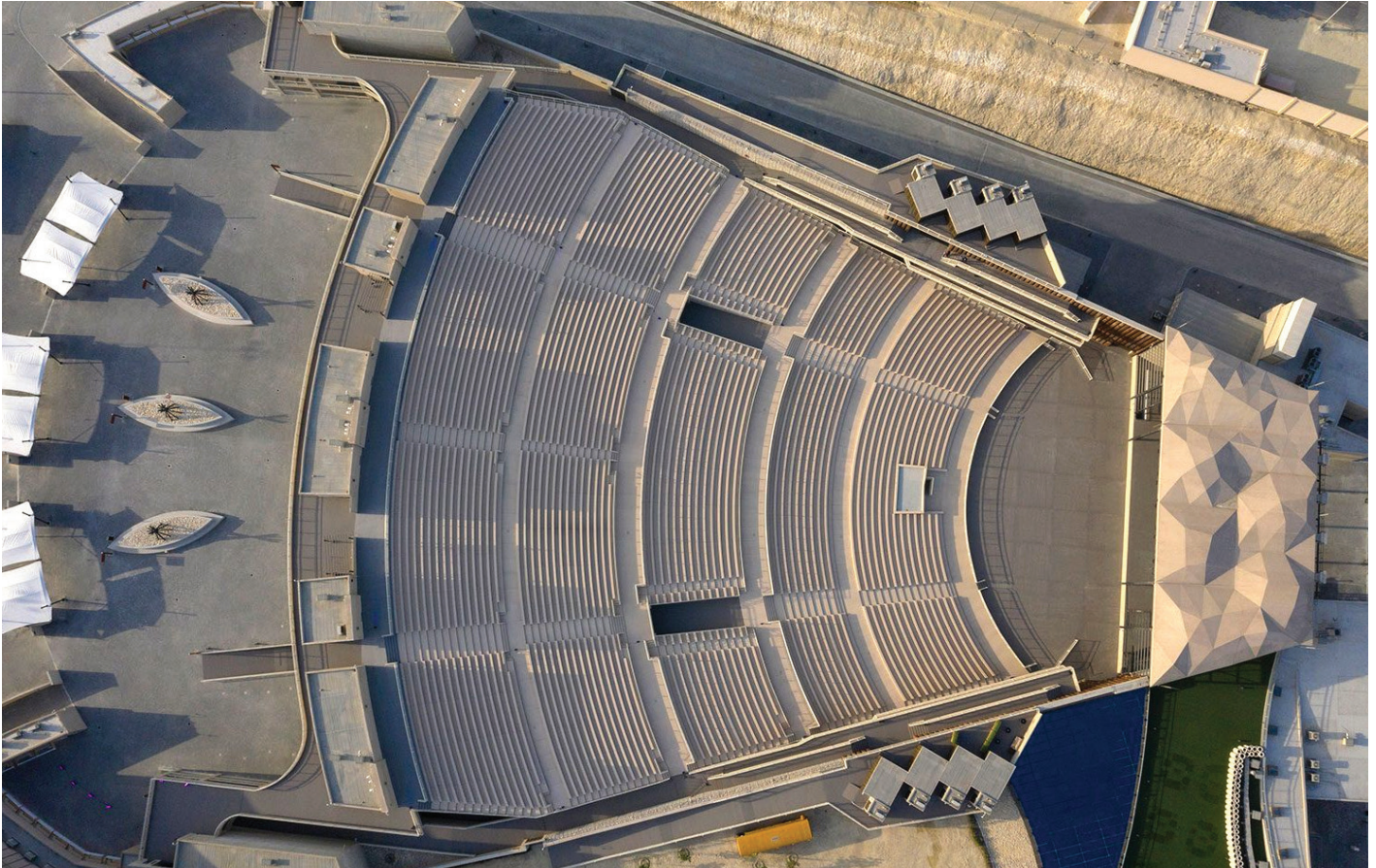
**Dr Rahim ... a veteran in the industry.**

with a finger on the pulse of each facet of the construction industry, having set up the flagship of the group – Cebarco (Civil Engineering, Building and Construction) – back in 1992. The group now enfolds vir-

tually the entire spectrum of construction-related companies to support Cebarco and the industry's requirements – covering mechanical and electrical engineering and contracting services (Kartec), facades (KAR Facades), cranes (KAR TC), sanitary ware and tiles (Marmara Trading/Aqua Art), building products and equipment trading (KAR Trading), and PKE (electronics and security services). In addition, the KAR Group also has interests in the real estate sector (KAR Properties).

Cebarco is currently working on the BD83.6-million (\$220.4 million) New Exhibition and Conference Centre (NECC) in Sakhir, which along with the proposed Bahrain Sports City that is planned to be built adjacent to it, will attract other businesses to the locality and will further enhance this area as a new standalone destination, Dr Rahim says (*see Page 42*).

The firm is also working on a design-and-build contract for the BD12-million Electricity and Water Authority (EWA) control centre for monitoring of Bahrain's electricity and water networks. The scope of the package includes civil and electro-



**The 10,000-seat-capacity Al Dana Amphitheatre ... a key project completed by Cebarco in 2021.**



mechanical works for the new building, in addition to modifications in the existing control centre to turn it into an emergency control centre.

"The control centre for EWA will be the new nerve centre for the whole of Bahrain for the next 50 years. This is a unique building with a stepped and twisting structure, shielded from the sun by extensive shading to help reduce solar gains. Internally, the building will house complex operation and control systems to ensure that electrical supplies in the kingdom are never subject to outages," says Peter Sellers, CEO of Cebarco.

At Diyar Al Muharraq, Cebarco is building the landmark Marassi Galleria and the adjacent Vida Hotel and serviced residences.

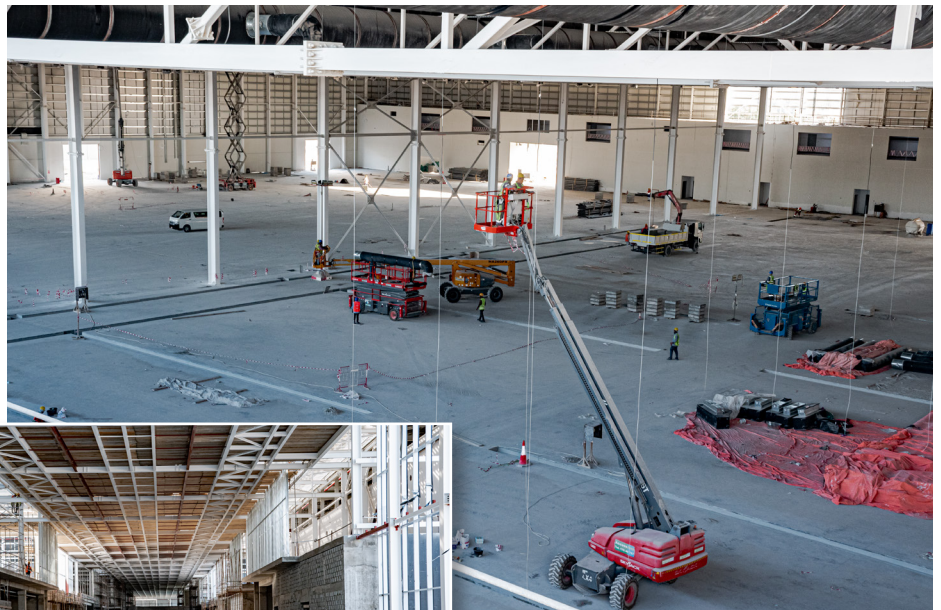
The Vida hotel has been handed over and opened to the public in December. Work on the Marassi Galleria – originally targeted for handover in mid-2021 – has been delayed by a number of factors and is now scheduled for completion in the first quarter of this year (2022).

Commenting on the project, Cebarco's CEO says: "This has been a very difficult project as it is reliant on materials from overseas, which meant that deliveries were impacted by the coronavirus pandemic when factories closed down for months in Europe and elsewhere, and borders were closed; so our hands were pretty much tied.

"Even goods from the GCC were significantly delayed due to the closure of the Saudi border and we, as all other business in Bahrain, were fighting for seafreight slots and searching for available containers. We ended up having to increase advances to suppliers and this has hurt our cash flow.

"The good news is we are recovering from these closures and are progressing well. The Vida hotel is handed over and we are planning delivery of the mall in the first quarter of 2022 on the basis that all final materials arrive on time," he says.

Cebarco's showpiece infrastructure project, the Dilmunia Grand Canal at the nearby Dilmunia island was opened with much fanfare early last year and since then the contracting company has been awarded additional works to cover the extensions to



Work under way at the NECC.



Sellers .... projects progressing well.

previous phases as further land plots have been sold and new developments started within the island off Muharraq.

Another major accomplishment for 2021 was the 10,000-seat-capacity Al Dana Amphitheatre, which in November held its first concert to a sell-out crowd. While the facility was virtually complete when the Covid-19 pandemic broke out, Cebarco has since carried out additional works to ensure that the amphitheatre can handle a multitude of events.

Cebarco is now engaged on the 15-storey District Tower in Seef, which it aims to complete early this year.

In the renewable energy sector, Cebarco, along with its German partner JUWI, have completed and handed over the first solar power and wind plant for EWA at Ad Dur and this plant is now supplying renewable

energy into the Bahrain power grid.

"This is a 5-MW solar farm, together with two wind turbines. This pilot plant will lead the way to a significant increase in use of renewable energy for the kingdom and is the first step in achieving the goals of HRH Prince Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa, Crown Prince and Prime Minister of Bahrain, in achieving carbon neutrality by 2060," Dr Rahim says.

In the wastewater sector, Cebarco is working on Phase Four of the Tubli sewage treatment plant with its partner WTE of Germany.

"This is a significant civil engineering project for Cebarco with complex structures, including 30-m-deep pumping stations constructed with slipform, 3-m-diameter mains incoming sewer lines bored with tunnelling machines. We understand that this line is currently the largest bored sewer line in Bahrain. The project is being carried out on an extremely tight site, which has made logistics extremely difficult but we are managing well," says Sellers.

In addition, Cebarco is set to add another major BD21-million deal to its already healthy order book worth BD300 million, which is expected to keep it busy during 2022.

The KAR Group has a well-devised strategy in place to ensure that it is well poised to take a major share of the business anticipated in the New Year.





**Marassi Galleria ... scheduled for completion in the first quarter of this year.**

Towards this end, it is looking to leaner and more efficient operations and is seeking strategic partners to target complex works where specialist services are involved.

"We are currently reviewing our own operations and structure to see where we can better optimise our resources. We are also looking at where subcontractors and suppliers can prove more efficient and we will be using the best resources possible going forward. We have appointed new operations managers who are tasked with making the best possible use of our resources or those of others," Dr Rahim says.

From the sustainability point of view, the company is looking at changing its site operations to solar power to increase its green footprint and also to offset increased costs of diesel fuel for site generators.

Cebarco also intends to broaden its horizons, with plans to set up operations in Saudi Arabia "still on the table".

"We have been talking to several large organisations about making a move across the causeway, as to where we can add value to their developments and we are hopeful of a structured move in the future," he adds.

Cebarco has a branch office in Cyprus, where it is developing a mixed-use project. According to Dr Rahim, the project has suffered due to the pandemic as well as owing to the changes in investor rules.

While the project has been scaled down from a three-tower to a two-tower complex, "it will probably be the most iconic building in Cyprus," he adds.

Meanwhile, KAR Properties is poised to open the Riffa Gharbi Mall in the near future. The boutique development in the heart of Riffa is set to become a "destination for quality service". The mall includes

a new showroom for group company Mamara Trading, which has been doing good business despite the pandemic, according to Dr Rahim.

The Gharbi Mall will also accommodate an Al Osra supermarket, which is currently being fitted out; a VIP travel services outlet; an exclusive Bathroom Solutions showroom and a wellness facility offering exceptional spa and beauty treatment.

With the residential segment of the real estate sector being buoyant, KAR Properties is planning to develop a villa community in Isa Town, comprising 135 two-and-a-half-storey townhouses.

The company is also looking at setting up a showroom complex with two upper levels in Sitra.

Contrary to the trend of businesses slowing down and reducing staffing levels during the pandemic, Dr Rahim says the KAR Group has in fact recruited new staff and made the most investment in plant and equipment since 2009, when it constructed the Abu Dhabi F1 Circuit.

"Even our tower crane company KARTC

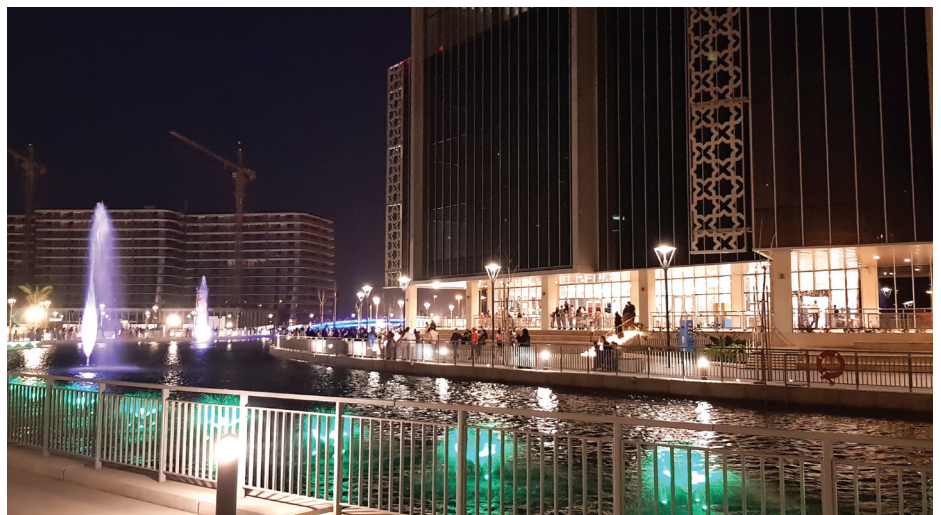
has been purchasing equipment – which for me is a good indicator that things are coming back to normal," he stresses.

"We will continue to develop group companies to support our other activities where we see opportunity. We have several irons in the fire at the moment..." Dr Rahim adds with a grin. "However, whatever business I set up must be able to stand on its own two feet and act independently of the group."

The group is also in discussions with some major international players about bringing financing into government housing and infrastructure projects, with a view to setting up an engineering, procurement, construction and financing (EPCF) venture.

Dr Rahim is optimistic about prospects in the Bahrain market, where several projects are on the cards. These include the Fourth Manama-Muharraq Crossing, which will help reduce traffic flow in Muharraq and give direct access from Manama to Diyar Al Muharraq and Dilmunia; Diyar Al Muharraq, which continues to expand and will soon host a cruise terminal; and the Al Jazayer beach hotels and the Hawar development, which will boost tourism.

Bahrain is also developing new townships and has reclamation projects on the anvil and additional work is planned for the airport complex to position the country as a cargo/transit hub. This apart, Bahrain is focusing on renewable energy projects as well as on sustainability and waste management – all of which spells good news for the construction sector, Dr Rahim concludes. ■



**Cebarco's showpiece infrastructure project, the Dilmunia Grand Canal.**





# PACESETTER FOR 30 YEARS



BIC Track



Bahrain Chamber of Commerce & Industry HQ

**FOR** nearly 30 years, **Cebarco Bahrain** has been leading the industry both locally and abroad by having built some high-profile landmark and infrastructure projects.

A paradigm for civil engineering, building and roads construction as its name represents, the company has built a strong reputation in the market for its unparalleled management, technical engineering and organisational services.

**Cebarco** is the flagship of the well-diversified **KAR Group**, which was founded in 1992 by chairman and chief executive officer Dr Khalid Mohammed A Rahim. Located in Manama, the group today enfold a number of companies that support and complement **Cebarco's** activities while having various business and property interests all over Bahrain, and internationally in the UAE, Cyprus and Ireland.





Cebarco Tower

**“The main opportunity is to challenge ourselves and keep reviewing the efficiency of our operations, use our detailed knowledge of the market and capitalise on Cebarco’s and KAR Group’s solid track record and reputation”**



Dr. Khalid Mohammed A. Rahim, Chairman and C.E.O. KAR Group of Companies

**Cebarco’s** main operations are headquartered in Bahrain, with branches in the UAE and an office in Cyprus. Over the years, the company has proven its ability to handle mega projects that showcase its engineering and technological expertise.

One of its most prominent projects is the fastest ever ‘rock to race’ Formula One circuit at Bahrain International Circuit (BIC), which was delivered in an unprecedented 483 days. These skills led to an invitation to construct the \$1.3-billion Yas Marina Circuit in Abu Dhabi in 2009 and subsequently **Cebarco** was consulted on race track projects in the USA, Russia, Kuwait and Qatar, to name a few.



## OTHER GROUP COMPANIES



KAR Trading specialises in the import of mechanical, electrical, architectural and building products.

Its product range includes ceilings, partitions, ironmongery, toilet cubicles and steel doors; drainage products and manhole covers; heating, ventilation and air-conditioning (HVAC) products such as air-handling units, air-conditioning equipment, air distribution accessories, ventilation systems, and ducts; and lighting, wiring accessories, generators and PVC conduits.

**Marmara Trading S P C**

**AQUART**  
MODERN BATHROOM SOLUTIONS  
MKAR

These two companies, under the direction of Nouf Khalid Abdulrahim have firmly established themselves as premier destinations for quality sanitary ware and tiling products.

From their dedicated showrooms in Mahooz and Sitra, Marmara Trading and Aqua Art offer a wide range of products from world-renowned brands such as Ideal Standard, Grohe and Geberit and offer complete bathroom solutions including sanitary ware, furniture, accessories, showers and tiling.

Marmara Trading and Aqua Art also sell wholesale to the construction and development industries and will be adding a new exclusive showroom in the Riffa Gharbi Mall soon for the new showroom Aqualux.



Kartec is a specialist electrical and mechanical engineering and contracting company with extensive experience in the design, supply, installation, testing, commissioning and maintenance of complete electrical and mechanical engineering systems, including high-voltage (HV) power transmission and distribution, HV and low-voltage (LV) electrical installations for infrastructure, industrial, commercial and domestic applications, air-conditioning, ventilation, refrigeration, plumbing, drainage, fire-fighting and other piping works, as well as specialised engineering plant installations.

Kartec is registered with Bahrain’s Electricity and Water Authority (EWA) as a “Grade 1” electrical contractor, and as such is licensed and approved to carry out electrical projects of unlimited load and to 11 kV level.

It has completed two circuits on the 400-kV project linking the Riffa and Al Dur power stations.



Other projects it has successfully executed include the City Centre Bahrain, Madinat Salman PPP Housing Scheme of nearly 2,000 units, Shaikh Isa Cultural Centre and Library, Cebarco Tower, the Bahrain Chamber of Commerce building, Le Méridien and Westin City Centre Bahrain, the 33-km King Hamad Highway in Bahrain, and the Yas Marina Yacht Club in Abu Dhabi.

But **Cebarco's** expertise extends well beyond these achievements, with specialised projects such as large data centres, tunnelling and deep gravity sewers, as well as bridges, industrial plants and other complex construction.

The company was recently awarded the New Systems Control Centre for EWA located in Hidd on a design and build basis and is negotiating several other major

projects. This is in addition to the Bahrain Exhibition and Conference Centre with 10 halls and 149,000 m<sup>2</sup> of built-up area located adjacent to the BIC, the Marasi Galleria Mall project with 550,000 m<sup>2</sup> of built-up area that is nearing completion with the Vida hotel handed over and major civil works for Tubli Phase 4 extension project.

**Cebarco** is certified by Bahrain's Ministry of Works and Housing as a Grade AA contractor and also certified to ISO 9001, OHSAS 18001 and ISO 14001 quality, occupational health and safety and environmental management systems.

**Cebarco** is joined in its successful run by nearly a dozen other group companies that have acted as cornerstones to boost it to new heights.



*City Centre Bahrain*



*The New Bahrain Exhibition and Conferences Centre*



This is a residential and commercial property development company managed by Mohammed Khalid Abdulrahim. KAR Properties lists several buildings in Bahrain in its portfolio, the most prestigious being the Cebarco Tower in Mahooz. The sophisticated residential building features 110 fully-furnished one-, two- and three-bedroom apartments complete with state-of-the-art furniture, a large infinity pool, deck and barbecue area, Jacuzzi, gym, steam, sauna and a children's play area. It also offers parking and concierge services. Other properties include Sugaya Views, Busaiteen Views, and the Al Gharbi Mall in Riffa, which is set to open soon.



An IATA-accredited travel agency, KAR Travel & Tours has been offering all travel-related services including hotels and car hire since 2013. Its experienced staff understand the challenges of the modern travel and tourism industry and that planning, developing and adapting destinations to the evolving needs of the market is the key to success.



Synonymous with tower cranes in Bahrain and across the GCC, KARTC is engaged in sales and rentals, installation, servicing and maintenance of tower cranes, passenger hoists, work platforms, and gondola and roof-mounted cranes.



KAR Façade is an innovative total façade solutions provider that offers a creative and pragmatic approach to give every building a cutting edge and vibrant look combined with functionality.

KAR Façade prides itself on the exceptional quality of its designs in architectural, aluminium and glass development, fabrication and installation of various building components.



Whether you're involved in motorsports, tuning or simply looking to improve the output of your car, KAR Performance provides customers with quality car parts and equipment. The company is the official dealer of Cosworth performance parts in the Middle East, and supplies other products such as CTEK battery chargers. It also deals with collection cars.





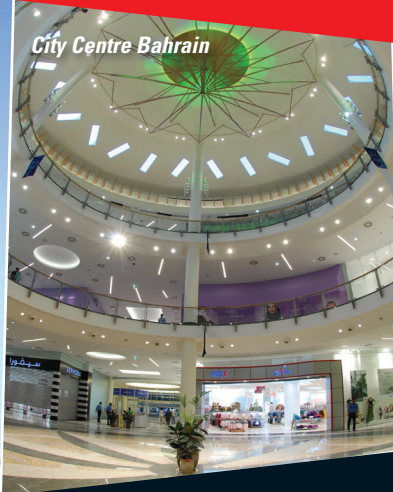
*The Yacht Club at Yas Marina, Abu Dhabi*



*Citibank*



*Riffa Clock Tower*



*City Centre Bahrain*



*Shaikh Isa Library*



*BIC Pit Building*



*Segaya Views*



*UBL Headquarters*



*Riffa Commercial Development*



*PPP housing 2,000 units*

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# Paschal formwork shows its versatility



Paschal systems have been utilised in the construction of Once Mall in Isa Town.

**F**ORMWORK systems from Paschal-Werk G Maier of Germany are being used in the construction of diverse projects in Bahrain, ranging from water tanks to high-rises and from multipurpose halls to mixed-use complexes.

"Contractors in Bahrain are deriving benefits from the versatility of Paschal's Modular formwork and have been reusing their systems for a number of projects and various applications," says Amir Delghandi, General Director of the Bahrain-based Paschal Concrete Forms, the German manufacturer's regional office.

One such contractor is Kazerooni Contracting, which is currently using the Modular formwork for the construction of a water tank at its 10-storey mixed-use development at Dilmunia. The contracting firm had previously used Paschal systems for the construction of the columns, lift shaft and slabs of the 20-storey Kazerooni Heights 2 in Amwaj.

Another contractor Kooheji Contractors is engaged in the construction of a multipurpose hall at the Canadian School in

Diyar Al Muharraq, where Paschal systems are helping shape the columns and reinforced concrete walls. The contracting firm has been using these formwork systems for the construction of the architecturally striking 42-storey Onyx at Bahrain Bay and the 27-storey headquarters for Sayacorp (previously known as First Energy Bank) at the entrance of Bahrain Financial Harbour, construction of both

of which is well advanced. On the headquarters building, Kooheji Contractors has used Paschal's Modular system as the single-side retaining wall formwork with supporting jack, as well as for water tanks, core walls and columns, while the Paschal Deck system with H20 wooden girder and heavy-duty adjustable props was used for the slabs. Paschal's climbing system has also been deployed on the project.

Among other projects, Once Mall in Isa Town has achieved structural completion using Paschal's Modular formwork for the construction of its retaining wall, columns and core walls; and the Deck system HD frame for shaping the new mall's impressive double-height area and props in other areas for support. The contractor on the three-storey mall project is Saleh Abdulla Kameshki, which has recently utilised Paschal formwork for the construction of the columns, lift shaft and slabs of the Al Ra-beeh Medical Centre in Manama.

Another project that has reached structural completion is the Multiple Sclerosis Centre, an offshoot of Muharraq Medical Complex. Zayani Trading & Contracting has utilised Modular systems for the construction of the columns and lift walls. The contractor is also deploying these systems for the construction of the columns of a multipurpose hall in Hidd for the Ministry of Works.

The Modular formwork is also being utilised by UAE-based Tecton Engineering and Construction for the construction of reinforced concrete walls and the mass foundation at water storage and transmission facilities at Al Dur Forwarding Station in Bahrain.



Al Dur project ... Modular system in use.



Other ongoing projects that are using Paschal's modular system are water tanks at Salman Town, which are being built by Santy Excavation & Construction; Wave Tower, a 36-storey residential building in Hidd being built by Fundament SPC; and a fuel station in Hidd, which is being built by Olympic Contracting.

Some of the prominent projects in Bahrain that were completed recently using Paschal systems are the first-of-its-kind

spent pot lining (SPL) treatment plant in the GCC, built at Aluminium Bahrain (Alba); the 41-storey Burj Kadi in Juffair; and the 12-storey Hanging Gardens in Dilmunia.

Paschal is a sought-after partner for concrete projects worldwide, with customers in more than 40 countries and 50 years of experience.

Paschal Concrete Forms was established in Bahrain in January 1998, and since then Paschal has emerged as a leading supplier

of modern formwork solutions to the region's contractors. The company's Modular universal formwork and the Paschal Deck system for slab formwork have especially proved popular in the region.

Based at BIIP in Hidd, Paschal Concrete Forms has an assembling facility for modular formwork and a stockyard in Bahrain. In addition, with a branch office in Dubai, Paschal is strongly represented in the Middle East and North Africa (Mena) region. ■

## Reynaers builds on campaign success

**R**EYNAERS Middle East (RME), the Bahrain-based regional office of the leading European aluminium solutions provider Reynaers, says its recent marketing campaign to engage with the Business to Consumer (B2C) audience in the Middle East has been a success and it has received many inquiries as a result of it.

The campaign was launched in the last quarter of 2021 in a bid to drive home the message that it offers the ideal product for luxury homes and villas.

"In keeping with the current trends of influencer and video marketing, Reynaers Middle East embarked on a very different but ambitious marketing approach with this new campaign, as Reynaers Aluminium predominately adopts a Business to Business (B2B) model, where fabricators are the end customers," Ali Khalaf, Managing Director of Reynaers Middle East, explains.

RME has supplied aluminium systems for the doors and windows and facades of some of the most luxurious and contemporary homes featuring cutting-edge technology and offering superior performances.



Reynaers' marketing campaign ... a success.

A three video series featuring prominent Bahraini actors was filmed at the iconic Bahrain landmark Four Seasons Bahrain Bay hotel, where some of Reynaers' versatile and sophisticated aluminium systems have been installed. The video highlights the fact that the husband, who has been on the look-out for aluminium doors and windows for his villa, is fascinated by the systems in place at the hotel.

An offline and online marketing campaign was launched and executed around this series, the objective of which was to boost the Reynaers Aluminium brand awareness in the B2C segment.

The video aimed to create a stir in the homes segment of the market, Khalaf comments.

"Another key message we wanted to convey to our stakeholders is that Reynaers Aluminium is a multi-faceted organisation providing the full spectrum of aluminium systems where the two extreme ends of project types are showcased in our promotion. From the state-of-art Four Seasons Hotel to the home of the protagonists in the video Zuhair and Khatoon, Reynaers Aluminium can provide the right fit – whether it is solutions for highly specialised projects or modern homes," he adds.

The campaign has helped Reynaers Aluminium enhance awareness in the Middle East that it provides luxury systems for homes and luxury villas, according to Khalaf.

Some of the more popular

product series for the homes segment include the ES 50 inward and outward opening windows, the CS 77 for thermally insulated doors and windows and the CP 130 sliding doors series. The CF 77 and 68 are the other preferred choices in the folding door series for home owners.

The video series is available on Reynaers Middle East Instagram account [Reynaers\\_me](#).

Reynaers Group enfold its several diverse companies in three business units, namely aluminium architectural solutions (Reynaers Aluminium), steel architectural solutions and building products. Founded in 1965, the Reynaers Group is active in more than 70 countries worldwide with 40 subsidiaries and 2,400 employees.

Reynaers Aluminium specialises in the development and marketing of innovative and sustainable aluminium solutions for windows, doors, curtain-walls, sliding systems, sun screening and conservatories.

Reynaers Middle East is based in Bahrain and caters to the entire GCC region in addition to Lebanon, Egypt, Jordan and Iraq. It has branch offices in the UAE, Egypt and Jordan. ■