

QDC pursues US \$825 m. of Gulf dredging projects

Company identifies around 20 reclamation projects for Qatar, Bahrain, UAE, Kuwait and Iran

THE QATAR Dredging Company (QDC) is negotiating contracts worth around US \$825 million for major reclamation projects in Qatar, Bahrain, UAE, Kuwait and Iran. QDC was registered just eight months ago in Qatar by United Development Company of Qatar, Dredging, Environmental & Marine Engineering from Belgium, and the Government of Qatar.

To date, the company has identified and is actively pursuing around 20 Gulf dredging and reclamation projects, the estimated value of which is around US \$825 million (QAR3 billion), said Abdulrahman Abdullah Abdulghani, QDC chairman.

"QDC is now moving from strength to strength and we are delighted to have a solid base load of work on the table. Our current expansion programme enables us to take on further substantial projects in 2005 and 2006 in Qatar as well as overseas," he pointed out.

One of the company's first

projects was the reclamation part of the New Doha International airport in Qatar. QDC said the dredging works are well under way and on target.

QDC is lead partner in the NDIA reclamation contract joint venture, which includes Dredging International, Great Lakes Dredge & Dock Company and Boskalis Westminster. The NDIA contract is valued at approximately US \$428.5 million (QAR1.559 billion).

The Qatari firm is carrying out over 60% of the works on the NDIA project involving the use of cutting and filling vessels. It began dredging works on 24th January 2005 using its heavy duty, cutter suction dredger (CSD) Al Mahaar, which is registered and based in Qatar.

QDC's other major Qatari venture is the extensive reclamation contract for the offshore real estate development, The Pearl-Qatar. Work on this project began in August 2004. Dredging is now well on target

to deliver over 4 million m³ of reclaimed land and more than 40 kilometers of new coastline.

"QDC is building up an extensive local order book throughout the Gulf, with other important projects in Bahrain and Iran. This experience has proven very valuable to the joint venture, especially in the start-up phase of the NDIA project," Abdulghani said.

QDC is enhancing its fleet of dredging vessels to meet the expected increase in future projects. One new cutter suction dredger that is specifically designed to operate in shallow waters is scheduled to arrive in Doha this month. QDC additionally plans to modify its largest CSD, the Al Mahaar, to enable both deep and shallow water operations. When this is completed,

QDC will own the largest capacity CSD capable of shallow water operations in the world, its chairman claimed.

"These fleet expansions will favourably position QDC to compete in the Gulf. QDC is seriously considering enlarging its fleet by the addition of two to three cutter suction dredgers and two trailer suction hopper dredgers," added the chairman.



One of QDC's major ventures is the reclamation contract for the Pearl - Qatar.

in brief

Kuwait establishes village housing project for the Sri Lankan tsunami victims

The Kuwait Red Crescent Society has signed a memorandum of understanding with the Government of Sri Lanka to establish a village with 600 houses for the tsunami victims. Director of the UNICEF mission in Sri Lanka, Abdulrahman Al Oubaidi, Kuwaiti QDC chairman, is the first country to carry out such a project there. He said that the mission has also signed an agreement to establish a village for fishermen who lost around 100 large-size boats. It will be distributed to them.

Imax in Kuwait theatre deal

Imax Corporation has signed an agreement with Kuwait National Cinema Company to install two Imax MPX theatre systems at multiplexes in Kuwait City. The first, which should open in 2005, will be one of the first multiplex-based Imax theatres in the Middle East; the second is scheduled for completion by 2007. The agreement brings the total number of Imax theatres scheduled to open in the Middle East by 2007 to nine, including new multiplex locations opening in Dubai, UAE and Doha, Qatar. This is the first multiplex-based deal that has announced in recent weeks.