Kuwait construction: the top six contractors in Kuwait's construction industry. (The MEED List)

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Nasser Mohammed al-Kharafi

POSITION President, Mohammed Abdulmohsin al-Kharafi & Sons Company

BIOGRAPHY Nasser Mohammed al-Kharafi is president of the Al-Kharafi Group, which has an annual turnover of more than $4bn and operates in more than 25 countries. Originally established as a trading business, it has since developed into a multinational company with more than 100,000 employees. Successful ventures within Kuwait and the wider GCC region involved the company opening permanent branches in Saudi Arabia in 1965, the UAE in 1968, Yemen in 1975 and Egypt in 1980. The private group’s activities cover construction, manufacturing and commerce, while also holding other investments in leading Kuwaiti financial institutions. Al-Kharafi is estimated to be one of the world’s wealthiest individuals, with personal investments worth $11.5bn. He is also chairman of Egypt Kuwait Holding Company, and sits on the board of National Bank of Kuwait.

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Abdul Rahman al-Marouf

POSITION Vice-chairman, Combined Group Contracting Company

BIOGRAPHY Abdul Rahman al-Marouf is vice-chairman and managing director of Combined Group Contracting Company The private Kuwaiti-based firm specializes in roads, infrastructure, housing and oil works, and has completed about $670m worth of work over the past five years. In 2007, approximately 50 per cent of its work focused on projects in the buildings and oil and gas sectors. It employs just under 3,000 people. Al-Marouf says he is keen to explore opportunities to become involved with the Iraq reconstruction process, including building construction, infrastructure projects and oil field services. In Kuwait, the company is engaged on the Subiya Expressway road project, Jaber al-Ahmad City project, and infrastructure maintenance in Farwanya. It is also involved in international projects in Lebanon, Azerbaijan and Georgia.

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Fouad Alghanim

POSITION Chairman, Alghanim International General Trading & Contracting Company

BIOGRAPHY AS chairman of the Alghanim Group, Fouad Alghanim has been involved in various business sectors in Kuwait and abroad for more than four decades. Established in the 1960s, the general contracting company has undertaken major civil and electro-mechanical projects, which include the development of major housing projects, and the installation and maintenance of major pumping stations. It also acts as regional representative for several international construction firms. Its existing customer base includes the housing, public works, energy and defence ministries, as well as Kuwait Oil Company. Alghanim also holds key positions in various bodies, including director of First International Merchant Bank in Malta, and membership of the World Economic Forum, the Society for the Care of Arab Children and the International Council on Foreign Relations.

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Aliyar Deghani

POSITION General manager of contracts, United Gulf Construction Company

BIOGRAPHY The United Gulf Construction Company (UGCC) was established by Aliyar Deghani in 1975, and he is still involved with the company as general manager of contracts. Based in Kuwait, with clients including most government agencies, UGCC is a multi-disciplinary firm that specializes in quality control in planning, and management of engineering projects. This includes building construction, infrastructure, roads and landscaping and oil sector schemes. The firm suffered during Kuwait’s occupation by Iraq, losing 90 per cent of its resources. It has reacted by diversifying its business model to provide a more integrated service and a bigger range of products. These include its file factory, asphalt plants and concrete batch plants. UGCC has also developed a series of relationships with international companies including Hyundai Engineering & Construction Company of South Korea.

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Brian Johnson

POSITION Chief operating officer, Mushrif Trading & Contracting Company

BIOGRAPHY Brian Johnson joined Mushrif Trading & Contracting Company in June 2007 from his previous position as divisional director for Grinaker of Namibia. Johnson is chief operating officer of Mushrif, which was established in 1968 as a specialist in heavy civil and infrastructure contracting. It became one of the leading contracting companies in Kuwait and has been involved in several important projects in the water, oil and gas, and highways sectors. Clients include the defence and interior ministries, the US Air Force and the US National Guard. The company has offices in Bahrain, UAE, Qatar, Iran and Iraq. Currently, the company has more than KD248m ($910m) worth of work lined up, and last year announced a 100 per cent capital investment increase from KD3m to KD6m as part of its regional expansion plan. It has more than KD168m worth of projects under way.

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Ahmad Faisal al-Thuwainy

POSITION Chairman, Ahmadia Contracting & Trading

BIOGRAPHY Abroad Faisal al-Thuwainy is chairman of the company and has overseen the growth of one of the oldest contracting businesses in the country. The Ahmadia Group was established in 1954 by Abdul Latif al-Thuwainy and engineer Nagib Ibrahim Najjar. Over the years, the company has been responsible for several key projects, including the Bayan Palace and the Emir’s office (Amiri Diwan), Kuwait Financial House, and the Arab Organization and Kuwait Airways headquarters buildings. In 1994, the company was restructured to become a closed shareholding. Today, Ahmadia focuses on commercial towers, residential complexes, infrastructure, civil engineering and airports. It is one of four contractors bidding for the $100m design, build and maintenance contract for the Bayan Conference hall project to be built in Kuwait City.

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