

Ali Hassan Sulaiman



DOB: May 10, 1963

Marital status: Married, has two children

Education:
2013 - Master's degree, London City University, UK

Spoken Languages: Arabic & English

Interests & Hobbies: Motorcycling, Boating

Sector: Property development, Aviation

Ownership: Private

Established in: 2016

CEO, Sandan Development

Captain Ali Sulaiman has an interesting title for the leader of one of Oman's most ambitious property development companies. He is a career pilot with years of experience in the aviation industry, most recently serving as Executive Vice President and Chief Operations Officer at Oman Air. Having joined the nearly three-year old Sandan Development in September 2019 as its CEO Captain Sulaiman's task is to harness his large-scale managerial and leadership experience to pilot several of the country's biggest building projects.

Sandan was founded in 2016 to bring a set of unique new developments to Oman. Designed with international standards in mind, Sandan City is the first integrated city for light industries in Oman. It is the result of a promising vision that aims to utilize sustainable property development to cater for the needs of businesses and consumers and free-hold opportunities in the different stages of development. Sandan City is located in Halban, a vital location between Muscat Governorate and Al Batinah Governorate, the most heavily populated areas in Oman. All going to plan, which it certainly has so far, it will soon become a vital industrial hub.

The planning of Sandan City was a collaborative effort between a pool of skilled people including consultants, business leaders, and trade and industry experts in Oman. The project structure was carefully drawn up to cater for accelerated growth in the light industries sector, while keeping local market requirements in mind. The Sandan Industrial Park is an OMR 37 million project covering 250,000 square feet of land; it will include vehicle exhibitions and workshops, offices, warehouses, and 1,300 other business/retail and 3,100 residential units with a freehold system that allows any investor to own multiple units. The retail and residential units were completed in March 2019, and the company is now handing them over to investor/owners and helping them to lease.

The anchor businesses of the industrial park are car showrooms, car accessories, car repairs and service centres and building material. It will also host first of its kind in Oman an indoor vehicle auction Hall. This new indoor Auction Hall will be completely digital-ready so

it can be managed via the Internet with links to the leading auction houses specialised in buying and selling cars around the world through open auctions and it will be operated by an American company called "Copart" a pioneer in online automotive auctions.

Sandan Development's other major project, now 35 percent complete, is the Myriad Muscat student housing complex. Captain Sulaiman calls it "five star accommodation for university female students," to cater for the shortage of suitable student housing.

A fresh concept in off-campus living in Oman, the OMR 40 million facility is set to offer over 2,600 students the chance to reside in close proximity to Qaboos University with a choice of modern, practical, and affordable single and multi-occupancy rooms. The buildings will take up 11,117 square meters out of a total development area of 14,461 square meters.

In addition to the student rooms, the complex will offer two floors of parking, plus two floors of retail space and recreational facilities; this mall complex includes a mix of restaurants, cafes, shops, theatre, health club, gaming, supermarket, personal services and a lounge area with communal kitchens on every floor. Access to residential levels to all three blocks will have separate entrances from the mall, with a dedicated reception area ensuring secure entry.

Sandan Development, headed by new CEO Ali Sulaiman, has a staff of about 50 people. Focused mainly on the real estate development side, the company is also looking into taking on project management and facilities management as complementary lines of business to the building projects. In addition to the projects underway already, two more major projects in Oman are in the planning stages, and the company is also looking for opportunities internationally in locations Asia and Europe. Between now and 2022, Captain Sulaiman expects the company will be involved in five major projects.

Sandan Development will now be counting mainly on its new CEO's experience from the aviation sector to bring them forward to completion successfully. Captain Sulaiman was heavily involved in the Muscat Airport development project in his role at Oman Air, where he gained a lot of experience in project management. "I actually slept in airport for weeks," he said, which gave him a lot of insight how to actually run a project. The experience taught him that "if you want something to happen, you can make it happen," even under deadline pressure and working with people of different nationalities and bringing them together to get it done.

My message to youth:

Work hard and your dreams will come true.

My message about Oman:

Oman is a very beautiful country. It is very much a tourist country, so come and visit and you will see for yourself.



That "can do" attitude is something Ali Sulaiman thinks is special about Oman. People there are thinking outside the box about the possibilities for development, taking into consideration what Oman needs as a country, and then investing in those projects to help add value to its economic growth. While he admits the market is not as vibrant as it was, he is confident that when things improve in the oil market other aspects of the economy will also improve. Demand for new construction, in the meantime, is driving projects in key sectors of growth including tourism, with the government playing a key role in providing support to developers.

One such project, related not just to tourism but also to transportation, logistics and critical national infrastructure, was Muscat Airport. Captain Sulaiman sites it as one of his proudest accomplishments, working backwards from a strict deadline to complete all of the steps required by that date. Although there was doubt along the way that it could be done, it was with a strong sense of gratification that project delivery was ahead of schedule. Today, he travels almost every weekend, and "when I go through that airport, I feel so proud knowing I had something to do with that huge, beautiful project." The way things are going at Sandan Development, he should be getting that same feeling in a number of locations in Oman and beyond over the next few years.

Affiliations, Awards & Honors

2019 - Best Industrial Project in Oman