

Devaki Gulabsi Khimji



Education: Bachelor's degree, Business Management, India

Spoken Languages: English, Hindi, Gujarati

Interests & Hobbies: Art, Travelling

Sector: Construction

Ownership: Private

Established in: 1976

Managing Director, Al Tasnim Group of Companies

With a strong drive, excellent management skills, and a passion for innovation, Ms. Devaki Khimji is a pioneer in many of her business endeavors. Ms. Khimji started her entrepreneurial journey in India, where she established a series of successful companies in the fitness and technology sectors. She opened gyms and health clubs, founded a school for training fitness professionals (K11 Academy of Fitness Sciences, which currently produces approximately 10,000 graduates every year), as well as started a company that developed health club management software that is now used by 2,500 health clubs around the world. Ms. Khimji also founded the company India Circus, an online retail brand which she later sold.

In 2012, after 15 years of managing businesses in India, Ms. Khimji came to Oman and joined her father's business. Known Today as one of the leading multi-divisional Omani Companies in the Sultanate, the Al Tasnim Group was established over 40 years ago and has experienced tremendous growth over the years. However, as soon as she joined the group, Ms. Khimji realized it needed to undergo a significant number of changes in order to be able to survive in the current market conditions. Under her leadership, the group embarked upon a new path.

Since Ms. Khimji's arrival, the Group has grown from 15,000 to 35,000 employees. After a period of continuous growth, Ms. Khimji believes its now time to consolidate the Group's position and procedures. *"That's our strategy - grow for 5 years and consolidate for 5 years,"* she says.

As she explains, the biggest and most important change, was moving towards "Digitalization". She initiated the transition to ensure all data is recorded in digital form instead of using paper for these records. The dynamic shift in data management system from analogue to digitalization has not only resulted in the smoother workflow, but has also enhanced procedures for data authenticity and helped in developing better strategies because of its analysis reports. Ms. Khimji

knew that there were many such reforms that could be brought across the group and hence, formed a central team called "Business Process Development". The team's primary responsibility is to identify, evaluate and execute special projects to improve processes which would be beneficial in terms of direct savings or efficiency to the organization.

As per Ms. Khimji, the Group has got on board, a consultant that would help in digital transformation. It is one of the upgrades that includes integrating Logistic Management System & Equipment Management System for its Logistics Department. On implementation, it would be a tremendous support to logistics of the projects in terms of tracking and efficiency, as drivers will be reviewed for the safety and accuracy of the journey. Apart from that, Al Tasnim Group recently signed a contract with Omantel, which will provide the Group with an integrated ICT solution to support its business operations.

The Al Tasnim Group umbrella engulfs various divisions. Key divisions include Civil Construction and Mechanical, Electrical and Plumbing (MEP), Cement Products and Oil & Gas. As Ms. Khimji highlights, every new division was started with the purpose of supporting a previously established division, which then expanded on its own, following a "Backward Integration Strategy". One of her favorites is the Building Finishes Division, which supplies and installs the finishing materials such as marble, stone, woodwork, steel, glass and others. *"We're known for our quality,"* she says, explaining that a large part of the country's buildings was *"made pretty"* with the help of this division. In addition to that, the Group is one of the only few companies that manufactures and exports finishing materials to India and Qatar, for specific projects in hand.

When it comes to Oman's development and future opportunities, Ms. Devaki Khimji is very optimistic, mainly due to the excellent location of Oman and the good relationships that the nation has established with the rest of the world. Though the major source of income for Oman is still oil, she believes the right steps are being made towards developing other sectors, such as tourism, energy and mining.

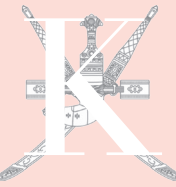
As a matter of fact, she disclosed that Al Tasnim has recently invested in copper mining industry, with the operations beginning very soon. In light of the global trend of transitioning to electric cars, Ms. Khimji estimates that there is going to be high demand for

My advice to youth

Oman has created a new road-map for entrepreneurs in terms of achievement of growth targets. Several start-ups have grown and flourished from learners to role models and have paved a path of entrepreneurial success which can give the youth big chance.

My message about Oman

Along with being a cultural hub, tourism and energy conservation industries have bloomed tremendously. The nation has also begun investing heavily in energy conservation.



copper, a resource which is abundantly available and untapped in Oman, as electric cars use a lot of copper for cables and batteries.

Al Tasnim Group constantly strives to meet and exceed its ICV (In-Country-Value) commitments. Al Tasnim works closely with nearly 50 SMEs, in line with Oman's vision to promote their growth. The group has also gone one step further by establishing a mentorship program for SMEs. Al Tasnim has contributed and stands committed to the Sultanate's growth and economic diversification. A key area of expansion is the massive fabrication and manufacturing facilities in Misfah, (spread over 15,000sqm), making the Group the first in Oman to enter the glass processing industry.

During her career, Ms. Devaki Khimji has succeeded in everything she has wanted to achieve, due to her outstanding vision, business sense, and determination. Her vast experience allows her to quickly spot opportunities and know exactly where to intervene in order to overcome the issues that might arise. One can safely say that under her leadership, Al Tasnim Group remains very much on the right path.

Affiliations, Awards & Honors

Most Influential Women in the Middle East, 2018 - Forbes Best Business Leader Award, 2018 - MENAA

Only Women in the Panel for Strategic Roundtable on Oil & Gas Sector, 2018 - TOGY and Ministry of Oil & Gas

Only women in the Top 40 List of Construction Week Power 100