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Construction begins on Rawabi, first Palestinian planned city

MENAFN Press - 05/01/2010

(MENAFN Press) Construction has commenced on Rawabi, the first Palestinian planned city, following the Palestinian Ministry of Local Government's approval of the city's Masterplan in December. The developer, Bayti Real Estate Investment Company, initiated excavation work at the site after receiving the go-ahead from the Palestinian Authority.

Earlier this week, bulldozers and heavy equipment began working on the primary construction phase of residential areas and the business district, in accordance with the new city's Masterplan.

The presence of engineers, workers and bulldozers on-site prompted excitement and support among the citizens of neighboring villages, who have eagerly anticipated this vital development since the project was announced during the last Palestine Investment Conference in Bethlehem.

Mr. Wael Bawatneh, head of the Ajjoul Local Village Council - an adjacent village which borders Rawabi - stated that this development will create thousands of much-needed new job opportunities for local citizens. Parts of Ajjoul will ultimately be incorporated into the new Rawabi municipality, and current Ajjoul residents look forward to the advantages that such close proximity to Rawabi will provide.

Bayti has tapped a range of local expertise in the hope of catalyzing growth in the Palestinian private sector, awarding several major construction contracts to local Palestinian companies. Among these, Bayti signed a contract with a consortium of general contractors including Shaltaf, Al Fursan Al Thalatha, and Al Mumayaza.

Commenting on the launch, Ghanem Bin Saad Al Saad, CEO of Qatari Diar, the main partner financing the project, reaffirmed his company's commitment to Rawabi's success and reiterated strong confidence in the project's ability to contribute to meaningful growth of the Palestinian economy. Al Saad stated that Rawabi, as a national undertaking, will create thousands of new jobs capitalizing on local expertise, skilled labor, and Palestinian products. As importantly, the project will provide new opportunities for the Palestinian people to own homes at affordable prices.

Bashar Masri, Managing Director of Bayti, acknowledged that the rapid mobilization of the construction phase would not have materialized had it not been for the extensive support of the Qatari partners and the Palestinian Authority's involvement and desire to stimulate the Palestinian economy. He pointed out that Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas, together with Prime Minister Dr. Salam Fayyad, are keen on overcoming the challenges and obstacles that impede forward progress on the project. Masri further added that to his distinct dismay, to date, Rawabi has not yet obtained any of the requested approvals from the Israeli government, although verbal assurances were given that approval will be forthcoming. Masri stressed that despite these challenges, the city of Rawabi will still come to fruition.

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