

SUPPLY CHAIN

Setting industry standards

The Riyadh Metro has had a transformative impact on Al Ashoury Industry, a Saudi company fabricating steel products for Lines 1, 2 and 3

FOR AL Ashoury Industry, which fabricates steel products used on lines 1, 2 and 3 being managed by BACS and ANM consortia, the project has proved a growth catalyst on many levels.

The company's state-of-the-art complex in Riyadh's Second Industrial City offers a vivid demonstration of the impact the Metro has had on the business. Amid the whirl of activity from the fabrication yards, Dr Nabil Al Ashoury, who as chairman has masterminded the company's evolution from humble trader to leading fabricator of steel structures, cable management systems and telecoms towers in Saudi Arabia and beyond, explains what the project means to his city and Kingdom.

"It reflects how civilised we are as a country," he says. "It will connect people. It is amazing to think that six lines are being built in one go. And because of its scale, all of us have learned a lot along the way."



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our total production capacity four-fold'

– Dr Nabil Al Ashoury

Al Ashoury Industry complex, one of the largest, most advanced, integrated steel manufacturing clusters of its type today in Saudi Arabia, was 30 years ago a small steel workshop. What had been a steady growth trajectory over the first two decades supporting national and regional development projects became a steep learning curve almost overnight

with the onset of the Metro.

"This is by far the largest project we have ever taken on," says Dr Al Ashoury, a visionary industrialist who, with his son Ashraf (Director/Partner), and Eng'r. Eid Al Ashoury (CEO) is navigating the company through these exciting times.

"We had to expand our total production capacity four-fold to 1,200 tonnes per month to cater to the sudden surge in demand from the Metro for the steel supports, side rails, fixtures, noise barriers and cable tray systems which are being installed on the three lines," says Dr Al Ashoury.

"For line 3 alone (being managed by ANM), we are supplying and erecting all handrails, guardrails, walkways and cable trays for 26km of viaduct on each side of the track," he adds.

To date, Al Ashoury Industry, through three manufacturing sites in the industrial city, has supplied more than 25,000 tonnes of fabricated steel products to the Metro. More than 500 engineers and technicians have worked around the clock in the factories to make products to the highest international standards, while on-site teams have been busy erecting structures.

That Al Ashoury Industry has been able to so successfully cope with the massive demands of the Metro is a function of the relative flexibility of steel manufacture – the company is able to adapt production seamlessly from telecoms antenna and towers to Metro products – as well as the ability of the management team to identify new business opportunities.

But the chairman admits candidly that the sheer scale of the Metro project was a game changer for his business

"As owners, we thought that our involvement on and commitment to



Al Ashoury Industry has had to dramatically ramp up output to cater to demand for items such as side rails

the Metro project would either take us to the next level, or swamp us. I'm proud to say that the experience and knowhow we have gained since becoming involved has taken us to the next level. And this will shape our future vision," he says.

Sharply ramping up production capacity required a leap of faith and significant new investment in machinery and manpower. Comprehensive training regimes had to be implemented for new and existing personnel, and the company's entire working processes have had to be streamlined.

"We have been transformed from a medium-sized business to a large organisation. That has an impact on everything, but more than anything it now gives us the confidence to work at higher levels in future," he explains.

A byword for quality, customer service and reliability, Al Ashoury Industry inevitably enjoys excellent ties with its Metro clients.

"The consortia know us and trust us," says Dr Al Ashoury, who adds that as the company's Metro-related production runs scale down over the next few months,



attention will turn to future opportunities.

"We are now a reference point for upcoming metro projects in Mecca and Jeddah. We are also considering setting up our own contracting division for steel structure installation, as that is what most big clients that we supply ask for," the chairman says.

Al Ashoury Industry has certainly left

its mark on the city of Riyadh, and the steel supports, side rails, fixtures, noise barriers, cable tray systems and sidewalks will for the foreseeable future lend both practical and aesthetic appeal to those that use the Metro.

The next chapter of this company's remarkable growth story will then be written.



What was once a small steel workshop is now a major manufacturing cluster in Riyadh