

WORLD NEWS



PANAMA New locks on the expanded Panama Canal will be ready for use by June this year, according to Jorge L. Quijano, CEO and administrator of the project.

At the opening ceremony of the Scale Model Manoeuvring Training Facility in March, construction of the waterway was said to be 97% complete, with the inauguration date now set for June 26.

The final phase of construction is now underway, with the final plug separating the upper chamber of the Agua Clara Locks and Gatun Lake now being removed by the Panama Canal Dredging Division.

Once fully removed, the Atlantic and Pacific oceans will meet via the canal's new lane – completing one of the world's largest infrastructure projects since the canal's original construction.

The canal will reopen with twice its original capacity.

JAPAN

Coal-power stations

As many as 43 coal-burning power stations are expected to be built in Japan over the next 12 years, after the Environment Ministry gave the green light to projects in February this year.

Japan currently has a total of 90 coal-fired units with a total capacity of 40.5 GW. Another 50 added by 2028 could represent a total capacity of 61 GW.

Coal is a cheaper alternative to generate electricity, and new sources of power are essential following the closing of nuclear power stations in 2011, after the tsunami.

Before these power stations closed, nuclear energy supplied a third of the market.

According to Global Construction Review, Japan is planning for a scenario where demand for energy rises by 22% to 1.1 trillion kWh by 2030, despite its declining economy.

The country's ten regional utilities lost their monopoly over electricity supply on 1 April this year, and 266 companies are now licensed to supply the domestic market, including telecom firms, trading conglomerates and travel agencies.

SAUDI ARABIA

Budget reduction

Faithful+Gould has announced that Saudi Arabia will spend around US\$ 29.9 billion on construction projects in 2016, reflecting a 20% decrease on last year's budget.

The integrated project and programme management consultancy company ran a seminar alongside Saudi Council of Engineers at the council's offices in Jeddah, which was designed to educate project managers and industry professionals on the importance of early engagement of project and programme management.

The event was part of a series of seminars that have become increasingly important, following the falling oil prices and the effects this has had on the Kingdom's expenditure.

Following the Kingdom's revised budget of US\$ 229 billion for 2016, a number of construction projects have either been scaled down, or put on hold indefinitely.

It is expected that spending will be similar in 2017, while 2018 will see a return to growth.

Faithful+Gould said that offering such seminars equips project managers with the right tools.

EGYPT

Cairo Metro contract

Vinci Construction Grands Projects and Bouygues Construction have secured a new joint-venture contract to work on the Cairo metro.

The € 1.1 billion (US\$ 1.24 billion) 67-month project includes the construction of 17.7 km of line, along with 15 new stations.

The project, known as Phase 3 of Line 3, was awarded by the National Authority for Tunnels, and continues a working partnership with Vinci and Bouygues that extends back to 1981.

Once completed, the Cairo metro's length will increase to approximately 100 km of line, serving around 5 million passengers a day in North Africa's largest city.

According to the Vinci press release, the new project will generate up to 5,000 jobs, as well as benefiting a large number of French small-medium enterprise companies (SMEs).

It is reported, for example, that the previous phase of construction – also carried out by Vinci and Bouygues – called on more than 600 French SMEs as suppliers and subcontractors.

EVENTS DIARY

2016

Hillhead

June 28 – 30, 2016
Buxton, UK
www.hillhead.com

Bauma China

November 22 – 25
Shanghai, China
www.bauma-china.com

Bauma ConExpo India

Dec 12-15, 2016
Delhi, India
www.bcindia.com

2017

Samoter

February 22 – 25, 2017
Verona, Italy
www.samoter.it

ConExpo-Con/Agg

March 7 – 11, 2017
Las Vegas, US
www.conexpoconagg.com

SMOPYC

April 4 – 7, 2017
Zaragoza, Spain
www.smopyc.es

APEX

(International Access Equipment Exhibition)

May 2-4, 2017
Amsterdam, The Netherlands
www.apexshow.com

International Rental Exhibition

(IRE)

May 2-4, 2017
Amsterdam, The Netherlands
www.IREshow.com

Plantworx 2017

June 6-8, 2017
Bruntingthorpe, UK
www.plantworx.co.uk

BICES 2017

Sept 2017 (Dates TBC)
Beijing, China
www.e-bices.org