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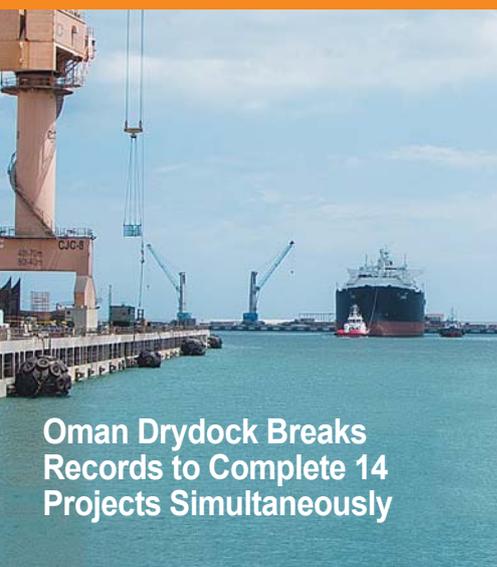


**Undersecretary of Tourism Ministry in an exclusive interview :**

**OMR 19 billion total investment required to implement Strategy of Oman Tourism**



**Correspondents admire Duqm**



**Oman Drydock Breaks Records to Complete 14 Projects Simultaneously**



**Duqm Refinery, a new investment hub with international standards**



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## **A WORLD CLASS OIL REFINERY**

### **STRATEGICALLY LOCATED IN DUQM**

Duqm Refinery and Petrochemical Industries Company L.L.C is a Joint Venture (JV) between Oman Oil Company (OOC) and Kuwait Petroleum International (KPI). The Refinery is based in Al Duqm which is located in the South East region, which is the Al Wusta Governorate of the Sultanate of Oman. This gives the project a strategic maritime location and a competitive advantage being in the path of international shipping lines in the Indian Ocean and the Arabian Sea thus easing the process of transport in and out of the region.

At Duqm Refinery we aim to be a world-class oil refinery, using proven technology, outputting clean, high-quality products, in a manner consistent with global standards for safety whilst always striving to achieve the highest operational standards. The state of the art refinery has been designed to process 230,000 barrels of various types of blends and will be producing Diesel, Jet fuel, Naphtha, LPG, Sulfur and Pet coke as its primary products.

Duqm Refinery's 900 hectares site is levelled and ready. Final technical submissions from bidders for EPC packages one and two comprise of the process units package and the utilities and off sites package respectively. EPC package 3 (offsite facilities) consists of the product storage and export terminal in Duqm, crude storage tanks in Ras Markaz, and the 80 KM crude pipeline from Ras Markaz to the refinery complex. The projects acts to reimburse the local economy of the area in particular while contributing heavily to the national GDP as a whole. This venture is being implemented meeting international standards making Duqm Refinery a major player in the field. It will also add intangible value to Duqm as a destination while introducing new industries to the area.



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# The Making of Growth in Duqm

The year 2017 carried many positive news on business growth in the Special Economic Zone at Duqm. On 10 April 2017, the joint venture agreement for Al Duqm Refinery and the Petrochemical Industries Complex was signed between Oman Oil Company and Kuwait Petroleum International. Al Duqm Refinery is seen as one of the main projects that lead growth in the special economic zone and paves the way for the establishment of a number of other petrochemical industrial projects.

The signing of this agreement came while work was starting at the project to deliver natural gas to Duqm to supply the refinery and petrochemical industries in Duqm with natural gas. Work is also ongoing in Al Duqm port to complete the second and third phases of port project, involving the commercial dock. The completion of the second and third phases of the project will bring the port into the stage of commercial operations. Work is also underway at the seventh phase for the liquid and bulk materials dock, and the fourth phase, which is the government dock, considered as the first of its kind in Omani ports.

The Special Economic Zone at Duqm is also witnessing the construction of the passengers terminal at Duqm Airport, the completion of marine works for the fishing port, the construction of a number of main and auxiliary roads and the construction of surface water drainage canals, protection dams and other projects in actualization of the commitment of the government of the Sultanate of Oman to complete essential infrastructure projects for the special economic zone before the end of the year 2020 AD.

These remarkable activities and achievements take place as the domestic and international private sector make significant efforts to invest in the Special Economic Zone at Duqm. In February, the Renaissance Village Duqm started soft operations. The village has a capacity of 16,000 residents and offers many facilities and services for the population. In the industrial sector, the Sebacic Acid Refinery is marking strong progress in the completion of construction works, while Wan Fang Oman exerts praiseworthy efforts to create job opportunities for workforce at Duqm in performance of its contractual obligations. The company started a training program in China to train 39 young Omanis to prepare them for work at the Chinese Omani Industrial City at Duqm. The company plans to send more batches of young Omanis for training in China in the future.

These achievements seen in the Special Economic Zone at Duqm reflect the commendable efforts to realize the vision of Sultanate of Oman for this zone to become one of the circles of economic diversification in Oman. We are all looking forward to more joint ventures agreements between Omani companies and international and worldwide renowned companies to carry out qualitative projects that achieve the main objectives sought from the construction of the Special Economic Zone at Duqm.



Yahya Bin Said Al Jabri  
General Supervisor



**These achievements seen in the Special Economic Zone at Duqm reflect the commendable efforts to realize the vision of Sultanate of Oman for this zone to become one of the circles of economic diversification in Oman**

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Special Economic Zone Authority

Sultanate of Oman

سلطنة عُمان



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Issuing municipal license and construction licenses

Commercial, industrial, tourism and environmental registration

Preparing technical reports and issuing approvals



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# Duqm Refinery, a new investment hub with international standards

- The Duqm Refinery will be established on a total area of 900 hectares
- The capacity to process 230,000 barrels of crude oil per day
- Refining 65% of Kuwaiti oil and 35% of Omani oil
- Share 10% contracts for local added value
- 2020 the date of operation
- The end of 2017 Laying the foundation stone

# The Sultanate and Kuwait are investing \$ 7 billion to establish the Duqm Refinery



Bakheet al-Rashidi (Right) and Hilal Al- Kharousi during the signing of agreement

Signing of the partnership agreements for the development of Duqm Refinery and Petrochemical Industries Complex

Dr. Mohammed Al-Ramahi: The agreements represent the distinguished bilateral relations between the Sultanate and Kuwait

## Muscat - :

Oman Oil Company (OOC), the Sultanate's investment arm in the energy and energy related sectors, and Kuwait Petroleum International Ltd (KPI), the international subsidiary of Kuwait Petroleum Corporation (KPC), today signed agreements related to their partnership for the development of Duqm Refinery and Petrochemical Complex (DRPC). The project is one of the most important industrial projects at Duqm Special Economic Zone.

The Agreement was signed on behalf of OOC by Hilal Al- Kharousi, Executive Managing Director and Bakheet Shabib al-Rashidi, CEO of KPI at Al Bustan Palace Hotel, Muscat; with the presence of ministers, undersecretaries and senior officials from both sides.

Commenting on this occasion, Dr. Mohammed bin Hamad al- Rumhi, Minister of Oil and Gas, Chairman of OOC, stated: "The Signing of this agreement reflects the distinguished ties between the Sultanate and Kuwait; and aims to open new horizons for wider economic cooperation to serve the common interests between the two brotherly countries".

He added, "This strategic partnership is an important step towards de-

veloping one of the most promising projects in the energy sector at Duqm Special Economic Zone. We hope that Duqm Refinery will act as an essential catalyst for different industrial sectors development as well as contributing to the economic and social development in the Sultanate in general and the Governorate of Al Wusta in particular".

Eng. Issam al-Zedjali, CEO of OOC commented on this agreement saying: "We are pleased with this strategic partnership with our Kuwaiti partners to progress this vital investment project which serves the common interests and provides promising business opportunities for both sides. We are also keen to translate our aspirations to develop this project along with other investment projects in the region that will contribute to the national economy. In this occasion, I would also like to hail the continuous efforts made by SEZAD towards the development of infrastructure facilities and to attract local and international companies to invest in Duqm".

He pointed out that contracts for establishing the refinery will be awarded the next two months and the foundation stone of the refinery will be laid at the end of 2017.

He added that the operational stage



From the Press conference

of Duqm Refinery would commence before the end of 2020 with production capacity estimated by 230,000 barrel a day; most of the production will be exported.

He further said that the estimated cost of the refinery ranges

Between USD 6 to 7 billion. He pointed out that the project will provide 700 to 800 direct and indirect jobs.

The work related to leveling the site of the refinery, which stretches over 900 hectares, has been completed, as well as laying the foundations for the construction of the refinery as per schedule. Once operational, the refining capacity will reach 230,000 barrels per day and will produce a number of key refinery products: diesel, jet fuel, naphtha and liquefied petroleum gas.

As for environmental precautions, Eng. Essam Al-Zadjali said that cooperation and communication with the Economic Zone Authority is ongoing to verify the environmental permits for the project.

The petrochemical complex is currently in the study stage as it entirely depends on the products to be produced and exported from the refinery. He pointed that the technical and fi-

ancial studies and preliminary studies of the petrochemical complex are ready and under review.

He added that the company is keen to research and cooperate with its strategic partners to translate its aspirations to develop the refinery project along with other investment projects in the region, which will contribute to the national economy. He praised the efforts of the Economic Zone Authority to develop infrastructure and provide incentives to attract investments to the region.

Nizar al-Adsani, Deputy Chairman and CEO of Kuwait Petroleum Corporation (KPC) said: "We hope that the refinery project will be the catalyst and ignition towards the start of similar ventures in the energy sector between GCC countries, where this mega project will ultimately lead towards transforming the Duqm area into one of the most important hubs for energy related industries regionally as well as internationally".

Bakheet al-Rashidi, CEO of KPI said that this partnership with OOC to develop the Duqm Refinery and Petrochemical Complex is for the strategic location of the economic zone of Duqm and

*The Technical and financial studies for petrochemical complex are ready*

*Essam Al-Zadjali: foundation stone for the refinery will be laid before the end of this year and operation in 2020.*





*The Refinery is welcomed by global finance houses*



*Nizar al-Adasani: The Refinery turns Duqm into an economic hub for oil investment at the regional and global levels*



*Bakhit Al-Rashidi: Al Duqm Refinery Project is designed to deal with a wide range of heavy oils*



towards the Arabian Sea and the Indian ocean which can attract European and Asian markets, the two companies seek to finance 60 - 65% of the total project cost of about US \$ 7 billion.

Al-Rashidi explained that the Duqm Refinery project is currently designed to deal with wide range of heavy oils and has the capacity to refine 65 percent of Kuwaiti oil and 35 percent of Omani oil. It also has the ability to refine any kind of oil found in the international market. It will also include the latest products in terms of quality and competitiveness in the European and Asian markets.

Bakheet al-Rashidi, CEO of KPI highlighted the importance of the

agreement, saying: "The Duqm Refinery project would help turn the Omani area into a world hub for energy industries. It will be managed by two sides; KPI which has ample international experience in mega refinery and petrochemical projects in Europe and Asia, and OOC which has rich experience in the oil related industries".

Ghanim al-Otaibi, KPI's Vice President said that this partnership will strengthen ties between Kuwait and Oman. He added that it will accelerate efforts to enhance the multilateral trade and economic cooperation between the two countries, in addition to paving the road for realizing the development strategies of both sides.



*With private sector investments*

# Education Board Approves the Establishment of a College Serving Economic Activities in Duqm



Muscat -  :

The Board of Education, chaired by H.E. Khalid bin Hilal bin Saud Al Busaidi, Minister of the Diwan of Royal Court, Head of the Board, approved the request of the Special Economic Zone Authority in Duqm (SEZAD) on the establishment of a college concerned with providing programs and disciplines that serve the economic activities in SEZD. The Board took this decision at its first meeting in 2017. The investments in the proposed college would be from the private sector.

The approval of the Board of Education paves the way for SEZAD to market the college among private sector companies and enterprises wishing to establish a college concerned with technical and professional disciplines related to economic and free zones and similar disciplines needed by the labor market in Duqm in particular and the Sultanate in general.

Moreover, this approval is an opportunity for the private sector to submit its visions on the establishment of the proposed college to SEZAD. This college would be the first higher

education facility in Al-Wusta Governorate, which includes the Wilayats of Haima, Mahout, Al-Jazir and Duqm, and has a population of 45,000, including 24,000 Omanis and 21,000 expatriates.

The establishment of the college is part of SEZAD direction to create an integrated system of educational facilities and services that keep pace with the aspirations of the population, accommodate the children of workers in SEZD, and encourage citizens and expatriates to stay and work there.

In 2016, SEZAD signed a usufruct agreement with Al-Taman Holding Company for the construction of an international school that targets Omanis and expatriates am due to start in September 2018. These steps are in line with SEZAD vision to make Duqm City able to meet the aspirations and needs of its population and become a suitable place to live, stay and work.

The aim of the Board of Education, established in 2012 by Royal Decree No. (48/2012), is to promote education in its different forms, stages and outputs and ensure its quality in line with the State policy, development plans and the needs of the labor market.

  
**First higher  
education  
facility in  
Al-Wusta  
Governorate**  


*Undersecretary of Tourism Ministry in an  
exclusive interview for  :*

# OMR 19 billion total investment required to implement Strategy of Oman Tourism

**Interview by: Mohammed bin Ahmad Al-Shezawi**

H.E. Maitha bint Saif Al-Mahrouqi, Undersecretary of the Ministry of Tourism, confirmed that Oman's Tourism Strategy, implemented from early 2016, focuses that the Sultanate would be one of the most important tourist destinations visited by tourists for holidays, exploration, and meetings. It also aims to attract 11 million international and domestic tourists at the very least and raise the sector's contribution to GDP to about 6%.

In an exclusive interview for Duqm Economist, she indicated that the Strategy, which extends until 2040, identified nine tourist models in which the Sultanate can compete, including relaxing vacations, tourism and culture, nature and adventure, special interests, short vacations, festivals, meetings, events, and others.

**Strategy  
aims to  
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million  
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and pro-  
vide rich  
tourist ex-  
periences  
hued with  
Omani au-  
thenticity**

#### **Oman's Tourism Strategy**

» ***Last year, the Ministry of Tourism began implementing Oman's Tourism Strategy. What are the main targets on which the strategy focuses?***

The Strategy summarized the Omani tourism message in key objectives, including contributing to diversification the economy and creating jobs by offering rich tourist experiences of Omani nature. The first goal is for the Sultanate to become the most important tourist destination visited by tourists for holiday, exploration, and meetings during the coming twenty-five years up to 2040. The second is to attract 11 million international and domestic tourists at the very least and raise the sector's contribution to GDP to

about 6% according to the model chosen, which supposes a rate of 3.5% per year on average. The guidelines for tourism development in the Sultanate include improving life quality of Omani citizens while asserting tangible benefits to local authorities at the same time. They also include strengthening the culture, heritage and traditions of the Sultanate, as well as conserving natural resources and ensuring their sustainability. Moreover, the Strategy addressed 15 key tourism themes, namely: planning and development, investment and entrepreneurship, involvement of local communities, sustainability of natural and cultural environment, experiences, operation and quality, marketing planning and management, marketing operations, talent attraction and retention, human

Al-Mahrouqi revealed that the total investments required for the implementation of Oman's Tourism Strategy are about OMR 19 billion of which private sector contributes 88% and public sector 12%, anticipating that the implementation of the Strategy would provide more than 500 thousand jobs.

She noted a number of integrated tourism complexes implemented in cooperation with the private sector to activate tourism movement to the Sultanate and attract tourism investment projects. She pointed out at the same time that the Ministry had launched the Oman Convention Bureau to promote this sector, develop and improve tourism products and services, and provide the maximum facilities for local establishments required by the tourism sector in terms of incentives and conferences. Al-Mahrouqi referred to Oman Convention and Exhibition Center and considered it one of the main pillars in the program to strengthen conference and business event industry in the Sultanate as one of the leading integrated excellent destinations in the region.



capital development, leadership in competitiveness, legal and regulatory framework, governance, and management.

#### Nine tourist models

» **What are the types of tourism on which the Strategy focuses and the job opportunities it can provide?**

The Strategy identified nine tourist models in which the Sultanate can compete because of the assessment of the attractiveness of all kinds of tourism and Oman's competitiveness, namely: relaxing vacations, tourism and culture, nature and adventure, special interests, short vacations, festivals, meetings, events,

one-day visitors, and visiting friends and relatives. We expected to increase the number of jobs associated with the sector up to 2040 to more than 500 thousand jobs, and the expected volume of investments during the period (2016 to 2040) to reach about 19 billion Omani Rials of which 12% investment from the public sector.

#### Ideas enriching the strategy

» **What is your assessment of community participation and the participation of government agencies and the private sector to identify strategic goals and aspirations?**

The ideas, interests and specialized

**Raising the contribution of the tourism sector in the GDP to 6% by 2040**



Al Mouj Project

**We focus on making the Sultanate the most important tourist destination for vacation, exploration and meetings**

**We expect the increase in the number of jobs associated with the sector to more than 500 thousand**

knowledge and expertise of Omani stakeholders in the tourism sector were an important and extremely valuable tool in the Oman's Tourism Strategy. In this regard, more than seven hundred people from the public and private sectors participated resulting in the expansion of the analysis of the external and internal factors, and thus identifying the key issues that require efficient management. The following took place:

- The Ministry provided the consultant with all the studies and reports it carried out.
- The Ministry conducted a series of workshops in 10 governorates. These included public and private sectors. The Ministry also conducted interviews with 500 people and visited prominent tourism sites and projects in the governorates visited over three weeks.
- The Ministry held 32 personal interviews with different figures in the State and the public and private sectors, involving 61 people.
- The Ministry held nine interviews with related sectors, such as tourism education and training, small and medium enterprises, environment, heritage, transport, hotels, representatives of trip organizing offices, aviation, and other related sectors. The total participants in these interviews reached 92 people.
- The Ministry distributed questionnaires to 288 people with the primary purpose of data collection. The Ministry prepared a number

of questionnaires according to the target segments and topic discussed.

- The Ministry implemented a number of plenary sessions and specialized workshops involving more than 100 participants from various quarters.
- The Ministry held a series of brainstorming meetings involving more than 100 participants from the internal teams in the Ministry of Tourism.
- The Ministry implemented workshops and discussion panels with more than 100 experts from various quarters.
- Fifteen people participated in workshops held for the adoption of the strategic path.
- The Ministry implemented eight specialized training courses attended by more than 200 people from various quarters.
- The Ministry spent more than 5,000 hours to review the consultant's reports and follow the path of implementation of the project by the management team of the Oman's Tourism Strategy Study.

#### Most prominent tourism investments

» **Tourism sector is one of the five main sectors of focus for the Sultanate in the Ninth Five-Year Plan (2016 - 2020) within its efforts to achieve economic diversification. What are the main tourism projects**



Oman Convention and Exhibition Center

**currently implemented and which will contribute to achieving this goal?**

The total investments required for the implementation of Oman's Tourism Strategy (2016 - 2040) are about 18 billion and 936 million Rials of which 88% by the private sector.

Many integrated tourism complexes are underway in cooperation with the private sector, which aim to promote tourism movement to the Sultanate and attract private tourist investments, notably the following:

- Salalah Beach project located in the area extending from Khor Soli in Salalah to Khor Taqa. It consists of three hotels containing 700 rooms, 1,000 residential units, marina, golf course, and 186 apartments. The implementation of a number of residential units for the first phase completed and Al-Juwairah Hotel was opened with a capacity of 65 rooms and Rotana Hotel of 400 rooms. The implementation of the marina finished along with the implementation of Fanar Hotel of 302 rooms.

- Saraya Bandar Jissah project located in Jissah area in Muscat. It consists of two hotels with a total capacity of 326 rooms, residential units, and recreational facilities. Settlement of the site finished and infrastructure and construction of some components of the project started.

- Wave project implemented on the coastal waterfront extending between Azaibah and Seeb. It consists of four hotels, residential units, golf course with 18 holes, recreational facilities, marina, and mall. The implementation of a number of residential units finished. The Walk Mall also opened and the remaining construction work is underway.

- Jebel Sifah project in Muscat consisting of four hotels with 500 rooms, 8,000 residential units, marina that can accommodate up to 200 boats, a golf course and a number of apartment hotel. Safeway Hotel also opened. A marina and a number of residential units finished.

- Ras Al-Hadd project located in Ras Al-Hadd, Wilayat of Sur. The project consists of hotels with a total capacity of 250 rooms, residential units, shops and restaurants.

- Omagine tourism project located in Seeb, Muscat Governorate. It consists of two hotels, residential units, marina, shops, restaurants and recreational facilities (7 Pearls).

**Premium-class strategy**

»» **Oman is famous for its picturesque nature and tremendous ability to attract tourists, but the number of tourists coming to Oman - in the view of many ob-**

**Consolidating the culture, heritage, and traditions of the Sultanate, conserving natural resources and ensuring sustainability**

**Adopting "premium-class strategy" approach to increase the per capita share of tourism revenues**



Imagine project

Integrated Tourism Complexes projects aim at attracting investment and promoting tourism movement to the Sultanate

Strategy deals with 15 central theme and focuses on investment, entrepreneurship and involvement of local communities

**servers - does not match this with the capabilities and capacities of the tourism sector. Did you discuss the challenges in this area? What are the plans in place to address them?**

Oman's Tourism Strategy adopts "premium-class strategy" approach. It addresses the market by focusing on a particular category of tourists. This Strategy, as opposed to strategic targeting large numbers of tourists, targets less number of tourists but of the class that can increase average per capita revenues from tourism. In addition, the premium-class strategy produces more positive social and environmental effects than other strategies.

#### Activating exhibitions and conferences tourism

»» **What are the plans of the Ministry of Tourism to revitalize the exhibitions and conferences tourism? Do you have an interest in other tourism types, such as therapeutic and adventure tourism, for example?**

Launching Oman Convention Bureau at the Ministry of Tourism is an important step through which Oman aims to develop and improve tourism products and services and provide greater facilities required by the incentive and conference tourism sector for local estab-

lishments. It also aims to strengthen the efforts exerted to place Sultanate at the front of the destinations attracting international events and maintain its position as a responsible and sustainable tourist destination in the first place. The Bureau will work on the development of this sector, particularly in the domestic regulatory actions, and in foreign promotional channels with the concerned and relevant organizations. It will serve all institutions and enterprises in the tourism sector in the Sultanate with the aim of unifying the message and integration of efforts in this regard and to highlight the Sultanate as a unique tourist experiment rich in cultural and trendy constituents at the same time. It will spare no effort to create a real effective partnership with relevant international institutions to host events in the Sultanate.

It is worth mentioning that Oman Convention and Exhibition Center is one of the main topics in the program to strengthen conferences and events industry in Oman as one of the most prominent world-class integrated destinations in the region. It will include a huge amphitheater with a grandstand that accommodate 3,200 seats, another one with 450 seats, 13 meeting rooms and VIP suites, offices for the organizers, and major/ minor ballrooms.

**Misbah Qutb**  
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## Shells and objectives

An Egyptian businessperson met an Omani ministry official on the plane flying to Duqm. Because the former was seeking to establish an industrial project in SEZD, it was natural to take advantage of the occasion to find out as much information as possible about SEZD. These included the incentives, opportunities, getting land, licenses, energy, and inputs, service prices, and the nature of the infrastructure, etc. However, the surprise was that the businessperson received only a single sentence as an answer that was enough to confirm his belief that he had chosen the appropriate zone or probably best in the Arab World to establish his project(s). What was that magical sentence that had all this effect during that short trip?

The only answer of the Omani official was “look first at SEZAD website and if they do not find an answer to any question then come back to me.” Indeed, after he visited the website and read later Duqm Economist regularly, the Egyptian investor did not need to pose a single question.

From this real snapshot, I would like refer to the issues that drew my attention strongly since I started to follow up this Arab Omani project, which we can call “pearl of Arabs to the Arabian Sea.”

The first issue is the strict adherence to environmental conditions. I do not think that this level of commendable strictness in preserving the environment that we see in Duqm does not exist in any other location in the Middle East and perhaps beyond. Therefore, preserving the vital land, marine, and desert space and maintaining all its natural and heritage components through intelligent control, monitoring and permanent follow-up would create a huge competitive advantage of the site. Another issue that attracted me was the first signal launched in Duqm, namely the establishment of refined hotels to receive those wishing to preview the site before achievements started to appear on the ground. The investors’ injection of tens of millions of dollars to establish those hotels in the desert before they saw the light of any project was evidence of full confidence in the future of the location and the integrity of its studies and plans. This signal also proved the prudence of those in charge of SEZD in providing the investors wishing to inspect the location with suitable accommodation during their inspection trips. This was one of the biggest attractions at the beginning. Numerous experiences indicate that most people, who visited SEZD while it was still flat ground for the most part, liked the scene, clean air, quiet charm and the genius of the location. They spent more days than scheduled just for recreation.

I also note that the adherence to the announced timetable to set up projects, roads, water supply, electricity,

gas, and establishment of specialized ports, facilities and services is one of the admirable features within a context that often lacks commitment let alone awareness of the importance of the time per se. The funny thing is that the visitors to SEZD have themselves become a live record for the progress that takes place therein. After each visit, they recounted their experience and adherence to the deadlines promised. The strangest thing I heard in this regard is that SEZAD bears the result of any lack of judgment by any of its departments and does transfer this burden to the investor even if the rules allow it. This means that SEZAD has confidence in its employees and their seriousness and ability, the presence of an internal review mechanism and profound keenness to gain much more than the confidence of investors, namely their surprise, admiration and respect.

The advantages of SEZAD and SEZD are numerous. These include the declaration of the usufruct prices with the utmost clarity, completion of proceedings through one building without any need to go anywhere else, whether in Duqm itself or in Muscat, and complete equality between the Omani and foreign investor, Arab or non-Arab. There is also full equality between large and small investments, opening the door wide for everyone to work without any bias to the large size, and even restricting some large projects in the case a small or medium project could achieve the target and increase employment. Add to this integration and harmony in all the acts or strategies. Although much of what is happening in Duqm is part of the biggest or broadest both in the Middle East and North Africa, or beyond, the sober tone in talking about SEZD, its vision, mission and the role it shall play for the Omani economy proves that those in charge are the offspring of the age-old wisdom of Oman.

Finally, we should note the way of managing large contracts with foreign partners, whether to set up large-scale projects or managing existing or future projects. It highlights the amount of skill in attracting the best foreign partners, diversifying partnerships, achieving the highest benefits for Omani economy as well as ongoing concern for the verification of sustainability of projects or partnerships. This combines with an essential keenness on the principle of sustainability in all achievements on the ground in SEZD. Development is a generation project. Although the modern world is full of all forms of uncertainty and complicated future scenarios probably in every economic activity, care, deliberateness, learning, reviewing, transparency, understating the current and future effects on any decision and accepting a calculated amount of risk with vigilance and open mind reaffirm the prosperity awaiting SEZD, God Willing.

# SEZAD Signs USD 265 Million Finance Agreement for Duqm Port

Completion of infrastructure projects associated with the port by 2020

USD 265 million funding

Repayment over 25 years, including 5 years of grace

Beijing -  :

Yahya bin Said al-Jabri, Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Special Economic Zone Authority in Duqm (SEZAD) signed an agreement with the China-based Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) to finance the second package of Duqm Port. The package is related to implementing the commercial terminal inside the port. The agreement was signed by Dr. D. J. Pandian, AIIB Vice President and CEO for Investment.

Signing this agreement comes within the SEZAD commitment to complete all infrastructure projects related to Duqm Port by 2020 and achieve SEZAD's vision towards enhancing the role of the Special Economic Zone of Duqm (SEZD) and attract more investments at the various industrial, business and tourism sectors.

USD 265 million funding

As per the agreement, SEZAD will receive USD 265 million loan, which will be repaid on installments up to 25 years including five-year grace period. The finance has been availed at a competitive

price and low finance fees compared to other financing agencies. The Sultanate is one of the leading countries that contributed to the China-based AIIB.

Scores of infrastructure, industry, business, tourism, logistic and real estate projects are currently underway at SEZD.

SEZAD signed three key agreements last year to complete the remainder works at Duqm Port as part of its plan to prepare the Port for commercial operations. These agreements are related to the 2nd, 3rd and 4th packages of the Port at a total accumulated cost of RO 239.9 million.

## Construction of four terminals on the commercial pier

The second package to Duqm Port is the most important operational facilities for commercial pier. Upon completion, it will allow the commercial operation of the port. This package includes the establishment of four terminals on the commercial pier, including the two for containers of about 1,600 meters long to handle about 3.5 million TEUs annually. There will be a terminal for bulk materials



Yahya Al Jabri and Dr. D. J. Pandian exchanging agreement documents



During the signing of the agreement

with a capacity of about 5 million metric tons per year and multi-use terminal with a capacity of approximately 800 thousand metric tons per year. This phase will also include the construction of iron rails for cranes, paving container storage yards paving, buildings, electrical and mechanical workshops, and many other facilities.

#### Several projects at the port

This project is one of the components of the Duqm Port packages currently underway along with the fourth package on the implementation of the infrastructure of government pier project and the third package on the construction of the commercial ter-

minal for commercial wharf. The infrastructure works of Duqm Port also include the projects of the seventh package associated with the construction of liquid and bulk materials pier, which is one of the most important projects that enhance the value added of the projects of oil and petrochemical industries.

Duqm Port has advanced infrastructure. The total length of wave breakers is about 8.7 km while the harbor basin depth is 18 meters and the entrance channel 19 meters, which qualifies it for the reception and handling of giant container ships. The Port has sufficient spaces for future expansions that qualifies it to create more than one oil refinery and many heavy and petrochemical projects.



Sophisticated infrastructure of Duqm Port

# SEZAD Signs

# 4

# Agreements at OMR 84.7 million

Construction of dams, drainage channels and double and single roads with lighting

Connecting Duqm Refinery, power station and Sebacic Company with the main road

Construction of a service road in the tourist area and bus stop



Muscat - 

H.E. Yahya bin Said bin Abdullah Al-Jabri, Chair of Board of Directors of Special Economic Zone Authority in Duqm (SEZAD) signed in 9 February 2017 four agreements to implement a number of infrastructure projects in SEZD at a cost of about OMR 84,700,000.

The signing of these agreements was part of SEZAD efforts to complete SEZD infrastructure projects within the Ninth Five-Year Plan and development until 2020 and make Duqm a city that attracts business activities and investments and a favorite destination for work and residence.

The signing of these agreements is also part of SEZAD plans to set up a system to drain surface water and provide the appropriate protection for the projects currently implemented in SEZD. These include the construction of protection dams and major and secondary drainage channels with capacities sufficient to drain wadi waters through collecting rainwater and discharging it in the sea in a safe manner and based on appropriate amounts of rain expected in SEZD.

#### Water Drainage Channels Project

The first agreement signed with the SERKA with Rajab & Aidi Earthmoving Co. Joint Venture stipulates the construc-

tion of two drainage channels. The first is Wadi Jarf Channel Valley about 12 kilometers long and 340-650 meters wide at the final exit at the sea. The second channel is Wadi Sai Channel of 10 kilometers long up to the meeting point with Wadi Jarf Channel of 90-320 meters wide. The agreement price is OMR 49,7 Million.

Mr. Hunkar Adali, Authorized representative of SERKA and Mr. Fathi Said Ayedeh Authorized representative of Rajab and Aidi Earthmoving Co., signed the agreement for the executing companies.

#### Protection Dams Project

The second agreement signed related to construction of two protection dams to protect, one over Wadi Jarf of 19.4 meters high and 1.6 kilometers long with a storage capacity of 32.8 million cubic meters, and the other on Wadi Sai of 16.4 meters high and 3.3 kilometers long with a storage capacity of 17 million cubic meters. Premier International Projects Company shall implement the project at a cost of OMR. 27,0 Million and expected complete by the end of 2019.

Mr. Mohan Babu, Managing Director, signed the agreement on behalf of the executing company.

#### Construction of Interface Roads in Duqm

The agreements signed also includes the Construction of Interface Roadway Project at Duqm (Section 4) at a cost of OMR. 7,2 Million awarded to Al-Hajri Trading Company whose Chair, Mr. Nasser bin Khamis bin Juma Al-Hashar, signed the agreement on its behalf.

The project involves the Construction of an Interface road from the Main Road (Sultan Said bin Timor Road) that goes along Duqm from the south to the power station, in addition to another link passing through the site of Sebacic Oman Company situated to the north of Duqm Port.

According to this agreement, the Company shall build a dual carriageway of 2.2 kilometers long and single roads of 3 kilometers long in addition to two dual entrances to Duqm Refinery with a total length of 574 meters. The works shall include traffic signals, two roundabouts, concrete channel for rainwater drainage of 3830 meters long, concrete box culverts, Street lighting, and protection of existing services.

Service Road Project in the Tourist Area

The cost of the fourth agreement signed today was OMR. 752 Thousand It provides for the construction of a service road of 790 meters long along the tourism road in Duqm along with parking spaces for 63 buses, pedestrian paths and concrete channel for rainwater drainage of 740 meters long. The works also include concrete culverts, Street lighting, parking spaces and protection of existing services.

Mr. Simon Karam, Chief Executive Officer of the executing company, Al-Sarooj Construction, signed the agreement on behalf of the Company.



Water Drainage Channels Project agreement



Protection Dams Project agreement



Construction of Interface Roads agreement

# PDO signs US 1.2 billion contract for the supply of pipes through Duqm Port



During the signing of the agreement

**Project prepares Duqm to become a major logistics hub for oil and gas sector**

**Import of 3,000 tons of pipes per week through Duqm Port**

**The project requires 30 trucks per day to transport the pipes from the storage yard to PDO drilling sites**

Muscat - **الدعم** :  
Economy

Petroleum Development Oman (PDO) signed a 1.2 \$ billion contract to supply piping for its drilling operations through Duqm.

The five-year deal with Japanese supplier Sumitomo further includes a new supply yard in the Duqm Special Economic Zone, which will be a logistics center for materials being delivered to PDO's drilling locations.

The agreement will confirm PDO as an anchor tenant at Duqm from mid-2018, with up to two shipments a week (carrying 3,000 metric tonnes of pipe) being routed through the port for its oil and gas fields.

The logistics hub will provide integrated supply chain management services, such as storage, planning and delivery, and 30 trucks a day will be needed to transfer the pipes from the new supply yard to PDO's drilling locations.

#### Positive Effects

H.E. the Chairperson of the Special Economic Zone Authority in Duqm (SEZAD) stated that this agreement will have a significant impact on SEZD in general and on Duqm Port in particular. Sumitomo Company shall be close to the oil fields and the works of the companies operating in this field in the Sultanate and thus these companies would have further access to parts and equipment needed.

H.E. added that the contract would provide many opportunities, including the allocation of some works to small and medium-sized enterprises, employment of some citizens of the Wilayat of Duqm in addition to sending of some of them to study in Japan.

#### logistics hub

The move will significantly build capability at Duqm to become the primary logistics hub for the Sultanate's oil and gas sector and complements the Tanfeeth programme on economic diversification.

PDO Managing Director Raoul Restucci said: "This contract will spur the growth of Duqm and attract even more business as the



Raoul Restucci

port demonstrates its ability to handle major operations.

"Every year, we drill 600 wells across our concession area and all the piping for that will be managed at Duqm.

"This agreement is further evidence that PDO's In-Country Value (ICV) programme to retain more of the oil and gas industry's wealth in the Sultanate by creating Omani jobs and developing local capability and infrastructure is going from strength to strength.

"At the same time, it underlines our commitment to turn the promise of Tanfeeth programme on economic diversification into concrete action."

The new agreement is a renewal of an existing contract to supply PDO oil tubular goods, casing and tubing pipes used for drilling, and consolidates the Company's long-standing business relationship with Sumitomo.

\The official contract signing took place un-



der the auspices of Yahya bin Said al-Jabri, Chairman of the Special Economic Zone Authority at Duqm, with special guest, Mitsugu Saito, the Japanese Ambassador to Oman, at PDO's Knowledge World Centre. The signatories were Restucci, Shuichi Suzuki of Sumitomo Corporation and Masayasu Abiko of Nippon Steel & Sumitomo Metal Corporation (NSSMC).

During the ceremony, Sumitomo presented PDO with a Japanese Samurai helmet and PDO presented Sumitomo with an Omani sword as tokens of mutual respect and appreciation.

#### **A new industrial oil and gas capital for Oman**

Suzuki said: "We have enriched our contribution towards In-Country Value in this renewed agreement, especially by relocating our supply base to Duqm. This shows Sumitomo's commitment in Oman to contribute towards this country's continued good fortune and development.

"This is an exciting challenge for us, and is a great honour for the whole Sumitomo Corporation Group to participate in the development of a new industrial oil and gas capital for Oman."

Abiko commented: "We believe more and more high-end pipes will be required for tougher well conditions in the future. As a premium casing and tubing supplier, NSSMC will continuously supply high-performance goods to PDO from our enriched product line-up."

Under the terms of the deal, Sumitomo has committed to further support ICV initiatives, on top of its large investment in Duqm.

The deal builds on the Government's strategic aim to make Duqm the oil and gas port for Oman and will further attract other companies' services to the hub. Its proximity to Oman's major oil fields and its links to a congestion-free road network will enable PDO to reduce road safety exposure and achieve cost reductions.

Restucci said: "Duqm meets a strategic need for Oman, both in terms of its location and facilities. For PDO and our contractors, its proximity to some of our major fields is a great boon as it enables us to import and move vital equipment and material faster and cheaper than routing cargoes through other locations.

"This new approach will save time and money while at the same time aiding the development, capability and capacity of a vital logistical hub for the Sultanate, complementing the well-established ports of Sohar and Salalah."

◆◆  
**Yahya Al-Jabri: many opportunities offered by the contract to local companies**

◆◆  
**Raul Restucci: new contract stimulates growth in Duqm and attracts more business**

# Economics of Free Zones

All world countries seek to strengthen their growth of their economy and promote economic development towards progress and development. They take all the necessary procedures and prepare plans, studies and policies, and select of appropriate strategies. They also try to exploit all state resources optimally to contribute to the renaissance of the economy and keeping pace with the global economy. Different countries have different policies in the development of their economies. Japan developed its economy through excellence in the world of technology while Asian countries, such as Singapore and South Korea, adopted the approach of Knowledge Economy. The Gulf States have tried to optimally exploit their oil resources.

Given the rapid and successive developments in today's world, it has become imperative that countries develop their national economy by all possible and legitimate means. As one of the economic development methods, many countries have established commercial areas known as free zones to increase the national income and therefore lead to economic development and growth. These zones provide many facilities and incentives that attract foreign investment and thus cause the prosperity of national economy. The experiences of countries have shown the effectiveness of these zones in advancing economic development. The number of free zones in the world until 2012 was (2000) spread over Asia, Europe and the Americas, Africa and the Middle East. Free Zones are economic or commercial areas within the territory of a particular State that aim to stimulate and develop foreign trade. Because the free zone is considered as out of State, it is exempt from customs duties. The Kyoto Protocol defines the free zone as part of the territory or county the goods produced or provided therein are outside the customs area. However, though free zones may agree in general definition, they differ in terminology depending on the goals from their establishment. There are free zones in marine ports, free zones in airports, banking free zones, free trade zones, special free zones, special industrial scientific zones, free industrial export zones free, storage zone (customs storage) and others.

Historically, the idea of free zones in general dates to the era of the Roman Empire. The first free zone then was the Delos Islands in the Aegean Sea. Its operation idea was re-shipping, storage and export of goods that

cross the borders of the empire. In the middle ages, countries located in the Mediterranean basin, used the free zones system to facilitate their business activities. When the colonies started to appear, the European countries created small zones at the port cities to facilitate the trade process, such as the Singapore Zone in the second decade of the nineteenth century (1819) and Gibraltar Zone in the first decade of the seventeenth century (1704).

The contemporary free zones date back to the city of Shannon in Ireland, which witnessed the establishment of the first free trade zone in the fifties when the government then decided to revitalize liberal politics after it had been the preserve of the ports and airports. It spread to other industrial zones adjacent to the airport, which changed the prevalent pattern in free zones from business to industrial activity. The same period also witnessed the establishment of Batan Zone in the Philippines and Masan Zone in South Korea. With the passage of time, free zones opened before the seventies in the American and the European continents, countries of Asia and the Pacific.

On the Arab level, the Syrian Arab Republic was a pioneer in opening free zones with the first free zone in Damascus in 1952. Then followed the free zone in Aqaba Port in Jordan in 1973. In the eighth decade of last century, Dubai, UAE, launched Jebel Ali Free Zone, which has been a good example of successful free zones and has been so far the only free zone in the world that received the (ISO) certificate in 1996. It is worth mentioning that the emergence of free ports started to grow in the second half of the nineteenth century and early twentieth century, especially with the end of World War II. World trade started to grow once again leading to increased demand on free zones given the importance of their strategic locations.

At the local level, the Sultanate of Oman has a full range of elements to attract foreign investment. The Sultanate's experience in the field of free zones is relatively recent compared to regional and international experiences. It is still in the establishment and development phase. The Sultanate passed the Free Zones Law in 2002 by Royal Decree No. (56 / 2002), which is the legal framework that regulates the operation of free zones in the Sultanate

**Dr. Nasser bin Rashid Al-Ma'awali**  
Assistant Professor of Economics and Director of the  
Human Research Center  
Sultan Qaboos University



and the mechanism of creation of those zones.

The free zones in the Sultanate provides a package of investment incentives and facilities, notably tax exemptions, simple procedures for licenses, permits and import of all goods permitted in the State, exemption from the minimum investment requirement, freedom to use currencies, exempt of profits from income tax and various other incentives. To promote economic diversification approach, the Sultanate established the Special Economic Zone Authority in Duqm (SEZAD) and issued its System in 2011 under a Royal Decree. The Special Economic Zone in Duqm (SEZD) consists of Duqm Port, Dry Dock, Duqm International Airport, and Complex of Oil Refinery and Petrochemical Industries. It also includes the industrial zone, system of fishery activities, housing area, tourist and recreational services area, educational city, and integrated transport system and services. This renders it one of the most important economic zones in the Middle East and North Africa.

In general, free zones play assume a key role in the economic development process. This appeared clearly with the emergence of globalization, which relied on economic thought intended to facilitate trade between the states and globalize markets, and its rapid spread along with the emergence of a global economic organizations, such as the WTO. It has become difficult for States to promote their national economies in isolation from other countries. It has also become necessary to strengthen economic and trade cooperation between countries, and promote economic openness, which free zones constitute one of its important tools. Those areas increase commercial activities and ease movement of capital between nations due to their facilities in terms of customs exemptions and facilities in unloading, storage, bunkering, and re-export operations. They also provide administrative facilities to attract the greatest possible number of investors that bring economic, social, political and cultural benefits to the States establishing the free zones and the investor as well. The Free Zone in Dubai attracts (20%) of the total foreign investment in the United Arab Emirates Tangier Free Zone attracted investments worth 500 million euros during ten years.

In the same context, the free zones increase proceeds of foreign currency in the country that benefit from fees and rents paid by enterprises within the zones.

These zones also increase the country's exports and reduce the imbalance in the trade balance and balance of payments. The free zones in Egypt, for example, managed to account for (20%) of the total exports to Egypt in the fiscal year 2007-2008. Dubai Free Zone has more than 50% of total Dubai's exports. Tangier Free Zone has managed after eight years of operation to have one-tenth of Morocco's exports (equivalent to 1.2 billion euros). Free Zones in China managed to direct workers' savings towards investment, which developed the capital market and encouraged global industries to invest in Chinese free zones markets because of the breadth of the internal market and ease of export to foreign markets.

In addition, free zones provide many job opportunities in various economic, technical and scientific fields and thus reduce the number of job seekers. Tangier Free Zone on the bank of Gibraltar provided 40 thousand jobs while the free zones in Egypt provided 136 thousand jobs. These zones also contribute to qualifying and training national work force on the advanced technology used therein, take advantage of them in the domestic industry, and stimulate innovation and creativity among employees. These zones stimulate industrial and technological growth and contribute to finding advanced methods for marketing, promotion, management and regulation. They also contribute to the development of the tourism sector in their host countries. They work towards development of all its facilities and encourage it to provide all necessary services for investors and commercial and industrial delegations. Special zones have also clear contributions in the infrastructure and work towards development of service facilities, power plants, water and sewage networks, and roads.

In conclusion, we emphasize the importance of free zones in the consolidation of the idea of diversifying sources of national income and implementation of economic diversification plans. They provide a powerful environment to compete for production, export, quality improvement, cost and price reduction, and optimal use of all natural resources using sophisticated techniques to increase national income and GDP. Free zones also play an important role in helping allocate and utilize economic resources, encourage foreign investment, and raise economic productivity and efficiency to cope with the economic transformations of the twenty-first century.

**Allows the investor access to its electronic services**



Portal creation team during a visit to the Economic Zones Company in Qatar

## SEZAD prepares to implement the second phase of the online portal project

Muscat -  :

Special Economic Zone Authority in Duqm (SEZAD) prepares for the implementation of the second phase of the online portal project aimed at transforming traditional manual services to digital services through electronic systems that enable the investor to receive SEZAD services electronically.

In preparation for the implementation of this stage, the team visited Economic Zones Company in the State of Qatar to benefit from its experiences in relation to the legislation governing economic zones, investors' services and procedures and systems used in the single-window management.

It is expected that this year will witness awarding the public tender for the second phase of the project whose first phase included taking inventory and identifying all services provided by SEZAD to investors in SEZD both those located directly within the scope of its powers or those offered by other authorities.

The first phase also included the documentation of administrative procedures, forms and requirements for the completion of each of these services, and developing a detailed map of the procedures of each service since the investor's

submission of the application until its completion by SEZAD, including the electronic collection of fees payable for these services.

In the first phase, the team also studied and reviewed the work procedures related to the services and provided re-engineering and design proposals thereof to develop and improve their efficiency by simplifying procedures and reducing the burden of administrative work for investors and traders. At the same time, the team determined the integration policies with other relevant actors related to the services provided by SEZAD to exploit the infrastructure systems available to these agencies and save costs and financial and administrative burden on the State Administrative Apparatus. These include the single-window, Ministry of Commerce and Industry, systems of Ministry of Manpower, and regulations of the Royal Oman Police, and the Public Authority for Civil Defense and Ambulance.

The first phase also witnessed the development of a comprehensive timetable to transform traditional work procedures and services into electronic services and identifying commercial and technical requirements necessary to implement the digital transformation of SEZAD services and establish the necessary conditions to accomplish the task.

  
**Focus on simplifying procedures and reducing administrative burdens on investors and dealers**



Many services provided by online portal to single-window clients



Journalists watch a model of SEZD

# Correspondents admire Duqm

Duqm -  :

Over three consecutive days, Duqm was the focus of admiration of 70 journalists who participated at the Fourth Correspondents' Forum hosted by the Special Economic Zone in Duqm (SEZD). The Forum, held on 30 January – 1 February 2017, witnessed significant attendance of media personnel, editors-in-chief of local newspapers, and correspondents of Omani television, radio and news agency and other local media.

The organization of the Fourth Correspondents' Forum in the Wilayat of Duqm was due to the huge projects and investments from the government and the private sector underway in SEZD in addition to its geographic location and tourist richness considered a fertile ground for a number of journalistic works.



Ali Al-Jabri

Ali Al Jabri:  
Duqm is  
a global  
investment  
zone and the  
media are a  
key partner  
in marketing  
and  
promotion'

Economic  
projects,  
geographical  
location  
and tourist  
richness  
are a fertile  
area for  
journalistic  
work



Participants in providing presentations answer media questions

In a press statement after opening the Forum, H.E. Ali bin Khalfan Al-Jabri, Undersecretary of the Ministry of Information, expressed his delight with the participation of such a large number of media personnel and journalists. He indicated that SEZD should receive more visibility in terms of the achievements and promising projects therein. Al-Jabri added that the primary role of the media should be to depict this bright image, the investment movement, and economic recovery to contribute to its marketing and promotion to be a global investment destination attractive to investments and investors on the domestic and external levels.

Al-Jabri asserted that Duqm is one of the most promising economic zones in the Sultanate and it is hopeful to be the locomotive that leads the Omani economy to new heights in the next phase. He pointed out that the presentations provided during the opening ceremony show the economic status and privileges enjoyed by SEZD, and the growth in the number of projects and capitals invested therein. He added that its location on the Arabian Sea and link with the most famous and active shipping lines makes it able to reach out to the various con-

tinents of the world.

His Excellency stressed that the media work hard to convey the image on the ground to the entire world.

#### An integrated media mix

During the opening ceremony held in Crowne Plaza Duqm Hotel, Awad bin Said Baquair, Chairperson of the Omani Journalists Association stated that the Forum this year was different. "It is an integrated media mix that combines a galaxy of journalists, media workers, and correspondents to push the press message forward. The organization of the Forum reflects the faith in the leading role of the correspondent of in all media," stated Baquair.

"The efforts of correspondents are profound in terms of undertaking their respective tasks. They should convey the press message with accuracy and credibility. The Forum involves noble implications and seeks to achieve a number of objectives. These include imparting the principles and skills of the professional work of the press correspondent and methods of their application to the participants in addition to strengthening the management and organization skills



Undersecretary of the Ministry of Information and the audience during the opening of the forum



Awad Baquair



Ismail Al-Balushi

**Ismail Al Balushi:** thanks are due to the Omani media for their efforts to highlight SEZD and the familiarize the community with investment opportunities

of journalistic work of the correspondent through the management of his professional duties to the fullest,” added Baquair.

He indicated that the Correspondents’ Forum is part of the idiosyncratic identity of the Association that originated more than four years ago and continues with apparent interest. He stated that this is in the framework of the attention paid by the Association to these elite journalists who contribute to conveying the development achievements of the various Wilayats of the Sultanate and highlighting the country’s rich cultural and historical landmarks throughout its regions.

**Unremitting efforts to attract investments**

Ismail bin Ahmed Al-Balushi, Deputy CEO of SEZAD, expressed his thanks and appreciation to the Omani Journalists Association for selecting Duqm to hold the Fourth Correspondents’ Forum. “SEZD is the fruit of the Renaissance era. It started in late 2011 within the Sultanate’s plan for economic diversification, provision of suitable job opportunities for Omani youth and creating a growth pole that extends from the Wilayat

of Duqm to include the various Wilayats of Al-Wusta Governorate. Since its inception on 26 October 2011, SEZAD has been working to achieve these goals. It prepared legislation that keep pace with the aspirations and expectations of investors from the Sultanate and abroad, contribute to attracting local and foreign investments, allow the private sector to contribute to development in the country and take advantage of investment opportunities in SEZD and incentives provided by SEZAD,” said Al-Balushi during the opening ceremony.

**Highlighting SEZD through the media**

“Your presence in SEZD will allow you to get acquainted first hand with this zone to which the government accords profound interest. On its part, SEZAD is seeking to translate these aspirations into reality. Over the past five years, SEZAD has worked to place SEZD within the focus area of local and global investors. Many delegations from the Sultanate and abroad conduct continuous visits to SEZD to get to know the investment opportunities available therein. At the same time, SEZAD promotes these op-

**Awad Baquair:** correspondents play key role to convey the development achievements to the world



SEZAD aims to place SEZD within the local and global investor's domain of interest



Honoring Duqm Economist



Honoring companies supporting the Forum

Printing 20,000 copies of the booklet on investment in Duqm within SEZAD efforts to highlight SEZD locally and externally

portunities locally and abroad. In 2015, we organized introductory seminars on SEZD in the various governorates of the Sultanate, in addition to highlighting it through local and foreign media outlets. SEZAD has issued a number of familiarization publications, such as 20,000 issues of Investment in Duqm booklet in Arabic and English over the past two years. Starting July 2015, SEZAD issued Duqm Economist, a quarterly journal specialized in the affairs of the economic and free zones issued in Arabic and English and distributed to officials and decision-makers in the public and private sectors, and investors who visit SEZD, SEZD offices in Duqm and Muscat, and abroad through the Sultanate's embassies," added Al-Balushi.

**Appreciated efforts of the Omani media**

Al-Balushi praised the efforts of the Omani media in highlighting SEZD and familiarizing the Omani society and the outside world with the investment opportunities available to them and follow up on the progress of the projects implemented in SEZD. He stressed that the efforts made by SEZAD over the

past years resulted in attracting various investments from the Sultanate and abroad. The number of usufruct agreements signed by SEZAD during the past year was 96, bringing the total number of land usufruct agreements signed by SEZAD since its inception to 165, in addition to the three agreements before SEZAD foundation. In 2016, SEZD attracted new investments by more than USD 13 billion, including USD 10.7 billion for Sino-Omani Industrial City in Duqm.

**Field visits and presentations**

The Forum witnessed organizing a number of field visits to the projects taking place in SEZD. These included Renaissance Village, Duqm Refinery, Sebacic Acid Production Refinery, Dry Dock, Duqm Port, project of 150 housing units allocated to Duqm residents, center of the Wilayat of Duqm, medical clinic project, and a number of other projects.

The opening ceremony included presentations to brief journalists on the investment opportunities in SEZD and the most important projects undertaken by SEZAD.



A photo in Renaissance Village in Duqm

# Duqm in Journalists' Eyes of ... First-Hand Testimonies

## Awadh bin Said Baqwair

Chair of the Omani Journalists Association

The importance of Duqm stems from its being a locomotive of the national economy and represents the future in terms of diversification of sources of income in light of the lack of importance of only one commodity, such as oil, under the fluctuations that affect it, especially in the political circumstances in the region and the world.

The experiences that the Forum made us see surprised us in terms of what is happening in this promising zone, especially with regard to local, Arab and international investments. These investments stress our optimism about the importance of this promising zone, which needs profound media marketing at this stage. At Omani Journalists Association, we urge supporting the project and promoting it in the local and international media.

## Ibrahim bin Saif Al-Azri

Director of News Department, Sultanate of Oman Television

This visit enriched me and was an opportunity to see the great and continuous development witnessed in SEZD, especially with regard to the establishment of Duqm refinery, refinery of the production of Sebascic acid and the terminal building at Duqm Airport, which is ready to receive more flights. Moreover, the residential complex of Renaissance Services Company is a clear evidence on the interest of SEZAD to provide a healthy and upscale environment for everyone working in SEZD, a large work cell that will continue in the coming years until the identified vision and strategy has completed. We also saw the project of 150 housing units allocated to Duqm residents. The high-quality services and facilities are a sign of SEZAD interest in the local community.

Marketing SEZD and reaching the investors and other community members has become easier thanks to the various media outlets. I hope that SEZAD would activate the promotion of projects and investments in all modern media outlets to reach most society segments.

## Ali bin Rashid Al-Mata'ani

Member of the Board of Directors of the Omani Journalists Association

The developments in Duqm are innumerable and signify the government's determination to MAKE SEZD one of the largest economic zones. The industrial development witnessed in SEZD will make a difference in the future.

The government relies heavily on SEZD to strengthen the national economy and attract in-



Media professionals listen to an explanation from the CEO of Renaissance Services Company during their visit to Renaissance Village in Duqm



Media professionals tour Duqm Port of Duqm



During their visit to the Sebascic Oman Project

vestments. Therefore, it provides all means for citizens and investors to invest therein easily through single-window that operates efficiently and facilitates the procedures for all those wishing to invest. The government provides all means possible for citizens to work in the existing projects and motivates them in every way to create their own projects that benefit from the advantages offered by SEZD.

**Saleh bin Fayez Al-Rawahi**  
Correspondent of Al-Shabibah Newspaper

The choice of Duqm as a venue of this annual Forum is due to the importance of SEZD and the role it will play in supporting the Omani economy towards growth and success. This visit has granted journalists and media correspondents new knowledge and provided them with a lot of information that some of them may not know. We have learned a great deal about this promising economic zone, which promises all of Oman with a promising future, under the patronage of His Majesty Sultan Qaboos bin Said. We congratulate our generations and ourselves on this economic zone.

**Samira bint Hilal Al-Harasi**  
presenter on Radio Hala FM

The importance of the visit is that it familiarizes journalists and media professionals on the nature of the economic zone, the advantages it offers to investors and the projects implemented in it. Therefore, this visit contributes to convey a more accurate picture of SEZD through different media outlets.

**Yaqoub bin Mohammed Al-Rawahi**  
Media professional

SEZAD is working hard to market the zone, but all I hope that the Omani investor to be the market and promoter of this zone by becoming an active partner in the zone. Once the presence of Omani investor is strong, it will give foreign investors greater confidence in the potential of SEZD and its ability to compete with the global economic zones.

**Ahmed bin Ali Al-Dhahli**  
Journalist in Oman Newspaper

Marketing of the SEZD must double during this stage, and the beginning should be locally. We must provide a clear picture of all the details of the economic projects with a strategic dimension that the government is looking forward to settle in SEZD, in addition to participating in the regional and international economic forums to attract investments, promote SEZD, and introduce incentives and facilities to investors.



Duqm provided opportunity to discuss media issues during the forum



Participants in a commemorative photo in the dry dock



Honoring Salem bin Rashid Al-Na'abi at the end of the forum

## Duqm in Journalists' Eyes

### Said bin Saif Al-Habsi

Correspondent of Al-Watan Newspaper

Duqm is a promising economic zone that has economic attractiveness in various fields. SEZD has witnessed in the last few years a good interest from investors from the Sultanate and abroad helped by the government's keenness to provide all the elements of economic success. Add to this the strategic location and internal stability of the Sultanate and its close and balanced relations with all world countries.

### Ahmed bin Thabit Al-Mahrouqi

Correspondent of Oman Newspaper

During our visit to Duqm, we found that there is a promising outlook for this economic zone, and we believe that the projects currently implemented in the zone are mega projects that would supplement the national economy and contribute to the realization of the economic diversification.

Duqm has many success factors that encompass different economic sectors.

### Khalid bin Rashid Al-Adawi

Head of the Local Department at Oman Newspaper

Duqm is a promising region if the government, private and civil society sectors join together to achieve its objectives. We expect that this cooperation would achieve SEZD objectives, which is still a nascent zone, but is capable of being effective in the commercial, industrial and tourism fields.

### Yusef bin Salem Al-Habsi

Journalist at Al-Watan Newspaper Newspaper

SEZD has many advantages, such as the geographical location on the Arabian Sea, its proximity to consumer markets, its vast area of 2000 square kilometers, and the diverse industrial, commercial, tourism, residential and logistics investment areas. There is no doubt that these



Distinctive attendance of editor-in-chief of Oman newspaper (Right) and editor-in-chief of Roya newspaper

factors represent an attraction for investors. The presence of correspondents from different media outlets in Duqm helps inform media professionals about SEZD growth.

### Saif bin Salem Al-Mamari

Correspondent of Al-Roaya Newspaper

The fourth edition of the Press Correspondent Forum was a qualitative event that differs for the last three forums because it witnessed the attendance of a large number of journalists and media professionals from all the governorates representing the various local media outlets. Holding the Forum in Duqm State provided media impetus to the event. The Forum made the correspondents have a close view on the ready projects and projects underway, such as the dry dock, Duqm Port, refinery, Renaissance Village of and Sebascic Refinery.

Despite the promising future awaiting the city of Duqm and the efforts of the government to provide facilities and stimulate investors, especially Omanis, to invest in SEZD, the absence of Omani investors and the reluctance of national work force to work in SEZD pose qualitative challenges during the current phase. This calls for a serious pause to look for the reasons and diagnose the interest of Omani investors to invest outside the Sultanate.



A commemorative photo at the conclusion of the forum

**Talib bin Saif Al-Dabbari**  
Secretary of the Omani Journalists  
Association



## Duqm: Future of a Homeland

Regardless of all that said about Duqm, as a promising free zone for the economy of Oman, only those who set foot on its ground and witness the magnitude of the accomplishments of the first phase from the total area of over 2000 square kilometers would understand that. Duqm is truly an Omani treasure coming strongly if not only those responsible for it but all the society stakeholders, especially those who have the financial ability to invest, can absorb all the economic, industrial, commercial, or tourist project, in all their heavy and light sizes and through a string of attractive facilities. Investment in Duqm can provide wealth and opportunities for gaining millions, especially if they are the first beneficiaries. The nature, location and characteristics of Duqm should drive those who can read the future to hasten to have a foothold from now on and before others. The effort to establish the infrastructure of SEZD in terms of roads, lighting, electricity, water and single-window that issues all services and permits needed by the investor. Moreover, the planned train, airport and expansion of the road indicate the seriousness of making it the future of Oman and one of the important stations of alternative economic diversification away from oil. It is no longer just a dry-dock, which has so far completed the maintenance and repair of about 460 ships and

giant tankers, as the first project associated with SEZD. It now includes a number of other projects, some of which completed, such as labor and housing cities, and hotels while others are under construction, such as the Sino-Omani City, Port and Sebasic Oman Refinery, the first of its kind to produce Sebasic acid in the Middle East for the production. Other projects are still under process while vast areas await investors.

If the plan is that SEZD will move on to the second phase in the next few years, the success of this depends on how quickly local capitalists are mobilizing and intensifying the marketing campaigns of SEZD domestically and externally. The reluctance of domestic investors and their tendency to invest abroad is a form of escape from national responsibility that requires them to advance the economy of the country, which will eventually provide tens of thousands of jobs for the citizens and improve the living standard of the society. In turn, this will help maintain social stability and extend security and safety throughout the country. SEZD, due to its distinctive geographic location, is one of the safest and most economical zones. We will not exaggerate if we say that Duqm is not only the future of Oman but will represent in the near and long term the future of many important parts of the globe.

**Talib Al-Miqbali**  
Muqballi@hotmail.com



## Duqm: City with International Specifications

I never thought I would visit SEZD because I believed it was specifically for industries, a free zone for import and export, and I simply do not own a company that works in the industrial fields.

However, my visit, which was during the Fourth Press Correspondents' Forum held for three days in Duqm, gave my colleagues and me an opportunity to see activities in SEZD, including Duqm Port, the dry dock, the Renaissance Village of workers and other facilities.

With the participation of about 70 journalists and media professionals, the majority wrote about SEZD and addressed all its facilities at length. Perhaps this article does not provide anything new and will be no more than those written by my colleagues each of whom provided wrote an article containing the details of SEZD and the services and facilities that characterize it.

Before I set foot on the land of Duqm, I expected to see a desert covered by shifting sand and connected to the sea especially that I went by road. However, when I arrived, I found myself driving in a city with modern dual roads, international

standards, traffic lights, advanced lighting, until I reached the four-star Crowne Plaza Hotel. I then realized that I was in the middle of a city with world-class specifications well thought according to economic fundamentals that herald a great economic future for the Sultanate.

Through our tours in SEZD, that beautiful village of workers, known as Renaissance Village, drew my attention. It is a huge project established with international standards in terms of security, safety and environment. Renaissance Services Company undertook this 75-million project that includes 15 thousand beds at affordable prices while providing various necessary and recreational services, and nutritious meals.

Apart from the major projects taking place in SEZD, I believe that the project of Renaissance Village in Duqm is one of the pilot projects. I hope to see similar projects in the industrial zones in all governorates of the Sultanate to provide suitable residential neighborhoods for workers in these zones to reduce the negative effects caused by expatriate labor's residence in residential neighborhoods.

**Yousef bin Ali Al-Balushi**

Member of the Board of Directors of the Omani Journalists Association



# The Rich in Duqm

Only Duqm must bring together the professionals from the fields of media, economy and money alike if we are to overcome all the challenges and economic rivalries under the current circumstances. It is our only savior and outlet away from the fluctuating and unreliable oil market.

A quick and beautiful initiative by the Omani Journalists Association in cooperation with SEZAD to hold the Fourth Press Correspondents Forum in Duqm, which gathered 70 journalists, media professionals and correspondents who saw Duqm and its projects. I am certain that they returned with a broader knowledge of the future of Duqm and its projects, as well as what we all have to do to make Duqm the city of wealth.

The future of this promising city on the Arabian Sea depends on cooperation of its sons for its success on the

local investors before the arrival of any foreign investor, and on the owners of wealth and their conviction to invest in this part of the world.

Before focusing on Duqm as a global economic destination, we should focus on it as a destination that is always under the spotlight of TV and the regional radio stations. We should properly employ the funds injected in it at the short term in parallel with the role of the media in highlighting it and facilitating the investors' access to Duqm from the wide-open investment door.

Therefore, Duqm is the place for the rich, and we have to harness all our media and economic potentials for Duqm to compete with the other industrial zones in the countries of the region because of its strategic distinctive location.

**Bader bin Zahir al Kiyumi**

Journalist



# Al Duqm: A model of determination and will of the Omani Renaissance

Visitors to Al Duqm will be impressed by the change that happened during the past few years. During my recent visit to this wilayat which is well-known of its beautiful beaches in March 2017 I was impressed of what I saw. I can describe this change as a proof of the determination of the Omani Renaissance under the wise leadership of His Majesty the Sultan.

My first visit to Al Duqm was a private visit back in the year in 2005. The city was a barren desert that did not have the simplest services such as hotels and restaurants. If not invited by the kind citizens, we could not continue to stay there because the services were not available. The people were generous and invited us to stay with them. Thanks for Al Duqm citizens who are always inviting Omani guests and expats.

My second visit was in 2014, accompanied by Omani businesspersons. We were invited by the Special Economic Zone Authority of Al Duqm (SEZAD) to learn more about the potential investments of the zone and its facilities. During this

visit, several members of delegation felt that the investment in this region will take decades to complete. But when I visited the area recently in March 2017, I was surprised with what I saw. The area is totally different in comparison to what I witnessed in the last three years. The construction projects are going on. I was surprised also by the progress and the services that are available in this region which contribute to attract thousands of workers from different governorates of the Sultanate as well as from abroad.

It was not only the businesspersons who were fear about the investment in Al Duqm, but also the journalists felt the same. When we were reading newspapers that the government is going to execute many projects in Al Duqm we felt the same. We could not imagine that this wilayat which is located in the middle of the desert 55 KM from Capital will change and boom so quickly. We could not imagine that international hotels like Crown Plaza and Park Inn will be established in the wilayat. Thanks to the wise leadership His Majesty the Sultan for his wise vision

**Yousef bin Ahmed Al-Balushi**  
Editor-in-chief of Wejhat Newspaper



## Go to Duqm

When I see that maquette of SEZD, I see a dream that will come true by 2020 according to the pursuit of those in charge of the working environment and the acceleration of work implementation in that part of Oman, our homeland we hold dear.

The comprehensive economic development witnessed by Duqm now pushes towards an attractive investment environment, which is an important step in terms of facilitating procedures and legislating investment incentives. However, waiting and hesitating on part of the local investor remains a challenge confronting such economic projects that enhance our national economy.

These huge cranes on the work arena in Duqm represent a strong impetus for SEZD to witness a great leap forward for the future generations, especially since such heavy projects will provide a large number of job opportunities for young Omani job seekers. Moreover, Duqm will be an important logistics hub between the East and the West.

Therefore, Omani investors should race to create small

and large projects because what is available today in Duqm will not be available tomorrow. These are opportunities for young people to go to Duqm to see the construction and development wheel on the ground that each of us takes pride in. There are various investment opportunities and when we are on the ground, we will see that ideas can turn into projects that serve SEZD, which is growing rapidly in an unimaginable way.

SEZAD great efforts to attract foreign investors are proceeding at a good pace and what we have witnessed in the last period confirms SEZAD success in approaching investors from China, India and many other countries. However, we emphasize the importance of further profound investment marketing of Duqm to be an incubator of global investments and one of the world's logistics hubs in terms of facilities or attraction of international investors. Add to this the fact that the Sultanate enjoys stability and peace and has been an incubator for peace due to Allah's grace and the wisdom of His Majesty the Sultan.

**Abdulaziz Al Jahdhami**



## Omanis rolling up their sleeves in Duqm

The currently undergoing several major infrastructure development projects in the Special Economic Zone of Duqm, its future is really promising.

All those projects will undoubtedly enrich the national economy and promote the Duqm economic zone as a key investment and tourist destination in Oman.

With all the different opportunities of investment and development on offer, the area will be totally revamped to be another world-class unique attraction in the Sultanate. For that reason, local and foreign investors and businessmen are attracted to the zone.

What is certainly thrilling in what's happening in Duqm is the remarkable contribution of young Omanis in the development process of Duqm. They are play-

ing a major role in leading and managing some of the projects that are under construction in the area.

Although there are some aspects of urban life in the city, but still it's totally different from Muscat where people are used to be close to every element of modern life.

However, Omanis working in Duqm are sacrificing the luxuries and comforts; just for the sake of being part of the development process.

Salute to all Omanis working in Duqm and helping in getting the government plans accomplished in a way or another. The unmatched sense of pride of what they are doing there is all behind their dedication to work day and night striving to accomplish their mission successfully.

# Al Duqm in the Eyes of Local English-Speaking Media in Oman

Al Duqm - Saleh bin Nabahan Al Mamari:

The Special Economic Zone Authority at Duqm (SEZAD) organized a visit to Duqm by representatives of English speaking local media for the period from March 20th, to 22nd, 2017. The program for the visit included visual presentations and direct meetings to be held with senior officials from SEZAD, Al Duqm Port and Oman Drydock Co., SEBACIC Oman Company and Renaissance Services Company. The media delegation also toured a number of projects being constructed at Duqm to see operations in progress.

## Jotham Barjaf

Journalist with Times of Oman Newspaper

Al Duqm represents an integral part of Oman's plan to shift from economic reliance on oil and gas to diversify the sources of the national income. The city's mega port, entertainment and business cities will lead this investment drive in the near future and are expected to contribute in creating and availing further job opportunities for Omanis, therefore realizing the ambitious goal of economic diversification for the Sultanate of Oman.

The government of the Sultanate of Oman entered into a new partnership with China to construct the Chinese Omani Industrial City in Duqm, which is expected to create and avail nearly 12,000 new job opportunities.

## Pillay Jetta Shankran

the Tribune Newspaper

During the visit, journalists have inspected the SEBACIC Acid Refinery project, expected to begin production operations in the near future once the plant construction operations are complete. I have met officials at this project, who told me that Sebacic acid and its derivatives will be exported via Al Duqm Port to the US, Europe and Asia. As a matter of fact, this project will encourage many other investors to have a great deal of confidence to turn Al Duqm into their own industrial base.

The Sebacic acid production project currently employs 125 workers and is being constructed on 400,000 square meter of land near the sea and Al Duqm refinery and is considered as a turning point in the history of Duqm to become a main center for the production and export of these acids.

## Conrad Barbo

The Observer

This is one of the significant visits and business tours a part from a great source of information from the actual ground. During this visit, I met with officials from SEZAD and a number of companies operating at Duqm. I experienced a true sense of welcoming and hospitality. Officials were extremely cooperative and spoke to journalists on operation detail with all trans-



During the presentation



A commemorative photo by the entrance of the Renaissance Village



Listening to explanation about the component of the Economic Zone

## Duqm in Journalists' Eyes

parency. I was able to gather information that assisted me write 6 economic feature reports. Organizers had also prepared a comprehensive program schedule reflecting the economic importance of Duqm.

I hope to find such similar visits are experienced by journalists covering economic news and to be conducted every three months as these visits will give these journalists a closer look at the development of this economic hub and an opportunity to closely interact with key officials, therefore, enabling the press to optimally cover the economic progress taking place in Duqm.

### Abdul Aziz Al Jahdami Columnist- The Observer

The 150 residential units at the project are characterized by being constructed at the highest building standards. These units built for Al Duqm residences are well organized and erected for an exemplary residential area offering all services such as roads, water treatment, lighting, well designed pavements, a mosque, a city council and parking lots.

The houses reflect modern designs and spaciousness and demonstrate a high degree of government sense of social responsibility towards the population at Al Duqm and the government's commitment to guarantee the highest standards of living and ensure the population benefits from the massive investments and ongoing economic projects.

### Abdullah Bin Ahmed Al Rubea English News Presenter, Sultanate of Oman Television:

The Rocks Garden at Duqm is breathtaking. The site offers unique compositions of rocks and the more you venture into the Rocks Garden, the more you get a sense you are entering a completely different planet.

The rocks we saw almost seem too imaginary and surreal to be from this earth. This spot is definitely source of inspiration and imagination, giving visitors a sense of the urge to write a story or a poem to recite before everyone. The Rocks Garden is certainly a unique attraction to visitors and tourists from all over the world.



150 housing unit project



Dr. Ahmed Al Abri explaining the capabilities of the DryDock



A commemorative photo at the DryDock

# A study on social, cultural and economic dimensions of development projects in Duqm



Study researchers with Wali of Duqm

## Muscat - Mohammed bin Ahmed Al-Shezawi

The Humanities Research Center at Sultan Qaboos University is currently conducting a study funded by His Majesty Sultan Qaboos bin Said on the social, cultural and economic dimensions of the development projects in Duqm.

Prof. Muneer Abdullah Karadsheh, the chief

researcher in this project, stressed the importance of the study, which is one of the first field studies that examine the social and cultural situation of the Wilayat of Duqm and the social, demographic and economic characteristics of its population. Karadsheh pointed out that the study is of great importance because it reviews a range of different effects of the establishment

## Study Objectives

- Identify the social, economic, demographic and health characteristics of the people of Duqm.
- Identify the prevailing marriage patterns in the Wilayat of Duqm.
- Identify the social impacts of SEZD on the population of the Wilayat of Duqm.
- Explore the extent of women's benefit from development processes in SEZD.
- Identify the availability of basic services in the Wilayat of Duqm.
- Identify the economic impacts of SEZD on the population of the Wilayat of Duqm.
- Identify the cultural effects of SEZD on the population of the Wilayat of Duqm.
- Identify the environmental impacts of SEZD on the natural and human environment in the Wilayat of Duqm.
- Identify the health effects of SEZD on the population in the Wilayat of Duqm.
- Determine the future population expectations of the establishment of economic projects in the Wilayat of Duqm.
- Identify the satisfaction of the local population with the services provided in the Wilayat of Duqm.
- Identify the social, economic, cultural, health or environmental responsibilities of the companies operating in SEZD towards the population.

**Dr. Muneer Kirdashah:**  
*review of various influences of SEZD on population*

**Preliminary results confirm positive impact of projects on Duqm population**



Study researchers with the local community

**Population emphasizes importance of education in raising individual social status**

of the Special Economic Zone in Duqm (SEZD) on the population, especially with regard to their social, economic, cultural and health conditions. He stressed that the study aimed to provide a database on the population of the Wilayat of Duqm and their characteristics as well as to identify SEZD impacts and reflections on Duqm population.

The chief researcher pointed out that the study, which began late 2015, sought to examine the current conditions of the population and their attitudes towards the various transformations caused by the establishment of SEZD in the Wilayat of Duqm. He added that the study also sought to highlight the current social and economic situation of women in Duqm and track the various transformations in their different roles that accompanied the establishment of these projects.

He pointed out that the importance of the study resides also in its attempt to draw a realistic field picture of the effects of the establishment of these zones and projects on the economic, social, cultural, health and environmental aspects of the population and track the various transformations in their different lifestyles that accompanied the establishment of these projects. Karadsheh asserted that the information

obtained provides important scientific knowledge on the impact of these projects on the reality of the local community.

#### Survey Covers 23 Villages

Dr. Muneer Karadsheh considered that the field research conducted with a group of col-

#### Study Team

- Prof. Muneer Karadsheh, Humanities Research Center, Sultan Qaboos University
- Prof. Samir Hassan, Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences, Sultan Qaboos University
- Dr. Rahma Al-Mahrouqi, Vice President for Graduate Studies and Scientific Research, Sultan Qaboos University
- Dr. Iyad Fadha, Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences, Sultan Qaboos University
- Dr. Montaser Abdul-Ghani, Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences, Sultan Qaboos University
- Sheikha Al-Medelwi, Humanities Research Center, Sultan Qaboos University

**Local community changes view of women's work and their contribution to labor market after establishment of SEZD**



During one of the interviews with the respondents



At the training center established by SEZAD

leagues in the study enabled them to identify many important characteristics of the Duqm community. He said that the methodology of the study relied on a comprehensive survey of all areas of Duqm and the survey included 23 villages using different tools to collect data. The study adopted the descriptive approach because of its relevance to its objectives and used the questionnaire tool as a means of collecting data on the local population in the Wilayat.

#### Important Results

He pointed out that they would publish the various results of the study in a specialized journal by the end of the current year. Karadsheh stressed that these results would be useful to decision-makers and stakeholders in SEZAD, other government agencies, and companies operating in SEZD, to take the necessary measures to maximize the positive benefits and minimize adverse effects.

Karadsheh revealed that the preliminary results of the study showed that education is one of the most important considerations that raise the social status of the individual in the Wilayat of Duqm; more than half of the respondents of the study confirmed this trend. The study also found that the severity of domestic violence in the Duqm is low; 81.5% of population adopts dialogue for crisis management within the family. The study revealed that SEZD and its associated projects did not lead to the emergence of dangerous behaviors among the children within or without SEZD. The preliminary results of the study showed that SEZD contributed to changing the perception of the local community towards women's work of and their contri-

bution to the labor market. About 61% of the population pointed to the increasing importance of women's economic role compared to 37% among the population living outside Duqm. The study concluded that the population living within SEZD has positive attitudes concerning the role of projects in providing job opportunities more than those living outside SEZD believes.

#### Population Outlook

Concerning the results of the study with regard to the future expectations of the population of the economic projects, Prof. Muneer Abdullah Karadsheh indicated that the preliminary results of the study indicated high expectations of the population towards improving their economic conditions and access to employment opportunities. The study also revealed the magnitude of their ambitions and expectations for the future of SEZD and the accompanying projects in improving the level of social services in the Wilayat through the establishment of schools and universities and improving population welfare.

He pointed out that the preliminary results of the study also confirmed that there is a 68.8% of the local population who believed they would avail of the opportunities offered by companies operating in SEZD. The results also showed that more than half of the companies studied (54.1%) indicated seasonal changes in the job opportunities that they would provide. The results showed the contribution of companies and institutions working in Duqm in the process of empowering women through qualification, training and providing them with the necessary expertise to enter the labor market.



A photo in the dry dock

Study results indicate a high level of expectation of improving employment opportunities and economic conditions

Study results confirm a high demand on job opportunities in SEZD

Population expects a positive role for SEZD in improving social services and establishment of schools and universities

# Impact of Economic Changes on Duqm Population

The research study on “Social, Cultural and Economic Dimensions of Development Projects in Duqm” gave me the opportunity to learn about the many transformations caused by the Special Economic Zone in Duqm (SEZD) for the population of the region. Through the study objectives, which focused on inspecting and monitoring the social, cultural, economic, cultural, or environmental impacts on the population of the Wilayat of Duqm, the team identified many results that the development plans taking place in SEZD can utilize.

The study relied mainly on the qualitative approach to characterize the phenomena under study and analyze them from different aspects and dimensions. The study tools were:

First: in-depth interview through which the team sought to meet with all concerned parties in SEZD, whether the officials of SEZAD, companies operating therein or the local population.

Second: observation based on the field visits conducted by the team that recorded all observations on the ground, especially with regard to the social, economic, cultural and environmental impacts that occurred in Duqm.

Third: documentation process carried out by the research team. At this stage, the team utilized many maps and documents available, in addition to ecological documentation, satellite images, and photo documentation of all field observations conducted.

In light of the interviews with SEZAD officials and the local population, observations by the research team and the available documentation, we have noted rapid, deep and profound changes in the economic and social reality of the Wilayat of Duqm connected with the huge investments pumped into SEZD. These transformations are as follows:

Allocation of 2000 square kilometers to SEZD di-

vided into several investment zones: industrial, tourism, residential, commercial and logistics. SEZAD focused on developing only and area of about 800 square kilometers at the current stage and linking it to a modern network of roads and infrastructure services. These efforts have attracted many local and international companies to invest in SEZD. The project of Renaissance Services Company to create 16,000 housing units is one of these projects.

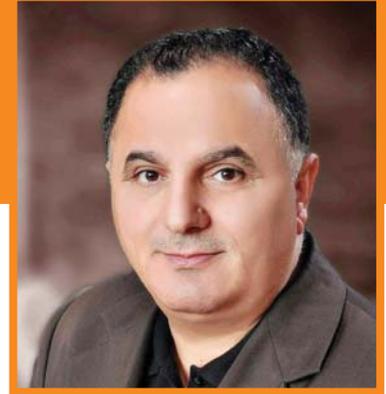
In addition to the residential area governed by the usufruct system managed by SEZAD, there are housing schemes managed by the Ministry of Housing and governed by the laws and provisions of the Housing Plots Distribution System apply. The changes witnessed by Duqm were in the form of quick transformations that affected the situation of the population in a profound and different manner. Land prices and rents increased significantly accompanied by some encroachments by some residents on State lands, which prompted SEZAD to rectify the situation.

The establishment of Duqm Port and the heavy industries zone close to were in tandem with identifying specific areas for fishing. This increased the number of anglers in some areas, deepened competition between them, and decreased supply of fish, according to the point of view of a local angler and one of the members of the Omani Women Association.

A number of local residents interviewed indicated profound changes in Duqm. They indicated that the prevailing traditional pattern of fishing and grazing changed into modern production based on work in institutions and companies operating in SEZD. A large number of Duqm residents went to work in the public and private functions made available by the development process in their Wilayat.

SEZAD has provided many responses to the

**Prof Muneer Karadsheh**  
Senior Researcher – Humanities Research Center,  
Sultan Qaboos University



rapid changes in Duqm. It took a number of measures to empower and qualify the local population to cope with these changes. These included obligating the companies to allocate 10% of employment opportunities for local residents, establishment of a center for training and qualification for them, and providing university study scholarships for Duqm students.

Omani Women Association plays an important role in the process of empowering the local population in Duqm, especially women. The Association founded in 2014, organized a number of training courses in collaboration with Duqm Refinery Company. It trained 200 women and developed their computer skills. One of the Association members noted that Duqm Refinery Company provided laptops for each participant in the course. In collaboration with Duqm Refinery Company, the Association launched the initiative “Wadha” to empower women in Duqm and improve their skills in the field of handicrafts. Duqm Refinery Company furnished the Association building and provided the necessary computers. It also contributed with the Association to support a workshop for Omani women in Duqm called “Fotoon” in order to develop their drawing skills. At the end of the workshop, they organized an exhibition of women paintings.

The changes witnessed by Duqm have also led to intensive entry of expatriate labor force into the projects implemented in SEZD.

Duqm has also witnessed a marked change in the issue of investment in the education of residents. SEZAD provided a range of scholarships to qualify students and enable them to obtain university degrees. However, the process of investment in and empowerment of Omanis in this region, especially in the field of knowledge and science, has faced many challenges, such as the lack of desire

of young people, especially males to complete their education. One of the respondents attributed this to the far distance of the universities as well as the lack of desire of the young people of this Wilayat to restrict their freedom and their inclination towards business and welfare (as camel racing). The vice president of the Omani Women Association also pointed out that the main reasons for the lack of completion of education, especially for females in Duqm, is the lack of appropriate schools and the lack of universities in the Wilayat.

As to the nature of the changes in production patterns in Duqm and their different effects on the population, a group of respondent women confirmed the rapid transformation of the productive patterns of the local Duqm community. It was a simple society with most of its population engaged in hunting and grazing, but now many of the population work in institutions and companies operating in the Wilayat.

The movement of change and modernization in Duqm related to profound structural changes in the traditional patterns of marriage that prevailed in society with the emergence of modern patterns, such as late marriages and out-of-family marriages. However, the pattern of polygamy and family-brokered marriages continue to be prevalent in the Wilayat, as most respondents pointed out.

One of the noteworthy observations that drew the attention of the research team was the awareness of women in volunteering and community service. The team realized this during the interview with the members of the Omani Women Association. The team noticed their presence, large number of voluntary activities undertaken by them and their strong desire to work.

# SEZAD Chairperson emphasizes the role of Shura Council in the success of SEZD



**Shura Council members emphasize the vital role of SEZD in the national economy**

## Duqm: Saleh Nabhan Al-Ma'mari

H.E. Yahya bin Said bin Abdullah Al-Jabri, Chairperson of Board of Directors of SEZD confirmed the role of the Shura Council in supporting SEZD and the proposals offered by its members to achieve its success whose construction was part of the Sultanate's economic diversification plan.

This came during a visit by the members of the Economic and Financial Committee of the Shura Council to

SEZD in January 2017. Al-Jabri said that the visit stemmed from the keenness of the Council to familiarize itself with SEZD components and projects implemented on the ground, pointing out that this project reflects valuable social dimensions as well as an economic dimension through which the Sultanate is seeking to achieve the diversification of its income sources.

During the visit, the Shura Council members saw SEZD model and the potential of the dry dock and Duqm Port.

**Saleh Musin: government investment in SEZD is beginning to bear fruit**





They also visited the project of 150 housing units allocated to the Duqm people, building of Duqm Airport currently underway, Sino-Omani Industrial City, and the settlement project of the land allocated to Duqm Refinery.

#### Promising Zone

H.E. Saleh bin Said Musin, Head of the Economic and Financial Committee of the Shura Council, stated that SEZD is a promising zone. "Through the discussions with the officials in SEZD, Oman Dry Dock Company, Duqm Port Company, I formed a broader idea of the executed projects scheduled in SEZD," added Musin expressing optimism in SEZD and that these efforts would succeed.

"We wish that such investments accommodate job seekers either of the people of Duqm or from other Governorates. SEZD is beginning to bear fruit through pumping more than two billion Omani Rials in infrastructure in preparation for receiving economic returns and foreign capitals," added Head of the Economic and Financial Committee of the Shura Council.

#### Call for Investment

For his part, H.E. Tawfiq bin Abdul-Hussain Al-Lawati, Committee member stated, "SEZD is a promising economic zone. It is among the priorities of the Sultanate to diversify sources of income. Duqm can be the most important incubators of the pillars contained in the Ninth Five Year Plan (2016-2020). Therefore, we call for domestic and international investors to take advantage of SEZD features to achieve value added and diversify sources of income."

"Any huge project will face many challenges, but we must provide alternatives and solutions to confront them. The role of the Shura Council is to ensure the existence of plans and programs and a clear vision to achieve the maximum benefit from the project," concluded Al-Lawati.

## Limited to projects fully owned by Omanis A 50% discount on services charges for small and mid-sized enterprises (SMEs)

Muscat - 

The Special Economic Zone Authority in Duqm (SEZAD) decided to reduce the fees for its services to small and medium enterprises (SMEs) by 50% as of Monday (27 March 2017).

The decision comes within the framework of SEZAD efforts to encourage SMEs to work in the Special Economic Zone in Duqm (SEZD) and to allow them to benefit from the investment opportunities available there.

The Decision, published

in Official Gazette No. 1187, states that the reduction of fees applies to SMEs owned entirely by Omanis and registered with the Public authority for Small and Medium Enterprises development (Riyada). The reduction is valid for five years and renewable for a similar period if necessary.

SEZAD has been witnessing the implementation of several projects in the infrastructure sectors, as well as major projects in various economic sectors, leading to high demand for services provided by SMEs.

## A New Flight To Duqm On Saturdays Five Flights To Duqm Airport Every Week



Construction works at Duqm Airport Terminal

Duqm - 

Oman Air is in the process of working and coordinating with the Special Economic Zone at Duqm on a new flight between Muscat International Airport and Duqm International Airport, on Saturdays to up the number of operated flights between the two ports to five flights per week. Flights are scheduled for Saturdays, Sundays, Mondays, Wednesdays and Thursdays.

The opening of the new schedule is to meet the increasing demand for air traffic between Muscat and Duqm and the growth of

business activities with more projects to be implemented and completed by SEZAD.

Saturday flight takes off from Muscat International Airport at 3 p.m. and arrives at Duqm after 1:25 hrs. The flight from Duqm to Muscat takes off at 5 p.m. to arrive at Muscat International Airport at 6:25.

Furthermore, Oman Air announced the commissioning inauguration of its retail sale office in Duqm as part of Omantel' outlets. Oman air will offer full range of services through this outlet including issuance of tickets and confirming reservation and booking.

# SEZAD and PDO sign MoU to train jobseekers

Qualifying young Omanis to work in SEZAD



Muscat - 

The Special Economic Zone Authority in Duqm (SEZAD) and Petroleum Development Oman (PDO) signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) that provides for the development of a joint mechanism for co-operation in various fields related to the training and employment of jobseekers.

H.E. Yahya bin Said bin Abdullah Al-Jabri, SEZAD Chairperson, signed the MoU on behalf of SEZAD, while Mr. Raoul Restucci, Managing Director of PDO, signed it on behalf of PDO.

The MoU aims to qualify young Omanis to get proper job opportunities in various projects implemented in SEZD to realise the joint objectives of SEZAD and PDO and their efforts to achieve sustainable development.

The MoU stipulates that SEZAD will identify training employment opportunities in co-ordination with the companies and institutions operating in SEZAD with a view to providing employment opportunities for Omani youth in SEZAD while PDO will support and, where possible, fund the initiative. The companies and institutions that employ young people will also support by paying a monthly grant and social security costs.

The MoU also includes direct employment opportunities, which SEZAD will identify in co-ordination with the companies and institutions operating there. The two parties will

choose the training entity and in accordance with the professional standards and controls issued by the Ministry of Manpower.

The renewable 3-year MoU also stipulates that the parties will exchange experiences and best practices in areas that benefit SEZAD and PDO. These will include best practice in the field of financing training programs, investor management, one-stop programs for the development of local communities and the establishment of civil companies in concession areas. The agreement also covers the co-operation and exchange of experiences in social investment and tourism projects within SEZD along with value-added programs.

PDO Managing Director Raoul Restucci said: "This agreement strengthens our relationship with SEZAD which is an important significant enabler to the economic sustainability of Oman and the creation of job and training opportunities for nationals.

"PDO is already routing cargoes through Duqm as its builds its presence as a key regional logistics hub and is committed to helping SEZAD develop Omani capability and capacity as the Sultanate diversifies its economy.

"We are delighted to sign this MoU which bolsters our already strong partnership with SEZAD and complements our key relationships with the well-established ports at Sohar and Salalah."

Exchanging experiences in development of local communities, establishment of civil companies, and local value-added programs

# Opening 109 kilometers of «Sinaw - Mahout - Duqm» Road

## Sinaw – Duqm Economist

The Ministry of Transport and Communications opened in February 109 km from the project of Sinaw - Mahout- Duqm implemented in stages.

The parts opened to traffic constitute around 60% of the 181-km road currently under construction that extends from Sinaw to Mahout.

The project consists of a dual road with two lanes 3.75 m each in width and external paved shoulders of 2.5 m in width and other non-paved of two meters in width on each side. The design of the road considered the lanes to be wide and asphalt layers to keep up with the movement of trucks on the road.

The works of the road include four parts, including the first and second parts from Sinaw to Mahout. “The third and fourth parts extending from Mahout to Duqm are within the Ninth Five-Year Plan projects (2016 - 2020). Then Ministry is interested in the completion of the road to Duqm,” stated H.E. Dr. Ahmed bin Mohammed Al Futaisi, Minister of Transport and Communications after opening the road.

# Oman Drydock Breaks Records to Complete 14 Projects Simultaneously

**Dr. Ahmed Al Abri: The new record achievement is a confirmation of the trust won by Oman Drydock locally and internationally.**

**The dry-dock receives the sixth Greek vessel owned by Springfield Company, Greece to convert the vessel for new uses.**

**Oman Drydock repaired and maintained 437 by the end of 2016.**

Al Duqm -  :

Oman Drydock Company broke unique records of its kind in March 2017 by completing 14 projects simultaneously.

Acting CEO Dr. Ahmed Bin Mohamed Al Abri described this record achievement as yet another achievement accomplished by the company who succeeded in the few past years in winning the trust of its clients.

Dr. Al Abri explained that the 14 projects included the maintenance and repair of 7 ships in two dry-docks and 5 other ships on the quay side, as well as the construction of the hull of Olympic Trust and the project to fabricate huge steel structures for one of the oil fields in the vicinity of Duqm for Petroleum Development Oman Company.

#### Miscellaneous Works

The first quarter of year 2017 witnessed increasing activities by Oman Drydock Company and major services offered to local and international companies. Oman Drydock Company undertaken many maintenance, repair and renovation of consumables for a number of international vessels such as the Balsam Crude Oil Tanker and VLCC Grand Lady. In-

dia's liquefied natural gas tanker Aseem also entered the dry-dock in March 2017. Furthermore, during the month of March, Oman Drydock Company started the modification works on Olympic Trust to convert this vessel from an (OBO) Ore-Bulk-Oil carrier into crude oil tanker only. Olympic Trust is the sixth vessel owned by Springfield Shipping Co. Panama S.A. from Greece to be converted at the dry-dock.

#### Locally

On the local side, Dr. Ahmed Bin Mohamed Al Abri said that during the first quarter of 2017, Oman Drydock company carried out maintenance and repair services on a number of vessels owned by the government and the private sector, adding that these projects reflect the strength of partnerships between Oman Drydock Company and Omani government companies in the field of repair, maintenance and logistical support to large ships and express ferries.

Oman Drydock has a capacity to repair over 200 ships per year. Dr. Al Abri said the Oman Drydock Company delivered 437 ships since it inaugurated its operations in 2011 and by the end of 2016, including super oil tankers, container ships, liquefied natural gas tankers, chemical materials carriers and vehicles transport ships.

Indian Ship Aseem entering the dry-dock on March 21, 2017

# Regulation on Organizing and Controlling Advertising Signs in SEZD Enters into Force



Duqm - 

In March 2017, the Special Economic Zone Authority in Duqm (SEZAD) began to apply the Regulation on Organizing and Controlling Advertising Signs issued as part of SEZAD efforts to organize business, provide an encouraging environment for investment and enable investors to promote their services and products in various locations in the Special Economic Zone in Duqm (SEZD).

The Regulation stipulates that the placement of any advertising sign shall be after obtainment of a permit issued in accordance with its provisions and payment of the prescribed fees.

The new Regulation covers various types of advertising signs, such as signs placed on the facades of commercial, industrial or service establishments or any other activity, guiding and promotional signs installed on the ground or along the road, signs erected on rooftops, signs of construction and projects, and signs on transportation means.

The Regulation excluded a number of signs from obtaining the permit: advertising signs in cinemas or inside shops provided they do not overlook the outside, advertising signs on devices, boxes, covers and authorized means to advertise the type of goods contained in these devices, boxes and covers, and sale or rent signs placed on properties. This exclusion also includes the advertising signs placed by the units of the State Administrative Apparatus or charitable associations, in addition to advertising banners placed in public events, such as religious, national sporting, cultural or social festivals.

The Regulation reads as follows:

# Decision No. (12/2017) Issuing the Bylaw Organizing and Controlling Advertising Signs in the Special Economic Zone in Duqm

In Pursuance to Royal Decree Number 119/2011 establishing the Special Economic Zone Authority in Duqm (The Authority) and issuing its regulations, Royal Decree Number 79/2013 Issuing the Regulations of the Special Economic Zone at Duqm,

Royal Decree Number 5/2016 designating the development of Ras Markaz as a public utility project and attaching it to the Special Economic Zone in Duqm, The approval of the Board of Directors of the Special Economic Zone Authority in Duqm (The Authority),

And in pursuance of the public interest,

It has been decided

## Article (1):

The attached Bylaw shall apply to regulating the organization and controlling advertisement signs in the Special Economic Zone in Duqm.

## Article (3):

All that is contrary to this decision and the attached Bylaw or contradicts with the provisions hereof is hereby repealed.

## Article (3):

This Decision shall be published in the Official Gazette and shall come into force from the date following the date of its publication.

**Issued on: 9 Jumada Thani 1438 AH**

**Corresponding to: 8 March 2017 CE**

Yahya bin Said bin Abdullah Al- Jabri  
**Chairman of the Board of Directors**

This Decision was published in issue  
No. 1186 of the Official Gazette on 19 March 2017.

# Bylaw Organizing and Controlling Advertising Signs in the Special Economic Zone in Duqm

## Chapter One General Definitions and Provisions

### Article (1)

In application of the provisions of this Regulation, the following terms shall have the meanings given to each of them, unless the context requires otherwise:

**Authority:** The Special Economic Zone Authority in Duqm.

**Zone:** The Special Economic Zone established in the Wilayat of Duqm for purpose of establishing economic, service and other projects whose borders and location are stated in the plan enclosed with the Royal Decree No. 5/2016.

**Chairman:** Chairman of the Authority.

**Competent Department:** Department of Public Services which follows the One Stop Shop department in the Authority.

**Advertising Sign:** Any writing, engraving or image intended to promote, advertise, or guide to the name of a commercial, industrial, tourist, governmental, service, goods, construction, project or other activity, whether fixed, mobile, lighted or suspended.

**Permit:** Approval of the Competent Department to place Advertising Signs.

### Article (2)

It is prohibited to place any Advertising Sign before obtaining a Permit issued in accordance with the provisions of this Bylaw and the payment of the prescribed fees.

### Article (3)

The types of Advertising Signs shall be as follows:

- 1- Signs placed on the facades of commercial, industrial or service establishments or any other activity,
- 2- Guiding and promotional signs installed on the ground or along the road,
- 3- Signs installed on rooftops,
- 4- Signs for construction and projects,
- 5- Signs on transportation means.
- 6- Any Advertising Sign approved by the Competent Department.

### Article (4)

The following Advertising Signs shall be exempted from obtaining a Permit:

- 1- Advertising Signs in cinemas or inside shops provided they do not overlook the outside.
- 2- Advertising Signs on devices, boxes, covers and authorized means to advertise the type of goods contained in these devices, boxes and covers.
- 3- Sale or rent signs placed on properties.
- 4- Advertising Signs placed by the units of the administrative authorities in the Country or charitable associations,

  
*Regulation aims to enable investors to promote their services and products in various locations in SEZD*

  
*Advertising signs placed only after obtaining a permit from SEZAD relevant public services department*

**Exemption  
of the units  
of State Ad-  
ministrative  
Apparatus,  
charities  
and cinemas  
from the  
conditions  
of obtaining  
permits**

5- Advertising Signs placed in public events, such as religious, national sporting, cultural or social festivals. There shall be coordination with the Competent Department before placing the banner that shall be removed directly after its purpose ends.

#### Article (5)

It is prohibited to place an Advertising Sign in the following locations:

- 1- Mosques, places of worship, archaeological buildings, cemeteries and their surrounding fences.
- 2- Other places which the Authority may determine.

#### Article (6)

It is prohibited to infringe on, destroy, tamper with, tear, or block any authorized Advertising Sign.

### Chapter Two

#### Conditions of Permit and Obligations of the Permit Holder

#### Article (7)

The Permit holder shall:

- A- Not assign the Permit to other parties without obtaining the approval of the Competent Department.
- B- Maintain and preserve the advertising sign in a good condition and in accordance with the instructions issued by the Competent Department.
- C- Adhere to the limits of the Permit issued to him, including the location, content, placement method, and the duration of the Advertising Sign.
- D- Comply with the requirements, controls and other instructions issued by the Authority.

#### Article (8)

The Advertising Sign shall comply with the following:

- 1- The language used shall be standard Arabic language. Any other language may be used provided following are complied with:
  - (A) The other language should be on the left or below the Arabic text.
  - (B) The area of the Arabic language shall not be less than that of the other language.
  - (C) The translation from Arabic into any other language shall be right and contextual.
- 2- The content of the Advertising Sign shall not be contrary to religious values, public order, morals or local customs and traditions.
- 3- The Advertising Sign shall be identical to the Permit and specifications specified by the Competent Department.

### Chapter Three

#### Procedures for Obtaining Permit

#### Article (9)

The concerned parties or their legal representative shall submit the application for Permit to the Competent Department on the form prepared for this purpose, together with the documents and information specified in the form and the number and date of the approval of the competent authorities if the required advertisement requires prior approval of those entities. The applicant shall

**Need to use  
standard  
Arabic  
language in  
advertising  
signs  
and other  
languages  
on condition**

also submit the written consent of the owner/ beneficiary of the property on which the applicant shall place the Advertising Sign along with the statement of the advertisement sign.

The Competent Department may complete such documents or data it deems necessary to decide on the request for Permit.

#### Article (10)

The Competent Department shall review the application and decide on it within fifteen (15) days from the date of submission along with the required information and documents. The lapse of this period without a decision shall be deemed as an acceptance.

In case of rejecting the application, the decision to reject it must be justified.

#### Article (11)

The Competent Department shall inform the applicant of the decision on the application at the address provided in the application within five (5) working days. In the case that the application has been rejected, the concerned party may appeal the decision to the Chairman within sixty (60) days from the date of notification or certain knowledge of the rejection in which the applicant shall indicate the basis of the appeal and the supporting documents.

#### Article (12)

The Chairman shall review the appeal, decide upon it, by either acceptance or rejection, within a period that does not exceed thirty (30) days from the date of its submission, and inform the concerned parties of the outcome.

In all cases, the decision of the Chairman on the appeal shall be final.

#### Article (13)

The Permit period shall be for one (1) renewable year provided that the renewal procedures are initiated at least thirty (30) days from the date of expiry of its term.

### Chapter Four

### Controlling Advertising Signs and Penalties

#### Article (14)

The Competent Department shall have the authority to supervise and inspect all Advertising Signs in the Zone to ensure the compliance with the provisions of this Bylaw.

#### Article (15)

Without prejudice to any legally prescribed penalty, the Authority may, in case of violation of the provisions of this Bylaw, take one or more of the following measures:

- 1- To obligate the violator to remove the causes of the violation and restore the situation to what it used to be during the period specified for it. The Authority may do so at the expense of the violator and obligate him to bear all the expenses incurred by The Authority for this purpose.
- 2- To impose an administrative fine in accordance with the schedule enclosed to this Bylaw.

In case of continuation of the violation, the Authority may impose an administrative fine on the violator which shall not exceed ten (10) Omani Riyals for each day.

In all cases, the Authority shall withdraw the license from the violator.

  
**Prohibition  
of placing  
advertising  
signs in  
mosques,  
places of  
worship, ar-  
chaeological  
buildings,  
cemeteries  
and sur-  
rounding  
fences**

  
**Permit  
issued within  
15 days from  
the date of  
complete  
application  
and  
documents**



**Mohammed bin  
Ahmed Al-Shezawi**  
Editor-in-chief



*Today, as I accompanied media delegation in a tour of Duqm on the fourth media visit to the area, I realized this endeavor exceeded the wildest ambitions as I recalled press interviews with Duqm residences in the summer of 2008*

mohammed.alshezawi@duqm.gov.om

## The Media Documents of Duqm Progress

When I had visited Duqm in 2008 for the first time, on a journalistic assignment; the first of its kind to prepare media surveys for Al Duqm Port far 550 kilometers from Muscat, I was impressed and surprised by the magnificent weather in the month of June, which is usually smoldering hot in Muscat.

However, the weather was not only my main preoccupation when we were discussing this part of the sultanate. As journalists, we were also thinking about the time wasted and spent by those living in Duqm in transportation to the governorate of Haima just to draw cash from the nearest Automatic Teller Machine (ATM) 180 kilometers away. We were also wondering about the limited economy, consisting of a few shops and the total lack of any hotel facilities to accommodate visitors for an overnight stay.

Forward into 2017, and as I spoke to government officials and Al Duqm Port operating companies and others living in Duqm, there was a sense of optimism. They all spoke about their desire to make history here in Duqm. Since my first visit to that area, I witnessed major changes and how the strategic concept for Duqm was changed from a "regional heavy industrial center with a dry-dock, a free zone and an international airport" to "a special economic zone with an area of 2000 square kilometer that hosts hundreds of projects covering all types of economic sectors". More than 200 contracts and agreements to utilize the area were executed and signed as of March 2016.

Today, as I accompanied media delegation in a tour of Duqm on the fourth media visit to the area, I realized this endeavor exceeded the wildest ambitions as I recalled press interviews with Duqm residences in the summer of 2008. Duqm became a home of a large number of media projects and the press is scrambling to cover the details of these projects that began with the single project of Al Duqm Port, which was where all this started.

The growth witnessed in Duqm in the span of only a few years and which changed this point in the Sultanate of Oman from an arid and limited patch of land into a modern economic zone attracting investors from all over the world, is nothing less than a story of success that deserves to be documented by the press.