



*Council of Ministers Urges Concerned Authorities to Accelerate the Completion of the Remaining Packages of Key Projects*

## Council of Ministers Issues Directions to Accelerate the Development of Appropriate Solutions to Overcome the Challenges at "Duqm"



Duqm Special Economic Zone (SEZD) is One of the Mechanisms of the Government to Diversify the National Economy

Muscat – June 21, 2015

The Council of Ministers has issued directives to accelerate the development of appropriate solutions to overcome the challenges at Duqm Special Economic Zone (SEZD) and the projects that are being set up in the area.

In a statement regarding the topics the Council had discussed up to mid-June 2015, the Council urged concerned authorities to accelerate the completion of the remaining packages of key projects that are being set up at SEZD. The statement emphasized the importance of field visits to the projects by Members of the Council and the concerned in the government to track the progress of work and to address challenges as soon as they arise.

SEZAD (Duqm Special Economic Zone Authority) delivered a presentation to the

### The Council Emphasizes the Importance of Field Visits to the Projects by Members of the Council and the concerned in the Government

Council of Ministers regarding the progress in the projects that are being set up at SEZD, and the available investment opportunities. The presentation was made to illustrate the work progress of the projects that are being set up at SEZD and the challenges these projects face, which comes as part of the Council's efforts to activate the role of development zones in the diversification of the national economy and to achieve sustainable growth rates.

## SEZAD signs two MoU's with Ministry of Manpower and Oman Chamber of Commerce

Muscat - June 29 & 30, 2015

Duqm Special Economic Zone Authority (SEZAD) has signed two Memorandums of Understandings with the Ministry of Manpower and Oman Chamber of Commerce and Industry in implementation of Royal Decree 119/2011 "Establishing Al Duqm Special Economic Zone Authority" and Royal Decree 79/2013 "Issuing the regulation of the Special Economic Zone at Duqm".

The MoU signed with the Ministry of Manpower deals with accelerating the issuance of licenses provided by the One-Stop Shop that are related to the recruitment of foreign workers to work at SEZD (Duqm Special Economic Zone) according to the stipulations of Royal Decree 79/2013 "Issuing the regulation of the Special Economic Zone at Duqm". The MoU stated that SEZAD should be in charge of accepting the submitted applications to recruit foreign workers to work in the projects registered in the Commercial Registrar according to the approved forms, additionally, SEZAD will verify that the application meets the requirements in terms of data and documents. SEZAD, once an application has been received, will provide the applicant with a confirmation of receipt and will refer the application to the Manpower Department in the area with SEZAD's recommendations.

On the other hand, the MoU signed with Oman Chamber of Commerce and Industry, stipulates that the Chamber will register the projects that should be registered according to its laws and regulations. Moreover, the Chamber will provide its services to investors through the One-Stop Shop and will delegate an employee or more to the Shop.

For more details, see Pages 2 & 3

## A Tender for the Protection of Jarf and Sai Villages from water

Duqm – June 7, 2015

SEZAD (Duqm Special Economic Zone Authority) has floated a tender to provide needed protection for Jarf and Sai villages from any expected floods by building protection dams and secure the flow of rainwater into the sea.

This tender is in line with SEZAD's plans for the protection of all residential, commercial and industrial areas and neighborhoods from the threat of floods and rising water

levels during rainy weather the area may witness and to route valleys and their channels of discharge.

The tender was floated after a study that was conducted by specialists in SEZAD who recommended the building of 16 km long and 340 – 650 meters wide discharge channels and to provide materials to protect the banks of these channels from corrosion and erosion.

Bids are expected to be opened by the end of August 2015.



Aerial photograph of the village of Sai

# SEZAD and OCCI Signs an MoU

Muscat - June 30, 2015

The Special Economic Zone Duqm (SEZAD) and the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Oman (OCCI) signed on Tuesday, June 30, 2015 a memorandum of understanding (MoU) to regulate their cooperation towards the provision of the best services to investors through the one-stop shop in SEZAD. This was as stipulated in the Royal Decree 119/2011 establishing SEZAD and Royal Decree 79/2013 issuing SEZAD System.

The MoU was signed by H.E. Yahiya bin Said bin Abdullah Al-Jabri, SEZAD Chaperon, and H.E. Said Bin Saleh Al-Kiuymi, OCCI Chairman.

Royal Decree 119/2011 stipulates the establishment of a single investment window to provide all the necessary services for the establishment of investment projects within the Zone, while Royal Decree 79/2013 stipulates that all the necessary services for the projects should be provided through the one-stop shop. Article (12) of the latter Decree obligates SEZAD to create an online portal to provide all information necessary on the Zone, while Article (24) of the Special Economic Zone System states that OCCI shall issue and approve certificates of origin and source for projects in the Zone.



According to the MoU, OCCI shall register and renew registration of projects that are subject to the OCCI Law. It shall also ratify sale bills after review, grant and approve certificates of origin and the source, validate commercial guarantees and ability of financial guarantors, certify the validity of documents it issues and the signatures of stakeholders on them. OCCI shall also ratify the other commercial and industrial certificates necessary for commercial and industrial business, state

registered members and their businesses and grades, and register commercial arbitration documents submitted to it by appointed arbitrators or related parties. OCCI shall carry out the tasks of commercial or industrial nature, including commodity inspection, audit of disputed services, ratification of reports and certificates prepared by experts and trade representatives, and provision of information on the prices of commodities traded on certain dates in local commercial markets.

Under the MoU, OCCI will provide these services through the one-stop shop in the Zone through its applicable programs and regulations. It will send one or more of its employees to the one-stop shop in SEZAD.

The MoU also stipulates the organization of cooperation between the two sides in a number of other aspects, notably promotion of the Zone inside and outside the Sultanate through organizing lectures, seminars, workshops and economic conferences and exhibitions in the Sultanate and participating in the events held abroad.

OCCI is also cooperating with SEZAD to settle the disputes that may arise in the Zone and entrusted to it by means of amicable reconciliation or arbitration, taking into account the legislation in force in the Sultanate and regulating this aspect.

## Chairman of SEZAD Receives a Delegation of UN Representatives



A picture of H.E. the Chairman of SEZAD and Mr. Dmitri Dovgopoly

Muscat – June 7, 2015

H.E. Yahya Bin Said Bin Abdullah Al Jabri received in his office in KOM in Muscat on June 7, 2015 Dmitri Dovgopoly, Senior representative of the UN Procurement Division and his accompanying delegation.

An overview of the SEZAD's capabilities and advantages, the incentives provided by SEZAD to investors and the projects that are currently being set up at it, have been

presented during the meeting.

Mr. Dovgopoly expressed his impression about the projects which are being set up at SEZAD pointing out that the geographical location of the Sultanate in general, particularly Al Duqm is qualified to be of service to international food organizations such as the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations due to its proximity to vital marine lines that connect Africa with South East Asia and the Middle East.

## GIS Department Develops an Application to Track Tropical Weather in the Indian Ocean

Duqm – June 8, 2015

Geographic Information Systems Department in SEZAD has developed an electronic application to track tropical weather that may form above the Indian Ocean in order to track Cyclone Ashobaa, which was formed in the Arabian Sea and reached Oman early June 2015.

Nasir Bin Mohamed Al No'mani, Manager of the Geographic Information Systems and Topographic Survey Department, said that the application offers several options that provide accurate information about the details of any formed tropical weather and it can determine its course given that it also draws its data from the Joint Typhoon Warning Center (JTWC). Nasir explained that the team has developed the application and made it available for browsing on the extranet for cellular and smart phones in order to track tropical weather from home and work or in the field. The application monitors any climatic changes that occur over the sea and tracks the case until it disappears throughout the day.

The development of this application came during the time when SEZAD took part in the Duqm Emergencies Committee to discuss and to take necessary precautionary measures to minimize the impact of the storm on SEZAD and those who work in it.

# SEZAD signs an MOU with the Ministry of Manpower

Muscat – 29 June 2015

The Special Economic Zone Authority Duqm (SEZAD) signed on Monday, June 29, 2015 a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with the Ministry of Manpower to organize their cooperation in many areas as prescribed by the Royal Decree No. 79/2013 issuing the Regulation of the Special Economic Zone Duqm. The Royal Decree stipulated there shall be established in the Zone a manpower department to issue the necessary permits for foreign labor force expeditiously and efficiently efficiency provided that the period taken for issuing the permits does not exceed five working days from the date of application.

H.E. Yahya bin Said bin Abdullah Al-Jabri, SEZAD Chairperson, and H.E. Sheikh Abdullah bin Nasser Al-Bakri, Minister of Manpower, signed the MOU.

Under the MOU, the parties agreed to issue regulations governing the licensing procedures of foreign labor recruitment for the establishments operating in the Zone by the Manpower Department. The SEZAD Board shall issue a decision of this Regulation in coordination with the ministry.

On the signing of the MOU. H.E. Yahya bin Said bin Abdullah Al-Jabri underlined its importance in coordinating the cooperation between the two sides in the areas of the labor force in Zone to contribute to overcoming the challenges facing the projects implemented there.

Al-Jabri stressed that the MOU provides for the expeditious issuing of licenses related to the recruitment of foreign work force in the Zone, as stipulated in the Royal Decree No. 79/2013. He stressed that the MOU aims to raise the competitiveness of the Zone through the services provided to the projects implemented there.

He pointed that SEZAD signed during the past few months a number of MOUs with the government units and as stipulated in Royal Decree No. 79/2013, commending the cooperation of various government units in this regard. SEZAD, he asserted, seeks to provide the best services to investors and overcome the difficulties they may face.

For his part, H.E. Sheikh Abdullah bin Nasser Al-Bakri stressed that the Ministry of Manpower supports SEZAD in its quest to provide the best services to investors, stressing the importance of the MOU in overcoming the challenges facing investors.

Al-Bakri noted the importance of the Zone in attracting investments to the Sultanate and supplementing the government's efforts to diversify sources of national income and the provision of appropriate job opportunities for citizens.

The MOU stipulates that SEZAD shall notify the Ministry of the decisions issued SEZAD issues regarding foreign labor recruitment fees and Omanisation percentage so that the Ministry can consider the same upon performing its terms of reference.

The MOU states that SEZAD shall receive the licensing applications for recruitment of foreign labor by the projects registered in the Zone commercial register according to the approved forms for this purpose. SEZAD shall verify that the



applications fulfil all the data and documents required and deliver the applicant a receipt. Then it shall forward the application on the same day to the Department together with its recommendation.

The Labor Department in SEZAD shall receive foreign labor procurement applications directly from natural persons and projects not registered in Zone commercial register, as well as applications for procurement of servants and the like.

SEZAD shall also receive the applications for the transfer of foreign workforce services from the customs territory or free zones in the Sultanate to the projects registered in Zone commercial register. SEZAD shall verify that the applications fulfil all the data and documents required and deliver the applicant a receipt. Then it shall forward the application on the same day to the Department. The Labor Department shall receive the applications for the transfer of foreign workforce services from the customs territory or free zones in the Sultanate from natural persons and projects not registered in Zone commercial register.

The MOU also provides that SEZAD shall set a maximum limit to the number of projects licensed to carry on the activity of procuring foreign workforce in the Zone, and shall review this periodically in the light of the Zone development and the growth of economic activities therein. It also stipulates that SEZAD shall inform the Ministry of Manpower in the case any of the establishments in the Zone commercial register desires to move to the customs territory so that the Ministry can apply the same conditions, fees, regulations, and laws applicable to all private sector enterprises without exception.

The MOU confirmed the need for the Ministry of Manpower to review license applications, and other applications referred

to in the MOU and decide on them quickly, and in all cases issue the required licenses within five working days from the date of submission. The lapse of this period without deciding shall mean approval. In case of rejection, the decision must be justified. The MOU stressed that it is impermissible for expatriate workforce recruited within the Zone to move to work in the customs territory without obtaining a new license from the Ministry.

According to the MOU, SEZAD shall notify the Department with the projects ended, as well as companies, which ended their work in the Zone.

With regard to control and inspection within the Zone, the MOU stipulated that SEZAD work in coordination with the Ministry to develop a system for the inspection and control of economic activities in the Zone as to the commitment to Omanisation percentage and terminate the use of unauthorized foreign manpower. The Ministry shall supervise and inspect economic activities in the Zone in accordance with the provisions of the Labor Law, without prejudice to the provisions of Article (13) of the MOU, which states the expeditious deciding on license applications within a period not exceeding five working days.

The MOU also stipulates that the parties should cooperate to take the required action to limit the number of current expatriate labor in the Zone and adjust their status according to the agreed procedures between the two parties. The two sides shall also cooperate in the preparation and implementation of vocational training programs to supplement the Zone with its needs of Omani workforce in the numbers and disciplines required and, in particular, training and qualification of job seekers in Al-Wusta Governorate, in order to enhance their chances to benefit from the jobs introduced in the Zone.

# SEZAD Conducts a Blood Donation Campaign



**Muscat – June 2, 2015:** CSR department at SEZAD conducted a blood donation campaign in collaboration with the Ministry of Health and Oman Drydock and Port of Duqm. This campaign was conducted in response to the emergency declared by Oman Blood Bank in terms of the lack of blood needed for care units in hospitals. This campaign was conducted as part of SEZAD's plan to conduct a number of initiatives to serve the community. This campaign witnessed wide participation from employees.



## Ramadan brings together employees of SEZAD and Duqm Development Company



**Muscat – July 1, 2015:** Services Department at SEZAD organized a dinner event for the employees of SEZAD and Duqm Development Company at Intercontinental Muscat Hotel on the holy month of Ramadan.

The event was held under the auspices of H.E. Yahya Bin Said Al Jabri, Chairman of SEZAD and attended by members of the executive management and employees.

