

الدقم Duqm

هيئة المنطقة الاقتصادية الخاصة  
Special Economic Zone Authority  
سلطنة عُمان Sultanate of Oman



الدقم  
الاقتصادية  
Duqm  
ECONOMIST

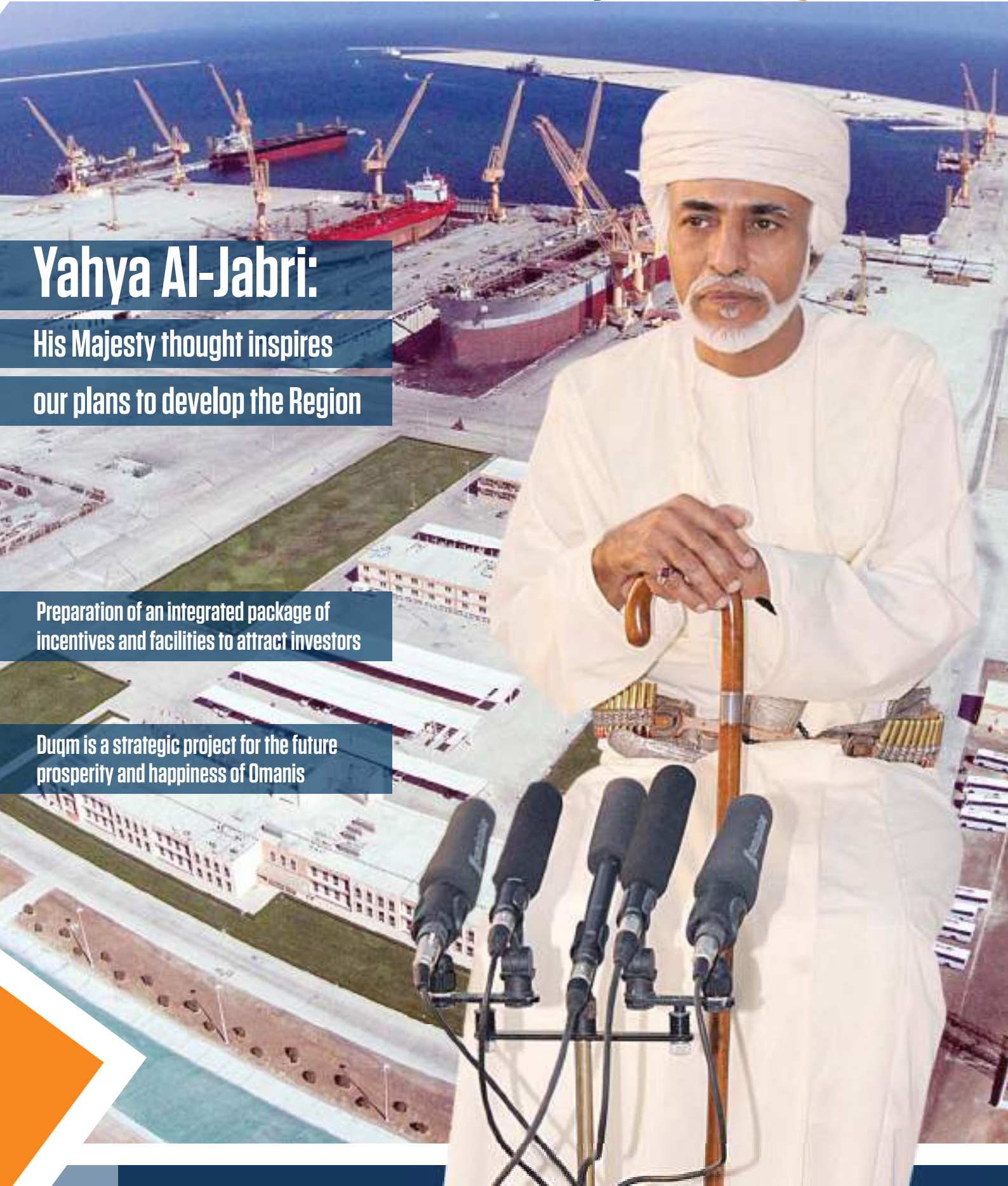
A Quarterly magazine issued by the Special Economic Zone Authority Duqm  
– Year One – Issue One – July 2015

## Yahya Al-Jabri:

His Majesty thought inspires  
our plans to develop the Region

Preparation of an integrated package of  
incentives and facilities to attract investors

Duqm is a strategic project for the future  
prosperity and happiness of Omanis





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سلطنة عمان  
Sultanate of Oman



ميناء الدقم  
PORT OF DUQM

# Duqm Economic Diversity

THE first issue of Duqm Economic Magazine comes concurrently at a precious occasion. It is the 45th anniversary of the modern renaissance that began way back in July 23, 1970 to embody our dreams and ambitions.

Today as we look at this date and remember the first day of the modern renaissance when His Majesty Sultan Qaboos, announced his determination to restore the glories of the Sultanate and to achieve the better future the people aspire to, we feel proud for the achievements made by the Sultanate during the last 45 years, praying to the Almighty to save His Majesty the Sultan and grant him health and wellness and to save people of Oman and achieve its aspirations of superiority, glory and decent life.

Although the Sultanate has made tremendous achievements over the past years, we optimistically look at the future in view of the foundations laid by His Majesty the Sultan for the blessed renaissance since 1970 which enabled the Sultanate to start achieving its objectives in a stabled country with strong economy and people supporting their leadership and homeland contributing in the development process that was launched 45 years ago to turn the Sultanate into a source of wisdom in its decisions and tendencies and be one of the countries determined to achieve world peace considering it as its key trend.

Perhaps the most notable issues highlighted by the Sultanate since the dawn of the modern renaissance were the building of strong and diversified economy and infrastructure not only in Muscat Governorate, but also in all regions of the Sultanate. The past years witnessed a number of achievements in this respect.

The Special Economic Zone in Duqm represents one of the policies to be adopted by the government to accomplish the economic diversity during the coming phase because of the potential it possesses in terms of the geographic location in the way of the world trade, the area that totals about 1,745 square kilometers and the diversified projects included in the comprehensive plan such as Duqm port, dry dock, airport, Duqm refinery as well as many other projects in various economic sectors.

And keeping up with the attention attached to the Special Economic Zone in Duqm either by the government that mobilizes all its resources to make the project a success, or by the society that aspires to benefit directly or indirectly from the projects being carried out in the Zone, we are keen that the new Duqm city be capable of realizing the aspirations of the future generation of young Omanis.

Therefore, we are determined to provide the future generation with whatever it aspires to either in terms of the possibilities that should be made available in the new city and its building foundations or the projects the young people hope to work in, giving attention to elements that renders the city vital and capable of meeting the wishes and needs of its population.

In addition to the projects related to the ports, dry docks, refineries and heavy industries, the Zone welcomes the commercial, touristic, sports, recreational projects which make the Zone a favorite place for living and residing, because of the moderate and exceptional climate Duqm enjoys throughout the year.



Yahya Bin Said Al Jabri  
General Supervisor



**we are keen that  
the new Duqm  
city be capable  
of realizing the  
aspirations  
of the future  
generation of  
young Omanis**



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**SEZAD holds six introductory seminars across the various governorates of the Sultanate**

# SEZAD invites the private sector to explore investment opportunities in the Zone



Through six introductory seminars organized this year in various governorates of the Sultanate, the Special Economic Zone Authority Duqm (SEZAD) called upon the private sector to explore investment opportunities in the Special Economic Zone of Duqm.

Ismail bin Ahmad Al-Balushi, Deputy CEO of SEZAD, indicated that SEZAD endeavors to provide the right climate to attract domestic investments. In this sense, we call the Omani private sector to benefit from the investment incentives, privileges and facilities provided by SEZAD for investors, stressing that this invitation is not limited to big companies only but also includes small and medium enterprises (SMEs).

"SEZAD is working to implement the government's strategy to increase the activities of these SMESs and give them the opportunity for growth. Last year, it signed a memorandum of understanding with the General Authority for the Development of Small and Medium Enterprises. The aim of this MOU is to organize their cooperation on allocating industrial and commercial lands to SMEs owners to invest in them in accordance with the respective usufruct contracts," added Al-Balushi in the statement he delivered at the seminar organized by SEZAD in Batinah South Governorate.

He also noted the potentials of the Zone and the invest-

ment opportunities available in it. He said that the Zone enjoys a range of comparative and competitive advantages, which qualify it to become a regional hub for maritime transport and a logistics supply portal for the Gulf region. Its vast area of around (1745) square kilometers allows the implementation of variegated projects and investments in various economic sectors.

The seminars organized by SEZAD in Khasab, Musanah, Sohar, Buraimi, Ibri, and Nizwa are a part of its efforts to familiarize entrepreneurs of the investment opportunities available in the Zone in the industrial, commercial, tourism and logistics sectors and growth in the Zone over the past years. The seminars also aimed to identify the proposals of the private sector to invest in Duqm and answer their questions about the incentives and facilities provided by SEZAD for investors and services provided by the one-stop shop, which is the investment gateway in the Zone. This forms part of SEZAD plan to increase domestic investment and encourage businesspeople to localize their projects in the country.

During the seminars, SEZAD specialists offered presentations on investment opportunities in the Zone and incentives provided by SEZAD. They also shed light on the projects being implemented at the Zone.





# الدقم Duqm

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Special Economic Zone Authority

Sultanate of Oman

سلطنة عُمان



## One-Stop Shop

Your Gate to Investment at SEZAD

One-stop Shop is the department concerned with registering investors and issuing required different licenses, permits and approvals. One-stop Shop provides the following services:

Issuing manpower permits

Preparing usufruct and development agreements

Providing all types of visa-related services

Completing rent contracts and regulating the relation between the owners of the property and the tenants

Issuing municipal license and construction licenses

Commercial, industrial, tourism and environmental registration

Preparing technical reports and issuing approvals



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*Yahya Al-Jabri in an exclusive interview with:*

# His Majesty

## the Sultan is the symbol of national unity



◆◆◆  
*His Majesty thought inspires our plans to develop the Region and make it a pillar of economic diversification*

◆◆◆  
*Preparation of an integrated package of incentives and facilities to attract investors*



## ◆ Interview by Mohammed bin Ahmad Al-Shezawi

His Excellency Yahya bin Said bin Abdullah Al Jabri, Chairman of the Special Economic Zone Authority Duqm, commended the achievements of the Sultanate in terms of developmental renaissance in various fields under the reign of His Majesty Sultan Qaboos bin Said - may God protect him - the builder of the renaissance of Oman and reformer of its glory and history.

His Excellency stated in an exclusive interview with :

His Majesty the Sultan is the symbol of national unity and the Sultanate realized endless achievements under His prosperous reign. It also enjoyed regional and international appreciation due to His Majesty's wisdom in steering the country's affairs and his profound vision for the various international events and issues.

Al Jabri stressed that the Royal thought to His Majesty the Sultan inspires SEZAD development plans and make it a pillar of economic diversification. He pointed out that SEZAD has prepared an integrated package of incentives, privileges and facilities that would encourage investors while the investment environment in the Region is experiencing diverse projects and investors. He stressed at the same time that SEZAD is keen on attracting domestic investment and said that SEZAD is keen to provide a conducive environment for private sector investment.

His Excellency referred to the vision of SEZAD for Duqm as the city of the future. He asserted that Duqm is a diverse city not in its investment only, but also in the cultures and experiences of its population. As the investments in SEZAD are industrial, tourism and trade, the experiences, preferences and cultures of its population are diverse as well. This diversity shall contribute to the transfer of expertise to the people and to the founding of a city that will be, with God's help, a symbol of cultural and social co-existence among the many nationalities that will live in Duqm.

◆◆◆  
***Attraction of local and foreign competencies and provision of a stimulating work environment for creativity and innovation***

◆◆◆  
***We are keen to create Duqm to be multi-investment city and a place for cultural, social, cognitive and productive coexistence***



SEZAD Chairperson in his interview with the editor-in-chief

**Duqm refinery is the driver of localization of heavy and petro-chemical industries**

### Glorious day in the history of Oman

»» ***These days, the Sultanate celebrates the forty-fifth anniversary of the modern renaissance that began on July 23, 1970 to illuminate the different parts of the country and take it from one era to another. Your Excellency, since you witnessed this historic transformation, would you please highlight the reasons that enabled the Sultanate to realize comprehensive developmental renaissance and achievements in various fields?***

At the outset, I would like to congratulate His Majesty Sultan Qaboos bin Said, may God protect him, and the Omani people on this happy occasion that recovered to Oman its glory and renewed its history to become today a State that has a presence, prestige and appreciation at the regional and international levels.

His Majesty Sultan Qaboos bin Said, may God protect him, is the symbol of national unity. July 23, 1970 is a glorious historical day on which the modern renaissance of the Sultanate emanated to illuminate the various cities and villages of the country. Since the first day of the blessed renaissance, His Majesty the Sultan laid the foundations of a modern state that pays attention to all life details of the citizens and provides them with welfare, daily needs, and what helps them achieve their ambitions and hopes and enable them to live in dignity on this good land. His Majesty the Sultan was keen to achieve social justice and equality for all and equal opportunities in access to state services and jobs offered. His Majesty the Sultan has been keen that modern Renaissance include all corners of the country to the benefit of all citizens. He followed progress in the projects, inaugurated completed ones and called

on all citizens to dedicate themselves to the goals of the Renaissance.

The tours of His Majesty Sultan Qaboos bin Said throughout the country is a wise approach of His Majesty to meet citizens and identify their needs, aspirations, ambitions and hopes at first hand.

Through this parental guidance of His Majesty the Sultan and his keenness to follow up on various aspects of life in the country, the Sultanate has managed to realize many achievements in various fields. It was also able to build good relations with neighboring countries and with the various countries of the world based on mutual respect, non-interference in the affairs of others and resolution of international problems by peaceful means. This modern Renaissance relied on these principles established by His Majesty Sultan Qaboos bin Said since the first day in power and his call for Omanis abroad to return to their country and contribute to its construction and to reject all forms of discrimination. Today, we are reaping its fruits stemming from the wisdom of the country's leader and his foresight to achieve greatness, pride and glory for Oman and its people and those who live on this good land.

### Maintaining the Achievements

»» ***In your view, how can we preserve the realized achievements and maximize the benefits for the next generations?***

Under the keen interest and patronage of His Majesty Sultan Qaboos bin Said, may God protect him, the Sultanate has become a modern state in which we enjoy security, safety and peace of mind. We are proud of all the achievements of the Sultanate in various fields, education, health, economy, trade, tourism, agricul-





ture and the like. Thanks to the wise directives of His Majesty, the Sultanate has also become the country of peace and stability because of the wise approach and principles established by His Majesty the Sultan since the beginning of the modern Renaissance. This wise policy earned the Sultanate respect, appreciation and praise from around the world. All these achievements make it imperative for us to maintain them through working hard in our respective areas of specialization and to employ our skills and capabilities to achieve the greatness, development and growth of the country.

### Several Projects

»» ***We find that SEZAD is witnessing the implementation of many projects. Would you highlight the most prominent of these projects and the volume of investment therein?***

SEZAD is witnessing the implementation of a variety of projects. SEZAD manages and supervises some of them while major companies operating in Duqm implement some others. One prominent project is that of Duqm Refinery. Last year, SEZAD signed a preliminary usufruct agreement with Duqm Refinery and Petrochemical Industries Company in this regard. SEZAD has recently floated the tender to pave the site on which the refinery shall be established. There are also a number of infrastructure projects, such as the remaining packages of Duqm Port and Airport, roads, liquid and bulk material pier, construction of 150 housing units for the citizens, construction of SEZAD headquarters, and the new main road to the center of Wilayat of Duqm in addition to many other projects.

The projects implemented in Duqm also include contractors' housing complex to provide accommodation for workers instead of using mobile caravans implemented by Renaissance Services Company. This labor city shall accommodate about 16,000 people and shall provide the various facilities to its residents. Duqm Development Company implements Phase II of Duqm façade while Al Madinah Real Estate Company is constructing a touristic shopping mall. There are other investments carried out by local and foreign companies with which SEZAD signed usufruct and development agreements during the current and prior years in the educational, health, commercial, industrial, logistics and other sectors.

### Incentives and Facilities

»» ***In the light of competition between economic and free zones in the region, do you think that the facilities provided by SEZAD are sufficient to attract investors?***

SEZAD has been working to keep up with investors' ambitions and expectations. It has prepared an integrated package of incentives and facilities that include tax exemptions up to 30 calendar years renewable for similar



periods and land usufructs up to 50 calendar years renewable for similar periods. Moreover, SEZAD provides several facilities through the one-stop shop to overcome the various difficulties and challenges facing investors. In addition, SEZAD overlooks the Arabian Sea, an open sea to the Indian Ocean near the international shipping lines and the key markets in Asia and Africa. SEZAD also has the advantage to embrace a variety of projects in different sectors. It is not only an industrial zone, a multi-investment economic zone that has a room for tourism, recreational, real estate, and residential projects.

It can accommodate warehouses, hospitals, international schools and many other projects in addition to other key projects relating to ports, dry docks and heavy and petrochemical industries. All these projects give SEZAD an impetus and readies it to attract different investors.

### Human Resources

»» ***SEZAD oversees multi-billion major projects that require the provision of competent and responsible labor. What is the approach of SEZAD on this?***


SEZAD is keen to attract local expertise qualified in this area. It publishes vacancy announcements in local newspaper and on its website to allow all concerned to compete to choose the best expertise available in the market. A specialized company evaluates the applicants before conducting job interviews. While SEZAD works to attract specialized foreign expertise it is keen at the same time to attract young Omani cadres of college graduates. This would make young Omanis gain the necessary experience to work on various projects overseen by SEZAD.

SEZAD is also working on the development of its human resources through high-level internal and external training courses. In this regard, SEZAD has developed an ambitious plan for its staff while taking care to provide an encouraging work environment and a positive

»» ***Duqm Port is ready to attract international shipping lines and the East and West trade***


»» ***We look forward to the establishment of an urban city replete with all the elements of modern life***



  
**Preparation  
of a study  
to set up  
a social  
responsi-  
bility fund  
to finance  
community  
develop-  
ment pro-  
grams**

climate for the development of the spirit of creativity and innovation.

**Key Objectives**

 **You mentioned on more than one occasion that the objectives of SEZA are to diversify the sources of national income, provide job opportunities for young people and develop Al Wusta Governorate. How would you achieve these goals?**

There are three key goals. The first is to diversify sources of national income through attracting various investments to SEZAD, especially in heavy and petrochemical industries sector. Duqm refinery and petrochemical industries shall be the locomotive for development and localization of these industries. Their presence in Duqm will attract major global and local companies to work in SEZAD and thus contribute to the diversification of the national

economy. Moreover, the strategic Duqm Port with its capabilities is qualified to attract many shipping lines to use it in their trade movements between East and West. By connecting the port with the multimodal transport system between Duqm and the various Wilayats of the Sultanate and major GCC cities, the Port will attain many gains for the national economy.

Add to this, the dry dock, managed by Oman Drydock Company, wholly-owned by Omani government, managed over the years to build a good reputation as one of the dry-docks to which international companies flock to perform maintenance of their vessels. The dry dock has also embarked on another activity that enhances its revenues, namely manufacturing iron structures and conversion of ships from one use to another.

Many other projects in tourism, real estate development, logistics, business activities and other sectors shall be, once completed, a good tributary to the national economy. Recently, we have observed an increase in the number of hotel guests because of the high number of ships coming to Duqm Port and dry dock.

The second objective is to provide employment opportunities for youngsters. This is a natural consequence of the increase in the number of projects in SEZAD. Currently, there is a growth in the number of Omanis working in SEZAD, Duqm Port or the dry dock or in other companies operating in the region and government units in Duqm.

The third goal is to develop Al Wusta Governorate. We can realize this by comparing the current commercial and tourist traffic, and industrial renaissance with the situation of the Wilayat of Duqm before work at the Port started. This comparison makes us realize various gains Al Wusta Governorate after the establishment of SEZAD. We expect that economic activity in the Governorate shall grow over time.

I would also like to point out here that the objective of the establishment of SEZAD is to create a development pole that stems from the Wilayat of Duqm to reach the various Wilayats of Al Wusta Governorate. The Governorate en-





joys a vast area of more than 79,000 square kilometers, while its population amounts to 42 thousand people according to the 2010 census, including 19 thousand Omani and 23,000 expatriates. This vast area with the limited number of residents needs development through the establishment of projects that benefit the various Wilayats and enable the population to be stable in their places of residence. Perhaps the contracts signed by local companies with SEZAD or with the major companies working in the region reflect parts of this goal. These projects have enabled local companies to grow and benefit from development.

### Local Community

»» ***This leads us to talk about social responsibility and the role of SEZAD in this area..What is your views on this.***

Since its inception, SEZAD has been focusing on the implementation of many programs for the local community and for the local companies to benefit from the projects implemented there. We have formed a committee concerned with this area, Local Community Development Area in SEZAD. The committee includes members of the local community as representatives of and familiar with the needs of residents. Last April, SEZAD organized, in collaboration with the OCCI's branch of in Al Wusta Governorate, the second forum on Duqm: Society and Economy, which discussed the development of social responsibility and the role of companies in this. SEZAD has taken great strides in the area of social responsibility in the region through strengthening its relationship with the local community and implementing a number of programs to serve it, such as providing 10 bachelor scholarships for the people of Al Wusta Governorate with a view to qualifying them to work on the projects in the region.

SEZAD is currently working on preparing the necessary studies to establish a Social Re-



sponsibility Fund in association with the companies operating in the region to finance the various programs proposed to serve people and develop local community.

### New Future of the Sultanate

»» ***SEZAD is considered the new future of the Sultanate in the field of diversifying the sources of national income and enhancing government revenues. To what extent can SEZAD achieve these visions?***

The development dimension, diversification of sources of national income and increasing government revenues is one of the main objectives of the establishment of SEZAD. In line with this objective, the government provided many capabilities to accomplish the various identified in the plan.

However, this does not mean that the objectives area realizable within a year or two but over a reasonable period that would witness the establishment of a modern urban city that



♦♦♦  
***The objective of SEZAD is to diversify the investment environment and allow for the contributions of the private sector therein***



**Duqm is a strategic project for the future prosperity and happiness of Omanis**

has the elements of modern life and provide all the needs of its population. SEZAD strives to achieve this goal.

It has developed time-bound action plans for the various stages of work in the region. I would also like to stress that SEZAD is one pillar of the Sultanate's plan to diversify sources of national income and there are other projects implemented by other government agencies. All together shall contribute to achieving the aspirations of the citizens and the governmental objectives to diversify sources of national income.

#### Duqm in the Future

»» **With the signing of several agreements, especially in heavy industry, refineries and petrochemical sectors, what is the vision**

#### for Duqm in the future?

The last period witnessed signing several land usufruct agreements for varied projects, including industrial projects related to refineries, ports and dry docks. We also signed land usufruct agreements with the private sector for the implementation of projects in the field of light and medium industries as well as tourist, recreational, commercial and logistics projects. This contributes to the diversification of the investment environment in the region to be able to attract different investors.

As I have said on more than one occasion, Duqm is a variegated city not only in its investment, but also in the cultures and experiences of its population. As the investments in SEZAD are industrial, tourism and trade, the experiences, preferences and cultures of its population are diverse as well. This diversity shall contribute to the transfer of expertise to the people and to the founding of a city that will be a symbol of cultural and social co-existence among the many nationalities that will live in Duqm.

#### Ambitious Project

»» **Finally, what is the message you would like to convey to the society as we celebrate the 45th anniversary of the blessed Renaissance?**

I would say that the gains made in the Sultanate during the past 45 years are numerous in various fields. SEZAD is one of the ambitious projects that target the prosperity and happiness of Omanis. SEZAD shall continue its endeavors to achieve the objectives of the region inspired by the thought of His Majesty Sultan Qaboos bin Said for the development of the region and attract various investments pursuant to an ambitious strategic plan aimed at not only the present generation but also extends to the future generations. This is because the development projects the region is of a long-term nature in light of their size and the required investments.







Ismail Bin Ahmed al Balushi, Deputy CEO of the Special Economic Zone Authority in Duqm, says the private sector investments witnessed a considerable growth during the last three months. He pointed out that the Authority efforts in promoting the Zone in and outside the Sultanate contributed to diversifying the investments to include investors from various countries.

He said the Authority intensified its efforts to promote the investment opportunities available in the Economic Zone in Duqm through promotional campaigns organized by the Zone in Turkey, Singapore and Italy or through the cooperation with the Public Authority for Investment Promotion and Exports Development (Ethraa) in conformity with the Memo of Understanding signed by both the authorities last year.

The MoU dealt with the cooperation in several aspects like including the Zone promotion in the annual programmes and activities carried out by 'Ethraa' and through its offices and representatives approved abroad.

There is also a cooperation with Oman Chamber of Commerce and Industry to promote the investment opportunities in the Zone. Such efforts contributed in acquainting the investors and major companies outside the Sultanate with the country's investment climate and the investment opportunities accessible in the Special Economic Zone in Duqm.

# Deputy CEO: Promotion efforts attracts investors from worldwide



Ismail Bin Ahmed Al Balushi



SEZAD provided a visual presentation on investment opportunities to Juan Carlos, former King of Spain

**Focus on the elements of Zone competitiveness and targeting of domestic and foreign private sector**

Al Balushi referred to the results of the promotional campaigns that motivated the investors and investment in the Zone, indicating that such campaigns contributed in diversifying the investments, confirming in the same time that the Authority is moving ahead in its plan to attract the investors to invest in numerous sectors. This would lead to achieve goals of establishing the Zone, of diversifying the national income sources, providing employment opportunities and the development of Al Wusta Governorate.

Al Balushi stated that attracting the investments was not only limited to the foreign investment but also include the local sector. The last period witnessed organizing several visits to the Omani businessmen to see the Zone and get acquainted with the available investment opportunities and to know of the work progress of the projects being executed in the Zone.

He indicated that the Authority launched a series of the awareness symposiums in the Sultanate during the beginning of 2015 targeting the local private sector and the Omani investors to introduce the businessmen to the investment opportunities available.

He maintained that the local symposiums also aimed to receive feedback and suggestions from the private sector regarding the investment in Duqm and replying to their enquiries about the Zone and the incentives provided for the investors. He indicated that the symposiums conducted in Khasab, Al Musanaa, Sohar, Al Buraimi, Ibri and Nizwa contributed in familiarizing the investors with the incentives and advantages provided by the Authority.

These symposiums also helped in encouraging the private sector to invest in the Zone within the Authority's plan to increase the local investments and motivate the businessmen



Focus on the elements of Zone competitiveness and targeting of domestic and foreign private sector





Sayyid Shihab visits SEZA pavilion at a local event



**The Promotional campaign in Singapore focused on the investment climate in the Sultanate**

to localize their projects and benefit from the advantages, tax and non-tax incentives and facilities provided by the Authority to various investors.

The SEZAD Deputy CEO pointed out the promotional efforts made by the Authority in and outside the Sultanate either through the symposiums, participation in the local and foreign exhibitions and conferences, leaflets or advertising the investment opportunities in various media contributed in motivating the investors to invest in the Zone.

He stated that the investments of the local private sector and the international companies are growing, referring to the agreements entered between the Authority and local, foreign investors totaling 51 agreements by the end of last May. He said that such agreements reflect

the attention the Special Economic Zone drew from the local and foreign investors, expecting that the Zone will experience more demand from the investors especially after the operation of Duqm oil refinery and providing the Zone with gas.

Concluding his press review, Al Balushi, confirmed that marketing the investment projects available in the Zone represents one of the goals the Authority endeavors to achieve, explaining that the increase in Zone investment volume reflects the extent of the investors attention attracted by the Zone.

He indicated that the Zone has tremendous opportunities in fields of industry, commerce, tourism, real estate development and logistic services which enhance the Zone competitiveness and qualify it to play a larger role in future.



The Promotional campaign in Singapore focused on the investment climate in the Sultanate

# Duqm:

## The One Stop Shop for investment

◆ File prepared by: Mohamed Bin Ahmed Al Shizawi

Saleh Bin Hemoud al Hasni, Manager of the One Stop Shop, Special Economic Zone Authority, Duqm says the One Stop Shop is the key to invest in Duqm.

There is also a wider space for the small and medium enterprises which the Authority endeavors to provide them with a relevant climate to success.

Saleh al Hasni offers tenths of video presentations to the investors every year in and outside the Sultanate believes that Duqm has become in the forefront of the investors attention.

At One Stop Shop the investor deals with only one entity through which he can obtain all services.







A number of foreign investors get to know the services provided by the one-stop shop

Al Hasni believes that this would save the time spent by the investor shuttling between more than one department to have his application completed. Through this the company can be registered, various permits and licenses either environmental, commercial, industrial or touristic obtained. The One Stop Shop communicates with other bodies such as Ministry of Manpower to obtain the manpower for the project. The Ministry has to respond to the request within 5 working days only by Royal Decree No79/2013 under which the Special Economic Zone was issued. The One Stop Shop also communicates with Royal Oman Police to issue entry visas for the investors as temporary solutions until these bodies delegate their representatives to work.

The One Stop Shop is the department concerned for the investors being vested with most powers and authorities necessary to register the companies and grant various licenses, permits and approvals to establish projects in the Zone.

Demand on the investment in the Zone:

Al Hasni says the demand exceeded the expectation. Last year, for example, we received about 200 various applications for industrial, tourism and commercial projects. Applications also included those for exhibition and stores sector and educational and health sectors. Since the establishment of the Authority, the previous year witnessed constant growth in the investment volume in the Zone. The usufruct contracts signed until last May totaled 51 contracts covering industrial, Tourism and commercial sectors of investment and other sectors. Until mid May 2015 the commercial registers recorded in the Zone totaled 95 for main offices and 189 branch offices in and outside the Zone.

The One Stop Shop that was established

in July 2014 by virtue of the Royal Decree No 79/2013 issued in December 2014 consisting of four departments, ie, Commercial Registration Department, Work Permits and Investors Visas Department, General Services Department and Import, Export and Custom Clearing Department. Through these departments, the One Stop Shop strives to keep abreast of the ambitions and expectations of the investors.

Facilitating and simplifying the procedures:

Al Hasni confirms that the main objective is to facilitate and simplify the procedures for the investors under which various department sections perform their duties. He added that we endeavor to facilitate and simplify the investors licensing and registration in the Zone and complete such formalities quickly and efficiently as possible. Recently, we worked on developing electronic services systems characterized with flexibility, transparency and speed in completing the formalities by creating an online single access point to ensure that the investor and the public obtain sufficient information and data. They can also submit the incorporation and licensing applications, follow up and pay the prescribed fees and other formalities necessary to provide the investors with better service in the Zone.

Commercial Registration Department:

Mahmoud Bin Hemoud al Rawahi, Manager of the Commercial Registration Department, believes that the station was able to establish a strong relationship with the investors during the last period as a result of the services it provides with which he thinks are in line with their ambitions and expectations.

He states that the Commercial Registration Department works on performing the services relating to the companies registration within a short period not exceeding 48 hours from the date of submitting the regis-

**Saleh Al Hasni: Our goal is to simplify the procedures and finalize the registration and licensing as quickly and efficiently as possible**



**Mahmoud Al Rawahi: Registration with the Authority is necessary to benefit from the privileges, incentives and tax exemptions**

tration application provided that it is complete with all the required documents, instruments and information which indicates that the Authority is determined to save time and effort of the investors. This is a considerable task with which the Authority was able to bring several projects in the Zone.

Al Rawahi in his statement, reviewed the services the Department made available to the investors saying that the Commercial Registration Department is the body concerned with receiving the incorporation and licensing applications from the firms and companies desiring to operate in the Special Economic Zone and obtain and privileges and facilities provided by the Authority to the investors.

He indicated that various companies registered in the Sultanate can operate in the Zone but the privileges and incentives provided to the investors are restricted to the companies registered and operating in the Zone taking into consideration the Omanization percentages prescribed by the Authority.

He added that the Authority provides numerous incentives to the investors such as tax exemptions and granting land usufruct rights for long periods of time and other incentives that encourage the investors to invest in Duqm. To enjoy such incentives, companies have to be registered with the Authority, a process that is performed within a very short period.

He pointed out that companies may be registered as a new sole company, a new commercial company either limited partnership company, partnership, limited liability, joint stock company or joint-stock company (closed). Companies may also register as a branch of sole company or local or international commercial company with its headquarters located outside the Zone. The

Authority welcomes various businesses to be carried on in the Zone under any legally recognised form.

He confirms that the department business is not limited to project registration but also includes governing the commercial registration processes to serve the purposes of publishing, control and safeguarding the public in coordination with the relevant departments and bodies.

This includes scrutinizing, updating and recording all the commercial registration particulars for all corporations and companies registered with the Zone and issuing the certificates and particulars from the Commercial Register to those concerned in conformity with the rules and regulations in force. This is another element that contributes to the improvement of the role played by the department with its services that extend to include maintaining an integrated database of its business and keeping the necessary records.

He indicates that the Commercial Registration Department also supervises the procedures pertinent to the ordinary and extraordinary general meeting of the joint-stock companies through reviewing and approving their agendas, approving their minutes of meeting and delegate observers in coordination with the relevant authorities.

The department is also concerned for the continuous follow up of the positions of the corporations and companies registered with the Authority to ensure fulfilling the prescribed conditions in the Zone in coordination with the relevant control department, especially those encountering contingent material circumstances or structural changes that affect their business or financial position including capital restructuring, merger and liquidation and provide adequate recommendations.



The one-stop shop in Duqm offers many services for investors





**Work Permits:**

After having signed the usufruct contract, the investor would like to know if he can secure the manpower needed to his project? His question doubles if he has heavy industry project or other major projects that require hundreds or thousands of labor especially during the construction phase.

Here comes the role of the Work Permits and Investors Visas Department that liaises between the Authority on one hand and Ministry of Manpower and Royal Oman Police on the other hand is important. Through this department, investors submit their applications to obtain permits to bring non-Omani manpower to the Sultanate. Investors also submit applications to obtain entry visas to the Sultanate.

Sultan Bin Adeem al Shuraiqi, Department Manager, states that labor permits and investors visas is the body concerned for receiving the non-Oman manpower employment applications. After reviewing, checking and ensuring that they contain all particulars and documents needed in conformity with the laws and regulations in force, the Department forwards the same to the concerned body in the Ministry of Manpower to issue the permits.


Royal Decree No.79/2013 stipulates that “The period necessary to issue the permits shall not exceed five working days from the date of submitting the relevant applications. If such period elapsed with no decision taken, the application shall be deemed as approved. In case the application is declined, reasons must be assigned.”

He clarified that fixing such period confirms

the Authority’s commitment to facilitate the formalities for the investors to help them establish their projects in the Zone, indicating in the same time that the department also receives the applications of transferring no-Omani manpower from an establishment to another and issue, renew and amend the relevant labour cards.

Al Shuraiqi pointed out that the department services are not restricted to assist the investor to obtain the required number of non-Omani labor, but extends to include the coordination with ROP to obtain visas for the employees and investors and their families. The department receives the applications for issuing visas for the investors and employees and refers them to the competent authorities after reviewing, checking and ascertaining that they contain all particulars and documents needed in conformity with the laws and regulations in force. According to Al Shuraiqi, the department renders all-important services to the investors and saves them a lot of time and effort.

He states that coordination between the department and the competent authorities resulted in issuing 15 investor’s license and more than 2,400 work permits, in addition to more than 1,400 work and investor’s visas until end of May 2015. The department now coordinates with those concerned in Ministry of Manpower and ROP to set up speedy and efficient procedures to receive and issue applications for employing foreign manpower and applications for issuing and renewing of visas highlighting the cooperation between the Authority and Ministry of Manpower to provide facilities to overcome

  
***Signing of MOU (s) with the government units to coordinate cooperation aspects relative to serving the investors***



**Sultan Al Sheraiqi:  
Providing  
the projects'  
requirements of  
foreign man-  
power within  
a period not  
exceeding  
5 working  
days**



the challenges related to securing the manpower needed by the projects in the Zone.

**Various Services:**

He adds that there are several other services rendered by the department including receiving applications for establishing training or educational projects or employing non-Omani manpower for the projects registered with the Zone. The department is also concerned for defining the Omanization percentages to be followed by the projects registered with the Zone in coordination with the relevant authorities and regularly reviewing the same to ensure the projects abiding by such percentages.

The department also looks after the extent to which they said projects are committed with terms of the Labor Law and the relative legislations, regulations and instructions including the rules governing the transfer and delegation of the manpower between the projects and the application of wages protection and employment contracts regulation in coordination with the relevant authorities.

Duties of the department also include ascertaining that the companies registered with the Zone are abiding by the rules of the Labor Law and the legislations concerned with the safety and professional health in coordination with the relevant bodies and departments. The department also reviews the number of the projects licensed to bring non-Omani manpower in the Zone and to look after the extent to which said projects are committed with the relative laws, legislations, regulations and instructions in coordination with the concerned bodies and departments and study the impact resulting from bringing non-Omani manpower in the Economic Zone to submit reports thereon.

**Import, Export and Custom Clearing:**

The One Stop Shop is characterized with the existence of a department relevant to various services of the import, export and custom clearing.

Most prominent tasks of the department include the continuous monitoring

of the changes occurring to the export and import regulations and the priorities and commercial restrictions to notify the exporters, importers and businessmen thereof and to make available data and information about the commercial, economic and financial activities and events that take place in the Zone.

Sultan Bin Adeem Al Shuraiqi, Manager in-charge with the Import, Export and Custom Clearing, states that the main goal of the department is to facilitate the operations of import and export for the companies operating in the Zone and look after various affairs relative to the custom clearing. As you are aware, the Zone experiences an increase in the number of the operating companies. With the lapse of time we will have large quantities of imported and exported goods. This necessitates taking certain procedures to ensure smooth movement of goods from and to it. Obtaining tax exemptions granted by the Authority to the investors and companies operating in the Zone also requires certain procedures to help attract various companies and investments.

Article 5 of the Royal Decree No119/2011 establishing the Special Economic Zone in Duqm which defines that "the goods imported from outside the Sultanate to the SEZ and those exported from the Zone to outside the Sultanate shall be exempted from the custom tax." It also defines that "goods leaving the Zone to any location in the Sultanate shall be dealt with as foreign goods even if it contains local raw materials or components."

He says Import, Export and Custom Clearing Department is the department concerned for devising the custom management system, tariff conditions and reviewing from time to time in coordination with the relevant authorities. During the last period we started to hold several meetings to devise such system with the authorities."

Specializations of the department also include participation in the meetings relative to the international agreements to fix the tables of the exchanged goods and its custom items in





accordance with the coordinated system classification and following up the amendments of such system as issued by the coordinated system committees of the World Custom Organization for necessary action. The department also examines the disputes arising about the custom item to be applied and providing adequate solutions for settlement, in addition to the continuous coordination and follow up with the custom department established in the Zone to make sure that it practices its specializations in conformity with the system approved by the Board of Directors of the Special Economic Zone in Duqm.

**General Services:**

For the services rendered by the One Stop Shop to the investors to complete, it was necessary for a body concerned with providing the general and municipal services to the investors to exist. Eng. Abdulla Bin Salim Al-Hakmani, Manager of the General Services Department, indicates that the department's specializations include receiving applications for building permits, approving the drawings of housing, commercial and industrial buildings in the Zone after reviewing and studying same and ensuring that they are in conformity with the recognized local and international specifications and standards and rules and instructions in force to ascertain that the buildings are structurally safe. Specializations also include devising an addressing system in the Zone through numbering streets, complexes, buildings, roads and lanes in view of the approved drawings and to link the same with GPS system based on the international coordinates in coordination with the relevant authorities. The department undertakes to set up and regulate road services and lighting in the Zone to enhance the efficiency of traffic and link the Zone components through construction of roads, bridges and parking lots providing necessary maintenance, and to set conditions and technical specifications necessary for practicing the activities in the Zone, to grant permits and approvals relative to the technical works in the Zone, to provide maintenance for the facilities of the Authority and the roads, bridges, tunnels, markets, sea facades and ensure a healthy and clean environment in the Zone, to complete formalities of rent contracts and to regulate the relationship between the property landlords and tenants and regulate the issuance of all types of municipal permits in coordination with the relevant authorities.

Al Hakmani continued to say that the General Services Department is also concerned with assuring food safety, controlling food stuff, inspecting food to ensure its edibility, monitoring the stores that prepare or offer foods and their staff members, in addition to monitoring and combating cheat in the food and food stuff in coordination with the relevant authorities.

He indicated that the department concerns also include tree-plantation through the construction of public gardens, parks and tree-plantation in the roads and squares, designing, executing and maintaining of irrigation networks.

**Challenges:**



Before we left the One Stop Shop offices in Muscat, we asked Saleh Bin Hemoud Al Hasni, One Stop Shop Manager about the challenges that encounter the station and how they worked to cope with them. He said that any project has to face several challenges and as we started the One Stop Shop from almost the Zero Point, the challenges were huge. However, the Royal Decree No.79/2013 issued on December 26th 2013 laid the adequate basis for the One Stop Shop to start. Within this framework, we cooperated with other departments within the Authority to prepare MoU (s) to coordinate the cooperation aspects relative to serving the investors. An MoU was signed with the Ministry of Commerce and Industry concerning the cooperation aspects to apply the terms of the Commercial Registration Law, Unified Industry Regulation Law and Mining Law, exchange of deeds, data, forms and rules between both parties in respect of industry and mining licenses, cooperation in inspection and field survey and enhancement of electronic linkage media and use of computer systems.

An MoU was also signed with the Public Authority for SME Development for coordination and cooperation about dealing with the applications submitted by the small and medium enterprises to invest in the Zone.

By virtue of the memorandum, the SEZ is obligated to consider allotment of adequate location to the concerned project within a period not exceeding two weeks from date of receiving the application from the Public Authority for SME Development.

An MoU was also signed with the Ministry of Regional Municipalities and Water Resources to determine the powers and obligations of both parties in respect of issuing municipal licenses, excavation licenses, building permits, building completion certificate and setting the health prerequisites for the projects located in the Zone, defining the

**Abdulla Al Hakmani: General Services Department receives building permit applications, approves building drawings and establishes an addressing system in the Zone**



coordination aspects with the municipality in performing public services in the Zone such as construction of public facilities, tree-plantation, lighting, slaughterhouses, water drainage, sewerage networks and other services. The Authority also intends to sign MoU(s) with other authorities during the coming period.

Al Hasni says that they are endeavored to overcome challenges through the completion of the legislative and regulatory infrastructure governing the investment environment in the SEZ. Within this framework the Authority's Board of Directors approved the rules and legislations governing the investment environment.

The most significant legislations approved by the Authority's Board of Directors in this respect were the project registration regulation, land projects in the Zone regulation, environmental permits issuing regulation, investment environment, urban planning regulation, building permits, rules regulating the tax exemption, in addition to the legislations pertinent to Omanization in the projects being carried out in the Zone where the Omanization percentage was fixed at 10 per cent to be reviewed every three years.

He pointed out that serving the investors through the electronic channels is one of the goal the Authority seeks to

achieve to serve the investors and cope with the respective challenges which entails setting of electronic portal for such services.

A taskforce was formed for this purpose. "We look forward to shift the electronic government after defining the services rendered to the investors and setting up clear and definite procedures to fulfill. We also strive to complete the components by involving representatives of the government authorities whose specializations are not available with the Authority such as Royal Oman Police, Ministry of Manpower and Oman Chamber of Commerce and Industry."

Coordination with these authorities is underway to finalize the electronic linkage with them and delegate their representatives to provide their services to facilitate the investors business and speed up finalizing their transactions in respect of visas and work permits.

"We are also working on enhancing awareness about the legislative and regulatory framework for the investment in the Zone and the investment formalities. This is achieved through symposiums held by the Authority in various governorates of the Sultanate in addition to printing booklets and leaflets which aim at familiarizing the investor and the investment formalities therein.

Saleh Bin Hemoud Al Hasni says in his conclusion that "the Authority endeavors to overcome the obstacles, to handle the issues and put solutions in order to enhance the quality of the services rendered to the investors."



**Serving investors through the electronic channels is one of SEZAD goals**





# Local and foreign personalities

## confirm its confidence in Duqm promising future



Kamel bin Fahd listens to a briefing on the components of the Zone comprehensive plan



The Polish delegation during its tour in the Stone Garden



Italian investors listen to a briefing on the Zone components

Duqm  :

The Special Economic Zone in Duqm gained the attention of numerous local and foreign personalities that praised, during their visit to the Zone, the potentials it has and the investment opportunities it offers to the investors expressing their confidence in the Zone future. His Highness Sayyid Kamel Bin Fahad Bin Mahmoud Al-Said, Assistant Secretary General in the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister for the Cabinet Affairs stressed that Duqm represents an international economic multi-purpose façade and an essential center in the region in view of its strategic geopolitical position overlooking the Arabian Sea.

Following inaugurating the “Duqm, Community and Economy ” 2nd forum that was held lately in April 2015, His Highness added that this Zone development shall render it one of the most significant economic zones and ports in the Middle East and an integrated economic center in addition to the multi-purpose logistic services that shall be rendered. In addition, it shall be one of the zones that forms an international economic hub.

His Highness called the private sector for more cooperation with the government, to play its expected role in the investment in the Zone and to establish various projects and develop the local community.





The heads of Arab and Gulf Chambers in a commemorative photo at the dry dock

**Kamel Bin Fahad:**  
*Duqm is an international economic multi-purpose façade*

**Several Touristic Facilities:**

As for him, His Highness Sayyid Taimor Bin Asaad Bin Tariq Al-Said praised the private sector's attention to constructing touristic facilities in Duqm indicating that Al Wusta Governorate is known for its moderate climate through all the year's season, the virgin beaches and a number of the natural touristic sites which together form essential elements in attracting tourists.

Inaugurating Park Inn Duqm hotel and resort, His Highness stated that constructing a new hotel in Al Wusta Governorate contributes in enhancing the touristic business in the Special Economic Zone in Duqm and in attracting more tourists and investors to the Zone which witnesses numerous projects being carried out in various sectors, explaining that constructing new hotels shall keep in line with the increase in numbers of the investors who frequently visit the Zone.

His Excellency said that tourism sector is one of the promising sectors in the Sultanate's economic diversification plan, and we look forward to strengthening its contribution in the

Sultanate gross national product and make available more employment opportunities for the young people, pointing out that the Sultanate is full of touristic potentials.

**Economic Diversity:**

As for him, His Excellency Dr. Yahya Bin Mahfoudh Al Mandheri, Chairman of the State Council expressed his confidence in the capability of Special Economic Zone in Duqm to accomplish the Sultanate aspirations for the economic diversity.

During his visit to the Zone presiding a delegation of State Council in the beginning of January 2015, His Excellency mentioned that the Special Economic Zone in Duqm, together with the ports and airports existing in Muscat, Salalah and Sohar, constitute an integrated network of the essential infrastructures for the transport and logistics services sector in the Sultanate within the government framework to diversify sources of income, exploit the strategic position, safe and stable environment and the open seas the Sultanate overlooks.

His Excellency expressed his appreciation

**Taimor Bin Asaad:**  
*Construction of new hotels keeps pace with the increase in investors and visitors numbers.*



Taimur bin As'ad opens Park Inn Hotel



Members of State Council during their visit to Duqm



**Chairman of State Council:**  
*We're optimistic about the Zone capability to achieve the economic diversity.*



**Chairman of Shura Council:**  
*The dry dock represents an integrated quantum leap in the field of international ships' maintenance.*

of the efforts exerted by the government in the economic diversity which will have a positive impact on this deep-rooted country in the near future, God willing. His Excellency said that we support the government to accomplish more significant vital projects which will benefit this generation and generations to come.

His Excellency stressed that the effects of the eminent vision of His Majesty Sultan Qaboos Bin Said of the necessity for diversifying the country's sources of income and reducing dependence on oil in the national income have gradually started to become clear, indicating the near future shall witness more vital projects on the comprehensive development path in the Sultanate.

His Excellency called young people to benefit from the potentials of the project by working in its facilities and establishments or investing therein through their small and medium enterprises.

His Excellency urged Omani private sector to effectively and directly contribute in developing such significant national facility and investing therein to achieve the development of various Omani companies, and prosperity for society in general.

**Shura (Advisory) Council:**

His Excellency Khalid Bin Hilal Al Mawily, Chairman of Shura Council valued the significance of the projects being implemented in the Special Economic Zone in Duqm. During his visit that took place in mid 2013 accompanied by a number of their Excellencies members of the Council's Office and Heads of Committees he stated that the goal of the visit was to follow up the major economic and developmental projects hosted by the Zone in view of the local economy needs to such strategic projects.

His Excellency indicated that the visit's goals also include getting acquainted with the advanced phases reached at by the current projects specially the airport and infrastructure projects. The delegation also visited Duqm

port which saw evolutionary and developmental phases in the associated expansion and construction works, in addition to the drydock which represents an quantum leap in the field of international ships maintenance. The delegation also got closely familiarized with the most important challenges that encounter those in-charge of those projects and how to overcome them to ensure that the project progresses as planned.

**Gulf Economic Integration:**

His Excellency Abdul Rahim Hussein, Deputy Secretary General of the GCC Chambers Association praised the Sultanate investments in the Special Economic Zone in Duqm, stating that such investments make Duqm Zone an ideal one for the services and facilities it provides to the investors and its distinguished strategic position overlooking Arabian Sea which, in turn, overlooks Indian Ocean, confirming that Duqm is set to promote the economic integration of the Gulf.

In a press release delivered during his visit to the Zone as member of the Arab and Gulf Chambers of Commerce he added that the Sultanate exerted considerable effort in constructing the infrastructure of the Zone, indicating that the projects invested in by the government are huge and promising and possess enormous potentials to attract various investments. In the same time, he praised the moderate climate that gives Duqm an added advantage of encouraging the investors.

His Excellency said that during their visit to Duqm, they found that the Zone features all essential potentials for investment and that the projects implemented therein are huge and eligible to enhance the economic development, and they in the GCC Chambers Association, Gulf delegation and Arab delegation were very pleased about what they saw in the Special Economic Zone in Duqm and, in fact, the infrastructure of the Zone is completed urging Gulf businessmen and investors to inspect such





significant economic facility.

He added that we can say the Special Economic Zone in Duqm is considered as key to Asian and African markets and we expect that it shall witness an investment boom. He expressed his hope that Duqm shall be an ideal Zone to contribute in promoting the economic integration of the Gulf being a station for storing and redirecting the goods to the GCC countries, indicating that Duqm forms an important Zone for Gulf countries to secure sea outlets on Arab Sea where their good are stored and re-exported to the target markets.

In his statement, he invited Gulf investors to invest in Duqm, saying that the Zone offers promising investment opportunities and called the investors, businessmen and businesswomen to benefit from the Zone especially in major field such as energy, petrochemicals, oil, gas and railways.

#### **Italian Companies Opportunities:**

Her Excellency Paola Amadei, Ambassador of Republic of Italy to the Sultanate confirmed the importance of the visit organized by the Special Economic Zone in Duqm in collaboration with the Italian Embassy in the Sultanate and the Italian Ministry of Infrastructures and Transport for a number of the Italian officials and businessmen to get acquainted with the investment opportunities available in the Zone to pave the way for increasing the Italian investments in the Sultanate.

She said the visit aimed at strengthening commercial relations between the Sultanate and Italy and exploring the investment opportunities in the Sultanate in general and in the Economic Zone in particular, indicating that the last five years witnessed 59% increase in the volume of bilateral trade between the two countries.

She confirmed that there are several fields for the Italian companies to invest in, indicating that the Italian companies shall have a distinctive appreciation in various countries for its

commitment to quality and excellence specially in the fields of technology, architecture, designing, innovation, tourism and industry and several other sectors.

#### **Large investments and opportunities:**

For its part, Her Excellency Katarzyna Kacperczyk, Undersecretary of Ministry of Foreign Affairs for Diplomatic and Economic Affairs of Republic of Poland expressed her satisfaction of the large investments and opportunities she found in the Special Economic Zone in Duqm, indicating that Polish delegation that visited Duqm in May 2015 possesses expertise in the field of ships and infrastructures, pointing out that there exist good opportunities for Polish companies to invest in the Zone.

Polish companies expressed their admiration of the projects being implemented in the Special Economic Zone in Duqm. Strotka Kayem, president of one of the companies operating in the ports sector said that their visit to the Sultanate targeted exploring the investment cooperation between Republic of Poland and the Sultanate especially in the ports sector being vital and distinctive in the Sultanate.

He indicated that investments in the Special Economic Zone in Duqm are large and there exists cooperation between some Omani and Polish companies to establish partnership to invest in the marine sector in the Sultanate.

#### **Numerous Facilities:**

Abdul Mohsin Abdul Aziz Al Hukair, founder of Saudi Al Hukair Group expressed his happiness to visit the Special Economic Zone in Duqm. During the visit paid by number of Saudi investors to the Zone in December 2014, he stated that Duqm possesses numerous investment opportunities in various economic sectors, praising the services and facilities offered by the Authority, calling in the same time for more promotion of the Zone and the projects implemented therein.

He pointed out that the projects seen by the




**Italian Ambassador:**  
*We look forward to increasing Italian investments in the Sultanate.*



**General Secretary of the Gulf Chambers Association:** *Duqm is an exemplary Zone qualified to enhance Gulf economic integration.*



  
**Founder of Saudi Arabia Hokair Group: good career opportunities available to young people**

delegation during the visit will provide numerous employment opportunities for young people in projects of high level of technology and possibilities which will qualify them to gain considerable experiences in Petrochemical and heavy industry sectors.

**Ideal Investment Place:**

Mr. Mohamed Saleh, Chairman of Chamber of Commerce, Industry and Agriculture in Saida and Southern Lebanon praised the Sultanate efforts to attract foreign investments and provide an adequate environment for their growth, appreciating the efforts made by the Special Economic Zone Authority in Duqm and Oman Chamber of Commerce and Industry to introduce the investment opportunities available in the Sultanate.

Mohamed Saleh and number of investors from eight countries visited the industrial and touristic projects in the Special Economic Zone in Duqm specially Duqm port, dry dock, Crown Plaza and Part Inn resort and expressed his admiration of what they saw, indicating the potential of the Zone and its ability to attract vari-

ous investments. He stated that Duqm project is the largest investment projects he visited in the past years and that it is an investment project for future that reflects the Sultanate tendencies to diversity the income sources, noting that the project is adequate to various investors whether those desirous to invest in the industrial sector or the logistic, commercial and touristic fields. He added that he recommends every investor to come in the Sultanate to pump its investments therein. He continued to state that he has investments in several countries but he actually thinks to invest in the Zone because of the diversity of the investment field he saw, in addition to the considerable infrastructure, the sound planning for future and the Sultanate real tendency to encourage investment and provide an adequate environment for its growth. He expressed his admiration of the touristic virgin nature of Duqm and the beach beauty and splendor, saying that it's an ideal place for investment, confirming his optimism in the future that awaits Duqm and stressing that the efforts made by the Sultanate to make the Zone an ideal place for investment will achieve their goals.

  
**Head of Sidon Chamber: Duqm is an ideal location for investment**







# Duqm Refinery awards site preparation work of its refinery complex to Galfar Eng

MUSCAT  :

Duqm Refinery announced that Galfar Engineering and Contracting has been awarded the tender for site preparation work for its upcoming refinery at the Special Economic Zone in Duqm.

Site preparation work is expected to start in the second quarter of 2015 and complete during the second quarter of 2016. The site preparation work comprises the excavation and compaction of more than 12 million m<sup>3</sup> of soil, and will lay the groundwork to commence refinery construction in 2016.

Once the refinery is completed, it will have the capacity to process around 230,000 barrels of crude oil per day. Diesel, jet fuel, naphtha and LPG are to be its primary products.

Jacobus Nieuwenhuijze, Project Director of Duqm Refinery commented "the site preparation work will be the first activity on the refinery site and this is an exciting milestone for the project. This ensures that the site will be ready for major construction of the refinery"

Jacobus further added, "we are delighted that many Omani contractors had expressed interest in tendering for the contract and this award will directly benefit the local community

of Duqm and Al Wusta region."

Duqm Refinery will be one of the growth engines for the special economic zone. It will provide development opportunities for new projects that will directly and indirectly interface with the refinery. These projects will look to benefit from the refinery's products as well as provide different logistic services to the refinery.

The Duqm area has been earmarked as Oman's next industrial and economic hub, to be known as the Duqm Special Economic Zone (SEZAD). Duqm Refinery is one of the major industrial projects of the new Special Economic Zone and will serve as the springboard for Duqm's planned transformation into one of the largest industrial and economic hubs in the region. This will have significant spin-off benefits for the local community, as the refinery will be the starting point for a number of In-Country Value (ICV) programs.

Duqm Refinery is a joint venture between the state owned Oman Oil Company and the International Petroleum Investment Company (IPIC). The refinery's business proposition is greatly enhanced by its strategic geographic location - direct access to the Arabian Sea and Indian Ocean.

# Economic and Developmental Role of Free Zones in the World

A free zone is part of a State territory within its political borders and subject to its administrative authority. Dealing within the free zone are special in terms of customs, import, monetary, tax and other business transactions related to the movement of goods in and out. Normal procedures in force within the State do not apply to these transactions, in order to allow greater volume transactions and exchanges that will attract more investment.

Free zones can be classified into several types according to their set targets. There are public free zones established on areas selected specifically to serve the purposes of economic and social development in the country. A free zone may be an entire city or a fenced land next to one of the cities or seaports. These zones enjoy freedom of economic activity for all economic establishments, which operate therein whether commercial, financial, industrial or logistic.

There are also special free zones. They are similar in essence to public free zones, except that the rules governing the establishment of the special free zone are limited/related to the licensed entity considering the nature of its activity, economic importance or the State objective of the license.

There is also the free city, a public free zone that includes an entire city and all economic activities practiced therein. A city enjoys the status of a free city under a law passed specifically for that purpose. Its articles include all the regulating provisions and controls. In Egypt, an example of this is the Free Zone of Port Said City created pursuant to Law No. 24 of 1976, and Decree Law No. 13 of 1997 on its regulation before the issuance of Law No. 5 of 2002 abolishing the law and regulation to turn Port Said City into a free zone.

The free seaport is one of the types of free zones, which is a public free zone that includes the seaport area, the city that accommodates the seaport and all economic activities exercised in that particular geographical scope. Historically, the first application of this type of free zones was in Hamburg Port, Germany in 1189 when the State of Hamburg was considered a free trade zone along with its seaport and city. Then, this type of free ports gradually. Its spread related to the ports located on the main shipping routes in the world, such as Singapore, Hong Kong and Aden.

The free zones are also divided according to

their respective activities. There are free trade zones whose principal licensed activity is commercial operations authorized only in this type of free zones. If any zone is limited to these activities, it is called a free trade zone. The following activities and operations are authorized for the goods in the free trade zone:

- Re-export foreign goods received at the charge of the free zone, whether as is, or after undergoing industrial or logistic processing operations, such as sorting, assembly, mixing with local goods or packaging according to customer or market demands.
- Export foreign goods into the country in response to the demand of the local market; then those goods become subject to the customs laws and systems prevailing in the country.
- Introduce local goods to the free trade zone at the export charge abroad; then those goods shall be subject to export customs procedures prevailing in the country as the free zone is considered as a foreign land from the customs perspective.
- Store foreign goods received under re-export charge, the local goods prepared at export charge, or foreign goods imported without import charge under foreign market demand.

The free industrial zones are the free zones based on licensing the establishment of industrial plants therein for conducting industrial processes without subjecting them to the prevailing customs laws and regulations, conducting such operations on components and local production accessories in order to export them or withdrawing part thereof to the local markets after completing customs formalities. Therefore, free industrial zones rely on raw materials or semi-finished components or products, whether local from within the country provided the products are intended for export to foreign markets, or foreign non-existent in the country to be imported as inputs in the production process.

## ***In recent years, new types of free zones emerged as follows:***

- 1- Open Door Zones: free zones established with view to encouraging export-oriented manufacturing sector, because the positive effects will not be limited to a particular sector or region. They will extend to the rest sectors of national economy and industry, through exports movement from these zones



**Dr. Ayman Al-Nahrawy**  
Professor of Transport,  
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to the neighboring foreign markets at a wider scope than that of the territory of the concerned State. The most important geographical application of such zones is in the border between the United States and Mexico.

- 2- Special Economic Zones: free zones specially created to achieve certain economic goals the State is seeking to achieve. China was the pioneer in establishing this type of zones to undertake industrial development of the strategic industries at the national level in China.
- 3- Export Processing Zones: industrial free zones that offer advantages, incentives and facilities especially for industrial plants with export-oriented production to foreign markets.

#### Economic and Developmental Role of Free Zones

***The free zones perform many developmental and economic roles that can be summarized as follows:***

- Attract major industrial and commercial companies and enterprises, to invest and work within the free zones.
- Attract investors, companies, and major industrial and commercial installations for technology transfer.
- Revitalize international trade and the activities of seaports, as the free zones avoid some of the procedural and administrative obstacles caused by the application of customs laws and systems in some countries.
- Push and stimulate national exports movement by focusing on export-oriented industries in the free zones.
- Supply the local market with some of its requirements from the free zone products, at a lower cost than the cost of importing them, while achieving savings of time they take to get them from overseas markets.
- Provide national industries with some of their components, production requirements and semi-finished products directly from the free zone, at a lower cost than the cost of importing them, while achieving savings of time they take to get them from overseas markets.
- Increase demand for national labor at the projects of free zones.
- Increase free exchange income through port charges, insurance, commission, land rent and fees for various services provided to the

projects in the free zones.

- Achieve developmental or social goals such as the development of some remote areas.
- Increase the activity of the national merchant fleet of the countries in which the free zone are as the vessels shall transport their exports to foreign markets, and imports of materials, components and production requirements for the existing industries.
- Exploit the distinguished geographical location of some cities and ports to set up global marketing centers, thus achieving positive benefits for the national economy, such as the ports of Rotterdam, Shanghai and Dubai.

#### Success Factors of Free Zones

The most important success factors of free zone management lies adopting the ways that ensure raising the quality of services offered and reducing their costs to serve the industrial, commercial and service sectors therein. They provide warehouses, yards ready for storage, modern offices, lands for the construction of industrial and administrative facilities, vast, open, covered and air-conditioned storage areas as per the needs of major multinational and multi-disciplinary companies. This also includes the provision of a variety of high-quality alternatives and options to the companies of various nationalities, cultures, disciplines and areas, along with the development of systems and procedures for the conduct of business so that they can to meet the different needs of companies with a high degree of efficiency.

Moreover, the success factors of free zone management include detailed business analysis and development of an integrated system for market study to find out the constant change in customer demand to provide the services required. This would then help identify technological methods that support work and the extent of their suitability. This will entail the development of a new management information system, the use of electronic market systems that allow companies to expedite reconnaissance of prices and sources of goods. It will make it also possible to make deals with various suppliers and importers from all over the world through electronic networking, contracting and acceptance by contractors who can easily confirm and approve their orders. This also provides equal opportunities to the institutions in any country to deal through their own markets that carry their brands so that these markets are linked through the electronic market system.



## Sebacic Oman chooses Duqm SEZ to set up the first castor oil production plant

MUSCAT  :

Sebacic Oman Company has announced that it will invest around RO 120 million in two phases in its new plant that will be set up in Duqm Special Economic Zone (SEZD).

The company signed in May of 2015 a usufruct agreement with Duqm Special Economic Zone Authority (SEZAD), which granted the company the right to use the land to set up its plant in SEZD to produce Sebacic acid which is extracted from castor oil and which is used in many chemical industries including plastics and pharmaceuticals. The plant will be set up on a plot that is approximately 400 thousand square meters.

The investment value of this project in its first phase will be approximately RO 24 million, while the investments in the second phase, which will start within five years, will reach \$250 million. The project will create 450 employment opportunities in its first phase and an extra 250 employment opportunities in its second phase, which means a total of 700 jobs will be created.

This project, which is considered the first castor oil production plant in the Middle East, has received the necessary funding from Meethaq Islamic Banking.

Shaikh Hilal bin Khalid al Mawali confirmed that the aim of entering into such eco-friendly strategic project has always been the highest priority in this

investment.

He said in his speech during the signing ceremony, that the project would allow citizens to benefit from this project by planting trees, which produce the necessary feedstock in the Sultanate.

He also explained that the tree is known in the Sultanate for thousands of years as the "castor oil plant" that its oil has many usages and is easy to plant in many areas. He also emphasized the company's commitment to purchasing the farmer's production, pointing out that the Company has begun carrying out a study that aims to encourage local Omani farmers to grow this tree in a scientific way, especially in untapped agricultural areas.

## National Ferries signs MoU with ODC

MUSCAT  :

National Ferries Company (NFC) signed an MoU with Oman Drydock Company (ODC) related to providing regular maintenance for the company's ferries at the drydock in Duqm Industrial Zone.

The MoU was signed by Mahdi bin Mohammed al Abdwani, CEO of the National Ferries Company, and Shaikh Khalil bin Ahmed al Salmi, Deputy CEO of the ODC.

As per the MoU terms, the fleet of the National Ferries Company will be given priority in meeting the repair and maintenance needs during the period from 2015 to 2019.

National Ferries Company's fleet consists of seven ferries, used in transporting vehicles and passengers and one ferries for goods and equipment.

Mahdi bin Mohammed al Abdwani, CEO of National Ferries Company, said in a statement to Oman News Agency (ONA) that the both companies are owned by the government, therefore it will be easy to provide regular maintenance service for the company fleet as per world class standards, and especially ODC is known for providing high quality service. Moreover, ODC has all the technical capabilities and resources needed at any dry dock.

On his part, Shaikh Khalil bin Ahmed al Salmi said in a statement to ONA that the cooperation between the two companies is not new as a number of the NFC ferries has been repaired and maintained at the dry dock. This cooperation reflects both companies' success in creating a real partnership to benefit from this national project. ONA



# Successful closure of equity raising for Renaissance Duqm PAC



MUSCAT  :

Renaissance Services has finalised the equity partnership for its RO 75 million Permanent Accommodation Project in the Duqm Special Economic Zone.

Stephen Thomas, CEO of Renaissance Services, said, "Renaissance is delighted to have attracted investors from all our target groups, including the local community, alongside Omani Pension and Sovereign Wealth Funds."

The total investment is estimated at RO 75 million, with 40 per cent of

the investment funded through the new equity partnership between Royal Court Affairs, the Ministry of Defence Pension Fund, Bank Muscat, Al Khonji Development and founder and promoter, Renaissance Services.

Renaissance shall hold 51.9 per cent of the shares, with the balance held by the investing partners.

The Duqm Permanent Accommodation for Contractors project will create a modern, fully-serviced living facility for over 16,000 people working in Duqm.

The Renaissance blueprint turns the challenge of scale and perma-

nency into design economies for the project, which means they can provide world-class standards of comfort, safety and service, well below the cost of setting up temporary structures for the same number of people.

In fact, by offering services from recreation to cleaning and catering, the permanent accommodation experience is a striking contrast to the infamous living conditions faced by manual labourers elsewhere.

The project is progressing on time and on budget: the piling is completed and construction underway, with operations on target to begin mid-2016.



*Eng Yahiya Al Zidjali in an exclusive interview highlights:*

**Development of planning studies aimed at enabling Duqm to compete locally, regionally and internationally**







Duqm city center at the beginning of 2015

Duqm -  :

WHAT distinguishes New Duqm City is that the planning system adopted by the Special Economic Zone Authority Duqm (SEZAD) begins from where others have ended. It came after a number of studies conducted by the competent government agencies so that Duqm would be a modern city that keeps pace with the interests and aspirations of the population.

Eng Yahya bin Khamis Al Zidjali, Planning and Engineering Projects Follow-up Officer at the Office of the SEZAD Chairperson, confirmed that Duqm enjoys a number of factors that make it a modern city that can cater for the needs of its population.

He refers to many planning studies since the beginning of the last 90s with the issuance of Royal Decree No 6/91 in February 1991 adopting the administrative division of the Sultanate. This introduced Al Wusta Region (now Al Wusta Governorate) after its four wilayats were administratively divided between Dhofar Governorate, Ad Dakhiliyyah, and Ash Sharqiyah.

In an exclusive interview Al-Zidjali points out that this decree paved the way significantly to the development of Al Wusta Governorate. It led to the first planning study for the development of the governorate in the Fourth Five-Year Plan (1991-1995 AD) which clearly paid more attention to the regional dimension in planning in the form of distribution of projects development and government spending on the various governorates of the Sultanate.

  
***Duqm planning relied on correct scientific methodology in modern urban planning***




  
**Economic Planning recommended the establishment of Duqm Port to take advantage of its unique location on the international shipping lines**

recommendations of regional planning, a road network has been implemented in Al Wusta to link its various Wilayats and link them to the remaining Wilayats in the Sultanate to its north and south. As part of the fourth five-year plan, 600 kilometers were paved from Mahout to Duqm, Al Jazir, and Haima.

These roads were a manifestation of development in Al Wusta. They also contributed significantly to facilitate the movement of people from their respective Wilayats to the various Wilayats of the Sultanate, transport of goods and promote trade, especially sale of fish, which reflected positively on the development of the Region.

#### **Economic Planning**

Eng Yahiya bin Khamis Al Zidjali referred to a number of planning studies that fall within the economic planning relied upon for determining the economic activities necessary for the development of the Governorate. He pointed out that these studies focused on Wilayat of Duqm as a development pole for Al Wusta Governorate.

He explained that Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) prepared a study in which it recommended the creation of a port in Wilayat of Duqm to take advantage of the potentials of the fisheries and minerals sectors. The reason for selecting the Wilayat of Duqm was its location near the international trade corridor.

The Ministry of Transport and Communications included Duqm Port project in its plan. The preliminary idea was for a simple port then the government considered it appropriate to increase the absorptive capacity of the port and

make it a strategic multi-purpose port. There, the port size tripled and became able to accommodate a wide range of industrial activities.

Again, plans started to direct the capabilities of this huge port and enable it to achieve these goals so that it attracts heavy industries and becomes a center of manufacturing industries. Since the port shall contain significant activities, it is necessary to establish support areas, such as the residential area, tourism area, fishing port and the fishing industry area and connect these areas through multiple transport means that include a regional airport, high-quality road network in addition to the train project that connects Duqm with the main centers in the Sultanate.

#### **Land Use Study**

Engineer Yahiya Al Zidjali mentioned an important planning study conducted during the past years. He indicated that in 2004, a study was conducted on land uses in the development of the Wilayat of Duqm project.


Based on this study, the necessary infrastructure facilities for the project were determined. The study also laid the housing foundations and requirements in the Region and identified the port area and the various industrial, commercial, residential and tourist areas. This study has been updated continuously to keep pace with the progress in the project.

He pointed out that studies conducted during the period covered the various areas comprising the comprehensive scheme of the Region and determined the required services. He explained that the objective of these studies was to identify the required projects to make





Modern roads in Duqm

  
 The target of Duqm Port expansion was to enable it to absorb heavy industry activities and achieve the goals of economic diversification

**Potentialities:**

Eng Yahiya Al Zidjali, who undertook several responsibilities in the field of planning and held a number of senior positions, recalled the nineties, said that studies conducted in the fourth five-year plan focused on regional planning of Al Wusta Governorate. They aimed at identifying the potentialities of the Region and the demographic characteristics of its population, workforce, and natural resources. This regional planning resulted in the so-called hierarchy of population communities that considers spatial dimension. Based on the population characteristics, we were able to find a type of population hierarchy.

“In the beginning, we chose the Wilayats of Duqm and Haima as the regional centers in the Region. Haima is the administrative center of the Governorate while the choice of Duqm relied on its location on the open Arabian Sea, the Indian Ocean and near the international ship-

ping lines. This planning study recommended the establishment of an economic growth pole in Al Wusta Region (currently Al Wusta Governorate) centered in Wilayat of Duqm and plays a role in the development of the remaining Wilayats of the Governorate.”

**Growth Pole for Development:**

In this way, the regional planning identified the regional centers and demographic characteristics of the Region and the potentials of natural resources. It selected Duqm as a pole growth for the development of the Region as is the case with Wilayat of Sohar, the growth pole for the development of Batinah North, Rustaq for Batinah South, Sur for Al Sharqiyyah South, and Nizwa for Al Dakhiliyyah. This is also the case with the remaining Wilayats chosen to be growth poles from which the growth of the various neighboring Wilayats emanates.

He pointed out that in implementation of the



Duqm city center as currently planning






  
**Lands in the residential scheme accommodate about 500 thousand people, and there are no concerns about increasing population**

ed out that the residential area, with its current capabilities, can accommodate 150 thousand people.

#### **Eco-friendly City**

He stressed that the New Duqm City will be environment-friendly and will not be densely populated although growth forecasts suggest the Region can absorb 500 thousand people in the first phase of the scheme over 800 square kilometers including various industrial, tourist, commercial and residential areas. He asserted that the land in the residential scheme should accommodate this number of the population.

He said that in planning the New Duqm City, there is a synergy between the horizontal and vertical systems. He pointed out the Down Town area was also determined and that it would include high, but not high-rise buildings.

He added that SEZAD is currently developing the conditions and standards of the architecture style or facade especially in the business area and the areas that overlook the main streets and entrances to areas. Through these standards, SEZAD will control the visual perspective of the buildings. SEZAD also seek to find homogeneity in buildings in terms of height or facade type. The studies currently prepared by the SEZAD will lead to determining the architectural standards of the buildings to be established in the Region.

Al Zidjali indicated that though SEZAD strives to develop standards and criteria for the buildings, at the same time it would not impose specific designs on the real estate developers who have certain development visions for residential, commercial and tourist complexes.

There shall be general requirements that all developers should adhere to but each developer has the option to develop the design it deems appropriate, adds good value for the New Duqm City and is consistent with the basic standards.

#### **Transportation in the City**

In closing, Eng Yahiya bin Khamis Al Zidjali, Planning and Engineering Projects Follow-up Officer at the Office of the SEZAD Chairperson, highlighted the means of transport in the New Duqm City.

He indicated that SEZAD was keen that New Duqm City accommodates different types of transport based on the function of the road and the expected traffic movement. There are major dual roads with three lanes in each direction, such as the road that connects Duqm Airport and the Port. There are secondary ring roads with two lanes in each direction that connect other area, such as the road that connects the coastal city and the residential city and exhibition area. Then comes the local roads in neighbourhoods.

These roads have the potentiality for future expansion.

Moreover, enough space has been reserved for train, bus and metro lines. In general, the means of transport in the Region have been developed to keep pace with growth demand for more than twenty years to come. This not only limited to residential, tourist or commercial city, but also in the port area, where roads can have (8) lanes in each direction when need arises. As Duqm has wonderful climate and low temperatures, we may allocate lanes for bicycles.



Duqm able to compete locally, regionally and internationally.

He indicated that these studies dealt with the type of the required projects for the Region in its various commercial, industrial, tourist and residential sectors and investment system therein. They also dealt with how to protect the environment in Duqm and provide natural outlets, gardens and parks in the Region.

All of these studies relate to the urban environment. He asserted that that Duqm is lucky because it started from the regional level then the general level then the detailed level and then the operational level, which has not been the case with the other regions in the Sultanate.

This will lead to a very different model from other planning models in the Sultanate since it relied on a sound scientific methodology in modern urban planning. He pointing out that the planning studies identified growth prospects and stages of development of the Region.

#### **Creating an Urban Environment in the Region**

He focused on the attention given by SEZAD towards creating an urban environment in the Region. The urban environment means provision of the various and integrated infrastructure, such as roads, electricity, water, sanitation and communication facilities and the provision of various services cities usually require organization of its markets and neighborhoods. Accordingly, the planning of modern Duqm city was methodological to be able it to keep up with population growth, which comes because of the increase in industrial and com-

mercial activities in the Region.

He pointed out that the government has set a plan for the development of the first phase of the Region of an area of 800 square kilometers scheduled to complete in 2020. The year 2013 witnessed the preparation of the urban scheme of the residential area. This was a purely schematic study on the development of the modern residential city and all details related to environmental management, management of infrastructure facilities, land uses, construction conditions and means of transport as all the required modern life styles.

This important study considered the environmental aspects while maintaining Duqm geological characteristics to make it open and able to grow, and provide natural outlets, such as parks and buffer zones between its various parts and districts.

He explained that a further study is currently underway on urban planning for all these urban areas, pointing out that five urban areas were identified, namely airport, coast, stone park, government services and business district.

#### **Industrial Planning**

Al Zidjali turned to a number of studies on estimating the numbers of the population in the Region. He said that these studies relied on the type of planned projects. For example, the study on industrial planning considered that the population of the industrial area would be 250 thousand people by 2025 while the urban planning study predicted that the number of people in the residential area would reach 100 thousand people by the same year. Al Zidjali point-




*Planning studies identified land uses and areas and laid housing foundations and requirements*



*In implementation of Royal Decrees*

# Signing Memorandum of Understandings (MOUs) with the government units to raise Duqm competitiveness

Muscat -  :

The Special Economic Zone Authority Duqm (SEZAD) signed a number of memorandums of understanding (MoUs) with government units to implement Royal Decree 79/2013 on SEZAD System, which granted it the terms of reference of a number of government units in the Zone. This is part of the government's efforts to raise the competitiveness of the Zone and enable it to achieve its objectives.

According to the abovementioned Royal Decree, SEZAD has the terms of reference of the Secretariat of the Commercial Register to apply the Commercial Register Law regarding the registration of projects, and of the Ministry of Commerce and Industry to apply the GCC Unified Industrial Organization Law as for registration in the industrial record and granting licenses to industrial project. SEZAD has also the prerogatives of the Public Mining Authority to apply the Mining Law, of the Ministry of Tourism to apply the Tourism Law regarding the issuance of the necessary tourist projects licenses. It has, as well, the prerogatives of the competent authority in the application of Food Safety Law

and the jurisdiction of the Minister of Manpower to apply the Labor Law in determining the procurement fees of expatriate workforce and Omanisation percentage in the projects. SEZAD has also the terms of reference of the Ministry of Environment and Climate Affairs regarding the issuance of environmental permits for projects and the application of laws on environmental protection, pollution control and the protection of drinking water sources.

In order to effect the provisions of Royal Decree No. 79/2013 on SEZAD System and Royal Decree No. 119/2011 on SEZAD establishment, SEZAD signed a number of MoUs in 2014 and 2015 with government units. These included the Ministry of Commerce and Industry, the Ministry of Regional Municipalities and Water Resources, the Ministry of Manpower, and the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Oman.

## **Application of the Commercial Register Law, Industrial Organization Law and Mining Law**

The MoU signed with the Ministry of Commerce and Industry (MOCI) in February 2014 stipulated linking SEZAD system with the automated system of the one-stop shop at the MOCI to ensure speedy completion of trans-



**Granting SEZAD broad terms of reference to facilitate investors' procedures and provide services that keep pace with internationally established incentives**



MoUs seek to take advantage of the Zone potentials to attract investors





Yahiya Al-Jabri exchanges MoU documents with the Minister of Commerce and Industry

actions through SEZAD directly on behalf of the MOCI. The MoU also provided for the creation of a window for the commercial register transactions in the Zone, rectifying the status of commercial institutions and companies and identifying the facilities and tax exemptions.

The MoU clarified SEZAD prerogatives in the application of the provisions of the Commercial Register Law, Unified Industrial Organization Law and the Mining Law. Pursuant to the MoU, SEZAD shall exercise the competences and tasks relating to licensing, control and granting judicial arrest powers to its officers, as needed, in addition to training its staff on the functions of the commercial register.

#### **Municipal Services and Food Safety**

Before the end of 2014, SEZAD signed an MoU with the Ministry of Regional Municipalities and Water Resources. The aim of the MoU was to organize their cooperation in the provision of municipal services, application of food safety laws and carrying out their respective tasks and responsibilities smoothly pursuant to the Royal decrees relating thereto towards realizing the desired objectives of the establishment of the Zone.

The signing of this MoU was in implementation of the previously mentioned Royal Decree No. 79/2013, which states that SEZAD, within the borders of the Zone, would have the terms of reference of a number of government agencies. It was also in implementation of Royal Decree 44/2014 lifting the status of public utility of some schemes within SEZAD scheme, and Royal Decree No. 119/2011 establishing SEZAD.

Under the MoU, SEZAD shall issue drilling licenses, construction permits, and construction completion certificates in accordance with the systems in place therein for the proj-

ects registered in the Zone commercial register whether established on state-owned lands or on private lands owned by these projects. SEZAD shall also issue licenses and develop health requirements for the economic activities licensed in the Zone for the projects in the Zone commercial register. This shall be in addition to all the powers of competent authority in the Food Safety Law within the borders of the Zone.

Duqm Municipality shall issue construction permits, and construction completion certificates in accordance with the systems in place for individuals and projects not registered in the Zone commercial register built on the private lands owned by these projects. Duqm Municipality will also responsible issue municipal licenses and develop health requirements for individuals and projects not registered in the Zone commercial register.

With respect to services provided by SEZAD, the MoU stipulates SEZAD shall perform, in coordination with the Municipality, a number of public services, including the construction, maintenance and cleaning of public facilities, such as internal roads, squares, plazas, parks, children playgrounds, public toilets, public markets, parking lots, umbrellas and maintenance of these facilities.

Services provided by SEZAD also include landscaping and new lighting, management and maintenance of internal roads, streets, squares, beaches, public squares, parking lots, markets and playgrounds. It shall also establish new slaughterhouses, organization, naming and numbering of streets, neighborhoods, roads, alleys and fields, regulation and control of ads and banners at public roads in the Zone, taking the necessary actions to drain rainwater and providing and maintaining sanitation of networks.

The MoU also organized the services provided by Duqm Municipality in coordination



***OCCI caters for traders and investors through SEZAD one-stop shop***



Signing of an MoU with the Ministry of Regional Municipalities and Water Resources

**Agreement with the Ministry of Manpower to regulate procurement-licensing procedures of expatriate workers at the entities operating in the Zone**

with SEZAD. They include vector control, taking the necessary measures to safeguard public health, organize detention of stray or neglected animals, organize parking, setting taxi tariff and placing distinctive signs. Add to this taking the necessary procedures and measures to maintain, manage and operate the slaughterhouse, taking the necessary actions to maintain and manage the cemetery, and organizing festivals and cultural, recreational, sports, and social seminars.

The MoU also stipulates that its parties cooperate in the field of documents and records inventory relating to construction permits and construction completion certificates issued by the Municipality for the projects owned by companies and merchants enrolled in the Zone commercial register. To this end, these documents and records shall be transferred from the Ministry to SEZAD under official delivery and receipt proceedings.

It also provided for the cooperation of the two parties to transfer all documents and records relating to the actions and decisions previously issued by the Municipality within the framework of the application of the provisions of the Food Safety Law on economic activities in the Zone. The Ministry shall also provide the necessary technical support to SEZAD, and benefit from the services of its laboratory in the field of water testing and other tests related to food safety.

**Issuance of Foreign Workforce Licenses**

During 2015, SEZAD signed an MoU with the Ministry of Manpower to organize their cooperation in many areas as prescribed by the Royal Decree No. 79/2013 stipulated there shall be established in the Zone a labor 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.

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.

The MoU stipulates that SEZAD shall notify the Ministry of the decisions issued SEZAD issues regarding foreign labor recruitment fees and Omanization 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

**Issuance of foreign labor force licenses within five working days from the date of applying**





Yahiya Al-Jabri and Abdullah Al-Bakri during the signing of the MoU

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.

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 Omanization 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 take inventory of 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.

#### **An MoU with OCCI**

In 2015, SEZAD and the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Oman (OCCI) signed an MoU to regulate their cooperation towards the provision of the best services to investors through the one-stop shop in



***Expatriate workforce brought in to work in the Zone shall not move to work in the customs territory without obtaining a new license from the Ministry of Manpower***



During the signing of the MoU

**SEZAD**  
**issues commercial registers, and industrial, environmental and tourist licenses**

SEZAD. This was as stipulated in the Royal Decree 119/2011 establishing SEZAD and Royal Decree 79/2013 issuing SEZAD System.

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 at 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.



## ***SEZAD considers establishing a fund to finance various programs in Al-Wusta Governorate***

# **Duqm Forum discusses promotion of social responsibility concept among the companies operating in the Zone**



Kamel bin Fahd during his visit to SEZAD pavilion at the Forum of Duqm: Society and Economy

Duqm -  :

On 29 April 2015, Duqm witnessed the second edition of the Forum (Duqm: Society and Economy), which aimed to promote the concept of social responsibility and discuss investment opportunities available for local companies.

The Forum was held at Duqm Crowne Plaza Hotel under the patronage of H.H. Sayyid Kamel bin Fahd bin Mahmoud Al Said, Assistant Secretary General, Officer of the Deputy Prime Minister for Cabinet Affairs.

The Forum discussed many views and visions that would contribute to the activation of the performance of



A training course within the entrepreneurship program organized by the Community Development Committee



Sayyid Kamel bin Fahd and the audience during the opening of the Forum

companies in the area of social responsibility. It reviewed the investment opportunities in the Special Economic Zone Duqm (SEZAD) available to the people of Al-Wusta Governorate. Moreover, SEZAD signed three land usufruct agreements with local companies planning to implement a number of projects in the Zone.

H.E. Yahiya bin Said bin Abdullah Al-Jabri, SEZAD Chairman, indicated that the Zone achieved many successes during the past few years and assumed a distinctive place on the global investment map because of its competitive advantages and the incentives and facilities it offers for investors. In addition, its vast area of approximately (1745)

square kilometers can accommodate various investments that investors would desire to set up in the Zone.

#### Social Responsibility Fund

In a statement delivered during the Forum, Al-Jabri asserted that the development of Al-Wusta Governorate is one of the main objectives of the establishment of the Zone, commending the increasing trade and investment activity in Duqm. He said that the projects being implemented by the government and the private sector in the Zone have contributed to the revitalization of economic activity in the Governorate and provision of many job opportunities for its



Students at English language teaching program in Duqm





CSR gained extensive discussions during the Forum

people. He added that SEZAD has focused, since its inception, on the support of the local community. In 2013, SEZAD formed Community Development Committee to propose programs, activities and events the region needs. Its members include representatives of the local community in order to take advantage of their opinions and suggestions to enhance the residents' benefits of the projects in the Zone.

H.E. announced during the that SEZAD was considering the establishment of a social responsibility fund in the Zone to finance the various projects and programs needed by the community and strengthen the efforts of SEZAD and the companies operating in the Zone to implement quality projects that have a significant impact on the various segments of society.

#### Investment in the Community

During the Forum, Rania Safar, social responsibility specialist and in charge of women's section in "Smurf" social responsibility program at Aramco, Saudi Arabia, presented a working paper in which she confirmed that the programs implemented in the field of social responsibility are investments in the community. She pointed out that the foundations of social responsibility are care, guidance, perfection and integration.

Safar indicated that the benefits of social responsibility programs are not limited to the beneficiaries only, but also include companies that implement these programs. They can contribute to improving financial performance, reducing operational costs, boosting sales, increasing customer loyalty, promoting productivity and the ability to attract and retain staff in addition to earning the trust of government entities.

#### SEZAD Projects and Programs to Serve Local Community

SEZAD, in collaboration with some companies and government agencies, implemented a number of projects

and programs to serve the local community including the following:

- 1- Activate community participation by forming Local Community Development Committee.
- 2- Implement 150 housing units for the people.
- 3- Provide (10) grants for undergraduate study for the people of Duqm in the academic year 2014/2015.
- 4- Oblige SEZAD, as well as the government owned companies operating in the Zone, to allocate not less than (10%) of the total purchases and tenders to medium and small companies.
- 5- Oblige entrepreneurs to prepare training plans for national workforce to replace expatriate workforce in order to raise Omanization of their human resources.
- 6- Incorporate in all usufruct and development agreements entered into by SEZAD concerning the lands in the Zone a contractual clause stipulating preparing training plans for national workforce to replace expatriate workforce in order to raise Omanization of their human resources.
- 7- SEZAD has been continuously updating its data on the number of job seekers in Wilayat of Duqm in coordination with National Manpower Register Authority.
- 8- Coordinate efforts with Duqm Refinery and Petrochemical Industries Company in order to determine the number of jobs and competencies needed by the refinery project to prepare and qualify national workforce to maximize the benefit of these jobs.
- 9- Cooperate with the Ministry of Manpower to establish an institute for vocational training in the Zone.
- 10- Cooperate with the Ministry of Higher Education to provide guidance and scholarships for the people of the Governorate in the scientific disciplines needed by the Zone.
- 11- Cooperate with Takatuf Scholars, a subsidiary of Oman Oil Company, on enrolment of a number of job seekers in the preparation programs and on the job qualification.



Duqm Beach Company plans to invest US\$ 500 million for the construction of new tourist projects

Stoyan Kiceec:

**We are committed to creating a world-class integrated tourist project**







### Muscat - :

On Wednesday, May 13, 2015, the Special Economic Zone Authority Duqm (SEZAD) granted Duqm Beach Company a land usufruct in the Zone for the construction of Duqm Beach Tourist Resort on 450 thousand square meters at an investment cost in excess of US\$ 500.

H.E. Yahiya bin Said bin Abdullah Al-Jabri, SEZAD Chairperson, signed the agreement on behalf of SEZAD while Stoyan Kiceec, Chairman of Duqm Beach Tourism Company, signed it on behalf of the Company.

H.E. Yahiya bin Said bin Abdullah Al-Jabri stressed that this agreement reflects the importance attached to the Zone at the local and international levels.

In a press statement, Al-Jabri stated that signing of this agreement raises the number of tourist projects in the Zone and size of investments therein, pointing out that tourism projects raise the competitiveness of the Zone and offer several options for accommodation, recreation and entertainment for investors and tourists.

He noted that SEZAD is keen to diversify investments and investor base. "We are proud of the existence of a variety of investments in the Zone from around the world, and we hope that the new project shall be a successful addition to the touristic area and contribute to provide good job opportunities for citizens," stated Al-Jabri.

Duqm Beach Resort is an in-

vestment alliance of Australian Site Group Company, which owns (90%) of the project and Al-Jazeera International Company (10%).

Duqm Beach project includes a 5-star hotel, a 4-star hotel, restaurants and shopping mall. The first phase will be for tourism and other commercial activities along with residential facilities built to meet the demands of potential housing. The tourism project shall start, in principle, in the food sector to target the visiting ships and businesses operating in the Zone. It is expected for the first phase to start in the last quarter of this year and that the various stages of the project shall complete over five years. It shall provide job opportunities up to 1000 jobs by 2020.

For his part, Stoyan Kiceec, Chairman of Duqm Beach Tourism Resort, stated following the signing of the agreement «Our choice of the Special Economic Zone in Duqm came after a comprehensive and accurate study of the feasibility of the project, which is a new addition to the tourism sector in the Zone, taking advantage of the distinctive panoramic view of the Arabian Sea.»

"We stress through this agreement our strong commitment to build an world-class integrated project that shall be an added value to the balance of tourist facilities in the Zone. Aksit team shall bring the distinctive competencies to develop the project in full to be a new hub for business and tourism," added Kiceec.



## New successes by Oman Drydock Company

# Conversion of the ship “Olympic Luck” to an oil tanker and obtainment of contracts for conversion of two other ships



During the signing ceremony of agreements with local companies

### Duqm :

In 2015, Oman Drydock Company recorded new successes after it managed to turn the ship “Olympic Luck” a multi-purpose vessel to an oil tanker. During the celebration held early January 2015 for the delivery of the ship, H.E. Sheikh Dr. Abdul-Malik bin Abdullah Al-Hinai, Advisor to the Ministry of Finance and Chairperson of the Board of Directors of Oman Drydock Company, expressed his confidence that the company that has achieved many successes during the past years. It is noteworthy that Olympic Luck is ship number (300) repaired at the drydock since its operation in 2011.

“The project to convert ships reflects the ability of Oman Drydock Company to perform high-quality repairs at the hands of its skilled staff and advanced technical infrastructure. The vision of the Company is to become the best dry-

dock company in the Middle East,” stated Al-Hinaey.

“Olympic Luck” entered the drydock on 28 September 2014 for an integrated conversion that included the use of 2,500 tons of iron, mechanical works, paint and periodic and technical maintenance.

“Olympic Luck” is the first vessel converted from a multi-purpose vessel to an oil tanker at the drydock. This reflects the ability of Oman Drydock Company in terms of shipbuilding.

### Conversion of Two Other Ships

In the wake of this success, Oman Drydock Company obtained a contract for the conversion of two ships from the Greek Springfield Marine Company. Work in this project started in July 2015 with the participation of 500 workers and use of more than 6,000 tons of iron. The project will be implemented in partnership with the Korean Daewoo Shipbuilding & Marine Engineering Co., Ltd (DSME) in the



Oman Drydock Company has many potentialities





Memorial photo in front of Olympic Luck

shipyard in the Sultanate.

Yong Duk Park, CEO of Oman Drydock Company, indicated that these complex and massive conversion processes, which require a great deal of effort and experience, would rely on the comprehensive knowledge of DSME in precise engineering works and innovation in design that supports our methods in shipbuilding. As in the conversion of "Olympic Luck", we expect manufacturing nearly 40 barriers of 40-80 tons each. Therefore, we will be able to build larger sections, which will reduce both time and cost.

Dr. Ahmed Al-Abri, Deputy CEO for operations, Oman Drydock Company stated that "Olympic Luck" was the first major conversion process we have implemented. Its success remarkably underlined the distinct cadres, skills and infrastructure of the Company. The conversion of these two vessels will send an important message to our sector as regards the capabilities of Oman Drydock Company, its competitive advantages and its ambitions for growth in the future.

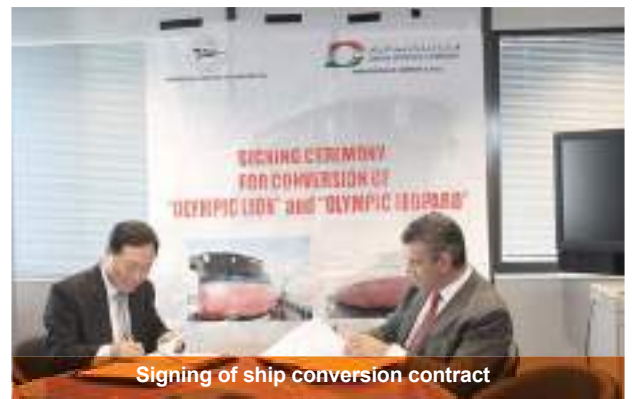
For his part, Demetris Patricius, Manager General, Springfield Shipping Company, said, "it is our pleasure to give the contract for these two mega conversions to Oman Drydock Company based on quality and the strong business relationship we have with its team. We look forward strongly for the implementation of the two conversions and see these two vessels transporting oil safely around the world."

#### Agreements with Local Contractors

At the time Oman Drydock Company is working to develop its work and strengthen its presence on the local and global levels in the drydock sector, it is keen to support local entrepreneurs and SMEs to enhance their role in the field of social responsibility towards the local community.

The Company has signed several agreements at a cost of OMR one million on mechanical works and paint as well as multiple periodic maintenance works with Engineering Speed Company, Overseas Marine Services, Peace Breeze International, Oman Line, Duqm Private Development Company and Duqm International Group.

Yong Duk Park, CEO of Oman Drydock Company, signed the agreements on behalf of the Company and the



Signing of ship conversion contract

chairperson of each company. The terms of the agreements include a full year contract as a package, including maintenance work in the Company, which directly serves periodic works and saves time and effort.

In a press statement, Sheikh Khalil bin Ahmad Al-Salmi, Deputy CEO, indicated that these agreements reflect the unlimited support of these companies with which Oman Drydock Company cooperated before, and the Company hopes to continue this cooperation.

In this regard, Sheikh Tahir bin Mabkhout Al-Junaibi, CEO of Duqm Private Development Company that consists of 600 shareholders of the people of Wilayat of Duqm that this agreement is to provide repair and maintenance services for their vessels and many job opportunities for the citizens. He also thanked the executive management for providing an opportunity for local community organizations to provide local services to Oman Drydock Company.

Ahmad bin Marhoun Al-Busaidi, CEO of Engineering Speed Company, stated that cooperation between the two companies is not new. His company was a pioneer in providing its service to the drydock since its launch in 2011. It is the first Omani company to provide steel structures for the construction and maintenance of ships and many other businesses in this area.

Al-Busaidi added that they were very pleased with this partnership with Oman Drydock Company and the support it provides to Omani entrepreneurs.



# DDC appoints AECOM for development of master-plan, design of Duqm Frontier Town





Duqm Development Company (DDC) has awarded AECOM, a leading professional and technical services consultant, a contract to develop the feasibility study, master-plan and detailed design for phase II of Duqm Frontier Town.

“To deliver this modern residential community, we have partnered with a consultant that ranks among the top design consultants in the world,” comments Shaikh Ibrahim Sultan Al Hosni, CEO of DDC. “AECOM will work in conjunction with DDC towards the development of a dynamic and economically viable masterplan that will bring our vision for Duqm Frontier Town to life.”

The first stage of the contract includes a feasibility study and multiple concept master plans. Thereafter AECOM will be responsible for the detailed master-plan, detailed design, preparation of tender packages and supervision of the construction contracts.

“AECOM is delighted and indeed honored to have been awarded the project by Duqm Development Company to provide consultancy services for phase II of the Duqm Frontier Town,” said Riad Nashif, Executive Vice President, Middle East; Managing Director, UAE and Oman.

“This confidence in AECOM is a testament of our long history in Oman and our commitment to actively participate in the country’s development. Given the strategic significance of Duqm development to Oman, we have actively sought out such exciting opportunities there, and with DDC in particular, to support its development utilising our full, and best in class, range of services.”

Phase I of Duqm Frontier Town was completed in 2013. Phase II will cover an area of 29.2 hectares and will include residential units, commercial space, hospital and an international school.



The first phase of Duqm Façade City



# SEZAD assigns the development program of Downtown Duqm

Muscat -  :

SEZAD's Tenders Committee awarded in its first meeting in 2015 one of the most prominent projects to develop Downtown Duqm consisting of an expansion on the main road. The contractor will commence works in the next few weeks, and the road is expected to be ready in the first quarter of next year.

The project includes expanding the main road to be a dual-carriage way road with two lanes in each direction for 7 kilometers and 11 km length service roads in each side as well as the construction of 12 roundabouts on the service roads and construction of traffic light intersections on the main road.

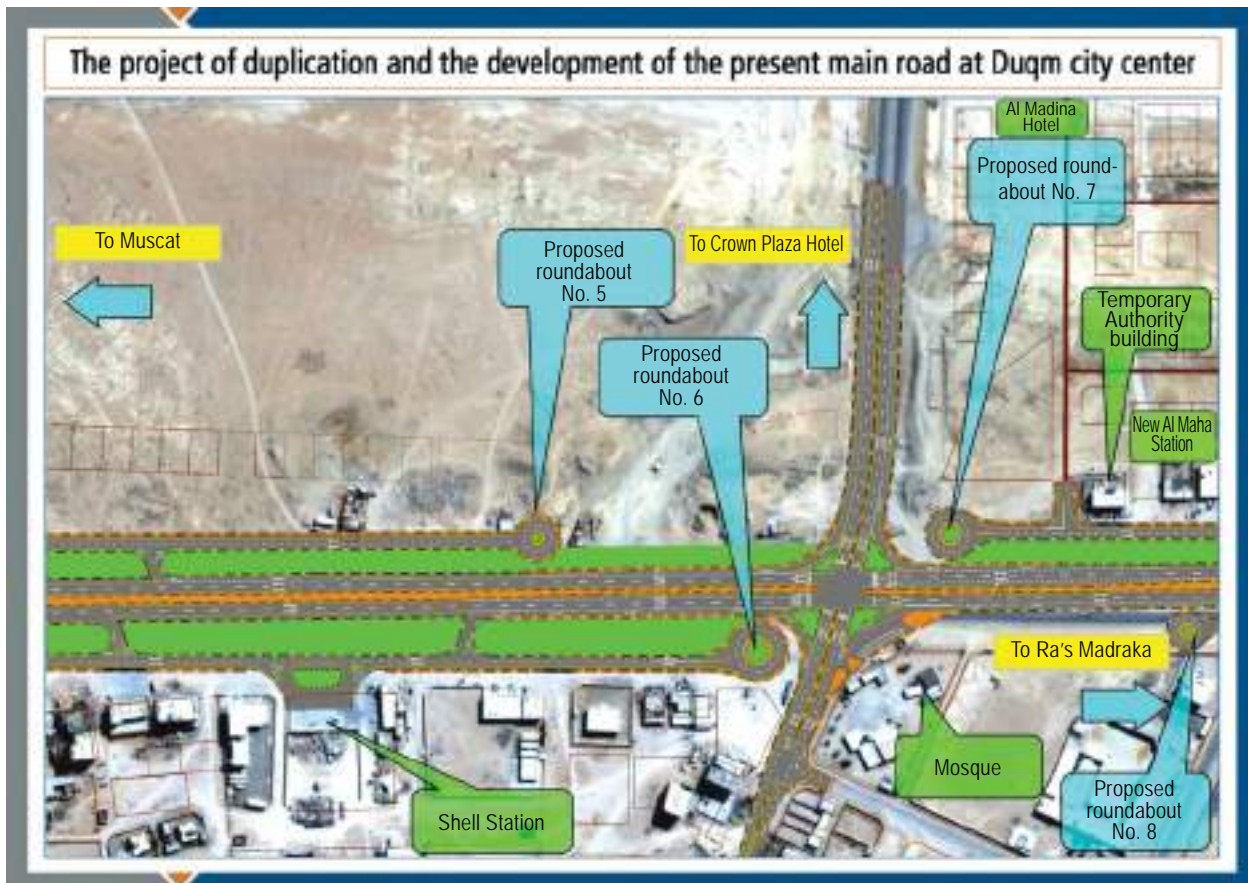
The project also includes the construction of car parking lots, landscaping, modern irrigation systems, lighting works and the diversion of electricity lines to underground cables. The main road will start at the entrance of Duqm Wilayat passing in front of the Office of H.E. Wali of Duqm and other government institutions, residential areas, commercial stores, and it will end with the road leading to Duqm Regional Airport.

This project aims to improve the urban environment in Duqm that is consistent with the

new urban development and to keep up with the projects that are being set up in the Special Economic Zone at Duqm. The project also aims to facilitate the traffic in Duqm and then towards commercial, industrial, and tourism zones.

Urban development is a priority for SEZAD, and the Authority is working to make the area a model integrated economic city that combines between industrial, commercial, tourism and social projects, mixes modernity with authenticity, and provides all the needs of its citizens from different services. The new urban design of Duqm is an opportunity to prepare model cities for coming generations, and it can be considered as the first model of an integrated city in the Sultanate of Oman that gives great attention to urban planning and sustainable development and determines the needs of different sectors from land and the need of the population for services.

Tens of projects are currently being set up in SEZD in different economic sectors, which falls within the Sultanate's efforts to make SEZD one of the pillars of economic diversification and providing employment opportunities. Last year, SEZAD assigned many projects; and signed usufruct agreements with a number of local companies.





# OMAN DRYDOCK

## WORLD-CLASS SHIP REPAIR YARD

Strategically located, facilitated with world-class expertise and committed to quality, Oman Drydock welcomes the world to the shores of Oman. As one of the biggest ship repair yards in the Middle East, Oman Drydock is specialized in vessel conversions and major structural On-shore fabrications, with a capacity to repair over 200 ships per year, including vessels as large as ULCCs.

- One-Stop Service Including Slop & Sludge Reception.
- Most Modern & High Quality Facilities.
- Specialized for LNGC repair.
- Ideal Climate For Painting.
- Strategic Location.
- DSME Support.

GRAVING DOCK		
Dock No. 1	410 m x 95 m	600,000 DWT
Dock No. 2	410 m x 80 m	500,000 DWT
Quay	2800 m	
Jib Crane	14 sets	



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



*Today, while I am writing these lines in the middle of 2015, I believe we achieved a lot towards the realization of this dream summed up in wondering: Can this remote city from Muscat be the focus for the trade and investments of local and foreign companies*

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## A Dream that has Come True

In 2008, I paid my first visit to Duqm while the Duqm Project was a mere dream for many Omanis. The city had no hotels, guest-houses, banks, luxury restaurants and internal roads. It lacked many services. Its economy centered on a few shops, and it was usual that one goes a distance from Duqm to Mahout or Haima simply to withdraw money from an ATM, which did not exist anywhere in Duqm at that time.

I sat down and photojournalist Salem Al-Muharbi in a modest restaurant in terms of services and capabilities wondering: Is it possible for this region to turn within a few years to a city teeming with factories, hotels and tourism and hotel facilities and become the focus of attention of investors from all over the world?

A year later, we went back to the same city when the dream grew after the government decided to expand Duqm port to be a strategic one that copes with the dreams and aspirations of the Sultanate to diversify national income sources and establish a port on the Arabian Sea that attracts trade and investment from all over the world. At that time, our bird's-eye view of Duqm was of a city teeming with thousands of workers who race time to complete the maritime business of the port in by the new deadline in mid-2012. We saw the "rigs" deepening the port basin, trucks fetching large rocks to be transported to breakwaters, and cranes carrying rocks and concrete blocks to be placed in the proper location on the breakwaters.

Today, while I am writing these lines in the middle of 2015, I believe we achieved a lot towards the realization of this dream summed up in wondering: Can this remote city from Muscat be the focus for the trade and investments of local and foreign companies?

At that time, it was difficult to answer this question, but it is no longer today. The port has already begun to receive certain vessels. The dry dock works well in ship repair and is an important destination for many of international companies and shipping lines. Duqm Airport began operation last year and today it receives four flights a week from Muscat to provide its services to investors and workers in the region and citizens who suffered hardships in departures and returns. Duqm hotels offer their services to tourists and investors, and sometimes - as one official at the Crowne Plaza Hotel says - it is difficult to find a single room vacant.

This radical change in Duqm is the beginning for placing Duqm city on the local and global investment map. The concerted efforts of various state agencies and citizens can make Duqm an oasis for local and global investment and a new rich economic city for projects that contribute to achieving the vision of the Sultanate's economic diversification.