

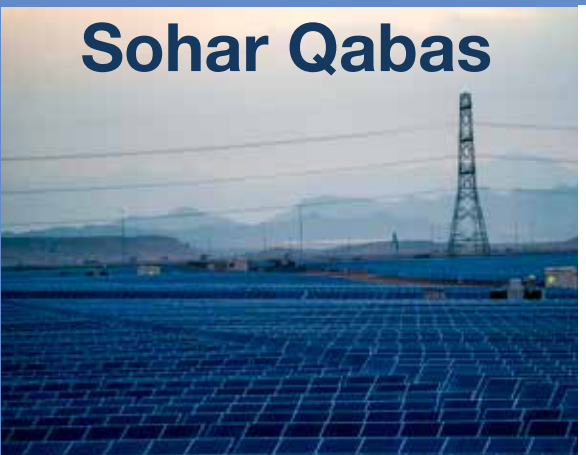
Al Mazunah..

a desert turned into
a thriving city



Launching first plant in

Sohar Qabas



120 cyclists

explore Duqm landmarks



Gas is flowing to heavy industries in Duqm



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A pioneering facilities management company in Duqm

Tatweer manages various facilities within the Special Economic Zone at Duqm (SEZAD) and always strive to ensure its clients complete safety of properties, operational efficiencies and compliance to QHSE. With its experienced and multi-disciplined team, Tatweer brings a well-harmonised working environment through the integration of People, Place, Process and Technology.

Objectives

- To become the ultimate provider of sustainable and technology-driven, complete facilities management services throughout SEZAD.
- Ensuring the safe maintenance and operation of the facilities.
- Achieving desired performance (availability, production) from the facilities.
- Ensuring sustainability of the assets at optimal cost.
- Minimising operating costs for the assets.
- Bringing best facilities management practices to Duqm.
- Adopting suitable assets management strategy (Own / Outsource / Mixed).

Services

- Managing and maintaining the assets of the Special Economic Zone at Duqm
- Providing maintenance service in all fields for any establishment in the Special Economic Zone at Duqm
- Construction of temporary roads
- Opening new entrances and exits
- Roads clean-up works
- An emergency respond team for emergencies.

Achievements

- Established a tourist camp (Duqm Beach)
- Restored Knowledge Village (Nafoun)
- Arranged the entrances and exits of cars in the Fishing Industries Zone.
- Arranged the entrances and exits of cars in the (falcon's nest) area
- Constructed temporary roads

Assets under operation

- Operation & Maintenance of SEZAD headquarter building
- Operation & Maintenance of Sewage Treatment Plant in Duqm with 2000 m³/day
- Operation & Maintenance of Sewage Treatment Plant at IP4 with 5m³/day
- Operation & Maintenance of Roads
- Maintenance of Dams and Canals
- Operation & Maintenance of Traffic Signal Lights
- Operation & Maintenance of Duqm Street Lighting



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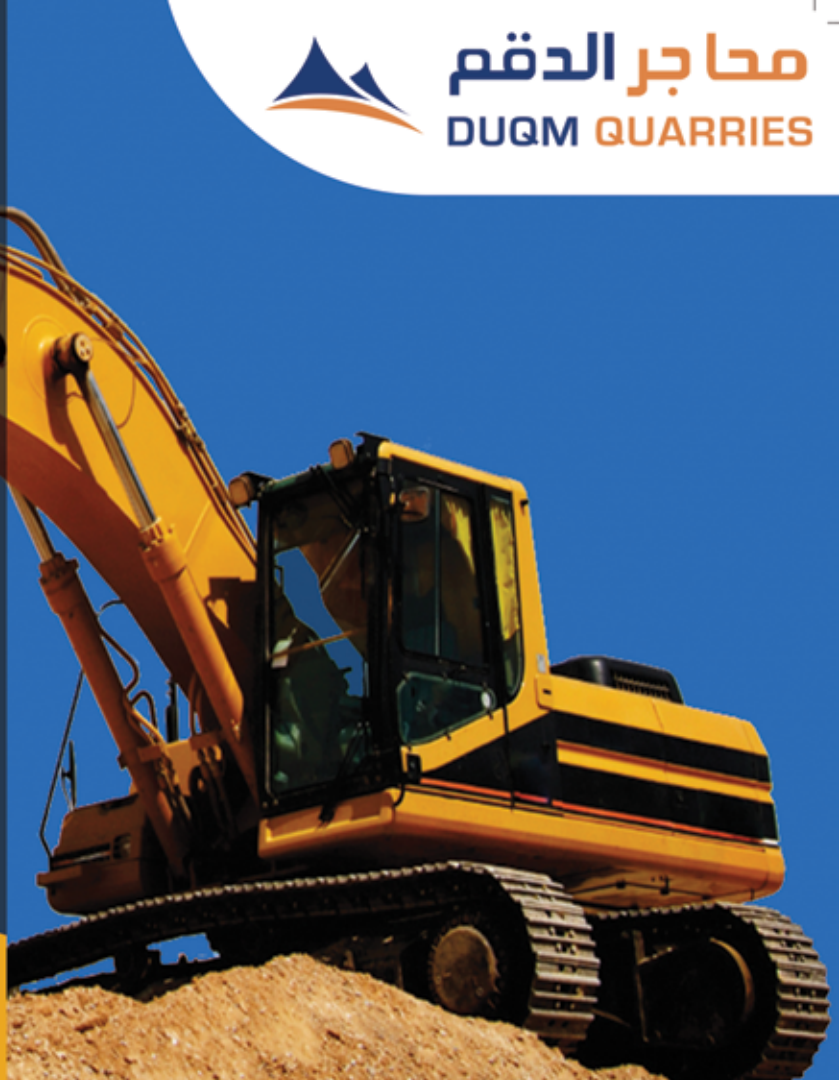
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Permanent investment destinations

The first quarter of this year witnessed a remarkable development in the Special Economic Zone at Duqm and the free zones in Sohar, Salalah and Al Mazunah in terms of completing infrastructure works, attracting investments and strengthening relations with investors. Perhaps, the most prominent of these works is completing the gas delivery project to the Special Economic Zone at Duqm. This paved the way for connecting the integrated power and water plant in Duqm, operated by Marafiq, Centralised Utilities Company, to the gas network, to start soft opening of its operations.

While expressing our profound thanks and appreciation to OQ, one of our key partners in the Special Economic Zone at Duqm for marking the milestone of gas delivery project to Duqm, we are urging investors, wishing to establish projects that require gas, to submit their applications to the Zone.

In Sohar Free Zone, the first quarter saw the opening of the first plant in Qabas Sohar Solar Energy Project with a capacity of 25 MW. This project stands as one of the renewable energy projects that the Public Authority for Special Economic Zones and Free Zones (OPAZ) focuses on, in line with Oman Vision 2040, which targets increasing energy from non-traditional resources.

In regards to attracting investments, the Special Economic Zone at Duqm (SEZAD) and the free zones in Al Mazunah, Salalah and Sohar observed the signing of usufruct agreements to establish new projects with local and foreign investments that add value to the national economy.

The Public Authority for Special Economic Zones and Free Zones (OPAZ) works to promote these zones and shed light on the major investment opportunities available. Reflecting on the different efforts of OPAZ in this regard, Duqm Economist Magazine accords a special portfolio in this issue featuring Al Mazunah Free Zone. There are many investment opportunities on offer in the Zone, which we urge investors to explore; underlining OPAZ vision of making the special economic zones and free zones permanent investment destinations.

The Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) stand as one of the areas of investment in the special economic zones and free zones. Thus, they have been accorded a commendable attention and significance by OPAZ like all other big projects. Case in a point, all SMEs operating in the Special Economic Zone at Duqm during 2016 to 2020 have been awarded projects and tenders with a value of OMR 61,5 million from OPAZ and the major companies operating in the Zone. This marks 12% of the total value of projects being developed in the Zone. Likewise, the initiatives that are aimed to attract SMEs to work in Duqm have significantly contributed to increasing the number of SMEs to reach 794 enterprises by the end of 2020.



**Eng. Ahmed bin Hassan
Al Dheeb**
General Supervisor



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Quarterly Magazine on
Economic Affairs and Free
Zones

Issued by:
The Public Authority for Special
Economic Zones and Free Zones

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opinion of the magazine.

The magazine welcomes
specialised researches
and academic studies

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Tatweer delivers 46 projects in Duqm



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Launching first plant in Sohar Solar QABAS PROJECT

Sohar – :

Oman Shell launched, on January 21, 2021, the 25-megawatt Qabas solar plant, helping the port and freezone in Sohar to become more sustainable and demonstrating the commercial benefits of solar power for industrial purposes. Owned by Shell, Sohar Solar Qabas is the company's first utility scale, photovoltaic (PV) solar project in the Middle East and in Oman.

An Important step

His Excellency Dr. Ali bin Masoud Al Sunaidy, Chairman of The Public Authority for Special Economic Zones and Free Zones (OPAZ) commented, "Inaugurating this solar project marks the first step for the Public Authority of Special Economic Zones and Free Zones' plan for solar projects. Such projects will help free up natural gas for other industrial use."

50-hectare

The plant is located on a 50-hectare site within Sohar Freezone, northern Oman, and


consists of over 88,000 solar modules. The renewable electricity output from Qabas is supplied to a large ferrochrome production facility, displacing the equivalent gas-fired power generation taken from the grid and avoiding more than 25,000 tonnes of CO₂ emissions annually.

Future ambitions

Walid Hadi, Oman Shell's VP & Country Chairman commented: "This is an incredible project and the first of its kind for Shell in the Middle East and in Oman, while being in line with our ambition to become a net-zero emission energy business by 2050 or sooner."

The project was completed to budget and on time while meeting Oman Shell's stringent Goal Zero safety standards. It was accomplished despite unprecedented challenges created by the global COVID-19 pandemic. Oman Shell has future ambitions to facilitate solar energy development within The Sultanate.


The plant is located on a 50-hectare and consists of over 88,000 solar modules


The project is the company's first industrial scale solar project in the Middle East and Oman



OPAZ Board of Directors approves:

Allocation of two sites in Duqm for gas-based industries covering an area of 44.6 sqkm



Duqm – :

Attracting local and international companies to localise investments of producing clean energy in Duqm and Sohar

Allocating a site for the uses of modern technologies and artificial intelligence

The Board of Directors of the Public Authority for Special Economic Zones and Free Zones (OPAZ) held its first meeting for the year 2021, chaired by HE Dr. Ali bin Masoud Al Sunaidy, Board Chairman.

During the meeting, held in the Special Economic Zone at Duqm (SEZAD), the Board of Directors touched on the progress made over the past few months in regards to urging local and international companies to localise investments of producing clean energy in SEZAD, through two potential projects for producing green hydrogen and another in Sohar Free Zone, Sohar Solar Energy Project.

Eng. Yahya bin Khamis Al Zadjali, In-Charge of Managing Operations of the Special Economic Zone at Duqm (SEZAD), explained that the Board approved the allocation of two sites in the Special Economic Zone at Duqm for gas-based industries. These sites include the first block, covering an area of 11.1 square kilometres and the second block with an area of 33.5 square kilometres. In

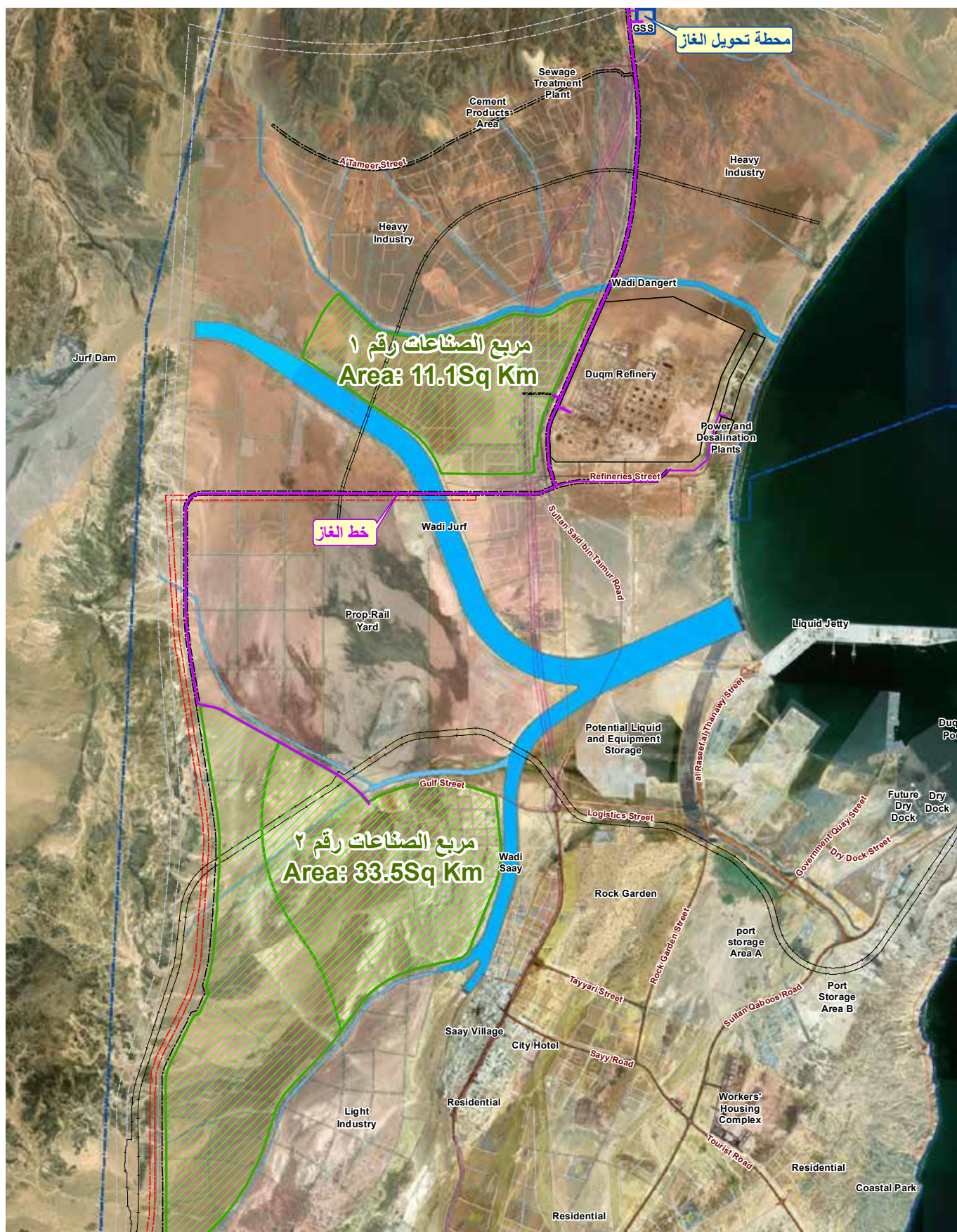
view of this, the Board called on all local and international companies, which are interested to invest in the Zone and require gas for operations, to submit their studies related to their requests to provide gas in Duqm upon the completion of gas pipeline.

Moreover, Al Zadjali noted that the Board initially approved allocating a site for the uses of modern technologies including artificial intelligence such as drone experiments. The Board also directed the Zone's Management to complete studies regarding technical and legal aspects, and to assess the required Internet speed and initial cost to attract local and foreign companies interested in developing future technologies.

Furthermore, the Board of Directors of the Public Authority for Special Economic Zones and Free Zones (OPAZ) paid a visit to the two sites designated for the gas-dependent industries and other existing projects in SEZAD to get familiarised with the latest progress.



Board of Directors during their visit to Port of Duqm



The map shows the two sites designated for gas-based industries in Duqm

OPAZ cooperates with the Ministry of Higher Education, Research and Innovation

Providing training opportunities for undergraduates and vocational colleges students

Encouraging private sector to establish scientific complexes and cities for higher education and scientific research centres

Establishing official channels and mechanisms to support innovation and urging companies to offer scholarships for schools graduates



Muscat - :
The Ministry of Higher Education, Research and Innovation and the Public Authority for Special Economic Zones and Free Zones (OPAZ) signed, on February 2021, a Cooperation Programme to align higher education, research and innovation with current and future plans of the special economic and free zones in the Sultanate.

The agreement was signed by HE Dr. Rahma bint Ibrahim Al Mahrouqi, Minister of Higher Education, Research and Innovation, and HE Dr. Ali bin Masoud Al Sunaidy, Chairman of the Public Authority for Special Economic Zones and Free Zones.

Under this agreement, OPAZ provides data on economic activities and companies operating in all zones, requirement, challenges and future plans for growth of the labour market, and expected numbers of jobs in coordination with the Ministry of Labour. It also offers training opportunities for undergraduates and vocational colleges students, so the Higher Education Ministry works on a framework for these opportunities.

Supporting innovation and entrepreneurial ideas
The Ministry of Higher Education, Research and Innovation coordinates with higher education institutions to provide research and guidance services to OPAZ. Also, both parties establish official channels and mechanisms to support innovation and creative entrepreneurial ideas, which could be turned into companies or commercial projects.

They also urge companies based in all zones to offer scholarships for students to proceed their higher education.

Establishing scientific complexes and cities

The Ministry and OPAZ will encourage private institutions and companies to establish scientific complexes and cities for higher education and centres for scientific research, innovation and vocational training. As well, OPAZ provides incentives, exemptions and determines the usufruct rights for the lands required for such projects, according to the relevant regulations and procedures.

Additionally, the two parties enhance industrial development, promote entrepreneurship and create connections between higher education institutions and industrial establishments to transfer new ideas, business projects and technology to the industrial sectors.

Involving SMEs in the available business opportunities

Cooperation programme to promote the role of entrepreneurship in economic and free zones



Muscat –

The Public Authority for Special Economic Zones and Free Zones (OPAZ) and the Authority of Small and Medium Enterprises Development signed, on March 23, 2021, a Cooperation Programme to promote the role of entrepreneurship in the special economic and free zones. The Programme serves as a platform introducing small and medium enterprises to the business opportunities in these zones.

The agreement was signed by HE Eng. Ahmed bin Hassan Al Dheeb, Deputy Chairman of the Public Authority for Special Economic Zones and Free Zones and HE Halima bint Rashid Al Zaria, Chairperson of Authority of Small and Medium Enterprises Development.

The Programme aims to benefit from the expertise of the Authority of Small and Medium Enterprises Development in developing entrepreneurship in the special economic and free zones. It intends to utilise the powers of OPAZ to overcome the potential challenges of SMEs in all zones.

Specialised platform

The Programme plans to establish a platform for creating innovative projects from

large projects. It recommends opening a service outlet in OPAZ Headquarter, serving entrepreneurs to benefit from opportunities offered by the zones.


Likewise, this cooperation programme endorses conducting a joint study on the Sultanate's markets to find out the supply, demand and gaps. Both Authorities will jointly observe the imported products and materials from overseas, each according to its competences.

Accordingly, they will work on creating investment opportunities, serving SMEs by establishing factories in the zones to produce these imported products and materials. In addition, they will provide business opportunities for projects from construction phase to starting operations.

Providing consultation and supervision services

This Programme includes providing consultation, supervision and training services to SMEs. It also allows benefiting from events and exhibitions organised for SMEs in the different governorates, and establishing incubators, accelerators and business centres too.


Establishing
a platform
specialised
in creating
innovative
projects from
large projects


Conducting a
joint study on
the Sultanate's
markets to find
out the supply,
demand and
gaps


Providing
consultation,
supervision and
training services
and establishing
incubators and
business centres

CEO of Karwa Motors speaks to  :

Ready to produce the first bus promoting "Made in Oman"



Duqm - Mohammed bin Ahmed Al Shezawi

As you pass the main gate, getting inside the bus assembly factory, which is being developed by Karwa Motors in the Special Economic Zone at Duqm, you feel as if you are already in an integrated city for bus manufacturing and not just an ordinary factory.

The factory is being established through a strategic partnership between the Sultanate and Qatar, represented by Oman Investment Authority, owning a 30% share and Mowasalat Qatar, with a share of 70%. During the project's groundbreaking, both parties announced that the total investment would be about \$70 million in the first phase of the project, which could potentially become a destination for bus manufacturing in Duqm in the long-term.

By the time of conducting this interview, in the last week of February 2021, with Dr.

Ibrahim bin Ali Al Balushi, CEO of Karwa Motors, at the company's premises in Duqm, the construction progress rate had reached %95. The manufacturing equipment have already arrived and fixed at the factory, with the Company is expecting the arrival of the raw materials and bus structures through Duqm Port by March 18, 2021.

Completed works

During the interview, Dr. Ibrahim Al Balushi was optimistic about the Company's ability to meet the deadline, which had been set earlier so the factory would start the initial production phase before mid-April 2021. Therefore, everything in the factory was proving this right as workers and project's engineers are sparing no effort on the different facilities of the project. The administration building was almost ready, parking area is completed too and the bus


Gearing up to operate the internal workstations for manufacturing buses and installing parts





CEO of Karwa briefs the editor-in-chief on the factory's workflow post opening

manufacturing and assembly workshops are ready to start work, while the bus inspection yard is ready as well to test the first bus manufactured in Duqm.

Business cycle

When the raw materials and bus structures arrive from overseas, they are initially stored in a large warehouse to be passing three workshops afterward, which are the cutting and welding workshop, the dyeing workshop, and then the equipment and motors assembly workshop. When the engineers confirm readiness of the bus, its capability would be tested in the designated inspection yard. The project site also includes a repair workshop, a secondary power station, a refrigeration equipment room, a fuel station, in addition to the administration building and other facilities.

Producing 200 buses

According to the Karwa Motor's CEO, the Company plans to produce 200 buses during this year for FIFA World Cup 2022. The aforementioned buses will be of the advanced school buses, but the Company will, later on, start producing city buses and

long-line buses. The production capacity of the factory during the first phase is 500 buses annually, but post this phase the production range will be from 500 to 700 buses.

40 work stations

The production of the new bus branded as "Karwa" and promoting "Made in the Sultanate of Oman" is not an easy matter at all. Dr. Ibrahim Al Balushi pointed out that the Company has prepared 40 internal work stations, in which workers form and manufacture the buses, install its various parts, paint and check its quality. "Everyone will work in the teamwork spirit to produce distinguished buses that are able to run on various roads and withstand the harshest weather conditions", commented Al Balushi.

Diverse international expertise

In the bus-manufacturing city, if we can call it so, expertise from different countries are gathered to manufacture and assemble new buses. According to the Company's plan, strategic relationships have already been built with the original suppliers and strategic partners to sustain the Company's business and obtain the best raw materials



The Company starts production line with school buses and moves to city buses and long-line buses afterward



Qualifying and training employees to work in bus manufacturing





Coordinating with the concerned authorities in the Sultanate to attract the best local cadres

and technologies in the field of bus manufacturing.

Karwa Motors announced previously that it had chosen the well-known Chinese "Higer" Company in the field of bus manufacturing to be Karwa's technology partner and a supplier of tools and equipment for this project.

Higer is known as one of the fastest growing brands worldwide in the field of manufacturing high quality buses, supported by its high innovative capacity and its provision of the best safety standards and high reliability.

Qualifying local cadres

As far as its focus is on the production cycle, Karwa Motors considers its workforce as the real strength of the Company. Dr. Ibrahim Al Balushi noted that the Company has developed a clear training plan to qualify employees to work in the bus-manufacturing industry. Likewise, in coordination with the concerned authorities in the Sultanate, local cadres will be attracted to work in the Company and will be trained in the various

phases of work in the field of manufacturing and assembly of buses.

It is expected that the Company will have about 300 employees, but the number will be doubled with the expansion of the Company's business and the increase in production lines.

Economic gains

The project will contribute to thriving the economic traffic in the Special Economic Zone at Duqm by using the facilities of Duqm Port and other ports of the Sultanate to import spare parts, bus chassis and other raw materials and export buses. The Karwa Motors and its products will also contribute to promoting many other economic sectors, especially with regard to public services and shipping companies.

The Port of Duqm, located on the international shipping lines of Karwa Motors factory, provides easy access to international markets in Asia and Africa. Besides, the simple access to the Port ensures that suppliers reach their shipments of spare parts as quickly as possible.



Building strategic relationships with original suppliers and partners to sustain the Company's business



Buses check-up route

Capital investment of \$ 1.2 million and products will be distributed locally and in GCC markets

SOHAR signs agreement for the development of ceramic tiles manufacturing facility



Muscat - :

SOHAR Port and Freezone entered into an agreement with Eagle Ceramics FZC LLC on January 26, 2021. The signing took place at the office of the Public Authority for Special Economic Zones and Free Zones (OPAZ), under the patronage of HE Eng. Ahmed Hassan Al Dheeb, Deputy Chairman of OPAZ. The agreement was signed between Omar bin Mahmood Al Mahrizi, CEO of SOHAR Freezone – DCEO of SOHAR Port and Manoj Valamji Panchotiya, Partner at Eagle Ceramics FZC LLC. The partnership will see the establishment of ceramic tiles manufacturing facility at SOHAR Freezone.

Increasing zone's attractiveness


Commenting on the upcoming facility, Omar Al Mahrizi stated, "We believe that the introduction of the new ceramic manufacturing facility will enhance the offerings of the Freezone, especially with regard to ceramic products. Apart from generating value-added services, the project is in line with our overall objective to increase the attractiveness of SOHAR Freezone to regional and global investors.

This, in turn, will allow us to boost our contribution to the GDP of the Sultanate and further the development of the logistics sector, alongside the creation of several job opportunities in the long-run."

Capital investment

The project will see an estimated total capital investment of USD 1.2 million and will take up a plot size of 20,000 m2 at SOHAR Freezone. The finished products from the facility will be distributed locally as well as exported regional GCC markets.

Manoj Valamji Panchotiya added, "We are proud to set up our new facility at SOHAR and are keen on being a part of the growing complex. We also look forward to the establishment of further downstream projects in the future, to enhance the offerings at SOHAR, alongside other industries. We believe that the ceramics facility will contribute towards the nation's efforts of economic diversification by promoting the export of ceramic products into the region and beyond."


Omar Al Mahrizi:
The project is in line with our overall objective to increase the attractiveness of SOHAR Freezone to investors


Manoj Panchotiya:
We look forward to the establishment of further downstream projects in the future

Most notably, dams, canals, and infrastructure for the Port of Duqm and the Fishing Port

"Tatweer"

delivers 46 projects in Duqm

Port of Duqm is the largest infrastructure project supervised by Tatweer

Managing development of 6 new infrastructure projects

Company's success attracts corporates operating in SEZAD to offer facilities management services

Muscat - 

Oman Company for the Development of Special Economic Zone at Duqm "Tatweer Duqm" has developed (46) projects in the field of infrastructure and consultancy in the Special Economic Zone at Duqm (SEZAD). Among these projects are Wadi Say Dam, Wadi Jarf Dam, canals for draining rainwater from dams to the sea, the second, third, fourth and seventh packages of the Duqm Port, which comprise the Commercial Berth, Government Berth, and the Liquid Berth. Additionally, Tatweer worked on other key projects including the buildings for operating the Port of Duqm, Customs Station, multi-purpose Fishing Port and the Headquarter of SEZAD, in addition to the 150 residential units built for the people of Duqm and many other projects too.

Infrastructure projects

The number of current projects supervised by Tatweer is (6) infrastructure projects, including construction of Roads 1 and 5, drainage systems at Duqm Port, dualisation of Sultan Said bin Taimur Road, Fishing

Port (marine and road related works), water distribution network expansion, construction of store and control room and design and construction of sewage water plant in Duqm.

Assets and facilities management

Tatweer Company oversees the operators of strategic assets in SEZAD, including Duqm Port, Duqm Airport and Drydock facilities, as well as operating and maintaining others that are roads and their facilities such as lighting, traffic lights, signboards, owned and rented buildings. In addition, it also operates sewage plants, dams and canals.

Tatweer in 2014 by (OPAZ) is aimed to ensure the efficient management and implementation of all projects to develop SEZAD. As well, it is intended to manage the various assets within the Zone in accordance with the regulations in place regarding quality and HSE. In addition, it serves to invest in business opportunities that focus on the development of Duqm while at the same time maximise shareholders' returns.

Honing skills of Omani engineers

Over the past years, Tatweer has been able to build a highly skilled team of Omani engineers.



Headquarter of SEZAD being managed by Tatweer



Wadi Say Dam stored huge amounts of water during Hikka Cyclone in 2019

This has empowered the Company with ample experience in projects development, assets management and attracting investments that open opportunities to get into new projects outside SEZAD boundaries.

Expanding facilities management

It is expected that the Company will achieve greater growth during the coming years in assets management, thanks to its experience of developing many infrastructure projects in Duqm over the past few years. Duqm Economist Magazine realised that Tatweer will focus, in managing the assets, on reducing operating costs and increasing the lifespan of assets. Facilities Management opens the door to meet the need of other companies based in Duqm to provide them with facilities management services.

Tatweer's experience in facility management has led the Company to change its approach from complete outsourcing to an in-house approach to manage the facilities. This has been achieved through in-house capacity building strategy, as every facility in Duqm is now directly managed by Tatweer. This approach has contributed to saving huge sums to OPAZ, while similarly it has assisted in developing human capabilities in Tatweer.

Investment management

In regards to investment management, Tatweer played a big role in attracting

investors by entering into partnerships in small proportions. Hence, this approach contributed to increasing investors' confidence in Duqm.

During the last period, the Company succeeded in establishing three companies whose share in the capital ranged between 15% and 70%. Last February, it gave up its share in Duqm Quarries Company to achieve an investment return of 33%.

Through its previous experience, Tatweer could stand as a strategic partner for any investor, wishing to partner and get supported or provided with any technical support to manage projects, assets and facilities.

Omanisation and social responsibility

By the end of 2020, the Omanisation rate of Tatweer Company reached about 88%. The Company remarked that Omanisation is one of its most important national objectives striving to achieve by attracting, training and qualifying national cadres to undertake leadership positions.

Moreover, Tatweer has also contributed to achieving many gains in Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR). The Company joins other founding members of Tawasul Charitable Foundation, which was established by (OPAZ) in Duqm. In view of that, Tatweer contributes to the fund on an annual basis with the aim of promoting sustainable economic and social development in Duqm.



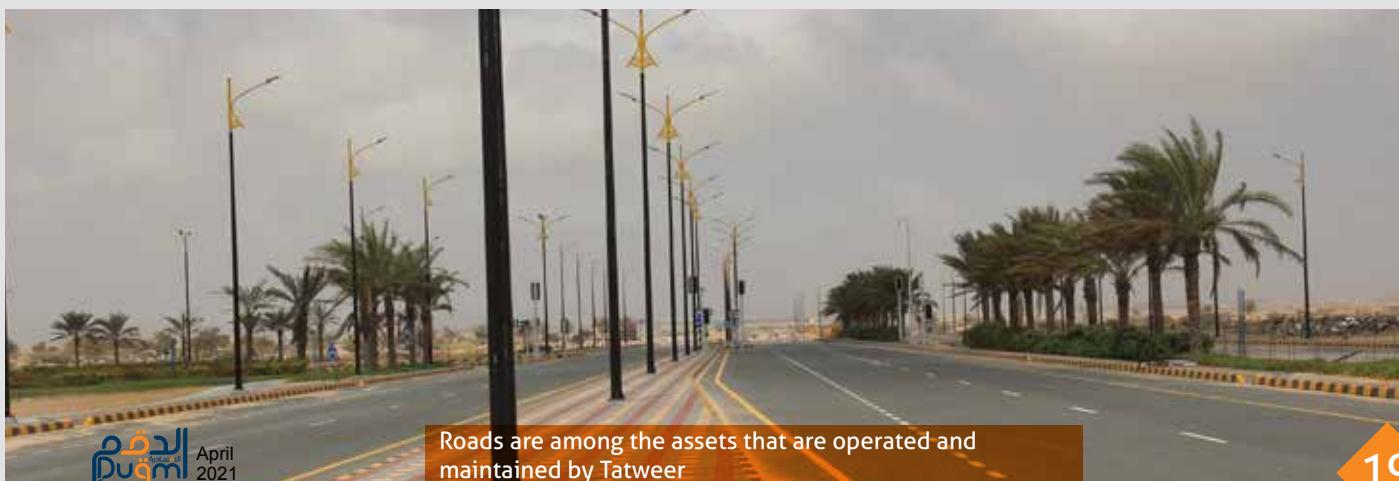
Several opportunities for "Tatweer" to expand business post establishment of OPAZ



Sewage plants, roads, buildings and dams are the most prominent assets being managed by Tatweer




Investing in business opportunities related to developing Duqm and maximising shareholders' returns



Roads are among the assets that are operated and maintained by Tatweer

GAS is flowing to Duqm

Vice President of Gas Network Operations at OQ Company speaks to :
The project reflects the Government's commitment to provide the key infrastructure to attract heavy industries to Duqm



Duqm - 


The gas supply to Duqm is a commendable addition to the 4,000 km gas network operated by OQ


Connecting the pipeline to gas sources from gas producing companies and pumping it to Duqm via a 220-km pipeline

As a historical milestone, the first quarter of this year witnessed the start of flowing natural gas to the Special Economic Zone at Duqm (SEZAD). The Integrated Electricity and Water Plant received the first flow of gas that was pumped from the assembly and treatment plant, located about 10 kilometres from Duqm Refinery.

Mansoor bin Ali Al Abdali, Vice President of Gas Network Operations at OQ, expressed his delight for making this milestone, reflecting the Government's commitment to provide the key infrastructure to attract heavy industries to Duqm. He also stressed that the gas supply to Duqm is a commendable addition to the 4,000 gas pipeline network that the Company runs in the Sultanate, providing energy and industrial projects with their needs of gas.

In an exclusive interview with Duqm Economist, Al Abdali said that the OMR

98-million gas delivery project in Duqm is aimed to meet the current and future needs of gas supplies for the projects in SEZAD and will encourage manufacturing industries to invest in the Zone.

Project's components

He explained that the project consists of 4 key parts; The First is the gas facilities in Sih Nahida, where the pipeline has been connected to gas sources from the producing companies. The length of the pipeline, extending from Saih Nahida to Duqm is about 220 km with a volume of 36 inches and its capacity is 25 million cubic metres of gas per day. The Second Part is the assembly and treatment plant, which is located in the Special Economic Zone at Duqm (SEZAD), including 4 separate locomotives in which gas is treated and purified. Each locomotive has a capacity of 5 million cubic metres per





day and through these locomotives, gas is pumped into the distribution lines, which mark The Third Part of the project.

Al Abdali commented that so far two distribution lines have been established; one to Duqm Refinery with a capacity of 32 inches and the other to Marafiq Company with a capacity of 18 inches. He also confirmed the project's ability to establish new lines to supply gas to new projects. "As for the Fourth Part, it is the staff building and maintenance workshops located near the assembly station in Duqm. On the other hand, employees have started their work at the site, with the project's Omanisation rate reached 100%" added Al Abdali.

Moreover, he touched on the amount of gas that will be pumped to Duqm, explaining that the gas supply station will receive 15 million cubic metres of gas per day in the first phase of the project. However, the station is prepared to increase its capacity to 25 million cubic metres per day whenever the need arises and as per growth that SEZAD will witness in the future.

The first gas consumer

He pointed out that the Company had started operating the gas pipeline to Duqm in December 2020, while the station was operational in February, and in March 2021, the gas was pumped to the first consumer, the Centralised Utilities Company, Marafiq.

Efforts and challenges

Commenting on the Company's efforts to deliver gas to Duqm, Mansoor bin Ali Al Abdali, Vice President of the Gas Network Operations at OQ, said, "The project was launched in 2017, and the Company accorded a great attention and capabilities to the project. For instance, the project's path passed through various terrains such as mountains and swampy lands. In the mountainous locations, there was a need to use explosives to construct the route for the pipeline, while in the swampy areas the ground had to be leveled and changing the soil, so it becomes solid to facilitate transporting the equipment to the project and placing the pipe in a safe place".

"The number of workers in the project reached 1600, and the Company was able to accomplish more than 5 million hours of work during the project implementation period" He explained.

Supporting local industries

In a closing note, Al Abdali commended the project's support for local industries and In-Country Vale. "More than 19,000 tubes were packaged locally in the pipes factory in Sohar, and then transported by land to the construction site through more than 3,800 trucks in a record period of time", He remarked.

Establishing two distribution lines, one for the Refinery and the other for Marafiq and the new lines to come when demand increases

Pumping 15 million cubic metres of gas daily to Duqm, and the station is prepared to increase capacity to 25 million

Packaging over 19,000 tubes locally, as part of the Company's efforts to support local industries





receives gas and starts commissioning the power plant



Duqm - :

Marafiq (Centralized Utilities Company) has started the commissioning activities of the integrated power and water plant in the Special Economic Zone at Duqm (SEZAD), post receiving the first batches of natural gas designated for its operations.

The plant is part of an integrated complex implemented by Marafiq in SEZAD, bringing a 326 MW power generation plant, a 36,000 cubic metres per day water desalination plant and seawater intake facilities with a supply capacity of 1.5 million cubic metres daily. In addition, a 132-kv high-voltage electricity transmission line was constructed from the 326 MW power plant to Ras Markaz oil tanks project, located approximately 80 km far from the Heavy Industries Zone in SEZAD.

Marafiq is a joint venture - owned by OQ, a subsidiary of the Oman Investment Authority, and Gulf Energy Development Corporation of Thailand. Marafiq is actively working on developing the utilities sector in Duqm under the Central Utilities Services Agreement with SEZAD. Marafiq has established a subsidiary company, Duqm Power Company to implement Duqm Integrated Electricity and Water Project and a 132-kv high voltage electricity transmission line project. Duqm Economist Magazine met with



Abdullah Al Hashimi: We are empowering "Marafiq" to be the main supplier of facilities in Duqm

Marafiq's management to understand the Company's progress, future planning of its involvement in SEZAD and other projects contributing to developing various heavy industries in Duqm.

An important milestone for SEZAD

Abdullah bin Mohammed Al Hashimi, Project Director of Marafiq, expressed that "Marafiq" is the first company to receive natural gas in Duqm, stressing that the arrival of natural gas is an important achievement for the Zone. All preparations and precautions for the natural gas receiving stations and gas pressure rebalancing station were completed. Then, permission was granted to start receiving gas, feeding the gas turbines, commencing the commissioning activities.


Supplying the
Refinery with
power and water
according to the
schedule agreed
upon this year



Gas turbines

Completing 90% of the project

Abdullah Al Hashimi stated, "Marafiq completed approximately 90% of its strategic project in Duqm by end of last March, and recorded over than 6.3 million safe working hours without Lost-Time Injuries (LTI).

All the 5 gas turbines have been installed in addition to 5 steam turbines at the site. Additionally, the marine works for the seawater intake facilities is experiencing significant progress, as is the construction of water and fuel storage tanks that are close to completion. It is expected that the plant will be able to supply OQ8 (Duqm Refinery) with power and water according to the schedule agreed upon this year.

Power transmission line to Ras Markaz

Marafiq built a 132-kv electricity transmission system to provide electricity for Raz Markaz based OMAN TANK TERMINAL COMPANY (OTTCO). The project comprises constructing approximately 80 km of overhead lines from Duqm to Ras Markaz, 240 towers and a 33/132 kv substation. All engineering and construction works on the project are completed and only the final connection remains, recording more than one million working hours without Lost Time Injuries (LTI).

Negotiation with "Tanweer"

Hamed Al Wahibi, Marafiq's General Manager of Business Development, stated: "Negotiations started with Tanweer at the end of 2019 to provide a portable gas operated 80-MW power station. Marafiq plans to build and operate the station for 3 years with an option to extend for a fourth year. By then, SEZAD will be connected to the Sultanate's main grid of 400 KV of high



Hamad Al Wahaibi: Negotiating with "Tanweer" to supply it with power through the 80-MW station operated by gas

voltage. The commercial operation of the new plant will start 6 months after signing the power purchase agreement".

Economic and environmental gains

"The new plant will achieve significant savings for Tanweer in energy costs, as a difference in cost between the currently used diesel and the gas station that Marafiq will provide. Consequently, the cost of producing one megawatt will be significantly lower than the current cost, and will reduce government subsidies, in addition to sustaining power supply and reducing greenhouse gas emissions", Al Wahibi explained.

Drinking water sector

Abdullah Al Hashimi noted, "In 2019 the Public Authority of Water "Diam", provided Marafiq with a 25-year license to produce, distribute and provide potable water services in SEZAD. In November 2020, Diam operations and assets were transferred under license to Marafiq, as the sole producer and distributor of potable water in SEZAD".

"Marafiq is now working to increase the production capacity of drinking water, in

◆◆◆
The proposed plant reduces emissions and significantly saves energy production cost

◆◆◆
Implementing new projects to increase the production capacity of drinking water post obtaining a production and distribution license


Abdullah Al Farsi:
 Establishing an
 integrated team
 for operation and
 maintenance.
 We focus on
 transferring
 International
 experiences to
 Omanis



Seawater intake station

addition to expanding the distribution
 network, improving the quality of customer
 services, and connecting new subscribers to
 the network”, He explained.

Operating and Maintenance

“Marafiq is working to become a leading
 and professional company in providing
 operations and maintenance services for
 different facilities in Oman and a recognised
 centre for excellence in operation and
 maintaining facilities”, Eng. Abdullah bin
 Khalfan Al Farsi, Senior Manager of Operation
 and Maintenance commented.

“Post signing the partnership between OQ
 and Gulf Energy Development Company, the
 operation and maintenance strategy has been
 shifted from “using an external operator”
 to “using internal and trained cadres”.
 This is made achievable by the significant
 experience of the Marafiq’s strategic partner

in developing, operating, maintaining and
 managing power plants”, He added.

Moreover, an integrated operation and
 maintenance team was formed during the
 pre-operation phase of the project. This
 is aimed at developing the appropriate
 expertise and a competitive operation and
 maintenance team.

SMEs development

Al Farsi stated, Marafiq is working with
 OPAZ to reach the best strategy, compatible
 with the private sector and other employee
 welfare activities. The number of employees
 in operation and maintenance facilities is
 about 60 people, with anticipation to rise up
 to 100 with the high potential demand.

The Company will also rely on SMEs in IT,
 communications and data hosting. Therefore,
 power and water plants and other facilities


**Implementing
 best strategies
 to support the
 activities of
 private sector and
 SMEs**



Diesel tanks



The main electricity distribution station (132 kV)

will be connected locally, and through a platform with the headquarters, and there will be a need for data storage and information security.

Training and added value

Currently, around 47 employees are employed by Marafiq and Duqm Power Company, with %51 Omanisation. "The Company aims to increase Omanisation to %75 in 2023 and rise to %90 by 2025. It has a training plan for employees focusing on HSE, environment, quality, time management, supervision and leadership skills", Nasser Al Habsi, Senior HR Manager explained.

Social Responsibility

"As part of Duqm integrated energy and water project, the Company has set a training and development strategy, by which the project's contractor must provide "Training for capacity development" and "Training for employment for Omanis" programmes" Al Habsi stated.

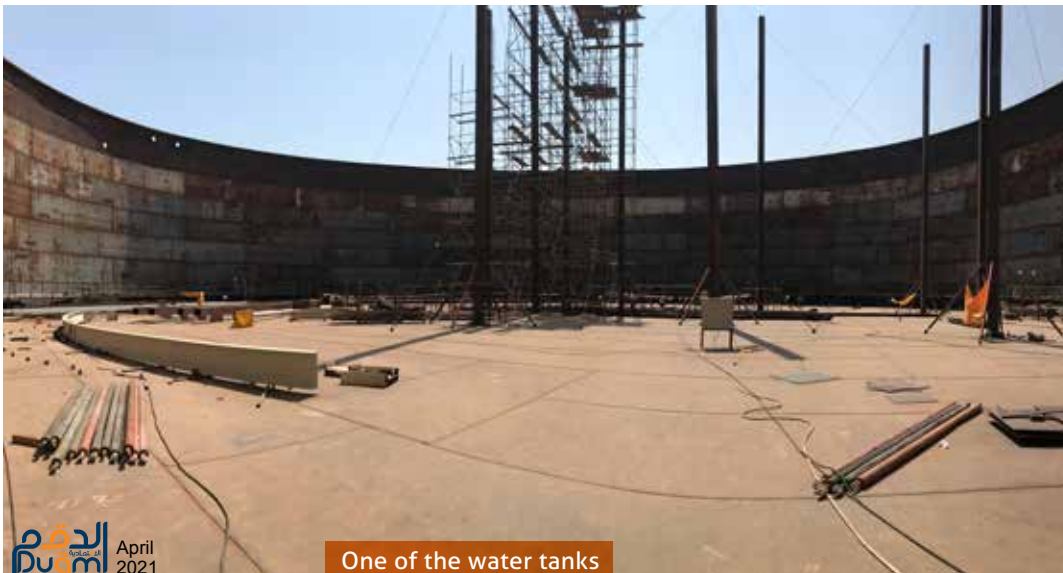
Gaining experience

"Currently, I'm handling the position of a



Saif Al Junaibi: Working in the company enriched my expertise in projects follow-up, tenders and engineering designs

Project Engineer, and working on following up the daily construction works on the site, while updating OQ8 (Duqm Refinery), OQ, and SEZAD Management regarding project's progress. In this project, I participated in different phases, including engineering designs, preparing tenders and submitting them for floating", Saif bin Ahmed Al Junaibi said.



One of the water tanks



Nasser Al Habsi:
Our objective is to build local talent and increase Omanisation rate to 90% by 2025



Preparing a training plan for employees focusing on HSE, environment, quality and time management

With a total value of OMR 5 million

Building a commercial-entertainment centre in Duqm

Attracting international brands and introducing cinemas and indoor golf course



Duqm - :

The Public Authority for Special Economic Zones and Free Zones (OPAZ) and Sabeen Group, represented by "Sabeen Investment", signed on February 9, 2021, a land usufruct agreement to establish a commercial-entertainment centre in the Special Economic Zone at Duqm (SEZAD) over an area of 10,500 sqm.

The agreement was signed by Eng. Yahya bin Khamis Al Zadjali, In Charge of Managing the Operations of the Special Economic Zone at Duqm and Khalid bin Said Al Nabhani, CEO of Sabeen Investment Company.

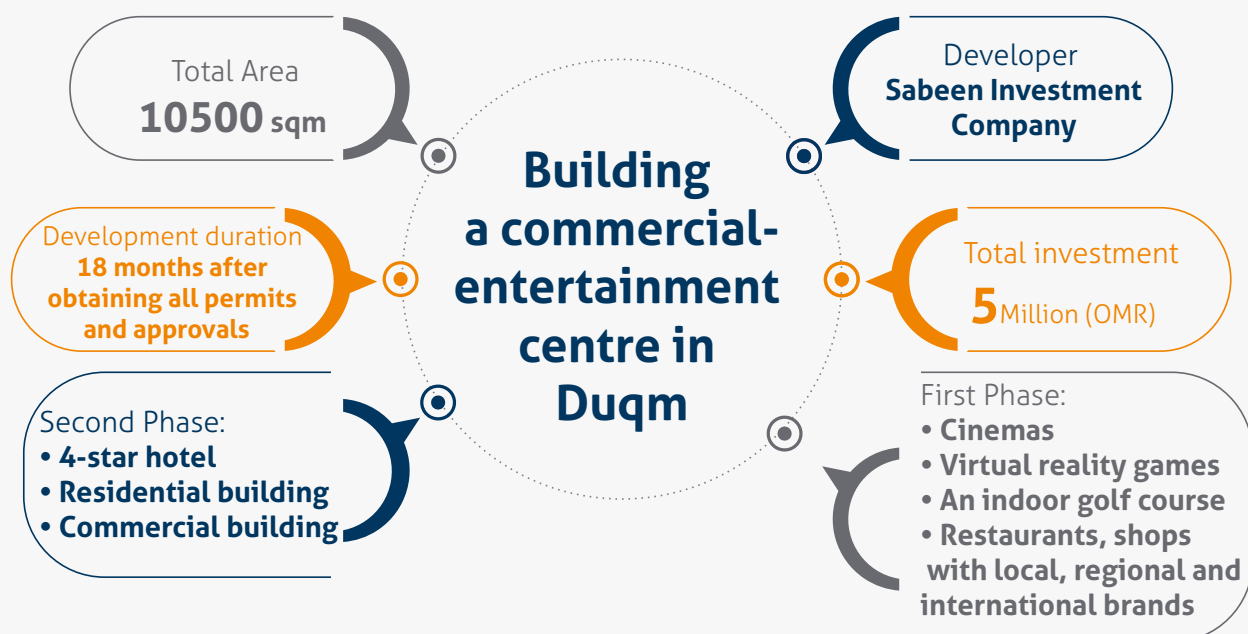
The first phase of the project will bring a centre consisting of different facilities such as cinemas, virtual reality games, and an

indoor golf course, as well as restaurants, shops with local, regional and international brands, and a car park.

The second phase will be developed at a later stage to introduce a 4-star hotel, residential and commercial buildings to provide integrated services for visitors.

Commenting on the project, Ali Shihab Al Din Al Mashhour, Chairman of Sabeen Investment Group, said: "Construction of the entertainment centre will extend between 12-18 months after obtaining all permits and approvals from the concerned authorities, while the total value of the project is around OMR 5 million".

The second phase brings a 4-star hotel, residential and commercial buildings



Al Mazunah, a desert turned into a thriving city

**Al Mazunah message from:
Mohammed bin Ahmed Al Shezawi**

**Pictures by:
Saleh bin Nabhan Al Mamari**

In 1992, when the borders between the Sultanate and the Republic of Yemen was demarcated, there was no people living there, which afterward became the Wilayat of Al Mazunah.

The Wilayat of Al Mazunah is one of the ten wilayats of Dhofar Governorate, located about 260 km away from Salalah and 1125 km away from the Governorate of Muscat. It can be reached through Muscat – Salalah Road by turning right after the second roundabout in the Wilayat of Thumrait. Al Mazunah is around 19 km away from Thumrait.

The road to Al Mazunah was quiet and peaceful, despite having many trucks crossing the road. Drivers could stop for a while on the way at Niyabat Moudi in the Wilayat of Thumrait to have a rest before continuing to Al Mazunah.

Al Mazunah is distinguished by its strategic location on the Omani - Yemeni borders, standing as the Gulf gateway for the transit trade to the Republic of Yemen. Establishing the free zone in Al Mazunah came as a testament of the distinguished relations between the two countries in a way that contributes to the recovery of the economy on both sides of the borders.

In this profile, the editorial team of Duqm Economist Magazine seeks to introduce the readers to the free zone in Al Mazunah in terms of growth and available investment opportunities. Al Mazunah was just a barren desert before it experiences aspects of the blessed renaissance, turning it into a prosperous city. Today, it hosts all government services, diverse economic activities, two branches of local banks and a number of hotel apartments, in addition to shops, restaurants and cafes, which witness an active business and turn out throughout the week.

Telecommunication networks are available all the way to Al Mazunah

Camera of Duqm Economist captures a picture of people at Al Mazunah

Al Mazunah Free Zone, the Gulf gateway for the transit trade to the Republic of Yemen



Deputy Wali of Al Mazunah speaks to Sultan Qaboos named the Wilayat of Al Mazunah, aspiring for being a prosperous city

A general view of Al Mazunah shows one of the public schools

Al Mazunah - :

Sheikh Musallam bin Mohammed Zabanoot, Deputy Wali of Al Mazunah, highly commended the comprehensive development and renaissance witnessed in the Wilayat. In an interview with Duqm Economist Magazine, he stated, "The late His Majesty Sultan Qaboos bin Said - May Allah rest his soul in peace - was the one who named the Wilayat of Al Mazunah after the boarders' demarcation between Oman and Yemen. At that time, there were no people living here, but Omanis were residing in the Niyabat of Shehn, which belonged to the Sultanate before the demarcation of borders".


"Post the demarcation in 1992, those Omanis moved to this current location in 1996, which afterward had been called by the late Sultan "Al Mazunah". This name reflects his aspiring for the would be future prosperous city.

Al Mazunah remained as Niyabat affiliated with the office of the Minister of State and Governor of Dhofar until 2006 when the Royal Decree No. 2006/13 was issued to upgrade the administrative level of Al Mazunah to be Wilayat" The Deputy Wali explained.

Development services

He pointed out that the Wilayat of Mazunah is among the largest wilayats in terms of population density in the desert areas of the Dhofar Governorate. According to 2020 electronic census, its population reached about 8,400 people, ranking fifth in terms of population in the Dhofar Governorate, which includes 10 Wilayats. Omanis mark %86.9 of the total population in the Wilayat of Al Mazunah.

Commenting on the urban development


The
establishment
of Al Mazunah
Free Zone
contributed to
the Wilayat's
economic boom


Al Mazunah
is a stopover
for investors
and traders
and there
are multiple
investment
opportunities



The main road in the Wilayat of Al Mazunah



Deputy Wali of Al Mazunah during his interview with the Editor-In-Chief

in Al Mazunah, the Deputy Wali stated, "Al Mazunah, which is about 260 km from the city of Salalah, has received various government services, especially in the field of education, health, municipal and housing services. Last year, the Tender Board awarded a project to establish a hospital in the Wilayat of Al Mazunah at a cost of OMR 15.3 million, standing as a new addition to the healthcare services in the Wilayat. In the education front, there are 9 government schools and a private school. The Wilayat and its affiliated Niyabats have also witnessed the distribution of about 632 houses granted by the Government to Omanis".

Economic boom

The Deputy Wali of Al Mazunah confirmed that the establishment of the free zone in Al Mazunah contributed to the economic recovery of the Wilayat. Trade traffic between the Sultanate and Yemen passes through this free zone and many investors, traders

and truck owners stop in Al Mazunah before heading to Yemen or the other Wilayats of the Sultanate. This has contributed to an increase in the demand for utilities, hotels and restrooms as well as caused a recovery of other economic sectors. He also stressed that the locals at Al Mazunah depend a lot on Al Mazunah Free Zone to attract investments and provide more job opportunities.

"We have high aspirations for an increase of economic activity more than what is currently being witnessed in light of the future plans of Oman Vision 2040, thanks to the visionary leader His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik", addressed the Deputy Wali of Al Mazunah.

Economic and tourist factors

Sheikh Musallam bin Mohammed Zabanoot, Deputy Wali of Al Mazunah, highlighted the different economic and tourist components of the Wilayat, which includes 3 Niyabats: Harweeb, Tusnat, and Metin, in addition to

Citizens depend a lot on the free zone to attract investment and provide more job opportunities

The Habrut Triangle, Ramla Jadela and ShROUT Rock are the most prominent tourist attractions in Al Mazunah



These pictures show the active commercial traffic in Al Mazunah



The public park is one of the Wilayat's recreational places

The topographic diversity introduce many potentials for investment

the Andat Centre and Hebrout Triangle, in which the historic Hebrout Castle is located. As well, there are people living in a place called Hurut, located in the southeast from the centre of the Wilayat and there is an archaeological site called Musanin.

Each Niyabat is characterised by a number of competitive advantages; Harweeb, for instance, is distinguished by having a number of water springs and Wadi Harweeb, which is linked to Wadi Aidem, one of the largest valleys in Dhofar Governorate. However, Tusnat is a pastoral area in which valleys are abundant, while Mitten is famous for its location on the outskirts of the Empty Quarter Desert and covered mostly by sand dunes and is known for Ramla Jadela, whose height is 455 metres above the sea level.

This site has attracted many tourists from within and outside the Sultanate inside and outside the Sultanate. Recently, a number of archaeological remnants, dating back

to the ancient times of humanity, have been discovered there, according to the specialists. The Wilayat of Al Mazunah is also home for many other tourist attractions, such as Shrouf Rock, a prominent geological and historical landmark.

Plains and green lush

The Deputy Wali of Al Mazunah, pointed out that the topographic diversity of the Al Mazunah, including mountains, valleys, sand dunes and vast plains, introduced different potentials for investment. The Wilayat is famous for having rich animal wealth, especially camels and sheep, and it is characterised by rich fertile plains that are good for farming. In this regard, he referred to the experience of a citizen in establishing a model farm full of different vegetables, fruits and date palms. This indicates that Al Mazunah is good for planting all kinds of crops.



New residential units that will be distributed to citizens soon

Shrout Rock, a prominent archaeological monument in Al Mazunah



Al Mazunah - :

Shrout Rock stands out in the Wilayat of Al Mazunah as one of the most important tourist, archaeological, geological and historical landmarks. The Rock was known in the past as a meeting place for camel caravans crossing the region and where tribes used to hold their meetings under its shade.

The Rock is still of high significance to the people of Al Mazunah for it is considered one of the meeting hubs there, witnessing different events and functions, including weddings.

The Rock, which is about 6 km away from the centre of Al Mazunah, is distinguished by its wide, round body. In view of that, it can be seen from a long distance due to its location in the middle of a flat ground.



We focus on attracting international investors and strengthening partnership with the Yemenis

Al Mazunah -  :

Said bin Abdullah Al Balushi, Director General of Al Mazunah Free Zone, confirmed that the Zone's future plan focuses on attracting international investors, strengthening partnership with Yemeni investors and establishing projects in the field of storing re-exported goods. The plan also includes implementing the fourth development phase with an area of 4 million sqm, bringing a diverse group of economic sectors, most notably the industrial sector.


The completed development phases reflect the Zone's ability to achieve economic recovery on both sides of Omani-Yemeni borders

In his interview with Duqm Economist Magazine, Al Balushi said that the area is operated and managed by the Public Establishment for Industrial Estates (Madayn) and has over the past years, worked on three phases of development that have contributed to proving the Zone's ability to achieve economic recovery on both sides of the Omani-Yemeni borders, where the Omani city of Al Mazunah and the Yemeni city of Shehn are located.

Al Balushi also stressed that the Zone, which marks the Gulf gateway to the transit trade to the Republic of Yemen and from there to the countries of East Africa, has been able, since inception in late 1999 as the first free zone in the Sultanate, to increase the intra-trade traffic between the two countries. It also encourages Yemeni capital to invest in the Al Mazunah Free Zone, as it has created many opportunities for Omani investment for growth.

Three development phases

Said bin Abdullah Al Balushi said that the free zone in Al Mazunah, which covers an area of more than 15.3 million sqm, has witnessed a number of development phases. Initially, prior to the Royal Decree No. (2005/103) to establish a free zone in Al Mazunah and command its operation and development of services to Madayn, the industrial focus has been on the traffic of trade, import and export. However, post issuing the aforementioned Royal Decree, the Zone received more attention and Madayn began preparing plans for its development.

During the past years, 3 development phases were launched in which the infrastructure needed by the Zone was established to be able to attract investments such as internal road networks with lighting, construction of sidewalks, pedestrian paths, electricity, water and communications networks, water tanks, fire extinguishing systems, sanitation



Main gate of Al Mazunah Free Zone

services, and water drainage channels.

A rest building for truck drivers was also constructed during their layover in the Zone. Madayn is currently working on other projects there; among the most prominent is the services and facilities building project, which is being constructed with a total building area of more than 11,000 sqm.

Development agreements

The Director General of Al Mazunah Free Zone remarked that during the past years the Zone had signed 3 major development agreements. The first agreement was signed with the Hala Golden Trading and Contracting Company to develop 3 million sqm of the area. The second was agreed with the Logistic City Company to manage and operate the land port, while the third was with Shumookh Investment and Services Company aimed at constructing the mixed-use services building.

74 productive projects

He explained that, by the end of first quarter

of this year, the number of productive projects in the Zone reached 74 projects, most notably Al Mazunah water bottling factory, the paper tissue production factory, and the restaurant ovens production factory, noting that most of these projects are destined for export outside the Sultanate.

36 under construction projects

He commented that the number of projects under construction is 36, of which 13 are being established during the development phase of the Golden Hala Company, stressing that most of these projects are in the final stages of the construction process.

Economic gains

Said bin Abdullah Al Balushi, Director General of Al Mazunah Free Zone, touched on the economic gains achieved by the Zone. He also noted that the Zone has contributed to enhancing intra-trade between the Sultanate and Yemen, and promoting activities related to import and export, car showrooms,

The Zone covers 15.3 million sqm and the available job opportunities exceed 1040

Implementing the fourth phase of development with an area of 4 million sqm comes within future plans

productive 74 projects in the Zone and 36 are under construction





Commercial centre is the first building in Al Mazunah Free Zone



The Zone contributed to boosting intra-trade between the Sultanate and Yemen and created many opportunities for local capitals

warehouses, and commercial agencies. This led to the establishment of many companies operating in the activities of import and export, customs clearance and handling.

In regards to crating job opportunities, he explained that the Zone has contributed to providing many job opportunities for the people of Al Mazunah. Around 1040 job opportunities have been provided by the projects operating in the Zone. In addition, the Zone also sponsors many activities and conducts training programmes for higher education students as part of their academic courses and graduation projects.

An invitation for investment

In his closing note, Said bin Abdullah Al Balushi, Director General of Al Mazunah Free Zone, stressed the invitation to investors from the Sultanate, Yemen, other Arab countries

as well as international investors explore investment opportunities in the Zone. In view of this, Al Mazunah Free Zone enjoys a wide range of incentives and exemptions such as tax exemption for up to 30 years, customs exemption, and projects %100 ownership for non-Omanis, exemption from the minimum capital stipulated in the Companies Law, in addition to facilitating and simplifying procedures for non-GCC investors to obtain residency in the Sultanate.

The Zone is also characterised by special incentives such as easy access for Yemeni individuals, shoppers and investors without entry visas, and facilitating the work of the Yemeni workforce in the Zone without a work visa, in addition to its proximity to the Yemeni markets because they are located directly on the borders.



Activating the fields related to import and export, car showrooms, merchandise stores and commercial agencies



Advantages of investing in Al Mazunah Free Zone

1

Allowing goods to be imported to the Zone without an import permit.

Exemption from the minimum invested capital requirement stipulated in the Commercial Companies Law or any other law.

2

3

Allowing the Yemeni workforce to work in the Zone without obtaining an entry or permanent residency visas in the Sultanate.

Low Omanisation rate of %10 as the company is subject to the Sultanate's Labor Law.

4

5

Relying on the customs data issued by the Yemeni customs centre of the Zone's Customs Department for the purpose of entering the goods coming from the Republic of Yemen without the need to pass to Al Mazunah Customs Department is considered.

The issuance of certificates of origin (free zone products) or (foreign origin) by the Zone.

6

7

Obtaining work permits and entry visas for investors and their workers through the one-stop shop system.

Allowing the establishment of a commercial representative office for the company within the customs territory, provided that it is registered in accordance with the Commercial Registry Law.

8

9

Allowing goods to be imported into the zone without an import permit.

One-stop shop to provide all services to investors



Al Mazunah -  :

The Investors Services Department (One-Stop Shop) in Al Mazunah Free Zone provides all services related to the permits required for projects that are established in Al Mazunah Free Zone.

The One-Stop Shop was established according to the requirements of Article (1) of the Free Zones Law promulgated by the Royal Decree No. (2002/56) and the regulatory bylaw issued by Decision No. (2010/22) to establish a system through which all licenses, permits, approvals, and visas are issued and registration procedures are completed. As well, other procedures are completed through the

same system, including registration of operating company and the implementation of all rules and regulations related to both the operating entity and the companies operating in accordance with the Free Zones Law.

Al Mazunah Free Zone Management is working with the Public Authority for Special Economic Zones and Free Zones (OPAZ) to implement the first phase of the unified system for One-Stop Shop, which includes SEZAD and the free zones in Sohar, Salalah and Al Mazunah.

The system aims to accelerate the completion of investors applications related to commercial registration and all permits required by investment projects and companies operating in the free zone in Al Mazunah. This comes according to the Royal Decree No. (2020/105), which stipulated the implementation of One-Stop Shop system in the special economic and free zones. Further, the Royal Decree granted OPAZ the powers to issue all types of licenses, approvals and certificates related to conducting economic activities in the these zones. The One-Stop Shop in Al Mazunah Free Zone strives to reduces efforts, cost and time, and simplifies procedures for companies operating in the Zone, so investors could only have one focal entity to obtain all services.

The Services Building built over 11,000 sqm

Al Mazunah -  :

Al Mazyona Free Zone is currently witnessing the development of the mixed-use service building, which is constructed by Shumookh Investment and Services Company, at a cost of more than OMR 3 million. The building is built over an area of over 11,000 sqm.

The building, which is expected to be completed next year, brings all services and facilities required by investment operations in Al Mazunah Free Zone. It introduces these operations to investors, business owners, auditors and customers in one place. This will create an added value for the Zone that works on integrating services, speeding up the pace of business and facilitating procedures for completing transactions.

The project will be developed in two phases; the first phase includes 4 floors, while in the second phase two floors will be added according to the market's need at that time.

The building is located before the main gate of the Zone in a prime location that is easy to see, access and benefit from its services without the need to get inside the Zone. The project includes a multi-purpose hall, an office for the service centre - a path, restaurants, office spaces for import and export, and a free space for investment.



1

Submitting the investment application online (www.mfz.om).

Investment process in Al Mazunah Free Zone

2

The application will be directly transferred to the one-stop shop:

- If the application is completed, an employee from the one-stop shop will complete the verification procedure and transfer the application for the initial approval.
- If the application is incomplete or there are deficiencies, the investor shall be informed to complete the required documents.

3

Post verification process, the application is presented for review and notifying the investor about the application's approval or rejection **within 3 working days**.

4

Upon approval of the application, the investor is called to inspect the land plot, sign the usufruct contract, issue the commercial register, handing the land krooki to the investor and the investor shall submit a timeline showing the period of land development to the Zone's Management.

7

The investor obtains a building completion certificate after completing the works on the project, provided that the project's insurance certificate is attached.

6

After approving the engineering plans, the investor obtains a building permit to start the construction works of the project.

5

After signing the usufruct contract, the investor, through the engineering consultancy office, sends the maps and engineering designs to the Zone's Management for approval.

8

The company obtains a license to practice the business activity after obtaining the building completion certificate.



Al Mazunah Land Port, the beating heart of the free zone



Al Mazunah - :

In April 2020, Al Mazunah Free Zone Management signed an agreement with Al Madina Logistics Company to establish a specialised company to manage and operate the land port. This agreement aims at developing and improving services related to customs inspection and handling of goods to increase the flow of commercial traffic between the Sultanate and the Republic of Yemen.

The agreement includes improving and developing the system of logistics operations in the Zone in general and ensuring the flow of goods and containers, in a way that contributes to increasing the smooth flow of goods and containers handling in import and export operations to serve suppliers, exporters and various economic sectors.

Accordingly, Al Madina Logistics Company established the Al Mazunah Land Port Company to develop and provide these services, as well as to facilitate commercial traffic with high standards and quality.

Creating an added value

Hassan bin Ihsan Al Naseeb, Chairman of Al Madina Logistics Duqm Company, confirmed that partnering with "Madayn" Group and Al Mazunah Free Zone to manage, operate and develop the customs yard comes within the framework of being a specialised and experienced national company in managing dry ports. He stressed that the Company is working to create added values for the suppliers and exporters.



Hassan bin Ihsan Al Naseeb:
Creating added values for
suppliers and exporters through
Al Mazunah Land Port

Marketing the provided services

Mahmood bin Sakhi Al Balushi, CEO of Al Madina Logistics Services Company, commended the efforts made by the Public Authority for Special Economic Zones and Free Zones to develop the services system and work on its integration with the private sector to provide value-added services to the special economic zones and free zones in the field of supply chain and logistics services.

"Al Madina Logistics Services Company is one of the pioneering national companies specialised in managing land ports. The Company established the first land port in the Sultanate and its services were launched


Developing the
logistics system
in the Zone and
ensuring the flow
of goods and
containers



Khalil Al Balushi: The Land Port connects the ports of the Sultanate and the northern land ports with the Republic of Yemen



Mahmood Al Balushi: Marketing the land port services in coordination with government bodies and shipping and navigation agencies

in 2010. As well, the Company is coordinating with its partners in the sector to market the added services provided by Al Mazunah Free Zone in cooperation with the concerned government bodies, as well as shipping and navigation agencies”, commented the CEO.

Growing shipping and handling services

Khalil bin Abdullah Al Balushi, Director General of Land Ports and Business Development at Al Madina Logistics Services Company, confirmed that the land port in Al Mazunah is witnessing growth in shipping, handling and associated logistics services. Al Balushi pointed out that the land port in Al Mazunah Free Zone is an important addition to the Zone and is considered its beating heart and a great supporter of commercial traffic by connecting the land port with other ports in the Sultanate and the northern land ports of the Republic of Yemen through Al Mazunah Free Zone.

Through the land port, inspection services are provided for exported and imported

goods, and providing services to investors, exporters and importers across the free zone. As well, refrigerated warehouses for food products will be provided and developed, in addition to providing services with international standards through computer systems and providing data and statistics on commercial traffic.

Supporting SMEs


Since starting its operations in June 2020, Al Mazunah Land Port Company signed a number of contracts with Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) to provide a number of services, including providing manpower in the field of handling at the customs station, providing meals for workers, auditors and employees at the station, providing offices for companies and customs clearance offices. Moreover, other contracts are related to selecting establishments to provide handling equipment services, other establishments that provide grocery, café and fast food services at the station.

Providing agricultural and veterinary quarantine services, inspection of exported and imported goods



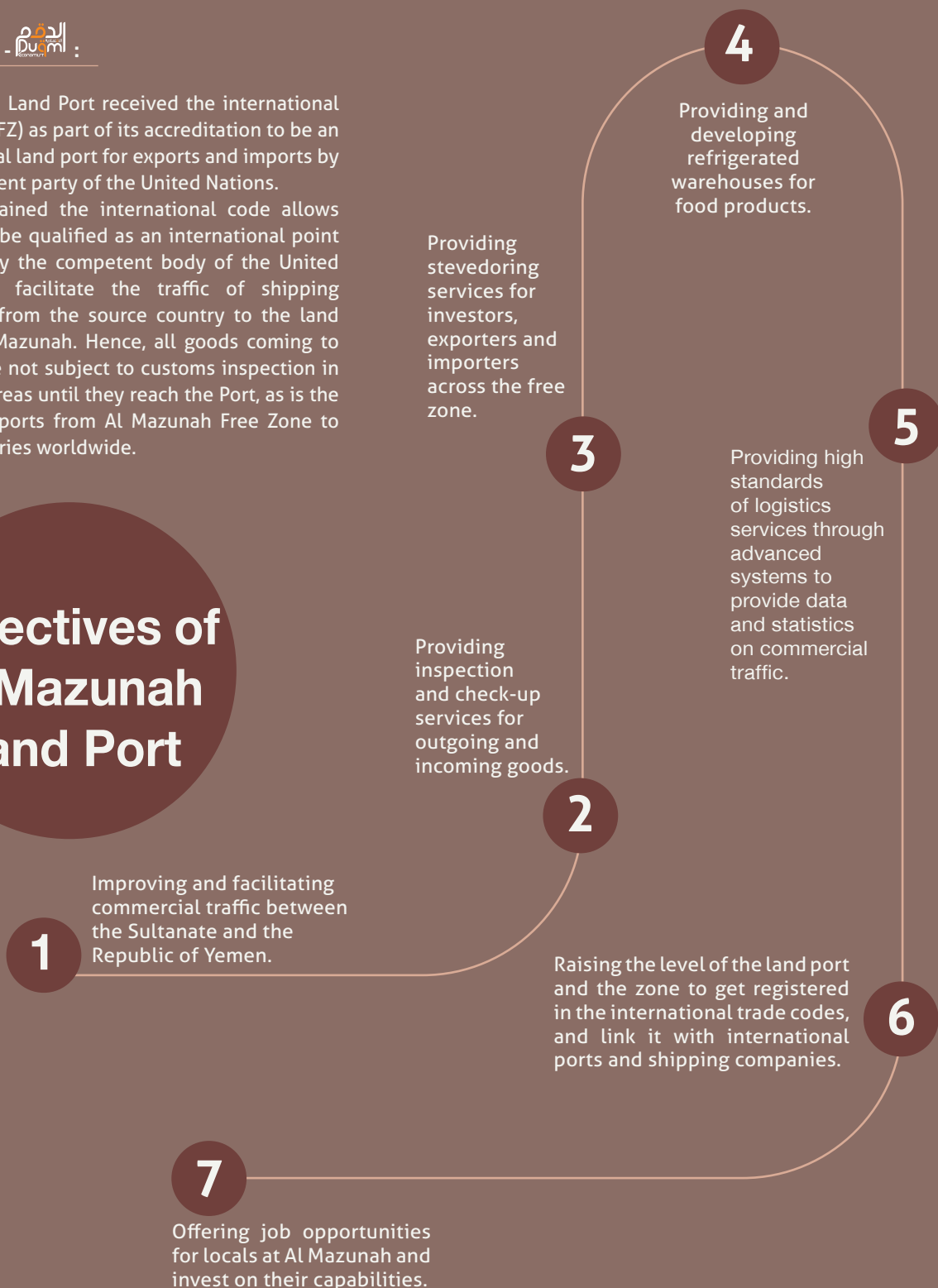
In the pipeline to be accredited as an international land port by the competent party of the United Nations

Al Mazunah Land Port receives an international code for container transport

Al Mazunah -  :

Al Mazunah Land Port received the international code (OMMFZ) as part of its accreditation to be an international land port for exports and imports by the competent party of the United Nations. Having obtained the international code allows the Port to be qualified as an international point approved by the competent body of the United Nations to facilitate the traffic of shipping containers from the source country to the land port in Al Mazunah. Hence, all goods coming to the Port are not subject to customs inspection in all transit areas until they reach the Port, as is the case for exports from Al Mazunah Free Zone to other countries worldwide.

Objectives of Al Mazunah Land Port



Al Mazunah Land Port receives 540,000 tonnes of cargo in 9 months



Faiz Qumsit: The Port witnesses active traffic and we receive 170 trucks daily at peak times



One of the customers processing his transaction at the One-Stop Shop in the land port

Al Mazunah -  :

Since starting its operations on June 2020, until the end of last March, the land port in Al Mazunah Free Zone received over 540,000 tonnes of exports and imports, loaded on 35,000 trucks.

Faiz Awaidan Qumsit, Operations Supervisor at Al Mazunah Land Port, said, "The Port witnesses a daily active traffic. It receives an average of 100 trucks daily, while at peak times the number reaches 170. The Directorate General of Customs makes great efforts along with other government bodies, handling good inspection operations prior to the importing or exporting companies obtain customs release data. The inspection process of each truck and delivering its customs declaration takes less than 30 minutes" He explained.

Faiz Qumsit is from the Wilayat of Al Mazunah and one of those who benefited from the job opportunities provided by Al Mazunah Free Zone. He joined the company after obtaining a Bachelor's degree in International Business Administration from the Netherlands.

Goods diversity

Qumsit said that the land port receives different goods like cars, fish, fruits and vegetables, and food and consumer goods. Exporting fish through the port is of high interest to importers and exporters, as more than 2,146 fish trucks carrying over 16,000 tonnes have been received, exporting fish outside Oman through the ports of Salalah, Sohar and other land ports. More than 2,000 truckloads of agricultural products of fruits and vegetables with a load of about 50,000 tonnes were received in the port.

One-Stop Shop services

The Company attends exporters and importers in the land port through One-Stop Shop, located in the customs yard. It serves customers and investors in the Zone in cooperation with the Directorate General of Customs, Al Mazunah Free Zone Management and other government bodies concerned with the release of shipments of foodstuffs, vegetables and fruits and food safety.


Goods are smoothly cleared by the Directorate General of Customs


The One-Stop Shop provides all necessary services to exporters and importers across the Port

Omani cadres manage all port's operations

Al Mazunah -  :

Al Mazunah Land Port Company has employed 10 young Omani cadres from the Wilayat of Al Mazunah, trained them on the systems used in managing land ports and familiarised them with the operations being conducted by the company. Those cadres are now managing the day-to-day operations of the Port. This marks a great added value to this project in terms of providing job opportunities for Omanis and benefiting from their capabilities.



A number of Omani employees on duty at the land port

One is for water and another for producing paper tissue

Manahel Al Saeed invests OMR 2 million to establish two factories in Al Mazunah




The provided facilities encouraged the Company to invest in the Zone


Al Mazunah's location on the Omani-Yemeni borders facilitates the quick reach of our products to the target markets

Al Mazunah - :

Manahel Al Saeed Company is one of those companies investing in Al Mazunah Free Zone by setting up two factories; one for bottling water and another for producing paper tissue. Eng. Mohammed Jamal, Operations Manager at the Company, said that the volume of investment in these two projects is about OMR 2 million.

In an interview with Duqm Economist Magazine, he described the Company's investment in the factories as a feasible and successful investment. "The products have received good attention in the markets since starting production in late 2019. We are expecting the Company to reach the break-even point by the end of this year", He explained.

He also noted that choosing Al Mazunah Free Zone to establish the two factories was highly attracted by the facilities provided by the Zone and its proximity to the Republic of Yemen, which marks the main market for the Company's products. As well, products are also mostly promoted in the Dhofar



Mohammed Jamal: Our investment is successful and Company's products are of interest to customers in the Sultanate and Yemen

Governorate, where products are very well-received by consumers there.

Water bottling factory

Commenting on Al Mazunah Water Factory, Eng. Mohammed Jamal, Operations Manager at Manahel Al Saeed Company, said: "The Company has two production lines with a production capacity of about 6000 cartoons of water per day, branded as "Mazunah". The bottles of water are categorised into 4



An employee is checking the production line at water bottling factory

different sizes that are 33ml, 600ml, 760ml and 1.5 liters, which are all very well-received by consumers”.

The Operations Manager stressed on the Company's keenness to always ensure providing quality bottled water through the Company's water quality laboratories, as the produced water is examined regularly to comply with the Omani and GCC standard specifications.

“Most of the factory's products are promoted in the Republic of Yemen, while some products are directed to Al Mazunah markets and other Wilayats in Dhofar Governorate. The Company has a plan to increase its products in the Sultanate's markets during the coming period” stated the Operations Manager.

Al Mazunah paper tissue factory

Eng. Mohammed Jamal, Operations Manager at Manahel Al Saeed Company, touched on Al Mazunah Paper Tissue Factory, which produces about 8,000 packages per day. The Factory was opened in late 2019 and its products are well received in export markets. The Company will, during the coming period, develop the production line to be fully automated”, He explained.

He praised the potentials of Al Mazunah Free Zone, which is located on the Omani-Yemeni borders. The location of the Zone contributes to the quick reach of our products to the Yemeni markets, which are the main markets for the Company's products.



Employees of the paper tissue factory are categorising products before storing them

Checking the produced water regularly to ensure compliance with Omani and GCC standards

Soon to have an automated paper tissue production line



Misbah Qutb

An Egyptian writer specialised in economic affairs

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The lost prospects

It is very normal for free zones located on the borders of countries to be different from those located inside, as every scenario has its own setting. Places clearly indicate that there is a difference in the nature of business and the objectives between the free zones.

As well, there are other differences in a percentage of cases between free border zones - which are the focus of this article - from each other even if they are within the same country. This is attributed to the neighbor, who falls on this border differs from the one on the other boarder, unless the country has a one neighbor only, which is a rare case, of course.

All data indicate that a free border zone can only succeed if there is mutual need and sustainability that justifies the investment cost that will be spent between the two countries sharing borders, clear cooperation, and open prospects for more areas of exchange. We all recall the obstacles that prevented the establishment of a free zone between Egypt and Palestine, close to Gaza due to the unfortunate disagreement between Palestinians. However, all objective reasons that require its establishment and all the success factors are available.

It is also noteworthy that most of the free zones over the borders, across the whole world, are mainly commercial, and are based on storage, warehouses, car showrooms or equipment, and logistics. Perhaps, there are some other simple manufacturing operations, not the industrial ones of course; such as sorting, packaging and canning. Such a free zone is could only be industrial if it enjoys a unique geographical location with very competitive advantages on one side or both sides of the zone.

As a theoretical example that if there is a mining industry on one side or having on the opposite side directly the possibility to establish manufacturing business for raw materials from which new products could be manufactured instead of transporting raw material or even making new investments to manage manufacturing it.

It is also noted that one of the most important success factors for the free zones is that being located close to a port or an airport and to be linked to a strong transport network or even a single strategic road. Al

Mazunah Free Zone stands a good example here, since its inception in 1999 between the Sultanate of Oman and Yemen.

The interesting thing is that the one might attribute the strong trade activity in Al Mazunah to the deadly war taking place in Yemen and the consequent increase in the needs of Yemenis for food, medicine, clothing, building materials, cars and in return their demand to import or export their agriculture and fish products overseas through Port of Salalah by Al Mazunah.

In addition, all international relief organisations are in need to offload aids in Salalah and then transport it to Yemen via Al Mazunah to be delivered to Yemen and distributed across the country there.

Moreover, one might think that Al Mazunah is just a temporary zone due to the crisis, which is totally not true. The history of its inception itself proves that, and in fact that Al Mazunah is a significant focal point to both countries, serving intra-regional trade and Yemeni trade to overseas on the other hand. I believe that it will take a long time before any party thinks about trying to build a different geographical equation through human action to change this reality, with its mountains and desert and in its complex relationship with the sea. Al Mazunah is more than 260 km far from the Port of Salalah.

The same is true for shipping as it is located in the upper northeast of Yemen, and far from the sea, and there is no indication that this distance can be challenged or linked to a Yemeni port that is closer than the Port of Salalah.

Assuming that Yemen could witness an extensive reconstruction and establishment of infrastructure, but we have not heard of any plans for establishing Yemeni ports close to the sea and heading to the Sultanate of Oman to be as an alternative to Al Mazunah or even compete with it.

However, it is only possible if the traditional Yemeni ports came back. This could only affect Al Mazunah in some aspects, but it opens other horizons for Al Mazunah because the condition of Yemen, its people, their production, consumption and trade at the time will be much better, and this will strengthen the status of Al Mazunah in the business of shipping.

Considered among the five most endangered groups Rescuing a Humpback Whale near the Port of Duqm

Duqm -  :

The International Whaling Commission (IWC) commended the Sultanate's efforts in rescuing a Humpback Whale, which was caught in fishing nets near the Port of Duqm, on January 19.

The Environment Authority explained that on January 21, 2021, a 15-mtr-long Humpback Whale was freed from the nets, praising the efforts made by the Authority's specialists and experts of the Five Oceans Company, along with the support of Duqm Port, Coast Guard and Royal Air Force of Oman. The Authority commented on a twitter post, "Based on the reported observation that the Humpback Whale was released from the trapped nets, the team announces the successful completion of the rescue mission".

The Authority noted that Royal Air Force of Oman flew the Casa planes to track that the whale left to the ocean safely, while Coast Guard monitored the path of the whale as it crossed the waters of Duqm Port.


An important rescue operation

The International Whaling Commission (IWC) reported that having the Humpback Whale in the Arabian Sea is unique; it is the only group of such kind of species that does not migrate.

Rather, it spends lifetime in the Arabian Sea, which makes it seriously endangered. Thus, the rescue operation carried out by the Environment Authority with other partners is of a great importance indeed.

IWC clarified that the Scientific Committee of the International Whaling Commission has classified the Humpback Whale in the Arabian Sea from the five most endangered groups. Therefore, rescuing only one whale marks a significant impact on genetic diversity and inhabitants' restoration of this whale type. Further, IWC confirmed that the Sultanate's Government has succeeded in responding to the emergency and other incidents that threaten the marine environment.

This type of whales is called the "Humpback Whale" or camel of the sea. It belongs to the jumping whales' family, having a short body, large head and its dorsal fin is relatively small. This black colour whale is around 12 to 16 metres long and the female often gives birth to two in one abdomen, and its length at maturity reaches 51 foot.


International
Whaling
Commission
(IWC): Rescuing
only one whale
has a major
impact on genetic
diversity and
inhabitants'
restoration.



Omanis roll up their sleeves in building Oman's largest fishing port

Interviewed by
Mohammed bin Ahmed Al Shezawi

Eng. Mahmood Al Hinai stands every morning on the ground of the multi-purpose Fishing Port in Duqm to observe the progress being made in the Port's construction works, which reached final stages by early March 2021.

Mahmood, a Graduate of BA in Civil Engineering from Caledonian College of Engineering in Muscat in 2014, did not expect to live in Duqm someday. Neither he imagined to be responsible for supervising a project as big as the largest fishing port in the Sultanate. Commenting on this experience, he said that the project was an opportunity to get first-hand experience about the construction works of ports, roads and their operation. As well, he could learn a lot in the field of maritime works in ports, within and outside the Sultanate through the field visits conducted to different ports.

"The Port is considered an integrated project, so supervising it marks an opportunity to develop the skills of engineers. The project includes many marine works such as fixed and floating berths, breakwaters, and drilling operations to deepen the Port's basin, in addition to road works that connect the Port with the Fishing Industries Zone. Other works in the Port are the surface water drainage from the canals and control of valley water within the Port area. Moreover, there are infrastructure works such as leveling and reclamation of land for the construction of service buildings and using them in the process of managing and operating the Port", Al Hinai explained.

Prior to joining this project, Eng. Mahmood Al Hinai worked in a number of other



Mahmood Al Hinai: The Port is an integrated project and supervising it is an opportunity to develop our skills

departments in the Oman Company for the Development of the Special Economic Zone at Duqm "Tatweer Duqm", through which he gained experience that helped him in his new mission to supervise the Fishing Port project.

Important events

The Port witnessed two important events, the first was in 2019 when the Special Economic Zone Authority at Duqm (canceled by the Royal Decree No. (105/2020) decided to increase the depth of the Port from 6 to 10 metres. This decision came in order to increase its economic value and prepare it to attract large fishing vessels operating on big seas. The second event is the decision of the Public Authority for Special Economic Zones and Free Zones - which replaced the previous authority- to conduct a study to convert the Fishing Port of Duqm into a multi-purpose port. Hence, it will provide facilities for handling foodstuff related to fish activities and transforming the Fishing


**Building Omani
expertise in
port supervision
is one of the
achieved gains**





Main breakwater of the Port

Industries Complex, located near the Port, into a complex for food industries, including the fishery industries.

Eng. Mahmood Al Hinai - who took over the task of overseeing the Port in 2018 after obtaining a master's degree in Engineering Management from Aston University in the UK - witnessed these two events and considers them today as the Port has reached its final stages, two key milestones in his career journey.

Building Omani expertise

Mahmood Al Hinai confirmed that he has gained a good experience and enriched his knowledge in this sector. The other fellow Omani engineers working for consultation firms confirm the same too. They regard that building Omani expertise in the field of port supervision and related infrastructure is one of the gains that were achieved by the multi-purpose Fishing Port.

Happy to work on the project

Mazin bin Nasser Al Sulaimi is a Mechanical Engineer working for the Italian company, Sering, which provides consultation services for the marine works project for the Fishing Port. He is one of the first engineers who worked on the project since the initial construction works in 2016. Over these years, he witnessed many works that have been carried out at sea and on ground. When he recalled his memories of the first months he spent in Duqm, he commented that he was happy to work on the project, and in many cases he would spend his weekend in Duqm. Mazin works as an inspector on concrete and other cement works, which are considered a



Mazin Al Sulaimi: Happy to work on the project and I often spend my weekend in Duqm

major part of the project. He witnessed many works that are made around the clock in the casting yard. "I've often worked at night in this yard, where the place is full of life, turning like a beehive with a big number of workers at night", commented Mazin.

Quality control

According to Mazin, this yard accommodates more than 25,000 pieces of Cor-Locs, which are used as supports in the breakwater with other huge concrete bricks were poured. Mazin stands among the employees performing his role as an inspector of the quality of work carried out in this yard. "We are keen to ensure that the work is done in accordance with the maps and specifications approved for the Fishing Port", remarked Mazin. After that, Mazin worked on other engineering works at the Port, including quality control of casting operations at the quay and installing breakwaters.

Engineers confirm their keenness to ensure that the work is in accordance with the Port's approved maps and specifications





One of the Port's berths in the final construction phase

Climate changes and wind intensity impose many challenges on workers, and youth affirm their efforts to make the most of them



Ahmed Al Ajmi: I learned a lot about strength or weakness of soil and how to deal with its issues

New experience

Ahmed bin Mohammed Al Ajmi shares with us another rich experience. Post his experience of working on the intersections project on the Al Batinah Road, he moved in 2017 to Duqm and started another chapter of his career journey with different challenges at the Fishing Port of Duqm, located on the

Arabian Sea and the Indian Ocean.

Amidst these challenges, Ahmed started working as a project engineer for the first time since he started his job as a civil engineer at the Italian company, Sering. The new role requires more scrutiny on the quality of the materials used in the port roads, such as soil, cement and iron. After two years of working on this project, Eng. Ahmed Al Ajmi confirms that he has benefited a lot in the field of discovering the strength or weakness of the soil as well as how to deal with its problems, with climate changes and wind intensity.

"Working on the marine works project for the Port of Duqm is very rewarding experience for engineers. The project includes marine works related to construction of breakwaters and berths and deepening the Port depth as well as other works on land such as building roads, drainage works and other works. Likewise, we gained a lot from the foreign expertise of our colleagues from Italy and Greek", said Ahmed Al Ajmi.



Part of the roads works in the Port

Duqm Airport welcomed 25,000 passengers in 2020

Duqm - الدقم:

The total number of passengers traveling through Duqm Airport in 2020 reached about 25,000, compared to over 58,000 in 2019.

Since its inception in 2014, Duqm Airport has served the traffic of aircraft and passengers between Muscat and Duqm airports. The number of flights operated by Oman Air between both airports is six (6) daily flights per week, except for Friday.

Last year witnessed a decrease in number of flights between Muscat and Duqm airports, which reached 328 flights only. This is attributed to the Covid19- pandemic, which had an impact on airlines traffic in most countries worldwide.

February marks best records

The total number of passengers arrived at Duqm Airport last year was 12,754 passengers, with around 12,051 passengers departed from Duqm.

The month of February recorded the highest

rate of passengers in 2020, as the number of arrivals to Duqm Airport reached 3048 and departures were 2563 passengers. However, the Airport stopped receiving passengers for almost 5 months, starting from April to August. The Airport resumed receiving flights in September, with around 258 passengers arrived, flying from Muscat in (8) flights.

Duqm Airport is regarded a key growth back up for the Special Economic Zone at Duqm (SEZAD), given that it connects the Zone with other countries around the world, while it is ready to receive international flights.

The Airport consists of passengers' terminal with a capacity to receive half a million passengers annually and could be expanded to receive two million passengers annually in the future. It also includes the air cargo building with a capacity of 25,000 tonnes per year, with the possibility of expanding according to future demand.

As well, the Airport brings a 4-km runway with 75 metres wide, with connecting corridors and parking spaces for four aircrafts, including the Airbus A380.

Operating 6 weekly flights between Muscat and Duqm and the airport is prepared to serve international flights

Half a million passengers is the capacity of the airport annually

Aircrafts and passengers traffic in Duqm Aiport in 2020

| 1 January | | | | 2 February | | | |
|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|
| Departures | Arrivals | Departures | Arrivals | Departures | Arrivals | Departures | Arrivals |
| 2,429 | 2,556 | 2,563 | 3,048 | 2,563 | 3,048 | 2,563 | 3,048 |
| Outgoing Flights | Incoming Flights | Outgoing Flights | Incoming Flights | Outgoing Flights | Incoming Flights | Outgoing Flights | Incoming Flights |
| 26 | 26 | 25 | 25 | 25 | 25 | 25 | 25 |
| 3 March | | | | 4 April | | | |
| Departures | Arrivals | Departures | Arrivals | Departures | Arrivals | Departures | Arrivals |
| 1,972 | 1,931 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Outgoing Flights | Incoming Flights | Outgoing Flights | Incoming Flights | Outgoing Flights | Incoming Flights | Outgoing Flights | Incoming Flights |
| 25 | 25 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 5 May | | | | 6 June | | | |
| Departures | Arrivals | Departures | Arrivals | Departures | Arrivals | Departures | Arrivals |
| 40 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Outgoing Flights | Incoming Flights | Outgoing Flights | Incoming Flights | Outgoing Flights | Incoming Flights | Outgoing Flights | Incoming Flights |
| 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 7 July | | | | 8 August | | | |
| Departures | Arrivals | Departures | Arrivals | Departures | Arrivals | Departures | Arrivals |
| 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Outgoing Flights | Incoming Flights | Outgoing Flights | Incoming Flights | Outgoing Flights | Incoming Flights | Outgoing Flights | Incoming Flights |
| 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 9 September | | | | 10 October | | | |
| Departures | Arrivals | Departures | Arrivals | Departures | Arrivals | Departures | Arrivals |
| 256 | 258 | 1,184 | 1,319 | 1,184 | 1,319 | 1,184 | 1,319 |
| Outgoing Flights | Incoming Flights | Outgoing Flights | Incoming Flights | Outgoing Flights | Incoming Flights | Outgoing Flights | Incoming Flights |
| 8 | 8 | 25 | 25 | 25 | 25 | 25 | 25 |
| 11 November | | | | 12 December | | | |
| Departures | Arrivals | Departures | Arrivals | Departures | Arrivals | Departures | Arrivals |
| 1,517 | 1,816 | 2,090 | 1,826 | 2,090 | 1,826 | 2,090 | 1,826 |
| Outgoing Flights | Incoming Flights | Outgoing Flights | Incoming Flights | Outgoing Flights | Incoming Flights | Outgoing Flights | Incoming Flights |
| 27 | 27 | 27 | 27 | 27 | 27 | 27 | 27 |
| Total | | | | April 2021 | | | |
| Departures | Arrivals | Departures | Arrivals | Departures | Arrivals | Departures | Arrivals |
| 12,051 | 12,754 | 12,051 | 12,754 | 12,051 | 12,754 | 12,051 | 12,754 |
| Outgoing Flights | Incoming Flights | Outgoing Flights | Incoming Flights | Outgoing Flights | Incoming Flights | Outgoing Flights | Incoming Flights |
| 164 | 164 | 164 | 164 | 164 | 164 | 164 | 164 |

Park Inn Duqm brings exciting leisure activities to attract more visitors

Cluster General Manager of Park Inn by
Radisson Hotels in Oman speaks to **الدوقم**
**Presenting new recreational activities
for hotel guests and Duqm visitors**



Interviewed by
Abdulaziz bin Ahmed Al Jahdhami

Park Inn by Radisson Hotel & Residence Duqm spares no effort to support promoting Duqm as one of a kind tourist destination in the Sultanate. In a bid to complement the various efforts and initiatives backing the Discover Duqm Campaign, the hotel introduced a number of fun-filled leisure activities for its visitors. Along with all other tourist landmarks, facilities and activities, Duqm would always bring a remarkable tourism experience to its residents and visitors alike.

To shed more light to the different recreational initiatives and activities introduced by Park Inn by Radisson Hotel & Residence Duqm, Duqm Economist Magazine, met with Michael Kuhn, Cluster General Manager of Park Inn by Radisson Hotels in Oman.

New leisure activities in 2021

In line with Duqm being a promising investment and tourism destination in the Sultanate, there is a growing demand for tourist and leisure activities and facilities to promote Duqm. In this regard, Michael Kuhn, Cluster General Manager of Park Inn by Radisson Hotels in Oman, remarked, "We are introducing a number of recreational activities that are aimed to promote Duqm overall and attract more visitors to enjoy their stay and experience the beauty of Duqm. Whether, visitors are coming for business or staycation, they will get something to enjoy. The leisure activities, tourist natural and archaeological landmarks and discovering the lifestyle and traditions of local community are just to name a few aspects of the enjoyment, in addition to the pleasant weather all year around.

"Our new plans bring a list of different recreational activities, which will be introduced gradually to visitors of Park Inn by


**Wind surfing
and offshore
fishing will
attract more
tourists to Duqm**


**We urge visitors
to discover
Duqm, lifestyle
and traditions of
local community
and enjoy
the pleasant
weather all year
around**





Radisson Hotel & Residence Duqm. Among the soon to be launched activities is the wing and kite surfing, which is operated at the hotel by Watersport Oman in the coming weeks. Through this Group, we are intending to promote Discover Duqm Campaign. We have already equipped the hotel with the wind station, which demonstrates the measures bar of temperatures as well as winds' speed and direction", explained Michael.

"This service is being introduced based on pre-booking through the hotel, but the specialised business Group is operating it in our premises. As summer is the perfect season for wind surfing, we are targeting to attract watersports community to experience their favourite sport in Duqm", he added.

Moreover, Park Inn by Radisson Hotel & Residence Duqm introduced yoga sessions for its guests. The Yoga Retreat will include a 3-night stay, city tour, excursions and yoga sessions in cooperation with a group of certified yoga trainers provided by Wellness Warriors Arabia. A part of the stay at the Park Inn by Radisson Hotel & Residence in Duqm, we are planning to offer offshore fishing package for guests through charter boats.

2021 development plans

The Cluster General Manager of Park Inn by Radisson Hotels in Oman, stated that part of the hotel's expansion project, the first phase will see an addition of 23 keys to meet the potential increasing demand for hotel rooms. He expected the completion of the new

rooms to be by end of August this year. "We have planned this in consideration to the type of visitors coming to Duqm, whom mostly are corporate guests coming for business. This project reflects the hotel owners' commitment to contribute in developing Duqm as a destination of choice for investment and tourism", he commented.

Stable occupancy rate

Commenting on the hotel's occupation rate in 2020, Michael Kuhn, Cluster General Manager of Park Inn by Radisson Hotels in Oman, explained: "Despite the impact of Covid-19 pandemic, the hotel received around(10-15%)more visitors during summer comparing to the same period in 2019. The occupation and turnout in 2019 and 2020 was almost the same, but during lockdowns, we welcomed visitors from Oman only. Therefore, around 70% decline was observed as the airport was closed for almost 2 months. However, the overall occupancy rate was almost similar in both years, 2019 and 2020. On the other hand, Q1 of 2021 marked an occupation rate of 80%".

A Safe tourist destination

"Striving to promote Oman in general as a safe tourist destination, we are implementing high safety standards and in-house precautionary measures in all our group hotels in the Sultanate. Through all the safety procedures put in place, we assure people that it's highly safe to visit Duqm and discover its various attractions", Michael pointed out.



Adding 26 more keys to meet the increasing demand for hotel rooms

Targeting to attract watersports community to experience their favourite sport in Duqm

Park Inn Duqm records 80% occupation rate in Q1 of 2021

Launching first phase of Maysan Square Duqm and groundbreaking to be announced soon

CEO of Maysan Properties:

A promising future awaits the real estate sector in Duqm

The marketing campaign marked a success and we are planning a visit to GCC countries before year-end

Establishing an integrated business square providing a good work environment for workers and attractive prices for investors

Muscat, Duqm - 

Maysan Properties Company announced, on January 2021, launching the first phase of "Maysan Square - Duqm" project, consisting of an office complex, residential apartments, a business hotel and entertainment facilities. Other amenities will be developed in upcoming phases, based on the increasing demand in the Special Economic Zone at Duqm (SEZAD).

The ceremony was held in Muscat City Center, Seeb under the patronage of HE Eng. Ahmed bin Hassan Al Dheeb, Deputy Chairman of the Public Authority for Special Economic Zones and Free Zones (OPAZ).

Sadiq bin Jaffer Sulaiman, CEO of Maysan Properties, said: "The construction works for the first phase will start in late April 2021, with expected completion to be in Q4 of 2022.

A successful marketing campaign

In an interview with Duqm Economist Magazine, the CEO described the marketing campaign, organised in Muscat and Duqm, as very successful. "Despite the impacts of the pandemic, we observed a good turnout with serious reservations and more are expected in the coming months. The Company is planning to promote the project in other GCC countries

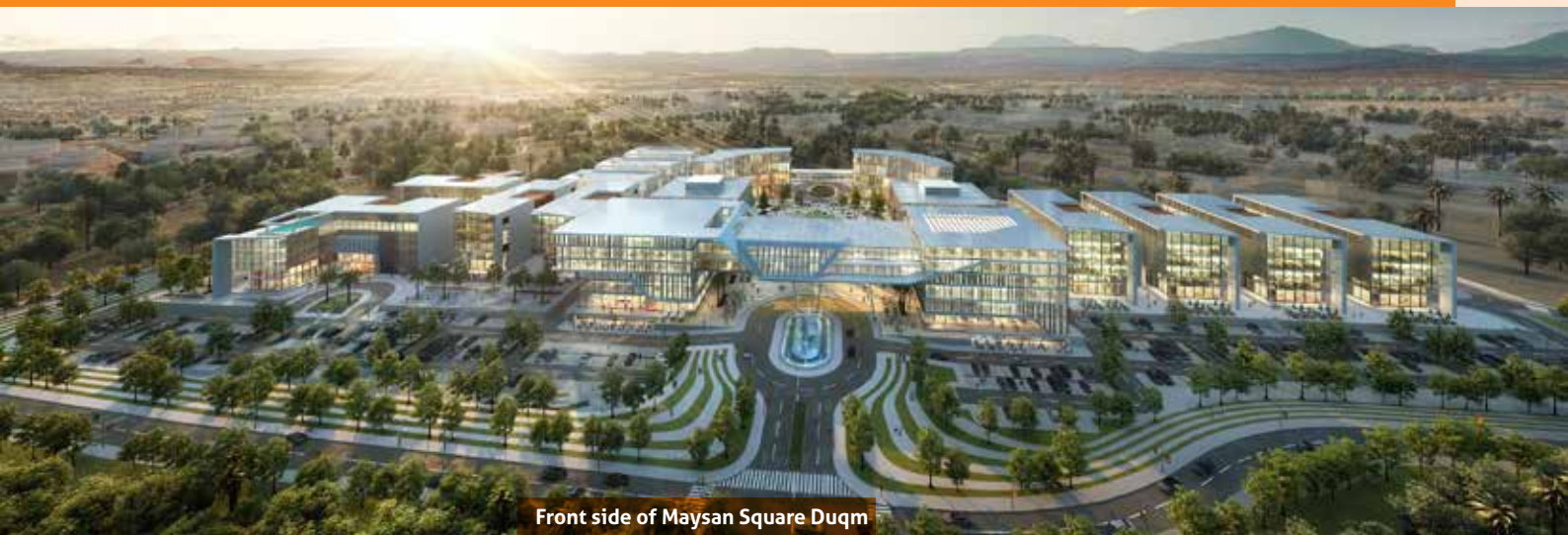
by end of this year. With this approach, we will promote Duqm as a promising investment destination for GCC investors, with various investment opportunities and incentives, moderate climate in the Zone and available infrastructure", He explained.

Project's components

The first phase of Maysan Square Duqm includes an office complex consisting of 3 pavilions with 229 commercial freehold units and retail stores, released based on usufruct system for a period of 50 years, which can be extended for similar period. The complex will be built over 12,000 sqm of land with a built up area covering 30,000 sqm. The project is strategically located at the centre of Duqm, with around 10 minutes far from Duqm Port and 15 minutes away from Duqm Airport.

Prices

The offices prices range between OMR 27,000 – OMR 50,000, according to the unit size, varying between 45 sqm - 75 sqm. The project will be equipped with protection systems, central air-conditioning and smart management of parking lots and waste. Offices could be furnished based on customers' request. "The prices set by the Company for offices are of good returns on investment, which are also lower than the prices of



Front side of Maysan Square Duqm

similar projects. When compared with a similar project, we will find that our prices are the best, and the return on investment in Duqm is higher than many other locations, including Muscat. SEZAD has been witnessing for several years a high demand for offices, residential apartments and hotel rooms. This made the employment rate in the real estate sector in Duqm high, which leads to providing good investment opportunities for local and foreign companies and individuals wishing to invest in the sector", The CEO commented.

An integrated business district

Sadiq bin Jaffer Sulaiman, said that Maysan Square Duqm is the first business district of its kind in Duqm, being integrated and providing a good business environment for workers through its various facilities. In addition to the offices, there are retail units, residential apartments and a business hotel. This will provide a comfortable and enriching work environment for workers in the complex. He also pointed out that in addition to the benefits of the complex itself, investors can benefit from the advantages of SEZAD, which enjoys tax and customs exemptions, as well as host many projects that make Duqm in a permanent economic development. Moreover, foreign investors are entitled a permanent

residency for themselves and their families when investing in Maysan Square Duqm.

Reasons to invest

"The most key reasons behind our investment in SEZAD is the remarkable growth witnessed at the Zone for several years. The establishment of Duqm Port, Duqm Refinery, Fishing Port and other projects contributed to attracting many companies. In addition to the increase in number of companies, we have also noticed urban and demographic growth, making the future of real estate investment in Duqm promising, stated the CEO of Maysan Properties.

Good facilities

The CEO stressed that the facilities provided by OPAZ to investors encouraged the Company to establish its project in Duqm. Also, the flexibility of getting a land usufruct, simplified procedures for investment and tax exemptions are all factors encouraging investment in the SEZAD.

Optimism for the future

CEO of Maysan Properties expressed his optimism about the future of investment in Duqm, noting that the advantages of Duqm are attracting investments.

◆◆◆
The first phase includes a 3-pavillion office complex, 229 freehold commercial units and retail stores

◆◆◆
Getting usufruct lands, simplified procedures for investment and tax exemptions are encouraging factors for investment

◆◆◆
Our prices are of good return and the economic, urban and demographic growth in Duqm raises the investors' profits



During the project's launch event

OPAZ issues controls of environmental permits in special economic zones and free zones

The decision aims to apply high standards of environment preservation in all projects developed at special economic zones and free zones

Muscat -  :

HE Dr. Ali bin Masoud Al Sunaidy, Chairman of the Public Authority for Special Economic Zones and Free Zones (OPAZ), issued a decision regulating the controls for organising and issuing environmental permits in the special economic zones and free zones in the Sultanate.

Lubna bint Hamoud Al Sabari, Environmental Specialist at the Public Authority for Special Economic Zones and Free Zones, pointed out, "The decision applies to all projects developed in the special economic zones and free zones. It specified the procedures for obtaining environmental permits and identified the projects that require preparing a detailed environmental assessment study for their potential impacts".

Scan to get a copy of the decision:




Projects are classified into 3 categories based on their impacts to the environment and health of human beings

Classifying projects to 3 categories

According to the decision, the projects established in the special economic and free zones have been classified into three (3) categories based on their impacts to the environment and health of human beings, their nature, location, materials used in production and production capacity. The First Category includes high-risk projects, as identified in Annex No (1).

These projects are required to submit an environmental and social impacts assessment study. Projects of this category include those related to the development and management of industrial plans, logistics storage sites, fishing ports and fish industries complexes, tourist villages with an area of 10 hectares or more, chemicals and oil storage tanks of around 5 hectares and more, heavy industries, oil refineries, chemical and petrochemical industries, power plants, seawater desalination plants with a production capacity of over one million cubic metres per year, and fish farming projects with a production capacity of more than 500 tonnes per year



Lubna Al Sabari: This decision aims to facilitate the procedures for investors and accelerate the issuance of environmental permits

for the localised fish and any quantity of abnormal species.

The Second Category includes projects with medium environmental risk, which require submitting environmental management plan. However, the Third Category is for projects with low environmental risk, requiring compliance with the specified general and technical environmental requirements, while submitting an environmental and social

impact assessment study or an environmental management plan is not required.

Facilitating procedures for investors

Lubna Al Sabari, stated, "OPAZ is intending to facilitate the procedures for investors and accelerate issuing environmental permits. For instance, the environmental permits for projects falling into second and third categories are issued prior establishing projects. These permits will be issued in (5) working days for third category projects and (10) days for the second category. However, for the projects that require an environmental assessment study, it takes a maximum of thirty (30) days for reviewing the environmental permit applications. This process serves to avoid the negative impacts of projects, which require a thorough evaluation before granting the environmental permit".

Categorising chemicals

The Environmental Regulatory Department shall categorise chemicals based on international classifications, including the global system for classification and labeling

of chemicals. It also develops guidelines for all phases of the chemicals safe management procedures and compiles an inventory of banned and restricted chemicals and those dealing with these chemicals. Moreover, the Department collects information about conditions of using, transporting, storing, handling and disposing chemicals.

"Projects must register the hazardous materials used, manufactured or produced as waste with the Department. As well, projects shall obtain the necessary permits to deal with chemicals as per the defined legal standards and controls and the procedures of Basel Convention. Further, projects shall provide the Department with information, maps and plans of sites allocated for storing and using radioactive materials, which are approved by the concerned authorities", Lubna Al Sabari explained.

She also stressed that the new decision prohibits the import or export of hazardous materials and any hazardous waste listed in the Basel Convention without obtaining a permit from OPAZ.

Annex No. (1)

Projects requiring an environmental and social impact assessment study



Environmental permits for projects falling into second and third categories are issued prior establishing the projects

Chemicals are categorised based on international classifications and guidelines are developed to ensure safe management procedures

Import or export of hazardous waste listed in the Basel Convention is prohibited without obtaining a permit from OPAZ

Duqm Cycling Championship brings a unique excitement

120 bikers from different parts of the Sultanate explore Duqm

Duqm - Saleh Al Maamari :


**Promoting
SEZAD as
a sports,
entertainment
and tourist
destination**


**Providing an
opportunity for
local community
and employees
to participate,
volunteer and
contribute in the
championship**

Duqm Cycling Championship kicked off its first edition on Saturday, January 16, 2021, from Duqm Airport for 107 kilometres. Around 120 cyclists, coming from different parts of the Sultanate competed for the Championship's title in 3 different age categories.

The Championship was organised in collaboration with Oman Cycling Association and the Special Economic Zone at Duqm (SEZAD), with the support of the Public Authority for Special Economic Zones and Free Zones and other companies operating in the Zone.

Well-admired championship

Although it was held on a weekend, the championship witnessed an excellent turn out from the local community and employees working in Duqm. They have been early at the start point and finish line observing cyclists competing and recording the different moments on ground in different parts of Duqm. The Championship was very well promoted on social media, where pictures of different activities were posted on various platforms.

Forming a team of volunteers

During the preparation for

the Championship, a volunteering opportunity was offered to the local community and employees working in Duqm. They were invited to volunteer in organising the Championship and support the cyclists during the race. The volunteers have lined up along the race route to help guiding and assisting the cyclists. During the closing ceremony, they were awarded a token of appreciation for the participation and contribution to make this Championship a success.

Competition and enthusiasm

The pleasant weather in Duqm in mid-January played a role to provoke the spirit of competitiveness among the cyclists. Their thrill and passion was even more post leaving the start point at the Airport until they reached the village of Say, which is witnessing an increasing number of buildings and remarkable urbanisation. Afterward, they passed the road to the Rock Garden neighbourhood, which is also witnessing a commendable growth and passing by the Tourist Zone until reaching the finish line in front of SEZAD Headquarter.

The finish line

Duqm Cycling Championship witnessed a great competition between the participating



professional teams of cyclists, which competed for 107 kilometres in two hours and fifteen minutes approximately. During the last minute, the cyclists spared no effort to reach the finish line and record a win.

Crowning the winners

The closing ceremony of the championship was held in front of the Special Economic Zone at Duqm Headquarter. Mishary Al Khalili from the Royal Army of Oman Team won the title of the Open Category, and Abdulrahman Al Yaquobi from the Gulf Cycle Team came in the Second Place, while the Third Place was picked by the English cyclist Bradley Parkins from North Road Oman.

Fifteen teams with Omani and resident participants took part in Duqm Cycling Championship. The participating teams are the Royal Army of Oman, Al Shabab Club, Nizwa Club, Quriyat Club, Sur Club, Ahli Sidab Club, Rustaq Club, Ibri Club, Izki Sports Center, Gulf Cycle, North Road Oman, Arsen Endurance, Elite, Capital, and Duqm Team.

Commendable Duqm Cycling Championship

"Organising Duqm Cycling Championship was not intended to attract cyclists only, rather it came to achieve many other sporting,



social, economic, health and development objectives" commented Eng. Yahya bin Khamis Al Zadjali, In-Charge of Managing the Operations of the Special Economic Zone at Duqm (SEZAD) during the closing ceremony. On the other side, Saif bin Sebaa Al Rashidi, Chairman of the Omani Cycling Association, said: "Such kind of races and championships reflect the important role that bicycles can play in promoting the tourism landmarks as well as achieving other sporting objectives, including sports competitions and supporting national teams.

Mishary Al Khalili wins the Open Category, Abdul Rahman Al Yaquobi comes second and Bradley Parkins wins third place

Cyclists crossed 107 kilometres in two hours and fifteen minutes



On the way to Al Mazunah

(1)

As we reached Al Mazunah, it was around four in the afternoon, so we headed directly to the hotel to check-in and afterward started our tour in this city, which we are visiting for the first time. We had the thrill of exploring the city since we pushed off from Salalah, while looking at the billboards, reading the names of the villages we were passing by on the way; some of which were familiar while others were new to us.

(2)

The road was quiet despite the trucks and cars heading towards or returning from Al Mazunah. On the way, we were attracted by the Niyabat of Moudi in the Wilayat of Thumrait, where we stopped for a short break. We enjoyed shopping in a foodstuff store, which was full of goods despite its far distance from the city of Salalah.

(3)

We were very motivated to explore the city before the sunset of our first day in Al Mazunah, which enjoys all aspects of development, education, health and economy while being located at the farthest borders of Oman. Actually, we have been surprised of meeting one of the young Omanis from Al Mazunah, a newly graduated citizen from the Netherlands in International Business Administration. He works as a Supervisor of Al Mazunah Land Port, one of the most important facilities in Al Mazunah Free Zone. Many other examples of young Omanis from Al Mazunah working in different public and private establishments.

(4)

On the first day, we visited the public park in Al Mazunah and roamed around the local markets. We were very much attracted by the artistic coffee booths on the roadsides. This was a quick city tour before starting our second day on duty in Al Mazunah.

(5)

Over the last two days of our visit, we got to know more about the people of Al Mazunah, the investors and those working there. They all expressed their sincere interest to work on making Al Mazunah, a thriving city with various economic components and one of the investment destinations in the Sultanate.

(6)

Some people often look at the areas located nearby the borders, which are far from capitals and major cities as "dead villages" leaning only on what comes from others. However, Al Mazunah proved the opposite as everything there reflects its prosperity and today it is more than ever qualified to be a major economic and tourist destination in the Sultanate. Al Mazunah is benefiting from its vast plains, sand dunes, tourist elements, rich climate and terrain, as well as the active commercial traffic, being led by Al Mazunah Free Zone, the beating heart of this city, which is getting brighter day after another.



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



However, Al-Mazunah proved the opposite as everything there reflects its prosperity and today it is more than ever qualified to be a major economic and tourist destination in the Sultanate.

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