

Duqm

a unique
destination for
hosting events



Closing a year with fruitful achievements

The Public Authority for Special Economic Zones and Free Zones (OPAZ) has closed another year, delivering great and fruitful achievements, most notably facilitating the procedures for investors in the zones affiliated with OPAZ. This serves the major objective of making these zones one of the key contributors to support the national economy, economic diversification, job creation, community development and encouraging entrepreneurs.

In view of that, OPAZ has worked on many programmes, initiatives, and activities within its competences in planning, regulating, supporting, and operating and bringing all zones under one umbrella that promotes a dynamic and harmonious work in various sectors and capitalizes on their comparative advantages.

Since its establishment until the end of 2022, OPAZ has accomplished a number of achievements, some of which are completing the infrastructure facilities in the Port of Duqm, supply and installation of cranes in the Port and handing over other facilities to the concerned parties. The multi-purpose Fishing Port has also been completed and handed over to a consortium led by Oman Investment Authority (OIA).

Additionally, other achievements include connecting the Fisheries and Food Industries Complex to the electricity network, capable of handling up to 40 megavolts and backing road network by developing the National Road 32, the waterfront and internal roads in Sayy neighbourhood. Another achievement was getting the railway plan in Duqm approved.

In collaboration with the Ministry of Energy and Minerals, a gas delivery project was accomplished in Duqm, along with the installation of 13 telecommunication towers. The project also involved the establishment of two gas lines for the Duqm Refinery and a utility company, as well as a separate line for the medium industries area.

During 2022, OPAZ signed a land usufruct agreement with Green Hydrogen and Chemicals Company (GHC), a joint venture between the UK entity of ACME Company and Norway-based Scatec ASA, to develop phase one of green hydrogen and ammonia project in SEZAD. It also signed a second land reservation agreement with HYPOR Duqm.

OPAZ also announced the allocation of around 18 sqkm of land in SEZAD to support and encourage the use of modern technologies, including artificial intelligence and drones. A tender for the construction of a drone helipad was also issued. Many experiments were carried out and a usufruct agreement was signed to establish a space settlement centre, in addition to the construction of three-dimensional buildings.

To facilitate and expedite procedures for investors in SEZAD, OPAZ launched an electronic land selection service for investors in the Special Economic Zone at Duqm. OPAZ stopped paper transactions at Duqm one-stop shop and also implemented an expedited service for investors to acquire long-term residency. Further, it introduced various electronic services such as those for chemical and hazardous materials management, and published a guide outlining the fundamental principles of design.

Aiming to improve the quality of lifestyle in Duqm, plans were made to develop Sayy district and Duqm Beach Park in an environment-friendly manner. Subsequently, a tender was awarded for the construction of two parks spanning 10,000 sqm within the district.

On the other hand, OPAZ introduced "Discover Duqm" campaign to promote investment and tourism opportunities. This drew various activities and support for numerous tourism projects. As part of this initiative, a mountain route was launched, a rock garden was developed and O-Taxi service was introduced.

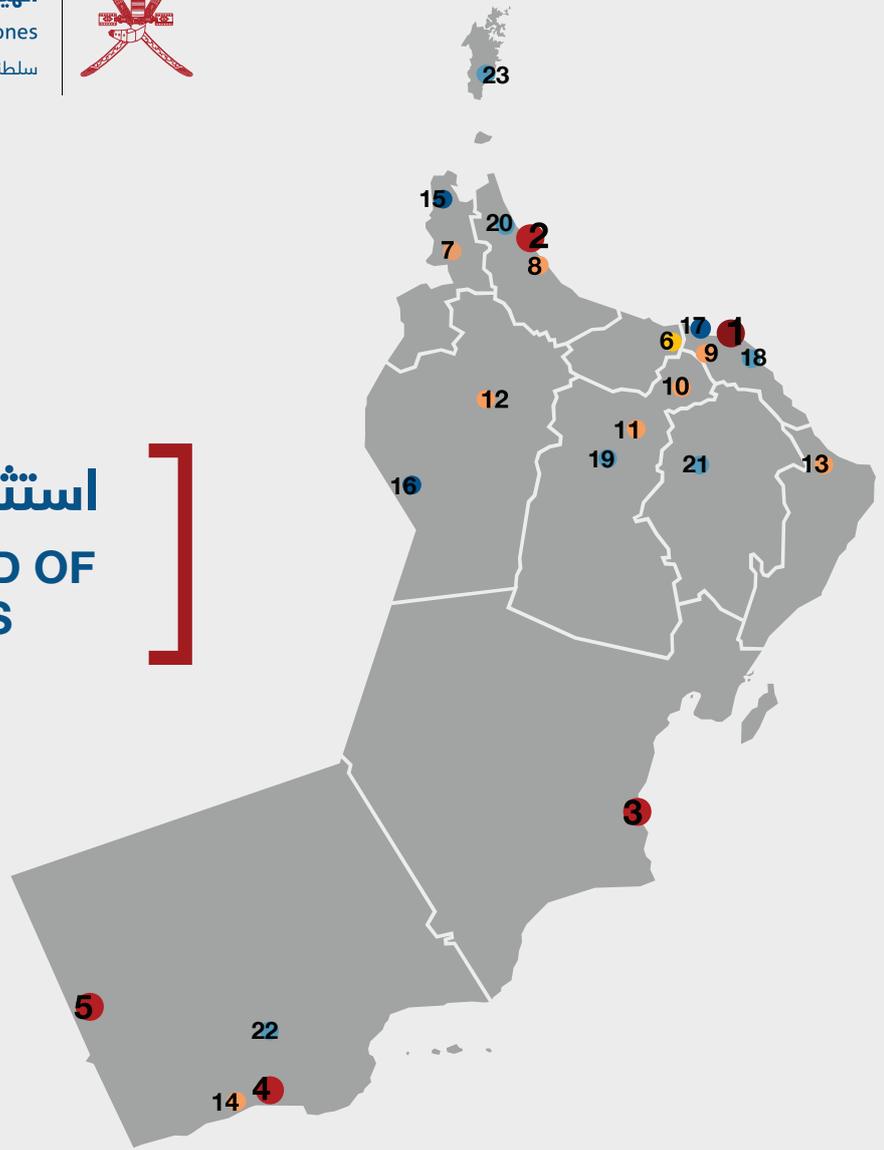


Eng. Ahmed bin Hassan Al Dheeb

General Supervisor



Achieving many important aspirations, most notably facilitating the procedures of investors in the areas that fall under the OPAZ supervision and making them oases and investment cities that contribute to economic diversification



استثمر في أرض الفرص INVEST IN THE LAND OF OPPORTUNITIES

مدائن madaayn

واحة المعرفة بمسقط
Knowledge Oasis Muscat
IT Park

مدينة نزوى الصناعية
Nizwa industrial city 11
مدينة عبري الصناعية
Ibri industrial city 12
مدينة صور الصناعية
Sur industrial city 13
مدينة ريسوت الصناعية
Raysut industrial city 14

مدينة البريمي الصناعية
Buraimi industrial city 7
مدينة صحر الصناعية
Suhar industrial city 8
مدينة الرسيل الصناعية
Al Rusayl industrial city 9
مدينة سمائل الصناعية
Samail industrial city 10

مدينة المضبيبي الصناعية
Al Mudhaibi industrial city 21
مدينة ثمرت الصناعية
Thumrait industrial city 22
مدينة محاس الصناعية
Mahas industrial city 23

مدينة الوادي الكبير الصناعية
AlWadi AlKabir industrial city 18
مدينة سيح السرية الصناعية
Sih Alsiriyah industrial city 19
مدينة شناس الصناعية
Shinas industrial city 20

الهيئة العامة للمناطق الاقتصادية الخاصة والمناطق الحرة
The Public Authority for Special Economic Zones
and Free Zones (OPAZ)



المنطقة الحرة بصحار
Sohar Port and Free Zone 2 SOHAR
المنطقة الاقتصادية الخاصة بالدقم
The Special Economic Zone at Duqm (SEZAD) 3
المنطقة الحرة بصلالة
Salalah Free Zone 4
المنطقة الحرة بالمزبونة
Al Mazunah Free Zone 5

Under development قيد التطوير

المنطقة الاقتصادية بناية الروضة
Al Rawdha Special Economic Zone 15
المنطقة الاقتصادية بمحافظة الظاهرة
Al Dhahirah Special Economic Zone (EZAD) 16
المنطقة الحرة بمطار مسقط الدولي
Muscat Airport Free Zone 17

General Supervisor

Eng. Ahmed bin Hassan Al Dheeb

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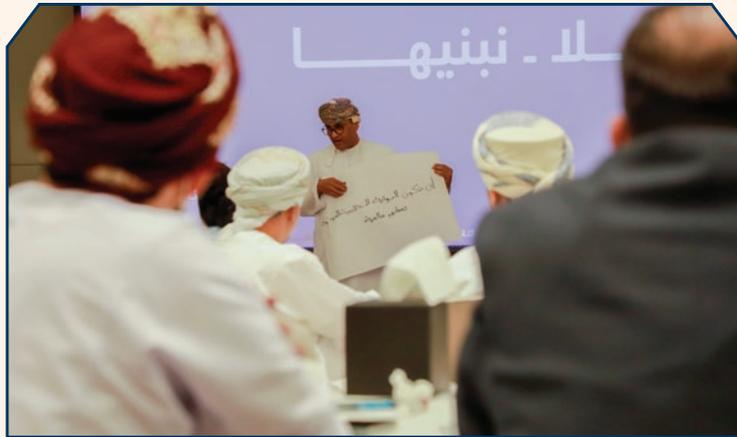
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The views expressed in
the magazine are those of
the authors and do not
necessarily reflect the
opinion of the magazine.

The magazine welcomes
specialised researches
and academic studies

**In this
issue:**



**The Public Authority for Special Economic Zones
and Free Zones launches its vision and mission**

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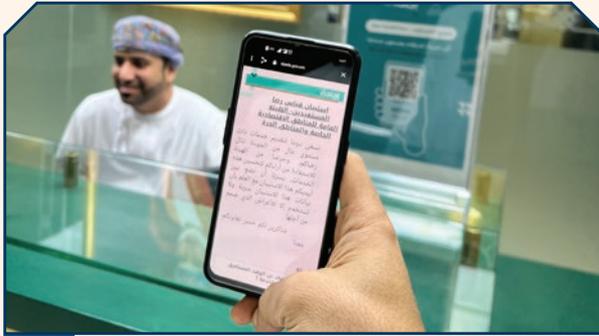
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Supported by 100 employees

The Public Authority for Special Economic Zones and Free Zones launches its vision and mission



Muscat –

The Public Authority for Special Economic Zones and Free Zones (OPAZ) launched its vision and mission, as part of its annual strategic plan for 2022 aimed at enhancing the investment environment in OPAZ affiliated zones, which contribute to boosting the national economy through attracting investment in various economic sectors to all zones.

OPAZ employees contributed to developing the vision and mission, which translate OPAZ competencies stipulated in the Royal Decree No. (105/2020), establishing the Public Authority for Special Economic Zones and Free Zones (OPAZ) and defining its roles and objectives, and with reference also to the Royal Decree

(53/2022) transferring the Public Establishment for Industrial Estates (Madayn) to OPAZ. These four key roles include planning and regulation, facilitation and operation in some cases.

OPAZ vision promotes its affiliated zones as "the investment destination of choice". This is reflected in its mission "developing and regulating the zones affiliated with OPAZ and providing an attractive and sustainable investment environment" that attracts investors from within and outside the Sultanate of Oman. On the other hand, OPAZ has approved its values that enable employees, customers and investors to support achieving the vision. These values are "Responsibility, Cooperation, Transparency and Creativity". Such remarkable values reflect employees' belief in the significance and worth of performing their duties


OPAZ affiliated zones to be the "Investment Destination of Choice"



A real partnership between an organisation and its employees to draw a clear plan

Huda Al Habsi
OPAZ Board Member



Promoting the investment environment in OPAZ affiliated zones



A real partnership between OPAZ and its employees



OPAZ Board of Directors placed its confidence in the employees as key partners

and shouldering the responsibility to serve their country and ensuring satisfaction for investors, businesspersons and all those benefiting from the services provided by OPAZ and all its affiliated zones.

Speaking on the occasion, Huda bint Abdullah Al Habsi, OPAZ Board Member and supervisor of the team managing the vision and mission project, explained that the vision, mission and values of OPAZ were developed by a team of employees through different well-planned phases. These phases attracted around 100 employees of OPAZ, the Special Economic Zone at Duqm and other free zones affiliated with OPAZ. Having them all in this project mirrors the confidence of OPAZ Board of Directors in the employees and their important role as a key partner in working on OPAZ mission and achieving its vision.

"The vision and mission are of great importance and regarded an essential pillar upon which OPAZ

directions, plans and strategy are based towards the development, regulation and supervision of the special economic zones, free and industrial zones. Further, involving employees in developing the vision, mission and values marks a real partnership between OPAZ and its employees to bring a plan on which all depends to implement OPAZ competencies, set policies and perform their tasks in the different affiliated zones".

It is noteworthy that the Public Authority for Special Economic Zones and Free Zones (OPAZ) was established as per the provision of the Royal Decree No. (105/2020), issued on August 18, 2020. It oversees the Special Economic Zone at Duqm, free zones in Sohar, Salalah and Al Mazunah and any other special economic zone or free zone in the Sultanate of Oman. OPAZ also oversees the Public Establishment for Industrial Estates (Madayn) as per the provision of the Royal Decree No. (53/2022), issued on June 28, 2022.



#رؤيتنا. بنيناها. معاً

#A_Vision_Crafted_with_Passion

Vision

Investment Destination of Choice

الرؤية

الوجهة الأمثل للاستثمار

Mission

Developing and regulating the zones affiliated with OPAZ and providing an attractive and sustainable investment environment.

الرسالة

تنمية وتنظيم المناطق التابعة للهيئة، وتوفير بيئة استثمارية جاذبة ومستدامة.

Value

Accountability, Cooperation, Transparency, Creativity

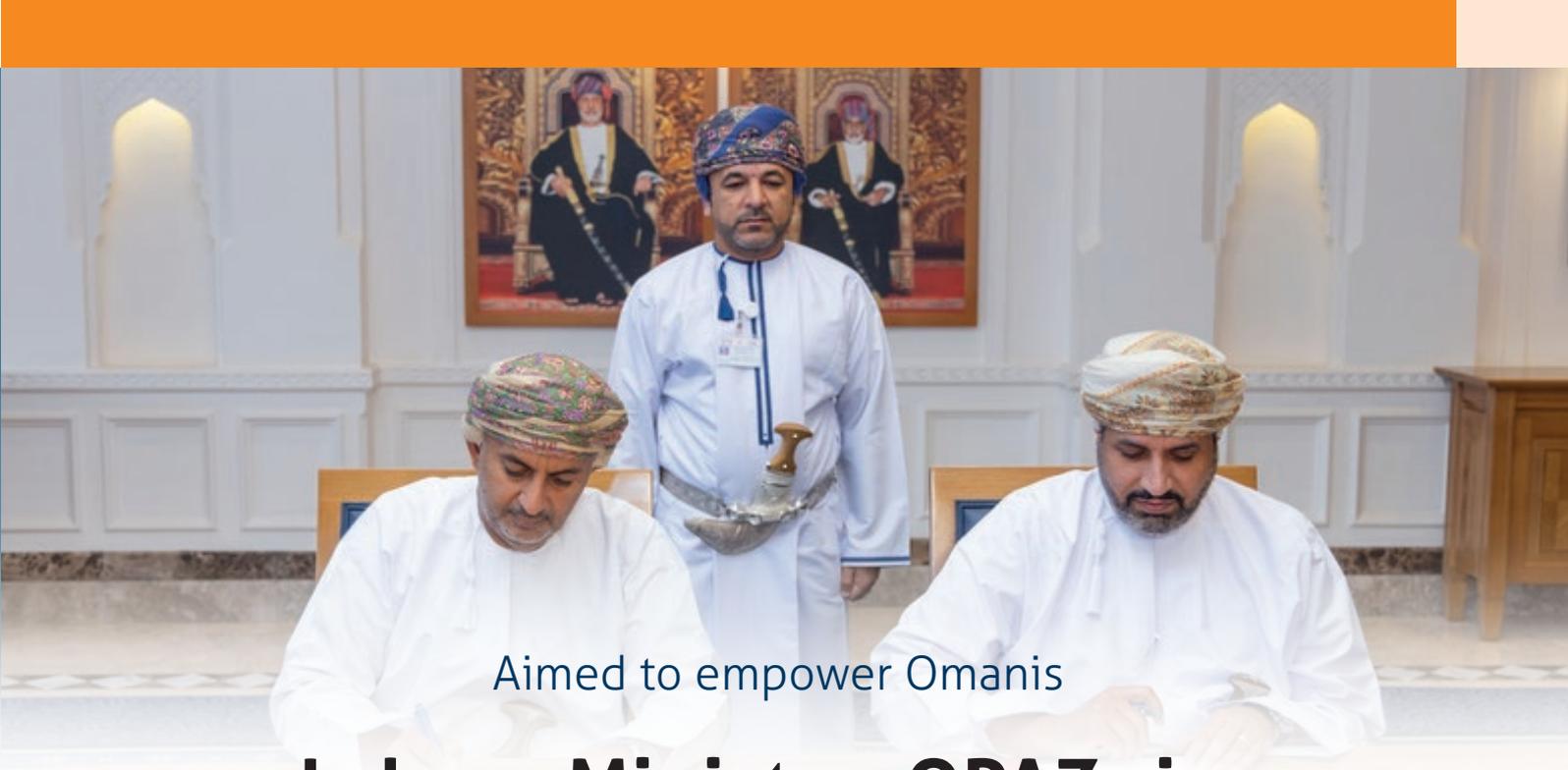
القيم

المسؤولية، التعاون، الشفافية، الابداع

عمان نبنيها معاً
Building Oman Together

الهيئة العامة للمناطق الاقتصادية الخاصة والمناطق الحرة
Public Authority for Special Economic Zones and Free Zones
سلطنة عمان





Aimed to empower Omanis

Labour Ministry, OPAZ sign cooperation programme

Muscat – :

The Ministry of Labour signed a cooperation programme with the Public Authority for Special Economic Zones and Free Zones (OPAZ). The step seeks to urge investment projects to contribute more actively to the empowerment of Omanis to occupy jobs available at OPAZ affiliated zones. The agreement was inked by HE Dr. Mahad bin Said Ba'owain, Minister of Labour, and HE Dr. Ali bin Masoud Al Sunaidy, Chairman of OPAZ.

Al Sunaidy said that OPAZ exerts efforts to streamline procedures and services rendered to investors in its affiliated zones to ensure speedy clearance of licenses and permits through the electronic channels of the one-stop shop.

He added that the programme includes enhanced training and qualification opportunities that comply with the nature of the work of companies operating in the special economic zones, free zones and industrial zones, in order to achieve integration between the Authority and the Ministry. This will help the concerned departments of factories and

companies to provide specific programmes during the construction period and in the early stages of operation to secure the qualification of Omanis who will work in these companies and factories upon completion of construction and commercial operation.

The programme includes increasing job opportunities for Omanis in existing projects in the zones, contributing to initiatives to place the national workforce in administrative, supervisory, technical and technical positions; creating opportunities for training programmes, coupled with employment for job seekers; finding alternative solutions for those who have been laid off from work; and activating the reception of applications for the recruitment of non-Omani manpower electronically.

The programme comes within the framework of achieving policies and plans that will facilitate procedures for attracting value-added investments, which in turn contribute to creating training and employment opportunities for job seekers, and pushing the wheel of Omanisation in establishments located within the special economic zones, free zones and industrial zones.

Areas of cooperation

- Increasing job opportunities
- Contributing to the replacement of the national workforce
- Finding training programmes with employment
- Finding alternative opportunities for those laid off from work
- Receiving applications for recruiting non-Omani manpower electronically
- Joint cooperation on labour control and inspection
- Exchange of expertise and participation in workshops and training



To develop superstructure and commercial facilities Signing usufruct agreement at the Fishing Port of Duqm

The developer,
Marsa Al Duqm
Investment
Company,
affiliated
to Oman
Investment
Authority

Developing
and operating
an area of over
300,000 sqm

Muscat – :

The Public Authority for Special Economic Zones and Free Zones (OPAZ) signed this morning 12/15/2022, a usufruct agreement for the Fishing Port with Marsa Al Duqm Investments Company. The agreement aims to benefit from the lands of the Fishing Port and to develop and implement commercial facilities with an area of 300,000 sqm, which will be used to serve fisheries purposes and related commercial activities, as part of the efforts exerted to develop and operate the port to attract local and international investments in the fisheries sector as the port is considered one of the economic engines of the economic zone at Duqm.

The agreement was signed by HE Eng. Ahmed

bin Hassan Al Deeb, OPAZ Deputy Chairman, and Eng. Nabil bin Salim Al-Bimani, Chairman of the Board of Directors of Marsa Al Duqm Investments, signed on behalf of the company and the GCEO of Fisheries Development Oman S.A.O.C.

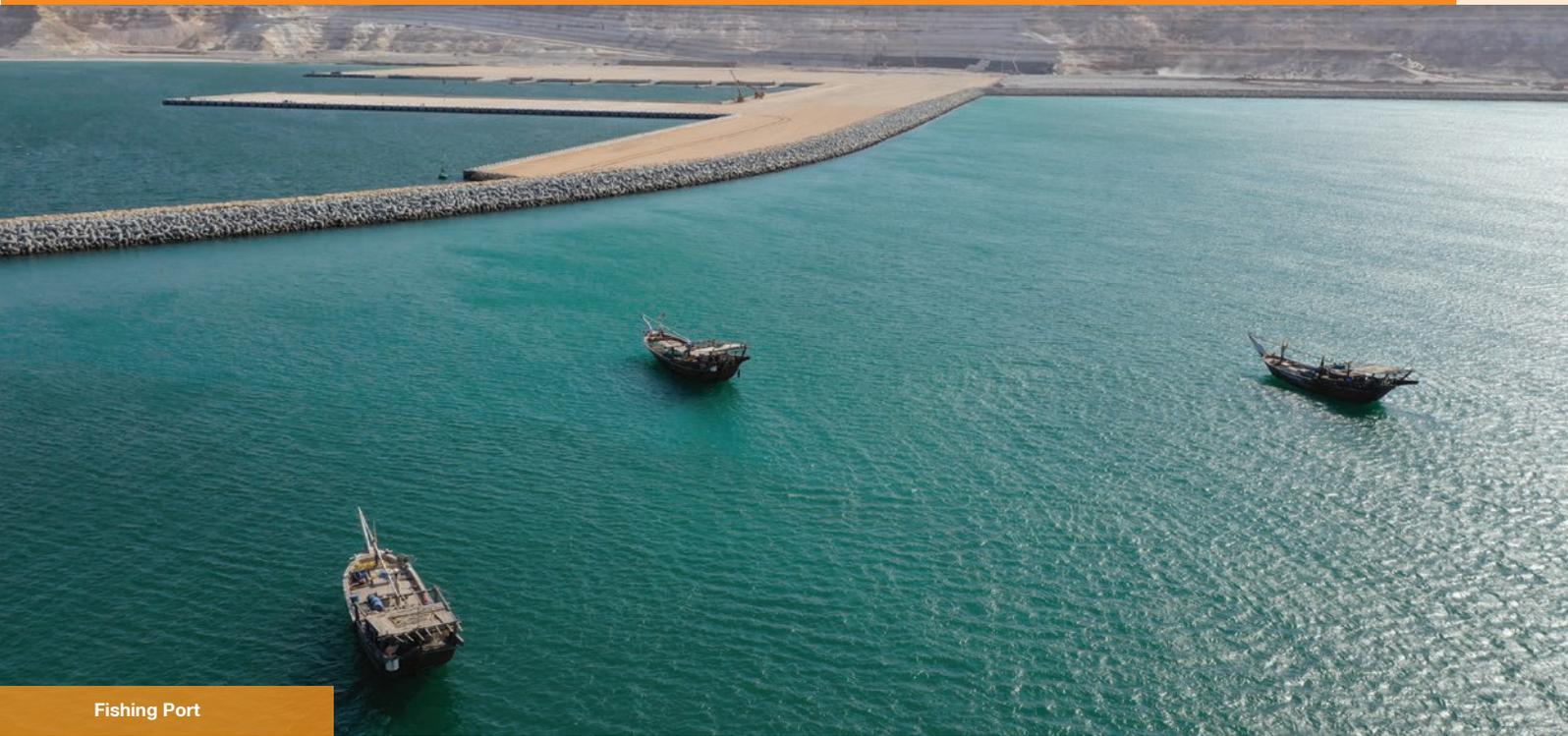
Under the agreement, Marsa Al Duqm Investments Company will develop the infrastructure and superstructure to serve the port commercially, with the aim of providing services to investors in the fisheries sector and fishermen from the local community.

Following the signing of the agreement, His Excellency Eng. Ahmed bin Hassan Al Deeb, OPAZ Deputy Chairman stated that, "The signing of this agreement comes within the Authority's strategy to enable local and international companies to develop fish industries sector and related

توقيع اتفاقية حق الانتفاع بميناء الصيد البحري بالدقم

Signing ceremony of
Duqm Fishing Port Usufruct Agreement





Fishing Port

activities and to develop service and commercial facilities, as this sector is considered one of the promising sectors in the Sultanate of Oman in general and in the Special Economic Zone at Duqm (SEZAD) in particular, benefiting from the fish stocks available in the zone". He added that this agreement aims to benefit from the infrastructure of the Fishing Port, support re-export sector, stimulate air freight traffic at Duqm Airport through export operations of fish products, and create added value to the fish wealth in the zone. The port consists of several facilities such as the main and secondary breakwaters and a 10-metre deep basin to serve commercial fishing ships and it is located nearby a complex for fish industries. His Excellency added that sites have been allocated for the maintenance of commercial fishing ships, artisanal fishing ships, fishing factories, fish sale facilities, and a training centre for fishermen. A network of paved roads has been

implemented to serve fish transportation vehicles"

On his side, Eng. Nabil bin Salim Al Bimani, Chairman of the Board of Directors of Marsa Al Duqm Investments Company, said:

"We are pleased today to sign this agreement in cooperation with our partners to manage, develop and operate the largest fishing port in the Sultanate, as the port is centre of the activities supporting the fishing sector and the link between all activities related to fishing. It also constitutes a suitable opportunity for attracting investment in the development of support sectors."

Al Bimani added, "The port will contribute to supporting and developing research and innovation, and localizing the value-added chain of fish products. The port also serves the fish industries area specialized in fish processing and canning." FDO seeks to transform the port into a sustainable smart city in global supply chains.



There is a possibility of expanding the facilities in the future



The Port sports and develops research and innovation





The Fishing Port of Duqm is the largest commercial fishing port in the Sultanate of Oman, with an area of approximately 7.5 square kilometres, to be able to receive the largest international commercial fishing vessels. It is 10 meters deep with floating berths and a private berth for the boats of Coast Guard police. The fishing port and the fish industries zone are considered one of the economic engines of the Special Economic Zone at Duqm, which will play a role in attracting local and international companies specialized in the field of fishing and related fish industries. The

authority also seeks to make the fishing port in Duqm a port that targets environmentally friendly green energy projects. It is worth noting that the Marsa Al Duqm Investments Company is a consortium led by a number of Oman Investment Authority companies represented by Fisheries Development Oman (FDO), Asyad Ports, Al Wusta Fish Industries Company, the Omani Food Investment Holding Company "Nitaj" and the French Port of Lorient Company, which is one of the largest ports hunting in Europe.



Usufruct Agreement relating to Duqm Fishing Port project at the Special Economic Zone at Duqm (SEZAD)

- ▶ **Developer:** Marsa AL Duqm Investment LLC, affiliated to Fisheries Development of Oman (FDO)
- ▶ To develop and operate over 300,000 sqm of Port area
- ▶ Capacity for **future** expansion
- ▶ Allocating **10 %** of construction works to **SMEs**

Features of the Port



Breakwaters length
3,3 Km



Basin depth 10m



Area 7,5 sq km



Connected to **fish industries** complex



6 **floating** berths



Fixed berth
1,3 km



Road network for
fish transportation trucks

With an investment of 3\$ billion Jindal Shadeed Group signs land reservation agreement to produce green steel in Duqm



The project's land covers about 2 sqkm in the plan of Duqm Port



The estimated volume of investment is 3\$ billion



An increasing global demand for green steel

Muscat – 

Jindal Shadeed Group, a pioneer in the steel industry, announced that it has selected the Special Economic Zone at Duqm (SEZAD) in the Sultanate of Oman to establish a manufacturing facility. Slated to be the largest of its kind within the zone to produce green steel, the factory will also utilize renewable energy sources in its manufacturing operations.

This announcement was made at a ceremony that included the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding and a land allocation agreement. The event was held under the auspices of His Excellency Dr. Ali bin Masoud Al Sunaidy, Chairman of the Public Authority for Special Economic Zones and Free Zones (OPAZ) and included the presence of a number of high-ranking government and private sector officials as well as prominent local and international media.

The Special Economic Zone at Duqm (SEZAD) is the largest economic zone in the Middle East, with an area of 2,000 square kilometers. This strategic project is being built over an area estimated at approximately 2 square kilometers in the concession zone at the Port of Duqm with an investment value estimated at 3 billion USD.

The MoU was signed by His Excellency Eng.

Ahmed bin Hassan Al Dheeb, Deputy Chairman of the Public Authority for Special Economic Zones and Free Zones, and Harsha Shetty, CEO of Jindal Shadeed Group. The land reservation agreement was signed by the Jindal Shadeed Group and Mr. Reggy Vermeulen, Chief Executive Officer of Port of Duqm.

In line with its development efforts, Jindal Shadeed Group also signed an MoU with the centralised utility provider, Marafiq, to provide the plant with the utilities necessary to operate the project such as water services, seawater for cooling purposes, and other Marafiq services. The agreement was signed by Talal Al Lawati, Vice President of Commercial Operations, Marafiq.

Commenting on the series of agreements, His Excellency Eng. Ahmed bin Hassan Al Dheeb expressed his delight in partnering with steel production expert, Jindal Shadeed Group, to develop its manufacturing facility. He reaffirmed that a project of this caliber would be an added value to the heavy industries cluster in the Special Economic Zone at Duqm and would play a vital role in the development of Duqm as a key industrial hub.

He added, "The signing of the MoU and agreement is a testament to the importance of the Special Economic Zone at Duqm and further reinstates



During the signing ceremony

its position as a leading and attractive destination for large strategic projects that will benefit from renewable energy and green hydrogen. The availability of solar energy and wind resources throughout the year will encourage more investments in green industries and renewable energy projects in the Sultanate of Oman in general, and Duqm in particular. The Sultanate of Oman is making commendable efforts toward using cleaner sources of energy to meet industrial requirements. The efforts are in line with the priorities of Oman Vision 2040 to use alternative energy and sustainable natural resources. The project also serves the comprehensive national strategy which focuses on reducing emissions and achieving carbon neutrality."

Adding to this, Harssha Shetty said, "Jindal Shadeed Group is investing more than 3 billion USD to develop this mega steel project in Duqm, and we have already obtained the necessary approvals to secure the land for our Green Hydrogen ready steel project. Our goal is to produce 5 million metric tons of green steel on an annual basis that will create over \$800M per annum in country value addition. The plant will supply high quality steel products to automobile, wind energy and consumer durables sector amongst others. There is a booming demand for green steel from ESG conscious customers around the world especially in Europe and Asia, who have already committed significant reduction in Scope 3 emissions by 2030.

Reggy Vermeulen added, "This is a great step for all of us, and we are thrilled to see such a project happen in Port of Duqm - a successful pairing of Jindal Shadeed Group's expertise in steel production and Port of Duqm's logistical prowess. This green steel project aligns very well with Port of Duqm's vision to be a green port operating on sustainable and renewable energy sources in line with the Oman vision 2040 to support economic diversification and reduce reliance on the oil and gas sector. This huge project will not only attract foreign investment but also provide work opportunities for local talent. I would also extend my gratitude to the board of directors for their unending support, and for paving the path for us to attract projects of this scale and implications to Port of Duqm. We are confident that we will benefit from the continuous support of all parties who are committed to making this project a success."

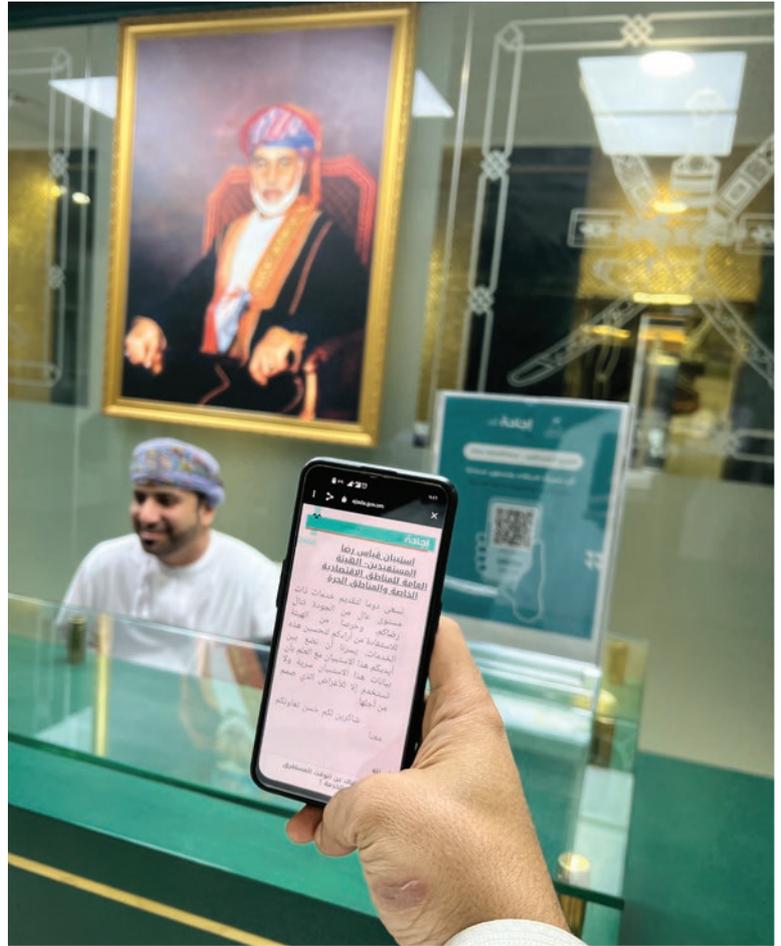
Talal bin Muhammad Jawad Al Lawati of the Central Services Company also commented saying, "We, at Marafiq Company, are pleased to provide the necessary water services for this vital and important project which will undoubtedly enhance the use of clean energy and green hydrogen in the Special Economic Zone in Duqm. We will ensure that all processes are in place to meet the evolving needs of the project while reinstating our commitment to contributing to other new developmental ventures as well."


An exemplary project interested in reducing carbon emissions by 2030


The project goes in line with Port of Duqm's vision of being a green port

82%

records customer satisfaction of OPAZ services



OPAZ received more than 170 ideas and proposals

Muscat – :

The Public Authority for Special Economic Zones and Free Zones (OPAZ) has recorded around 82% of customer satisfaction rate as of end of November 2022. The rate included evaluating a number of services provided by OPAZ in its affiliated Zones, such as services for providing building permits, demarcation, environmental permits, amending building permits, project plans, and investors relation management system. OPAZ Call Centre (1919), which was launched in September 2022, received more than 270 calls in addition to other inquiries received via online communications. All calls and inquiries have been managed and communicated with the concerned departments. Further, the Call Centre issued regular reports on all complaints and recommendations as well as conducted customer satisfaction evaluation for the services provided. The Centre is equipped with relevant systems that assists in handling all the complains received and managed internally with the concerned departments. It is

worth noting that the Call Centre serves all special economic zones and free zones by providing the key guidelines and information to investors, customers, entrepreneurs and the community. OPAZ is keen to provide all facilities that contribute to achieving highly efficient and quality services to investors, whether local or international, and provide sufficient information and tools that ensure smooth performance and quick response. Moreover, OPAZ has received a number of ideas and recommendations via the internal portal "Share Your Ideas", which exceeded 170 ideas. However, the opportunity was also given to public to share their ideas and suggestions, which are being evaluated and brought to discussion for further clarification and way forward. On the other hand, the Public Authority for Special Economic Zones and Free Zones announced last August of this year that it will stop all paper-based transactions and documents at the one-stop shop in the Special Economic Zone at Duqm. This comes as part of its environmentally-friendly initiative to stop paper-based transactions. This initiative was launched to reduce the use of paper documents in the

zones affiliated with OPAZ and to enhance efforts towards digital transformation and expedite transactions. It is worth noting that OPAZ accords attention to improving the level of services provided to investors and customers and meeting their aspirations, as well as seeking to enhance their online experience. Over the past years, OPAZ launched a number of electronic services that highly contributed to facilitating access to many services online without the need to visit OPAZ headquarters in Muscat or the Special Economic Zone at Duqm (SEZAD). The Call Centre of the Public Authority for Special Economic Zones and Free Zones extends its working hours from 08:00 am to 08:00 pm, unlike before where calls had been received during the official working hours only. Besides, the Call Centre Team are very well trained and qualified to be able to respond to the different calls and provide relevant information. Also, the Centre is supported by systems to track the process of transactions, as the Centre equipped with latest technical systems in order to ensure quality and efficiency and provide quick response.

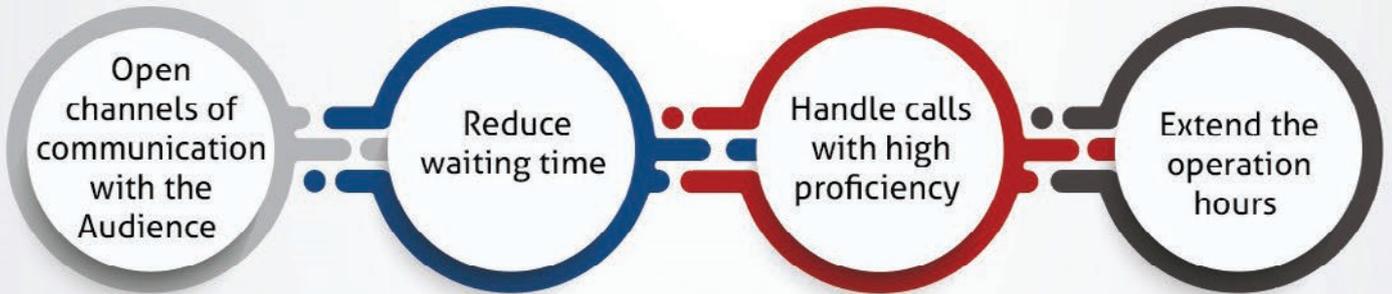


Call Center 1919

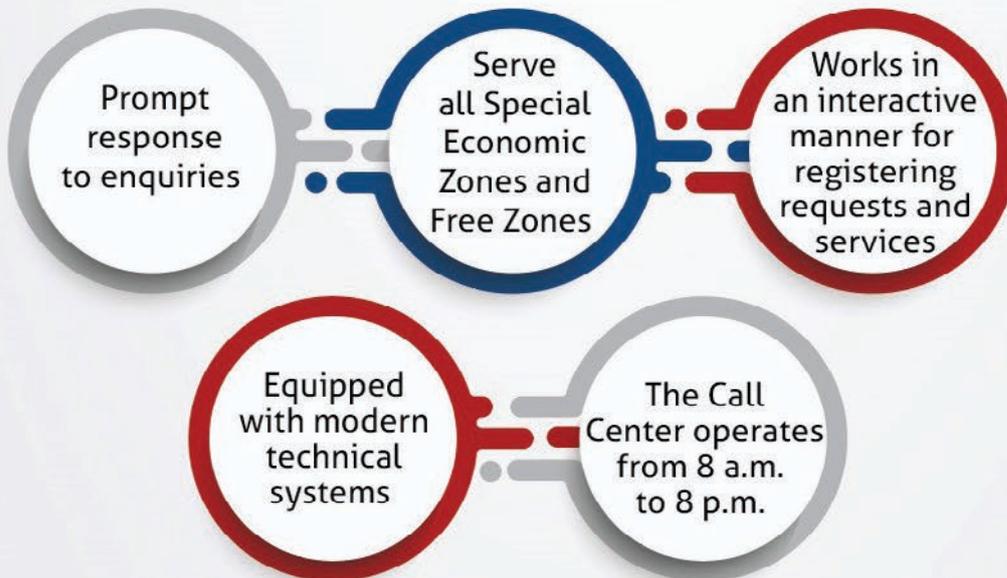
To serve all Special Economic and Free Zones



Objectives

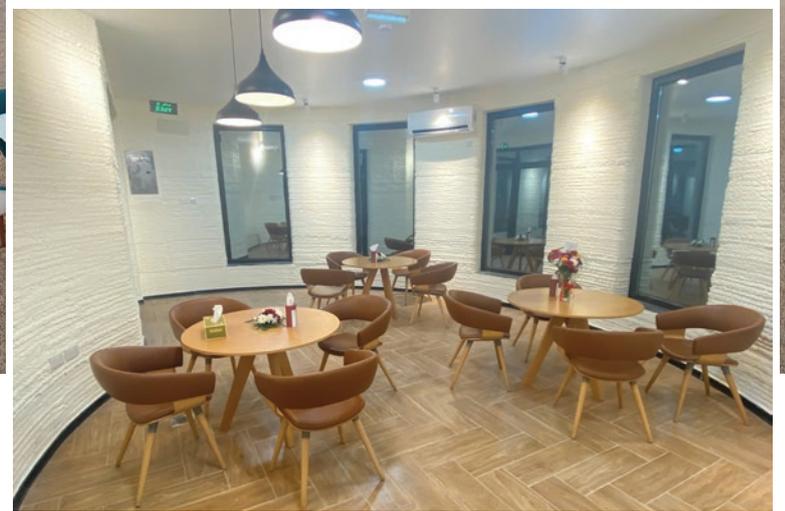


Features



To promote 3D printing technology

Building a residential unit and a café in Duqm



The built-up area is 101 sqm

3D printing technology brings a record time of construction

Duqm – 

The Special Economic Zone at Duqm (SEZAD) announced the start of construction works using the 3D printing as a new building technology to build a residential unit in the Fishermen's Village, and a café in the Tourist Zone in the Special Economic Zone at Duqm.

Saif bin Nasser Al Busaidi, Manager of Projects Management Department at Oman Company for the Development of the Special Economic Zone at Duqm (Tatweer Duqm), pointed out that the project includes building café over an area of 101 sqm and a residential unit to be built on 72 sqm of land in the Fishermen's Village. The construction process will take around a few days to build the café using 3D printing technology, marking a remarkable change in the construction sector in

comparison with the traditional building process. In addition to the record time of construction when using 3D building technology, it does not require having the concrete beams for the building structure. Rather, this technique converts the cement material into an integrated structure instead of using the traditional construction material such as concrete, iron and other material. It is worth noting that the Board of Directors of the Public Authority for Special economic Zones and Free Zones (OPAZ) approved earlier this year using the 3D printing technology in construction. This comes in line with OPAZ efforts to promote innovation, research and development in construction sector by using 3D printing and encourage localising such modern techniques in construction and accelerate the construction pace in the zones affiliated with OPAZ.



OPAZ approves policy of whistleblowing and whistleblower protection

Muscat – :

The Public Authority for Special Economic Zones and Free Zones (OPAZ) issued a decision approving its policy of whistleblowing and whistleblower protection by opening an official communication channel on its website, which serves protecting the whistleblowers and ensures confidentiality. By establishing this policy, OPAZ aims to preserve its positive image and good reputation, as well as improves the quality of its services and promoting transparency, integrity, impartiality and fairness. This also reflects its keenness to apply best practices in preserving its assets and raising the performance efficiency by informing employees

and all those dealing with OPAZ to report any committed violations or wrong practices that are in violation of the laws, regulations and systems in force in OPAZ. Accordingly, this policy guarantees confidence, protection and confidentiality of the whistleblower.

The policy stipulates that the Public Authority for Special Economic Zones and Free Zones (OPAZ) adheres to the highest standards of integrity and best practices in delivering its responsibilities and business, which are considered a basis for success and building a good reputation by reporting unprincipled or illegal work practices.



Conrad Prabhu

A unified national authority for Oman's manufacturing and industrial sector

Regulated until recently by a multiplicity of government agencies, Oman's industrial and manufacturing sector – one of the fastest growing segments of the non-hydrocarbon economy – is now poised for a phase of accelerated growth.

The primary driver here is a new Royal Decree that enlarges the remit of the Public Authority for Special Economic Zones and Free Zones (OPAZ) to include the Public Establishment for Industrial Estates (Madayn), which oversees an ever-expanding network of industrial parks distribution across the country.

Royal Decree No. 53/2022, issued on 28th June 2022 effectively brings the sizable portfolio of Special Economic Zones, Free Zones and Industrial Cities – currently in operation and on the drawing board – under the administrative mandate of a unified entity – OPAZ. Besides enabling the streamlining of bureaucratic procedures and approval processes across the sector, this new measure will also allow for the marketing of the Sultanate of Oman as an integrated destination for industrial and manufacturing related investment.

Consequently, prospective international investors will no longer have to navigate their way around multiple agencies and dissimilar regulatory regimes when zeroing in on a suitable location for their future investments in Oman. As the sole regulator of the vast acreage of designated SEZs, free zones and industrial cities now under its administrative control, OPAZ is well-positioned to provide speedy, seamless and hassle-free services to interested investors. As a one-stop portal for Oman's manufacturing sector, OPAZ now oversees a diverse menu of industrial and economic clusters, each with their own distinctive value proposition and investor-friendly regulatory frameworks. Thus, based on the specific requirements and market strategies of the investor concerned, OPAZ can recommend a suitable location within its geographical holdings that best serves the investor's

business interests.

An investor in steel, aluminium or other hard-to-abate metal industries, for example, will likely be advised to locate their projects in Duqm SEZ in light of the anticipated availability of green hydrogen in the area within a decade. Likewise, Sohar Free Zone – also part of OPAZ's mandate – will be an attractive location for an investor that depends on polymers as feedstock for its operations. Similarly, Salalah Free Zone and Al Mazyuna Free Zone – both falling under OPAZ's auspices – have their own distinctive attractions that would appeal to other categories of investors.

OPAZ now oversees a vast portfolio of real estate assets to offer for industrial investment, in addition to projects related to infrastructure, energy, logistics, housing, education, entertainment, hospitality and services. As the lead agency for the development and promotion of this diverse portfolio, OPAZ can also secure the support of other government and public sector stakeholders in the formulation of new policies that would enhance the appeal of these assets to foreign investors. Eliminating bureaucracy, speeding up permits and approvals, and offering personalised services to individual investors are key to enhancing the competitiveness of Oman in international markets.

As a flurry of recent reports have demonstrated, Sohar Free Zone, Duqm SEZ, Salalah Free Zone and Al Mazyuna Free Zone continue to garner new investors in the wake of the ongoing recovery in the global economy. While the first three are anchored by major maritime gateways and logistics hubs, the fourth is an important inland port straddling Oman's border with Yemen.

But it's Madayn – the newest addition to OPAZ's portfolio – that holds the brightest promise when it comes to anticipated investment inflows into pure manufacturing. In recent years, the industrial cities established by Madayn have grown by leaps

and bounds in trend with the growth of the non-oil economy in Oman.

Starting with only one industrial city at Al Rusayl in 1991, the manufacturing sector now boasts a network of industrial clusters spanning the length and breadth of the Sultanate of Oman. With nearly 2,300 localised projects, the total investment volume in Madayn's industrial cities today is now approaching RO 7 billion. The Omanisation rate in these projects exceeds 38 per cent of the total workforce in the industrial cities, which accounts for up to 8% of the total private sector workforce at the national level and exceeds 63% of the total workforce in the industrial sector of Oman.

Earlier in 2022, Madayn unveiled its own 2040 Vision that charts a strategy to grow its network of industrial cities to a total of 40 by the year 2040, up from nine operational clusters presently. As part of this ambition, Madayn announced plans for the immediate establishment of five new industrial cities at Khasab, Ibri, Thamrait, Shinas and Al Mudhaibi. A further 26 industrial parks will be added to the network over the next two decades.

Additionally, Madayn is creating a wider ecosystem to sustain private investment inflows into the country's burgeoning manufacturing base. It recently launched an investment complexes initiative which offers an opportunity for local and foreign companies to invest in the industrial sector and associated complementary sectors. Madayn has also introduced

recently its Industrial Innovation Academy to promote a diversified and sustainable economy based on technology, knowledge and innovation.

Significantly, OPAZ's incorporation of Madayn Industrial Cities into its mandate comes at an important juncture in Oman's vision to grow the national economy sustainably with a reduced dependence on hydrocarbons – the mainstay of economic growth for over half a century. Oman's 2040 Vision stipulates a higher GDP contribution from the manufacturing sector, bolstered by investments in value-add industries operating downstream of the petrochemicals, metals, mining, food and agriculture, and fisheries sectors.

Indeed, the promising potential of the manufacturing and industrial sector to GDP growth has been underscored by figures published recently by the National Centre for Statistics and Information (NCSI). The sector's value-add amounted to about RO 2 billion during the first nine months of 2022, representing 8.5% of Oman's gross domestic product (GDP). This came on top of the revelation that the manufacturing / industrial sector was the second highest contributor to the GDP, after the energy sector, in 2021. Of a total GDP estimated at RO 33 billion last year, the industrial sector's sector share was RO 6.6 billion, encompassing industry activities including mining, quarrying, manufacturing, petrochemicals, basic chemicals, and oil refining.

Aerial view of an industrial city in Sultanate of Oman





OPAZ delegation visits Port of Rotterdam in Netherlands

Rotterdam – :

HE Dr. Ali bin Masoud Al Sunaidy, Chairman of the Public Authority for Special Economic Zones and Free Zones (OPAZ), visited the International Port of Rotterdam in the Kingdom of the Netherlands and met with Allard Castelein, CEO at Port of Rotterdam and a number of officials. During the meeting, both parties discussed mechanisms to activate the joint cooperation between Port of Sohar, Port of Rotterdam and the free zones in the Sultanate of Oman. They also touched on ways to maximise the benefits of renewable energy for the production and export of green hydrogen. On the other hand, the delegation visited a number of facilities operating in the areas adjacent to Port

of Rotterdam, including facilities of green fuel production and emission of the associated carbon dioxide resulting from industrial production operations.

The Chairman and accompanying delegation also met with a number of port officials and companies operating in the fields of logistics, information technology and energy. On the sidelines of this visit, the Chairman met with a group of trainees who are on a scholarship programme from the Sohar Free Zone and Sohar Port.

The meetings were attended by Sheikh Dr. Abdullah bin Salim Al Harthi, Oman's Ambassador to the Kingdom of the Netherlands, Omar bin Mahmoud Al Mahrizi, CEO of Sohar Free Zone, and Emile Hoogsteden, CEO of Sohar Port.





During the press conference

Regional and international journalists explore tourism and investment opportunities in economic, free zones

Muscat – :

Journalists from regional and international institutions met with HE Eng. Ahmed bin Hassan Al Dheeb, Deputy Chairman of the Public Authority for Special Economic Zones and Free Zones (OPAZ), and HE Azzan bin Qasim Al Busaidi, Undersecretary of the Ministry of Heritage and Tourism for Tourism.

During the meeting, the Deputy Chairman of OPAZ touched on the economic and free zones in the Sultanate of Oman, represented by the Special Economic Zone at Duqm and the free

zones in Salalah, Sohar and Al Mazunah. He also highlighted the key projects and investment opportunities available in the zones.

Al Dheeb, further, shed light to the efforts accorded to provide infrastructure in the zones affiliated with OPAZ such as providing electricity and energy, and facilities for investors to easily complete their applications.

On the other side, HE Azzan Al Busaidi shed light to the Ministry's efforts reviewed the tourist attractions in the Sultanate of Oman and the key projects and investment opportunities in the tourism sector.



With a production capacity of 10 tons per day



Extracting the fatty acids Omega3 found in fish for human consumption

An added value to the fish and food industries in SEZAD

Exporting high-quality fish oil products from Duqm to the world

Exporting products to meet the requirements of local and international markets

First unit for fish oil refining for human consumption opens in Duqm

Duqm - 

The first fish oil refining unit has been opened and Inaugurated by Eng. Ahmed Akaak Acting CEO of the Special Economic Zone at Duqm (SEZAD) at the zone designated for fish and food industries in SEZAD. Gold Fin International Company which is specialised in the production of Fish Meal and Fish oil extract opened the first unit for fish oil refining suitable for human consumption in Duqm. The unit has the processing capacity of 10 tonnes per day. Through the new refining unit, the plant can extract the fatty acids (Omega-3) found in fish which is suitable for human consumption. The Acting CEO of SEZAD, said, "We are pleased today to inaugurate the fish oil refining unit, which represents an added value to the fish and food industries in the region, and which uses the latest technologies in refining fish oil and which produces oils for human use."

Muhammad Basheer, Chairman and the owner of the plant, said, "We are proud today to open this unit in our plant within a short period, which is constantly growing in the Special Economic

Zone at Duqm. The plant is considered, after the inauguration of its new unit, as the first plant in Oman to export such high-quality human Consumption Fish Oil products from Duqm to the world. We export our products to meet the needs and requirements of the International Market. Our international markets need such high-quality products for human consumption.

Basheer added that the cost for establishing the fish plant, which was inaugurated in 2018, in the zone designated for fish and food industries, is estimated at \$3 million. The plant crushes fish and transfer it to a dry powder that is used as animals feed and aquaculture industry, Pet food industry at 25%, and 10-12% as fish oil, and the remaining percentage is in the form of liquid. He stressed that the plant will continue, through its former unit, to meet the needs of international markets for raw material that reaches China and India and Europe, as a primary market, and Thailand and Malaysia and Asian Sector. We are truly studying expansion in the near future, even though we are new to the zone.

As part of the initiatives to increase the green area

Completing 90% of SEZAD plants nursery



The nursery covers an area of 5000 sqm

A plan for planting trees that are compatible with Duqm climate

Duqm - 

As the Special Economic Zone at Duqm (SEZAD) continues its efforts to increase greenery and make optimal use of treated water in the Zone, the Public Authority for Special Economic Zones and Free Zones (OPAZ) has assigned the works for setting up plants' nursery, to be the first of its kind in the zone and Al Wusta Governorate in general, in order to improve the urban lifestyle in the zone. The completion rate of the nursery project has recorded 90% completion. Being built over an area of 5000 sqm, the plants nursery aims to be a primary source for serving the zone's afforestation plan with plants that are well-suited with the nature of the climate in Duqm. The nursery is planned to be the basic and main incubator for the production of seedlings and ornamental trees before planting them in the gardens, parks and the shoulders of the streets. It is also considered

a station for agricultural experiments and an incubator for new types of plants and trees.

In this context, SEZAD management has allocated several investment lands for the purpose of establishing agricultural nurseries in the zone, which will contribute significantly to producing species suitable for the zone's environment and reduce the costs of planting them. OPAZ, in cooperation with the Environment Authority, has allocated one of these lands for the establishment of a nursery for the propagation of wild plants under the management of the Environment Authority, whose services will encompass the initiative of planting 100,000 wild trees at the level of Al Wusta Governorate, and the implementation of the national initiative to plant 10 million trees.

It is noteworthy that OPAZ has assigned, in the first quarter of last year, a project to design and develop the first phase of beautification,



One of the afforestation community initiatives

afforestation and landscaping works in SEZAD with an estimated value of over RO 2.3 million, which includes afforestation of several vital locations main roads, service streets, roundabouts and parks with their basic facilities, including green spaces for sitting and family gathering, multi-use recreational spaces for kids activities for different age groups and walking & fitness trails, so that they can accommodate social and cultural events and activities. It's worth a mention that modern irrigations systems will be used for the plants that comes part of the implementation plan. Current green areas in SEZAD are about 26,000 sqm. The executing company will plant 35,000

sqm, that the total area with the completion of the project will be more than 60,000 sqm, including planting more than 5,000 diverse trees that fit the climatic conditions of the zone. OPAZ launched earlier several initiatives, most notably "Plant A tree" initiative, as well as beautification works of some plans with the aim of making the zone a model of integrated economic cities that blend commercial, industrial and tourism projects and pay attention to environmental and health aspects while providing various needs of residents.



Under construction agricultural nursery



It marks the main incubator for the production of seedlings and ornamental trees



It is an incubator for agricultural experiments and new plants and trees



Allocating several lands for establishing plant nurseries



The nursery will serve the initiative of planting 100,000 trees in Al Wusta Governorate

OPAZ enhances environmental compliance standards



Preparing and updating general policies of inspection, control and compliance

Muscat – :

The Public Authority for Special Economic Zones and Free Zones (OPAZ), represented by the Environmental Regulation Department of the Regulation and Compliance Sector, made several visits to the companies operating in the zones affiliated to the Authority, in order to review the procedures followed by the operating companies in the field of environmental control and the extent to which projects comply with the legislation, laws and regulations issued by OPAZ and to review their compliance with the requirements of activity licenses and environmental permits followed in environmental management systems.

Among the expected results of these visits, are preparing and updating general policies of inspection, control and compliance, as well as setting up unified models for collecting information and data on environmental compliance and control in all fields, opening channels for communication, facilitating procedures and creating an attractive environment for investment.

The visit included briefing the companies on the role of the compliance and legislation sector to clarify compliance standards and environmental affairs and to strengthen partnership with companies operating in the economic and free zones in order to achieve the foremost objectives of OPAZ.



Environmental awareness programmes for school students in Duqm

Duqm – :

The Special Economic Zone at Duqm (SEZAD), represented by the Environmental Awareness Team of Environmental Sustainability Department, implemented an environmental awareness program for a number of students of Arab Sea School for Basic Education in Duqm.

40 elementary students participated in the program. The program included a field visit for the students to the engineering landfill of Bee'ah Company in the Zone. The company operating the landfill presented an educational presentation to the students, through which a simplified explanation was given about the engineering

landfill and the mechanism for receiving and backfilling waste, in addition to a field tour to see all landfill facilities and chemical waste storage. It is noteworthy that the management of the Special Economic Zone at Duqm continues, within its program "Together for a Sustainable Environment in Duqm", to raise awareness among members of the local community in Duqm by organizing many activities and events that concern the environmental aspect, including programs for clean-up campaigns, in addition to continuous educational and awareness programs in environmental aspects all year round in partnership with community members and institutions operating in the zone.



2022 Achievements and Statistics

OPAZ closes the year in a good note

Muscat 

The fifty-second National Day of Oman was observed by the Public Authority for Special Economic Zones and Free Zones (OPAZ), reflecting all the achievements made by OPAZ and its affiliated zones, since the ascension of His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik. His Majesty emphasises the ongoing march of sustaining progress and prosperity for the country and its people as well as making more achievements in all walks of life. OPAZ is committed to supporting businesses and projects in the Special Economic Zone at Duqm (SEZAD), free zones in Sohar, Salalah, Al Mazunah and industrial zones via the Public Establishment for Industrial Estates (Madayn). This confirms OPAZ ongoing efforts to facilitate business procedures,

serve investors, speed up transactions, provide electronic services and link them to the one-stop system. This can further enhance the attractiveness of SEZAD and industrial zones as investment destinations.

By building service facilities and infrastructure, OPAZ continues to drive growth, carrying out significant projects, and simplifying investment processes for diverse economic ventures. The benefits and incentives provided by OPAZ have aided the private sector and entrepreneurs. Having SMEs and large enterprises present attests to the development of the different zones into well-balanced, coordinated, and integrated cities.



Investments in OPAZ zones

Since its incorporation by the Royal Decree No. 105/2020, OPAZ has strived to meet investors' aspirations in OPAZ affiliated zones. The aim is to make these zones as one of the major sources to contribute to boosting Omani economy, contributing to economic diversification, job creation, community development and encouragement of entrepreneurs. In view of this, OPAZ has undertaken numerous programmes, initiatives, and activities that fall within its competences of planning, regulating, supporting, and operating, as well as bringing all zones under one umbrella. This approach enables a dynamic

and harmonious working environment across various sectors, aimed at serving the national economy and capitalizing on their advantages.

As of June 2022, SEZAD had attracted RO 3.6 billion in total investment, Sohar Free Zone had attracted RO 459 million, Salalah Free Zone had attracted RO 3.7 billion and Al Mazunah Free Zone had attracted RO 134,600,000.

Consequently, the zones received a total investment of RO 8,049,127,615, while the industrial zones received RO 6,771,629,790, and OPAZ-affiliated zones received RO 14,820,757,405.

OPAZ Vision, Mission and Values

As part of its annual strategic plan, OPAZ unveiled its vision and mission in November 2022. The objective of this initiative is to improve the investment environment in OPAZ-affiliated zones, thereby encouraging investment across diverse economic sectors in all zones and stimulating growth in the national economy.

The vision and mission of OPAZ, reflecting the Royal Decree No. (105/2020), were developed with the contributions from its employees. These vision and mission are based on OPAZ's competencies and further defined by the Royal Decree (53/2022), which transferred the Public Establishment for Industrial Estates to OPAZ. OPAZ's key roles are focused on planning, regulating, supporting, and operating.

OPAZ vision aims to position its affiliated zones

as "the investment destination of choice".

This objective is clearly stated in its mission "developing and regulating the zones affiliated with OPAZ and providing an attractive and sustainable investment environment" that draws investors from both Oman and foreign markets. Additionally, OPAZ has established values that encourage employees, customers, and investors to support their vision. These values include "Responsibility, Cooperation, Transparency, and Creativity". By upholding these values, employees can demonstrate their commitment to fulfilling their responsibilities and serving nation while ensuring satisfaction for investors, entrepreneurs, and all who benefit from the services offered by OPAZ and its affiliated zones.

Launches Call Centre 1919

OPAZ has launched its call centre, which will handle all incoming calls and enquiries about the services provided by various zones affiliated to OPAZ. The objective of the call centre is to improve the quality of services offered to both investors and beneficiaries. This is achieved by facilitating communication processes and ensuring that essential information is effectively relayed through prompt responses to calls. To make this

process more accessible, OPAZ has allocated a toll-free number – 1919 - for the centre. The company places great importance on providing all the necessary facilities that contribute to delivering highly efficient and quality services. OPAZ emphasises the need to equip the call centre team with sufficient information and tools to guarantee smooth performance and quick responses to service inquiries.

Approving registration fees for usufruct contracts

In September 2022, OPAZ approved the registration fees mechanism for real estate properties' usufruct contracts in SEZAD. In addition, several other applications related to usufruct in the electricity sector in Duqm were approved, along with the approval of OPAZ's vision and mission. OPAZ also highlighted its investment promotion strategies to attract more projects to the zones in the next phase.

Furthermore, they discussed the efforts made to transfer the Public Establishment for Industrial Estates (Madayn) affiliation to OPAZ as per the Royal Decree No. (53/2022) and the steps taken towards integrating the industrial cities, free zones, and special economic zones under OPAZ's supervision. The challenges faced by applications for establishing cement projects in the zones were also reviewed.

Developing two power transformer stations in Duqm

OPAZ has completed two main transformer power stations in the Special Economic Zone at Duqm (SEZAD) in collaboration with the Rural Electricity Company - Tanweer. The first power station, located in the Light Industries Zone, has a capacity of up to 60 MVA and was completed at an estimated cost of about RO 2.6 million. The second station was built in the Fisheries and Food Industries Complex and has a capacity of 40 MVA with the potential for future expansion to 60 MVA.

This power station was completed at an estimated cost of approximately RO 2.6 million.

It is clear that the significance of the two projects lies in their ability to meet the increasing demand for electrical power and the increasing number of subscribers in SEZAD. The number of subscribers utilising the power service surged to approximately 5,031 by end of 2021, marking a 30% increase from the 3,490 subscribers in 2020.

Introducing investment opportunities

OPAZ introduced potential investment opportunities in the free zones in Sohar, Salalah and Al Mazunah through several meetings and participations. Her Excellency Samia Suluhu Hassan, President of the United Republic of Tanzania was among the most prominent visitors. During the meeting, the President was briefed about OPAZ affiliated zones, as well as potential areas of cooperation between the two friendly countries with regard to port services and free and economic zones.

Additionally, the Chairman of OPAZ led a delegation on an official visit to several European countries, including to the Port of Rotterdam in the

Kingdom of the Netherlands. The delegations met with Allard Castelier, the CEO of the Port, as well as other officials. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss ways to enhance cooperation between the Port of Sohar, the Port of Rotterdam, and the free zones in Oman. Specifically, the parties discussed strategies to leverage on renewable energy for the production and export of green hydrogen, as well as how to optimise its benefits. During the visit, the delegation also toured several facilities located near the Port of Rotterdam, including those dedicated to green fuel production and the reduction of carbon dioxide emissions resulting from industrial production processes.

Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises

OPAZ introduced an electronic service for small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) to register themselves in OPAZ SMEs database. The service enables SMEs to register themselves through a self-registration process by providing their commercial registration number. By adopting this digital solution, OPAZ aims to automate its procedures and create a streamlined database, thereby reducing time and effort.

Through Tawasul Foundation, OPAZ implemented a number of programmes and initiatives for the local community in the Wilayat of Duqm and Al Wusta Governorate. These endeavours included entrepreneurship training and

qualification programmes for employment, education, health, and environment. It also supported sports associations and clubs and held awareness campaigns targeting health, social and development topics.

An 'Entrepreneurship Development Programme' was organised, targeting entrepreneurs and owners of SMEs in Al Wusta Governorate, with the aim of developing business skills. The three-month programme included training on developing business plans and activities, financial management, legal and marketing aspects, customer service management and supply chain.

Social responsibility

OPAZ has implemented various initiatives related to social responsibility. These include organising an Omani Environment Day event, carrying out a seaweed cultivation project, transporting a dead

whale at the Port of Duqm, supplying computers and whiteboards, restoring several houses in Sayyad district, sponsoring private sports teams, and distributing Ramadan baskets.

Salalah Free Zone

Investments totaling over RO 3.7 billion have been made in Salalah Free Zone. The Zone attracted a variety of industrial, commercial, and logistical activities with a combined investment value of over RO 72 million in the first seven months of this year.

Notably, a petrochemical products factory, a container maintenance workshop, a photovoltaic solar panel production facility, and a centre for re-exporting household oven products, electrical appliances, and a food production factory were established in the zone.

These projects have successfully attracted foreign direct investment due to the incentives,

benefits, facilities and promotions that the zone offers to investors, business owners and small and medium enterprises both within and outside of Oman. This highlights the zone's competitiveness and efficiency on both regional and global levels.

These efforts come align with the zone's plans to encourage investment in Oman and diversify sources of income by leveraging national facilities such as ports and airports to develop vital sectors such as logistics services, building and construction services, health services, real estate, and the provision of consumer goods.



Space Settlement Centre

OPAZ signed a land usufruct agreement with Global Space and Technology Company to establish a space settlement centre for research, scientific and practical experiments. The centre will simulate astronauts' conditions and conduct research on advanced technology and artificial intelligence over an area of 20,000 sqm in the Artificial Intelligence Zone in Duqm.

Salalah solar energy

Salalah Free Zone signed a usufruct agreement with the American Advanced Industries Company to establish a factory for the production and manufacture of photovoltaic solar panels in the zone, with an investment value of RO 29 million. The objective of this project is to produce photovoltaic solar panels with an annual capacity of 200 million watts. Each panel has the capability to generate 390 watts of electricity, and the entire manufacturing facility will occupy

an area of 10,000 sqm. The overarching goal of the project is to increase investment in the solar energy manufacturing sector, while also expanding the range of industrial investments in Salalah Free Zone. Furthermore, the project aims to foster collaboration between government agencies, the private sector, specifically industrial investors, and industries related to renewable and sustainable energy in Oman.



Enhancing maritime transport sector

OPAZ signed an agreement with Majan Logistics Solutions Company to establish a specialised workshop in Salalah Free Zone to provide logistics solutions and services, manufacture, maintain, store and provide solutions for reusing containers, with a total investment estimated at more than RO 384,000 to be an important addition to logistics service providers in the zone.

The workshop, spanning over an area of 3,000 sqm will specialise in various services including maintenance and repair of containers, as well as conversion and design of containers into establishments such as homes, restaurants, workshops and rooms. All the services provided will follow international standards and specifications.



Opening of Karwa Motors Factory

The opening of the Karwa Motors Factory marked a major milestone for SEZAD, ushering in a new era for the Omani industry. This state-of-the-art facility represents a major contribution to the industrial sector, both in the zone and throughout Oman, by enhancing the overall value of the industrial sector. The factory will help localising industries and achieving economic development and diversification. Furthermore, it will contribute to introducing modern technologies and capabilities that will have a beneficial impact on the development of SMEs. The project will also play a significant role in enhancing the skills and knowledge of Omani youth in the automotive industry by providing them with direct and indirect employment opportunities.



Sohar Free Zone

As an integrated industrial and logistical centre, Sohar Free Zone, which adheres to the sustainability standards in all of its operations and utilises cutting-edge international technologies, has successfully attracted a total investment of RO 459,000,000, in line with the goals of Oman Vision 2040. The zone is home to 223 companies operating in a range of industries, including minerals, petrochemicals, pharmaceuticals, food, and logistics services, with an impressive occupancy rate of up to 75%. In 2022, Sohar Free Zone signed nine agreements, including setting up of two warehouses, five factories and two expansion

agreements. This free zone is one of the most important supporters of achieving sustainable economic development in Oman and has provided more than 3000 direct job opportunities while maintaining an Omanisation rate of 45 %. Due to its strategic location and comprehensive list of advantages and incentives, the Zone has become the premier choice for foreign investment. This zone offers a range of amenities including top-of-the-line warehouses, commercial offices, and ample land to encourage investors to establish and expand their projects and businesses.



Sohar Port and Freezone registers strong results as it poises itself for 2023



Sohar – :

SOHAR Port and Freezone has announced strong results for the third quarter of 2022 as the Port throughput (export and import) reported an increase by 32% over the same period last year.

As the rapidly growing complex continues to transform the Sultanate's burgeoning maritime and logistics industries, dry bulk volume grew by 38% to almost 11.8 million tonnes, liquid bulk increased by 28% to just over 5 million tonnes. The number of handled containers increased by 4% to 188,604 TEU. In addition, the Port also recorded robust growth of 60% increase in Ship-to-Ship (STS) cargo given its strategic location and its reputation for delivering unmatched quality of service with quick turnaround times with our ever-growing STS Customer base.

Emile Hoogsteden, Chief Executive Officer of SOHAR Port said, "The year 2022 has been tumultuous when it comes to higher energy costs and soaring consumer food prices globally, which have led to higher marine bunker prices and an increase in shipping costs for all sectors. With that said, we have been pleased with our performance, as well as seeing throughput grow quarter on quarter, year versus year."

He added, "As we embark on 2023, we are

optimistic about what the year holds for us. With the continuous support of our shareholders at Asyad Group and Port of Rotterdam, we are confident that SOHAR Port and Freezone will continue to grow and place Oman on the global trade and logistics map. We are also excited about the prospects of investments in the realm of green hydrogen, supported by the recently signed agreement between Oman and the Netherlands at COP 27, which will contribute to building the global green hydrogen value chain, as well as boost port development opportunities." Meanwhile, SOHAR Freezone's performance has been unrelenting in Q3 2022 with 11.2% increase in exports, and 4.2% increase in land occupancy compared with the same period last year. With a bespoke regulatory and incentive scheme program to attract Foreign Direct Investment, phase one of the Freezone is now occupied at over 75% capacity.

Omar Al Mahrizi, Chief Executive Officer of SOHAR Freezone and Deputy Chief Executive Officer of SOHAR Port said, added, "The growth we have achieved in 2022 to date provides a solid platform for even better results during 2023. Further expansion is planned as we continue to reach out to overseas investors about the potential of SOHAR Port and Freezone to meet their logistical needs in the region." He added,

"In line with the aims of Oman Vision 2040 and considering the financial and economic measures the government is taking, the national economy is expected to grow by 5.7 percent next year. As a key enabler of growth, we look forward to more successes and achievements as SOHAR Freezone continue to attract Foreign Direct Investments and be the home of mega-projects in the fields of manufacturing consumer goods, food and industrial supplies, while offering competitive incentives and benefits." "In addition, and in line with its in-country-value strategy, SOHAR Port and Freezone local awarded outsourcing contracts increased by 114%," Omar concluded.

SOHAR Port and Freezone has attracted \$27 billion in total investment as part of a long-term commitment to developing Oman's economy in line with the objectives of Vision 2040. Open 24 hours a day, seven days a week, SOHAR is one of the world's fastest-growing complexes of its kind and significant developments within its industrial and food clusters are currently underway. The company is also exploring investment in green and renewable energy to make the Port and Freezone more efficient and environmentally conscious for the benefit of tenants, clients, the community, and the environment.



Sohar improves supply chain efficiency with the launch of new "Routescanner" platform



Sohar – :

SOHAR Port and Freezone has launched its new 'Routescanner' platform, an integrated global shipping route planner that will allow shippers and forwarders to view all available shipping routes in a single easy-to-use platform. Designed to making supply chains more efficient, transparent and sustainable, Routescanner allows users to display all routes via SOHAR using the Sohar Direct Connection feature, build custom routes, show the fastest routes via seaports, inland locations, road and rail and choose options with the lowest CO2 emissions.

Developed by the Port of Rotterdam, Routescanner aims to optimise supply chains through end-to-end planning, while improving transparency and allowing shippers throughout the industry to make smarter choices. The platform is built upon a global harmonised database of more than 4000 terminals worldwide, showing transit times, estimated departure and arrival times, all available logistics partners and CO2 emissions for each route.

Digital tools are an increasingly important element in managing business relationships and Routescanner will empower clients to select the most efficient connections to and

from SOHAR. More than 160 operators and carriers from around the world have already joined the Routescanner platform, which will further enhance our logistical capabilities and benefit the entire shipping industry by delivering greater visibility throughout the supply chain, driving growth at SOHAR by highlighting the most direct routes and speeding up transit times for goods around the world. SOHAR is a pioneer in the digital transformation of Oman's logistics sector and one of the fastest-growing fully integrated industrial and logistics hubs in the world.

An integrated hub for logistics solutions and services and connecting them to global supply chains



Enhancing the key role of the logistics sector in building a diversified and sustainable economy

RO 3.8 billion is the volume of committed investments in Salalah Free Zone

76 factories and stations under construction and operation in Salalah Free Zone

Salalah – :

Asyad Group supports the national efforts aimed at confirming the economic value of Dhofar Governorate as an integrated hub for logistics solutions and services, as well as connecting it to various supply chains through Salalah Port and Salalah Free Zone. In addition, the Group strives to enhance the growing role of the logistics sector to build a diversified and sustainable economy based on innovation and knowledge, in partnership with the private sector and international companies, aiming to strengthen the Sultanate of Oman's position as a global logistics centre.

Salalah Free Zone witnesses launch of new products

The total number of projects in operation and under construction in Salalah Free Zone has reached 76 (factories and stations), which reflect the high quality of the Zone's facilities, containing various industrial and productive projects, including manufacturing, pharmaceutical, food and cosmetic industries.

Salalah Free Zone recorded several achievements during the current year 2022, such as signing new investment agreements and hosting other companies and factories. Six factories launched their operations in the Raysut and Adhan regions, the most prominent of which, in terms of local investments, were the projects of the OQ Group to extract liquefied petroleum gas with an investment of more than OMR 315 million – with an occupancy area of 214,000 sqm and the ammonia production plant project – covering 118,000 sqm – with an investment of more than OMR 173 million. The Arabian Sea Fisheries Factory also started operations with an investment of OMR 538,000; the factory has an area for storing and preserving fish of approximately 1,200 tonnes

and a production facility for freezing 48 tonnes per day.

Salalah International Gypsum Company has finished expanding its production unit in an area of 50,000 sqm, with an investment of more than OMR 3.4 million.

In addition, construction work has been completed in a number of factories, most notably the Felix Pharmaceutical Plant, a Qatari project that occupies an area of more than 109,000 sqm, with investment value of more than OMR 140,000 for the production of medicines and specialised food products. Construction work of the Al Namariq Mining Company, which covers an area of 60,000 sqm, has also been completed. It is a joint Omani-Iraqi project, with an investment of OMR 4,000,192. Besides, the Zadi Food Industries is expected to start production at the beginning of next year, with an investment size of OMR 384,000.

The Zone was keen to provide all possible support and facilities for the industrial projects, serving its vision to build a long-term partnership with customers by establishing an integrated modern infrastructure in a distinguished geographical location. As well, it offers attractive incentives, a safe environment and reliable services. These facilities include building and equipping a corridor for bulk and liquid goods with a length of 5,740 metres, connecting the free zone and the Port of Salalah to serve methanol, liquefied natural gas and ammonia projects. In addition, a gas pipeline network will be built with a daily production capacity of one million cubic metres to meet the gas needs of existing and future factories. The free zone worked on developing its digital infrastructure and installing the latest technologies for wired and wireless communications for all locations in the Raysut region and the Adhan region of the first phase.

Commenting on the achievements, Dr. Ali bin



Mohammed Tabuk, CEO of Salalah Free Zone, indicated that "Salalah Free Zone succeeded in 2022 to attract many local and international investments, with a value of more than RO 409 million" The total usufruct agreements signed with the Zone by the end of October 2022 reached 119 agreements, with an investment volume of more than RO 3.8 billion.

Dr. Ali Tabuk added, "The total area of leased land from these agreements is RO 4.8 million sqm, approximately 40% of the total leasable land, while the percentage of renting warehouses and offices is 91% and 100%, respectively, of the total number of leasable warehouses and offices." This reflects the increasing demand for logistics services offered by the zone, and mirrors Salalah's leading position as a logistics hub."

As part of its efforts to be a leading global centre for high-quality industrial and logistical activities, Salalah Free Zone offers many economic incentives and facilities to investors, the most important of which are tax exemptions, free foreign ownership of investment projects, in addition to enjoying a strategic location adjacent to the Port of Salalah overlooking the routes of the most prominent global shipping lines.

Port of Salalah has global logistical capabilities and a major driver of the economy

The Port of Salalah is a global gateway for logistics services and a major engine for the national economy. It is the second-best port in the world in terms of operational efficiency in the Container Ports Performance Index (CPPI), issued by the World Bank, in addition to having high logistical and operational capabilities to deal with various sizes of ships.

Mohammed bin Ofeet Al Mashani, Chief Corporate Affairs Officer, said: "As the third largest port in

the Middle East and Africa, Salalah Port provides competitive advantages to the local and global trade community thanks to its strategic location, proximity to international shipping lines, and its connection with more than 50 shipping lines that include major companies. Shipping around the world, allowing access to various global markets within a maximum period of two weeks.

Al Mashani added that the Port of Salalah, which began its commercial operations in 1998, today constitutes an important gateway for the Sultanate in international maritime trade and a global centre for transshipment of containers, as its depth reaches 18 metres, and it has 21 berths with a length of 5.6 km, supported by 21 modern gantry cranes designed according to the best international specifications that allow it to receive and deal with ships of huge sizes.

He stressed that the Port was planned to be sustainable and capable of expansion and future growth in line with the development of the maritime trade industry and the entry of technology into operational processes. The Port is a link between the main Omani ports and a starting point for local exporters and importers to global markets.

The latest indicators for the Port of Salalah show that it achieved positive growth in all its operations, as the Port handled about 43 million TEUs until the end of the third quarter of 2022, and approximately 13.4 million tonnes in general cargo handling, an increase of 5%.

It is worth noting that the Port annually receives more than 2,500 ships, and its services include loading and unloading operations, container maintenance and repair, towing services, fuel supply, cargo storage and other port services, in addition to that it has logistical capabilities and high operational capabilities to deal with various sizes of ships.

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Port of Salalah is a global logistics centre and a crucial engine for the national economy

◆ ◆ ◆

Port of Salalah is the second-best port worldwide in terms of operational efficiency

13 contracts worth RO 2 million signed between large enterprises and SMEs in Sur Industrial City

Signing a project to develop a network of air quality monitoring stations



Sur – :

Sur Industrial City, affiliated to the Public Establishment for Industrial Estates "Madayn", organised a signing ceremony for handling contracts between large enterprises and SMEs, as well as a memorandum of cooperation to implement Air Quality Monitoring Station Network (AQMSN) in the Wilayat of Sur as part of the national programme for environmental monitoring and detection of surrounding air quality. The event was held at the University of Technology and Applied Sciences in Sur under the auspices of His Excellency Dr. Abdullah bin Ali Al Amri, Chairman of the Environment Authority. Speaking at the event, Eng. Abdulqadir bin Salim Al Balushi, Director General of Sur Industrial City, pointed out that a total of 13 handling contracts worth nearly RO 2 million got signed at the

event between Oman India Fertiliser Company (OMIFCO), Oman LNG, Phoenix Power Company, with a group of SMEs. "The contracts involve various logistics and support services, and we hope to maximize these services in the coming years through continuous cooperation and support received from the major companies in Sur Industrial City," Al Balushi said.

Al Balushi added that as a result of constant coordination between Madayn and the Environment Authority, Madayn has signed an MoU with Oman India Fertiliser Company (OMIFCO), Oman LNG, and Phoenix Power Company to implement Air Quality Monitoring Stations in several locations in South Al Sharqiyah governorate.

"Madayn pays significant attention to the environmental aspects being one of the national priorities of Oman Vision 2040," Al Balushi said,



"In this regard, Sur Industrial City has recently completed the engineering designs to implement phase 1 of 'green buffer zone' on 100,000 sqm in Sur Industrial City with the support from OMIFCO. Work on this project will commence during Q4 of the current year and the implementation shall take 7 months. This project, which will include planting 1,000 trees, walkway and seating areas, shall generate small investment opportunities for the entrepreneurs to provide support services and consequently ensure the sustainability of the project.", he added.

Within its annual agenda, Sur Industrial City is undertaking efforts to plant 500 trees to increase the green area and contribute to the national initiative implemented by the Environment Authority to plant 10 million trees in the Sultanate. Eng. Ahmed bin Khamis Al Kasbi, Director of

Operations at Sur Industrial City, commented that the industrial city is strategically located on a total area of 34 million sqm and offers 23 million sqm of investable areas. Sur Industrial City is home to 130 projects with a total investment value exceeding RO 2.3 billion. In addition to the presence of several major projects and SMEs representing various industries, Sur Industrial City also enjoys the presence of service projects such as Sur Gate, Hay Al Sharooq Residential Complex, and Hay Al Sharooq International School.

It should be noted that the national programme for monitoring the environment and the detection of surrounding air quality comes within the framework of the sustainable development goals (SDGs) and supports the priorities in Oman Vision 2040.

Over 1 million sqm

Developing roads and infrastructure projects at Mahas Industrial City



Khassab – :

"Madayn" and Galfar Engineering and Contracting signed an agreement for roads and infrastructure construction at Mahas Industrial City in the Wilayat of Khasab in Musandam Governorate. The signing ceremony was held under the patronage of HE Sayyid Ibrahim bin Said Al Busaidi, Governor of Musandam, and in the presence of Hamad bin Hamoud Al Qasabi, Acting CEO of Madayn.

The project, which will be developed on a construction area of one million sqm at a total cost of approximately RO 5 million, incorporates

internal road network of 7 km, installation of 100 lighting poles, construction of a 75-metre bridge linking the entrance of the industrial city to the main road, and water and sewage networks of 5 km and 4.5 km respectively. Moreover, the project includes electricity and telecom services and networks, water tank with a capacity of 1,000 cubic metres, sewage collection tank, rainwater drainage channels with a width of 20 metres and a total length of 4 km, in addition to other works that shall enhance the infrastructure services and facilitate traffic movement at Mahas Industrial City.

Madayn board of directors discusses establishing workforce township



Samail – :

The Board of Directors of the Public Establishment for Industrial Estates "Madayn" held its 5th meeting this year at Samail Industrial City, which was chaired by HE Dr. Saleh bin Said Masan, Undersecretary of the Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Investment Promotion for Commerce and Industry, and Chairman of Madayn's Board of Directors.

Several topics were discussed during the meeting including the establishment of an integrated

workforce township in Samail Industrial City and the rest of the industrial cities. The meeting was followed by a visit to Talent Electric Services, which specialises in the design and manufacturing of customised quality low voltage switchgear and control panel boards of various capacity to suit Oil and Gas, water and electricity, infrastructure, building and public utility projects. A visit was also made to Oman Plastics Company, which focuses on the production and sales of bottles, caps, PE films, labels and other plastic packaging products.


**Establishing
an integrated
workforce
township
in Samail
Industrial City**



Faiza Al Kalbani

My Story with Duqm

As I write this article, I recall my first visit to Duqm several years ago during the media visit with other colleagues in 2011.

In June 2012, I travelled again by bus for six hours to Duqm to report on the official opening ceremony of the Dry Dock project. The ceremony was held under the patronage of His Highness Sayyid Hamad bin Thuwaini Al Said. This project now plays a significant role in supporting the national economy and boosting the Sultanate's global standing. The project is a major accomplishment, enabling it to enter a new marine industry and establish a notable presence in the maintenance and repair of ships of various sizes, including large oil and gas vessels. Moreover, the milestone achievement of Ja'Aluni Airport's development and the reception of its first two planes have greatly facilitated access to the zone for investors and future flights. This accomplishment has been widely celebrated as a promising start towards attracting more investments and opportunities to Duqm.

Several years later, I participated in the opening of Duqm Airport, where we arrived after a one-hour flight. On this day, I witnessed a big difference, as the proof of urbanisation and development was everywhere, though I did not even see a single lighting pole on the sides of the road when I visited earlier. However, during this visit, I was on my way to Crowne Plaza, which was next to the Park Inn Hotel – a vast difference when there was only one hotel, City Hotel Duqm.

As I considered the manifestations of civilisation and the promising opportunities created for Duqm, I couldn't help but wonder if locals would truly benefit from these projects. Would they have access to employment and training opportunities? How many SMEs would be involved in the projects? It is important to prioritise social responsibility alongside urbanisation and development in the zone in order to

sustain the growth process. The Tawasul Foundation team, along with other departments in the Special Economic Zone at Duqm, are working towards completing these social responsibilities.

I recall that in January 2017, a media delegation from the fourth press correspondent forum, organised by the Omani Journalists Association in collaboration with the Special Economic Zone Authority at Duqm, visited Duqm for a three-day period. The visit aimed at updating the delegation on the progress witnessed in the zone, showcasing the most significant projects and achievements on the ground, and monitor their developments. Today, Duqm has transformed into a hub that attracts a diverse range of investments across multiple sectors, and as a free zone, it has emerged as a dependable resource to support plans and strategies for economic diversification. The amount invested in the zone until 2020 totaled RO 2.4 billion, with 95% earmarked for critical infrastructure such as the port, airport, roads, dry dock, and hotels, and other structures necessary for the establishment of these projects. Additionally, the government has injected over RO 1.7 billion into Duqm to realise the expectations for the zone.

Now it is our turn, as journalists and media professionals, to support this accomplishment through our work... so are we ready?!

To ensure maximum benefit, future visions for the zone must bring more hope that efforts and investments, both local and foreign, will be even more, considering the successive development in the size of existing projects. It is essential that the development march benefits from what has been already achieved, so that Oman hosts the "Chinese City" project, occupying a prominent place on the global economy and trade map as soon as possible. Serious investors should be granted facilities in procedures, licenses and implementation plans, to guarantee maximum benefit.

The official talks and statements vary about what has been accomplished in the zone, which was very promising. They assured that the basin will continue to receive ships, including gigantic ones that have an impact on the maritime transport industry, in addition to ships on the waiting list, and that the marketing process is based on expansion to search for other new markets. The development of the dry dock project and other various other projects such as Duqm Port and airport, Rock Garden, Renaissance Village, Duqm Refinery, natural gas receiving station, Fishing Port, oil storage park in Ras Markaz, Karwa bus factory, sebacic acid production refinery, and more, signifies one of the new and significant sectors in the Sultanate.

During a subsequent visit, I observed the launch of Renaissance Village, which is the largest residential project in Duqm that caters to the workforce of the companies operating in the zonen with a capacity of 16,000 beds. Now, there may be new projects in this regard to support the "Frontier" residential complex. Today, the completion of the "Railway" project is

eagerly awaited, as it is anticipated to substantially enhance the commercial activity in the zone. This will provide Duqm with all the necessary infrastructure to attract investors and establish itself as a promising hub for development.

The favourable climate in "Duqm" makes it an attractive destination, and provides an opportunity for substantial discussions about increasing investments in the tourism sector, including resorts and shopping centres, while maximising their potential to make it accessible for those looking to unwind, whether from within and outside the Sultanate. However, promotional and marketing strategies are still in need to draw in investments and boost tourism in the zone.

As citizens of this beloved country, it is our responsibility to support the government and the private sector to promote development, even if it is through spontaneous means such as social media. Let us utilise our platforms to promote Oman's progress. Profound thanks to everyone involved in the development of the Special Economic Zone at Duqm.



AMAD
DUQM 22 أمد
الدقم

MIZI

welcomed 23.000 and included over
30 youth activities that combine
sustainability, innovation and art

It was built on an area of 500,000 sqm, and its design
simulates a future residential village

Acting CEO of the Special Economic Zone at Duqm

Amad Duqm 22 Event is an incubator for
young people's vision and a launch for their
future creativity

Head of the Supervisory Committee

The Event enhances the presence of Duqm as
a modern, thriving and a futuristic city that
attracts youth and their projects

The Special Economic Zone at Duqm launched "Amad Duqm 22". The Event was organised in cooperation between the Public Authority for Special Economic Zones and Free Zones (OPAZ) and the Ministry of Culture, Sports and Youth.

"Amad Duqm 22" Event comes as a mini experimental laboratory for the aspirations of Omani youth. The design and implementation processes were entrusted to a selected group of creative Omani youth to create a vision that combines science, technology, art and entertainment to create a better world.

Characteristics

Eng. Ahmed bin Ali Akaak, Acting CEO of the Special Economic Zone at Duqm, welcomed the participants in the Amad Duqm 22 Event and introduced them to the characteristics of the Special Economic Zone at Duqm, which make it the city of the future and youth.

Akaak noted that the idea behind this Event is to enhance the role of culture, innovation, sports, technology and sustainability, and to introduce the economic potential and the growing investments in the region. Since youth are the cornerstone of achieving future aspirations, Amad Duqm 22 Event was organised to incubate the vision and creativity of youth.

"We, in the Special Economic Zone at Duqm, welcome all youth activities that support youth", he added.



Among the sports activities of "Amad Duqm 22" was paragliding, which included training sessions and aerial tours for visitors who were briefed on the importance of this sport in promoting domestic tourism.



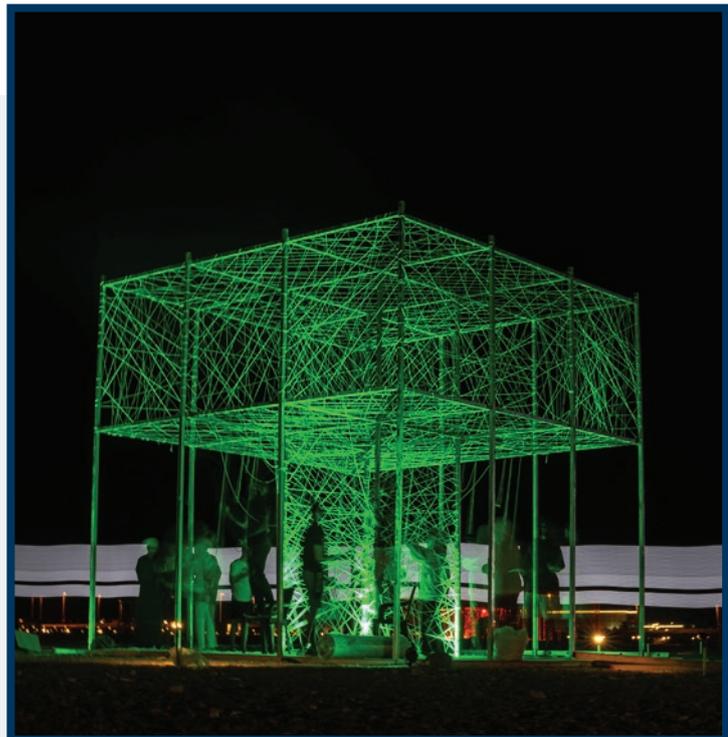
Erupting youth energies

On the other hand, Saud bin Badr Ambusaïdi, Assistant Director General of the Directorate General of Sports Activities at the Ministry of Culture, Sports and Youth, confirmed that the Ministry's participation in Amad Duqm 22 Event emanates from its keenness to contain youth and erupt their energies through various activities and Events that will start tomorrow, Friday. The Event also coincides with the most prominent global Event in the region currently (World Cup). This means that young people in Duqm will find another parallel field that that combines sculpture, theater and music.

"Duqm was chosen because it is the gateway to the Omani economy in the future stage. The Ministry desires to provide the opportunity for young people to express their vision about technological advancements in an incubation village, Amad Duqm."

Mystery and entertainment

Visitors to this Event experienced that he was a traveller who moved 100 years into the future. S/he experienced an environment that seems somewhat familiar to him/her, but it is from another future time. The experience of visiting the Event was shrouded in mystery, suspense and entertainment because all its elements seem bizarre; they are from the future. The Event called for contemplation and mediation through dozens of abstract and interactive artistic works and structures distributed over the village spaces. The village also included a number of recreational



Youth aspirations

Dr. Saïd bin Khalifa Al Quraini, Head of the Supervisory Committee for Amad Duqm 22 Event, stated that the Event will host more than 30 youth activities in various fields such as culture, sports, innovation, technology, sustainability and entertainment, in line with the aspirations of young people.

He pointed out that the idea of "Amad Duqm 22" Event came as part of the efforts being made to enhance the presence of the Special Economic Zone at Duqm as a modern and prosperous city that embraces art and innovation. It also seeks to introduce Duqm as a futuristic city that attracts young people and their projects in various fields such as energy, industry and logistics, in addition to tourism projects. The Event provides an opportunity for young people to transform their skills and innovations into promising economic projects that take advantage of the available opportunities. It also aims to provide various options for infrastructure and housing.

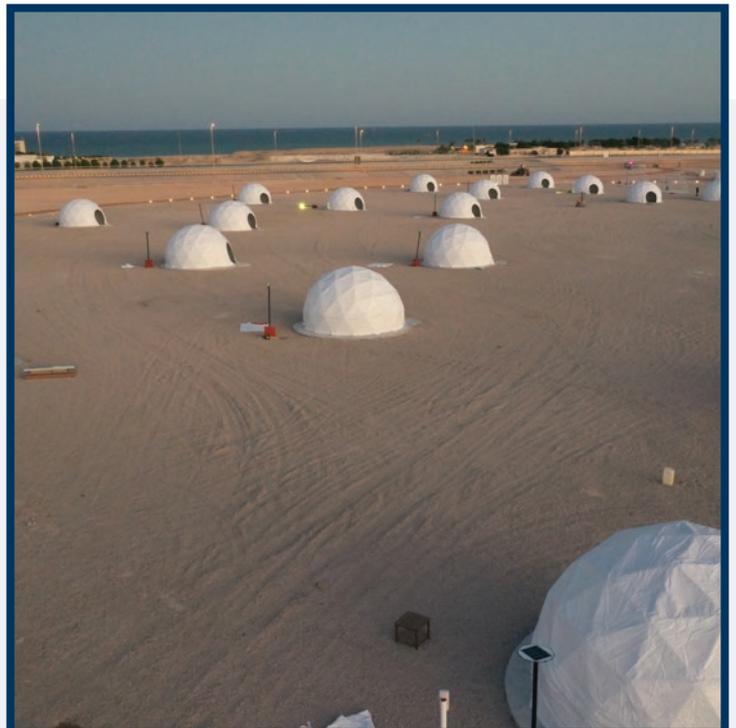


Integrated facilities

Al Tuwairshi indicated that the Event, which is being held on an area of 500,000 sqm, was designed to simulate a residential village with integrated facilities. It is hoped that the Event will attract more than 20,000 young men and women between the ages of 13 to 40 years.

"Since Duqm is the city of the future, it provides a lot of opportunities and economic potential. It also seeks to become a model in work, housing and lifestyle, he added.

"Duqm is suitable for the Event because it encourages immersion in the experience and meditation in an atmosphere of tranquility away from the noise of the city", he furthered.





Events in Amad Duqm 22

The Events in "Amad Duqm 22" were diverse and combined the future vision of youth and brainstorming. They included a meditation session, an electric bike circuit (scooter), Badil exhibition games, an obstacle course, drones, a remote control car racing circuit, art labs, video games, and backgammon.

The play "Lamada" was shown, along with concerts, astronomy camp and other Events that introduce visitors to the pristine nature of Duqm.



Cars march

With the cold winter breezes engulfing Duqm, the visitor observed a march of many cars that toured the roads of Duqm. The march, which announces the official launch of the Event, was subject to specific controls and guidelines. Fireworks were also accompanying the event.

"22 Amad Duqm" is the outcome of Omani youth creative ideas

Young people have benefited from Duqm as an area designated for conducting future experiments

Amad Duqm 22, held in the Special Economic Zone at Duqm, which was organised by the Ministry of Culture, Sports and Youth and the Public Authority for Special Economic Zones and Free Zones, appeared in a very beautiful way. The event was a large laboratory in which young people conducted their experiences and expressed their aspirations for the future. Innovation was the key factor in defining the parameters of this event and giving it creativity.

The event space, which stretches on an area of 500,000 sqm, has been transformed from a desert into a great meeting place for creative youth, thanks to the Omani hands. The idea, from its inception, is to give Omani youth the opportunity to present their visions and ideas and determine how to implement them after approving the idea. The youth rolled up their sleeves and began to

implement the scheme according to the design prepared for that, each in his field. There you find a young woman and an engineer standing with her maps instructing the youth on how to install that large, illuminated gate. There is another young man who carries out the work with his own hands with dedication and sincerity. There is another young man in the corner with a group of young men working tirelessly to get this village to its perfect final image.

This was not limited to those who worked on those sites. There are other people who contributed their projects and added a beautiful touch to the event. The good example of this is the food corner, which is run by Omani youth, not expatriates. Omani youth are now innovating in making your meal and coffee.

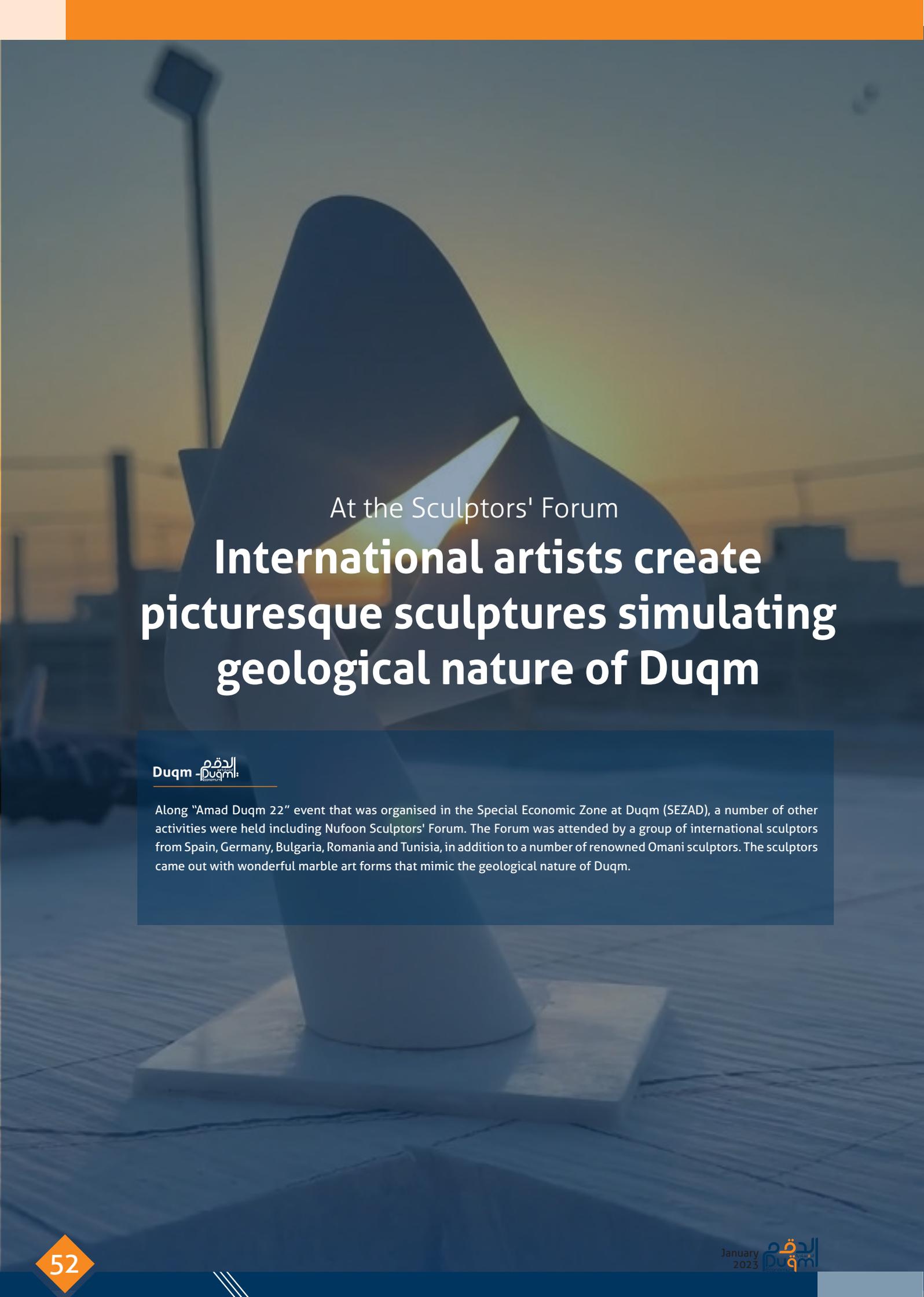
The story of the Entrance Gate



Ohood bint Mohammed Al Amriya, designer of the event's entrance gate and the circuit for electric bicycles "scooters", a graduate from the German University of Technology and Applied Sciences majoring in architecture, said, "The goal of choosing the Special Economic Zone at Duqm as a station for the event is to direct attention towards Duqm, which is witnessing great and continuous progress day after day. This day was chosen to attract young people to provide them with opportunities in Duqm. The event combines various elements related to art, sustainability, innovation and economy.

"I had a role in the master plan of the project and also in the design of some elements such as the main entrance gate.

I did my best to make the gate itself one of the attraction factors for visitors to the Amad Duqm 22 event. The gate was designed to simulate the most important themes of the event, which are sustainability, innovation and art. The gate consists of approximately more than 20,000 pieces of scaffold, equivalent to 150 tons, with an area of 900 sqm. The aim of using scaffolding comes to re-dismantle and use materials and not affect the surrounding environment. The focus was on the work being environmentally friendly in terms of the use of materials and construction work that It will not affect the site after the completion of the event, so that the site will return as it was before," she added.



At the Sculptors' Forum International artists create picturesque sculptures simulating geological nature of Duqm

Duqm 
Economic Zone

Along "Amad Duqm 22" event that was organised in the Special Economic Zone at Duqm (SEZAD), a number of other activities were held including Nufoon Sculptors' Forum. The Forum was attended by a group of international sculptors from Spain, Germany, Bulgaria, Romania and Tunisia, in addition to a number of renowned Omani sculptors. The sculptors came out with wonderful marble art forms that mimic the geological nature of Duqm.



Maria Negara

Presented a wonderful 3-metre-high artistic sculpture, reflecting the movement of water from the bottom of earth



Klaus Hesnicker

Presented an artwork of 3 pieces, reflecting the development and growth that different things go through in life.



Mohamed Sahnoun

His sculpture was inspired from Arabic calligraphy and the Rock Garden in Duqm

Sculptural schools

Artist Khalil bin Salim Al Kalbani, one of the sculptors participating in the Forum, expressed his happiness to participate with a group of international sculptors. He also pointed out that the Forum allowed him to benefit from sculptors who came from various international sculptural schools.

"I presented a sculpture, named "From the Surrounding to the Self". Its concept, which I wanted to convey, was to reflect on the reality we live in," he added.

"I relied on the overlapping linear movement and employing the aesthetics of mass and void. The sculpture was named to express the reality in which we live. The term "Surrounding" indicates the space that we live and interact with, while the term "Self" came to express man and his suffering during "Covid 19" and beyond. There are many concepts that need a clear explanation, which we may all disagree with. There is no definitive indication or a clear and direct concept from which we can derive certain information. Social media platforms broadcast daily pictures and messages and a huge amount of information. This situation does not make us differentiate between malicious rumors and correct information. We live in a situation mixed with interference and ambiguity, and everyone is still searching for the truth," he added.

Balance

Mohammed Sahnoun, a calligrapher and sculptor, a professor at the Higher Institute of Arts and Crafts from the Republic of Tunisia, was pleased to have the opportunity to participate in Nufoon Sculptors' Forum alongside with a wonderful group of international sculptors. He pointed out that his sculpture was

inspired from Arabic calligraphy and the Rock Garden in the Special Economic Zone at Duqm. He also noted that his 3-metre-high sculpture was divided into two parts, a base and a column.

On the other hand, the German sculptor, Klaus Hesnicker, commended his second participation in the sculpture forums in the Sultanate of Oman. Klaus presented at Nufoon Sculptors' Forum an artwork consisting of 3 pieces, reflecting the development and growth that different things go through in life.

"The idea of my sculpture is that things start with a foundation on which they are based and then grow and develop with the life time. This is like the life cycle of trees that begins with a seed we plant in the ground", he added.

While the Romanian sculptor, Ana Maria Negara, expressed her admiration for the Sculptors' Forum in Duqm. Negara presented a wonderful 3-metre-high artistic sculpture that reflects the movement of water from the bottom of earth and upwards through its fine details. Directing the work required a lot of effort, time, accuracy and patience to produce an artistic object of the utmost beauty.

Visits and admiration

The Special Economic Zone at Duqm (SEZAD) had organised a number of visits to the Nufoon Sculptors' Forum. The visits programme included a number of school students and members of the Omani Women's Association in Duqm. Participants expressed their admiration for the aesthetics of these sculptures, which will be transferred to decorate a number of sites in the Special Economic Zone at Duqm. Nufoon also received many tourists and visitors to observe the sculptures that reflect the geological nature of the Sultanate of Oman.


Attended by a group of international sculptors from Spain, Germany, Bulgaria, Romania and Tunisia


Crafting wonderful marble sculptures that mimic the geological nature of Duqm


Various messages reflected in the "From the Surrounding to the Self" sculpture

A New dawn for renewable energy

Sultanate of Oman, an ideal hub for green hydrogen projects



◆◆◆
Confirming Oman's ambition to accelerating the hydrogen-based energy

◆◆◆
OPAZ was chosen to play a pivotal role in the sector over the coming decades

◆◆◆
Allocating 250,000 km² for renewable energy projects in OPAZ's affiliated zones

Muscat – :

In June 2022, a new dawn for green energy has emerged. A joint Indian-Norwegian company was able to ink-pact a usufruct agreement with the Public Authority for Special Economic Zones and Free Zones (OPAZ) aimed to establish a major project for green hydrogen and ammonia project in the Special Economic Zone at Duqm (SEZAD). The agreement paved the way for the development of a first-of-its-kind green ammonia project in the Sultanate of Oman and also in the wider Middle East region.

The Oman-based Green Hydrogen and Chemicals Company (GHC), is a joint venture between the UK entity of the Indian ACME Company and Norway-based Scatec ASA, a leading provider of renewable energy solutions, has made progress in developing phase one of green hydrogen and ammonia project in SEZAD.

The first phase of the project will span over 12 km² of land to produce 100,000 metric tonnes of green ammonia per annum in SEZAD. When fully completed, the project is expected to produce up to 1.2 million tonnes of green ammonia annually.

The usufruct agreement signed with OPAZ was a milestone in the green hydrogen industry, which is in high demand in the Sultanate of Oman. It began in June 2022, long before the official unveiling of the National Hydrogen Strategy in October of the same year, and confirmed Oman's ambition to drive hydrogen-focused energy by regional stakeholders.

In fact, OPAZ was chosen to play a pivotal role over the coming decades in enabling large-scale green hydrogen and green ammonia projects in Oman. OPAZ has allocated, within its administrative jurisdiction, large parts of the lands allocated for green hydrogen projects amounting to 250 thousand m², as SEZAD receives the greatest interest in this field, as well as Sohar Free Zone and Salalah Free Zone, which receive the interest of developers thanks to their proximity to strategic seaports. Before moving forward with large-scale projects like green hydrogen, investors typically require a number of key elements to be available. Furthermore, the ports are very important, along with the open coastlines and the excellent alternative energy sources that exist in the Sultanate of Oman, as well as an added advantage of free zones that strongly support the existence





Special Economic Zone at Duqm receives the greatest interest in this field



HYPOR Duqm will develop a facility over 793,000 m2 with a capacity of 500 megawatts



Availability of energy sources in the industrial, economic and free zones and availability of low-carbon fuel in large quantities



Jindal Shadeed Group plans to invest 3\$ billion to produce 5 million metric tonnes of green steel annually

of such projects and an authority that leads this future direction.

The ACME project is one of the major projects that were announced prior to the launch of the National Strategy for Green Hydrogen in October. It is planned to develop the zones that form part of OPAZ's umbrella, which includes special economic zones and free zones. A parallel track is envisioned for HYDROM project regulating the green hydrogen industry sector in Oman will be progressed - away from the land auction process launched by the government previously to attract international developers and investors to this new industry.

The list of previous initiatives includes Duqm HYPOR project, a joint venture between OQ Group and the Belgian DEME Group, which aims to develop a major green hydrogen and green ammonia production facility in Duqm. According to the usufruct agreement, HYPOR Duqm Company will develop a green hydrogen and green ammonia production facility with a 500MW electrolysis capacity on a site of 793,000 sqm. The hydrogen plant will be powered by renewable electricity generated by combined installed capacity from wind turbines and solar panels established in the Special Economic Zone at Duqm's renewable energy zone, where HYPOR Duqm has been allocated an area of 200 sqkm.

The HYPOR Duqm project is founded on three main components: the installation and operation of a solar and wind energy field. The second phase is the establishment of a green hydrogen production plant,

which includes an electrolysis plant, an ammonia synthesis plant and storage facilities, and the third phase is the construction of a high-voltage transmission line of energy between the field and the station.

In the south, in Salalah, a consortium including leading industrial gases company Air Products, Oman's OQ Alternative Energy and Saudi-based energy developer ACWA Power plans to develop a world-class hydrogen-based green ammonia production facility. The reactor elements of the project, dubbed H2Oman, will be built in Salalah Free Zone.

Also, in Salalah, OQ Alternative Energy, Japan's Marubeni, Ireland-based Linde and UAE's Dubai Transportation Company (Dutco) signed a Joint Development Agreement (JDA) to develop SalalahH2 hydrogen project. An electrolysis facility with a capacity of up to 400 megawatts is required to produce green hydrogen. This will be used as feedstock to produce up to 1,000 tonnes per day of green ammonia using OQ's ammonia plant located in Salalah.

The availability of energy sources in the industrial, economic and free zones and the availability of low-carbon fuel in large quantities, will grant to the investors a greater opportunity to benefit from this shift in alternative energy sources in these areas and rethink this promising sector.

In this regard, Sohar-based Jindal Shadeed Group, a pioneer in the steel industry, signed a Memorandum of Understanding with OPAZ to establish a manufacturing




Jindal Shadeed Group will add an added value of more than 800\$ million annually


Economic and free zones may attract a total investment of 140\$ billion in the coming years


October 2022... Launching opportunities and incentives for investment in the green hydrogen sector

pioneer in the steel industry, signed a Memorandum of Understanding with OPAZ to establish a manufacturing facility. Slated to be the largest of its kind within the zone to produce green steel, the factory will also utilise renewable energy sources in its manufacturing operations.

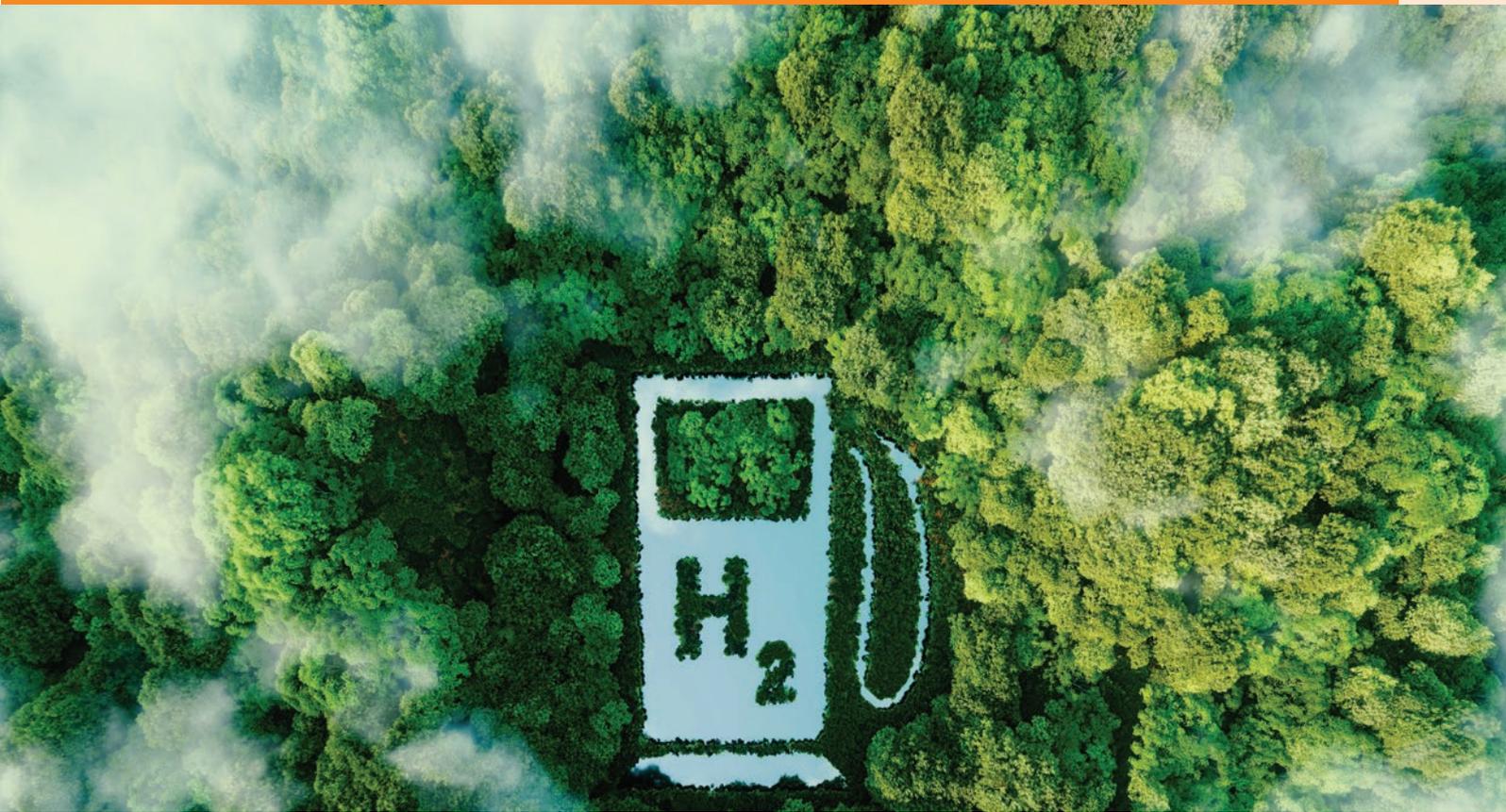
Jindal Shadeed Group plans to invest more than \$3 billion in a massive steel project that will produce approximately 5 million of metric tonnes of green steel annually, adding an added value of more than \$800 million annually. The factory will also produce high-quality iron for the automotive and wind energy industries, as well as a variety of consumer goods. There is an increasing demand for green iron by clients concerned with environmental, social and institutional

matters in countries around the world that have committed to reducing carbon emissions significantly by 2030.

Indeed, the special economic zones and free zones regulated by OPAZ are set to attract a large portion of the \$140 billion in investments expected to flow into the Sultanate of Oman with the launch of the green hydrogen industry in the coming years, according to the strategy developed for that purpose.

According to the press conference held on October 24th, the Ministry of Energy and Minerals announced the launching of opportunities and incentives for investment in the green hydrogen sector, the official launch of the Oman Hydrogen Company, procedures for allocating investment sites, the details of the royal





directives to set the year 2050 as deadline for reaching carbon neutrality in the Sultanate of Oman, and the establishment of the Oman Sustainability Center. The goal is to be in line with global efforts to reduce carbon emissions. It is hoped to produce one million tonnes of green hydrogen by 2030, which means within the next eight years. As a result, there are efforts to speed up procedures for regulating the hydrogen sector and allocating suitable sites for production, as well as plans seeking to localise hydrogen production technology, and provide investment incentives in the sector.

The Ministry of Energy and Minerals announced that it is scheduled to display the sites ready for investment in hydrogen production in early November 2022, including two areas in Duqm outside the Special

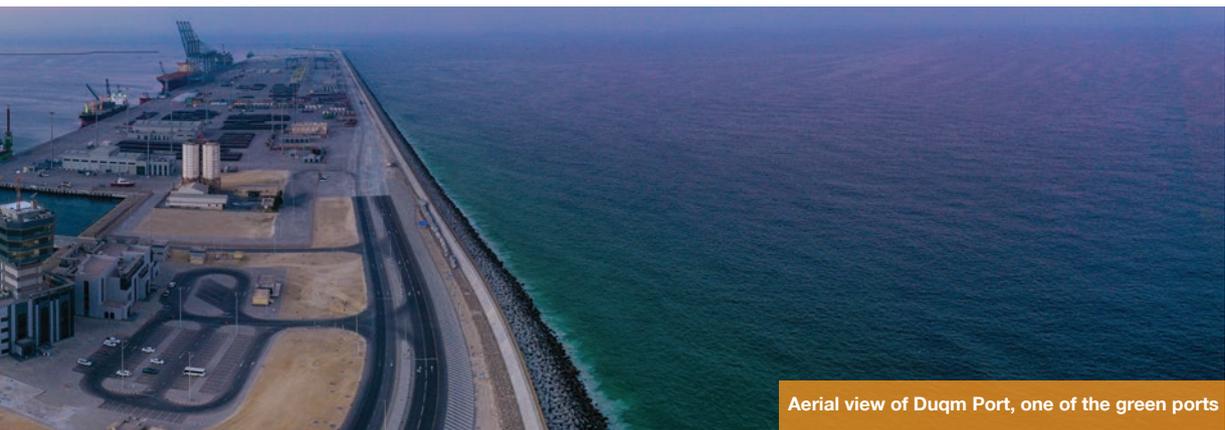
Economic Zone. The Ministry stated that four areas in the Wilayat of Thumrait in the Dhofar Governorate will be offered in the second quarter of 2023, pointing out that the offered area is estimated to be more than 50,000 sqkm, which were identified as a first stage.

According to the Ministry of Energy and Minerals, the negotiations with investors are ongoing to determine whether there are sufficient, attractive or even unfair incentives that should be modified in the future. It emphasised that this sector is new and must be learned from the first stage in order for knowledge to be transferred to other stages. It is hoped that the first shipment of green hydrogen will be exported abroad in 2030, and green hydrogen will be used in refineries and various industries.

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Royal directives on setting the year 2050 as the deadline for reaching carbon neutrality

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Keeping up with the global transformations towards reducing carbon emissions

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By 2030, it is targeted to produce one million tonnes of green hydrogen



Aerial view of Duqm Port, one of the green ports

Our vision, mission and corporate values

Developing the corporate vision, mission, and values is of high importance as it establishes the all-encompassing purpose and objectives of an organisation. The vision outlines the desired future of the organisation and serves as an aspiration that is supported and realised through the mission. Together, the vision and mission mark as a guide for organisation towards achieving its goals.

Over 100 employees were involved in developing the vision and mission of OPAZ. This was done in accordance with OPAZ competences, prescribed by the Royal Decree No. (2020/105), which aims to improve the investment environment in OPAZ affiliated zones. OPAZ's four key responsibilities are planning, regulation, support, and operation, all of which contribute to attracting investment in various economic sectors and boosting the national economy.

OPAZ has defined its vision to make its affiliated zones the 'investment destination of choice' demonstrating a clear commitment to becoming an attractive destination for successful and ambitious businesses and investments. OPAZ's mission is summed up in a well-established phrase: 'developing and regulating OPAZ-affiliated zones to provide an attractive and sustainable investment environment'. The development element of this phrase carries significant implications for progress, prosperity and growth, while the regulation component applies to all zones affiliated to OPAZ.

OPAZ mission is centered around organising, linking and arranging in order to address issues such as scattering, waste, distraction, and separation. This generates a strong sense of commitment to the organisation's work. Additionally, its mission emphasises the goal of creating an environment that is attractive and sustainable for business. This environment should promote stability and facilitate growth, multiplication, and productivity.

OPAZ selected very significant and effective corporate values that are "Accountability, Cooperation, Transparency and Creativity." The term 'Accountability' encompasses responsibility, dedication and obligation. The concept of 'Cooperation' entails synergy, solidarity, collaboration, participation and interdependence. Transparency embodies clarity, frankness, visibility and openness. 'Creativity' represents proficiency, skillfulness, and ingenuity.

OPAZ, on the other hand, underscored these values that empower employees and customers to fulfill its mission. These values urge employees to accord further efforts and dedication to deliver their responsibilities and duties to serve their nation and achieve investors' aspirations.

Undoubtedly, achieving the vision and mission will require persistence, dedication, and follow-up at every level. Thus, involving employees in developing the vision, mission and values reflects the confidence of OPAZ Board of directors in the employees as key partners.



Saleh bin Nabhan
Al Mamari
Editor-in-Chief



Involving employees in developing the vision, mission and values reflects the confidence of OPAZ Board of Directors in the employees