



A Quarterly magazine issued by the Public Authority for Special Economic Zones and Free Zones 35th Issue - April 2024

الدوق الاقتصادية ECONOMIST

Strategic project and a successful partnership



صناعة
TROC



SOHAR
PORT / FREEZONE

45km²
صحار
SOHAR

خزائن
khazaen

52km²
خزائن
KHAZAEN


المنطقة الحرة بالمزونة
AL MAZUNAH FREE ZONE

15.3km²
المزونة
AL MAZUNAH

الدقم
المنطقة الاقتصادية الخاصة
Special Economic Zone
Sultanate of Oman

2000km²
الدقم
DUQM

المنطقة الحرة بصلالة
Salalah Free Zone
The world within your hands

21.6km²
صلالة
SALALAH

6 مدينة سمائل الصناعية
Samail Industrial City

7 مدينة نزوى الصناعية
Nizwa Industrial City

8 مدينة صور الصناعية
Sur Industrial City

9 مدينة ثمريت الصناعية
Thumrait Industrial City

10 مدينة ريسوت الصناعية
Raysut Industrial City

1 مدينة البريمي الصناعية
Al Buraimi Industrial City

2 مدينة صحار الصناعية
Sohar Industrial City

3 مدينة عبري الصناعية
Ibri Industrial City

4 مدينة الرسيل الصناعية
Al Rusayl Industrial City

5 واحة المعرفة مسقط
Knowledge Oasis Muscat

مدائن
madayn

163km²



David Bird
CEO of OQ8



OQ8 is set to significantly influence Oman's economic landscape, especially through its impact on Duqm. Doubling Oman's refining capacity to 500,000 barrels per day

A historical start to a global transformation

The inauguration of OQ8 on February 7, graced by the presence of His Majesty Sultan Haitham Bin Tarik and His Highness Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, the Emir of Kuwait, marks a monumental stride for the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) region. It highlights the immense potential of cooperation and shared vision in driving prosperity.

This event is far more than just a milestone; it signals the start of a transformative journey for Duqm, Oman, and the broader region. The operational launch of OQ8 represents a pivotal moment, ushering in unparalleled growth and cementing Duqm's status as the emerging energy hub of Oman.

The role of OQ8 as a fundamental component of Duqm's and Oman's economic framework is unmistakable. This \$9 billion joint venture between Oman's OQ Group and Kuwait Petroleum International stands as the most substantial investment in the GCC's oil sector between two countries. It embodies a commitment to innovation, sustainability, and prosperity, positioning Oman strategically at the heart of the Gulf Cooperation Countries to meet global energy demands more efficiently and sustainably.

OQ8 is set to significantly influence Oman's economic landscape, especially through its impact on Duqm. Doubling Oman's refining capacity to 500,000 barrels per day, OQ8 not only boosts Oman's capacity to serve global energy markets but also extends its ambition beyond production. The refinery's strategic location, combined with its state-of-the-art technology and operational excellence, places Duqm as a pivotal player in the international energy trade, seamlessly bridging the East and West.

Beyond economic measures, OQ8 aims to foster a thriving ecosystem that propels growth and prosperity within the community. Its operations are instrumental in transforming Duqm into a vibrant industrial and economic hub. This transformation, supported by significant investments in local suppliers, talent development, and the creation of valuable job opportunities, underscores OQ8's dedication to sustainable community development.

Additionally, OQ8's collaboration with OPAZ and integration within the Special Economic Zone at Duqm offers strategic benefits, providing unparalleled opportunities for downstream investments and attracting diverse sectors, including renewable energy. This comprehensive approach to growth is crucial to our ambition of not only establishing Duqm as an energy hub but also as a beacon of innovation and sustainability, aligning with Oman Vision 2040.

For us at OQ8, the refinery's inauguration heralds a new era in Oman's energy sector, with Duqm at its core. We view the refinery's operational launch as just the beginning of a journey toward greater achievements. Now operational, our focus shifts to earning our right to grow by maximising the refinery's potential to contribute to the regional and global energy landscape, stimulate economic growth, and enhance social prosperity.

As OQ8 moves forward, we are committed to demonstrating its indispensability in the global energy market and its role as a catalyst for Duqm's and Oman's economic and social development. This journey, initiated by the refinery's launch, marks the start of realising Duqm's full potential as the energy hub of Oman, establishing a new benchmark for sustainable growth and prosperity.



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



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The magazine welcomes
specialised researches
and academic studies

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OPAZ Board of Directors holds its first meeting for the year 2024

Muscat -  :

The inaugural meeting of the Public Authority for Special Economic Zones and Free Zones for the year 2024 was presided over by the Chairman of the Board, His Excellency Dr. Ali bin Masoud Al-Sunaidi, in Muscat. The most significant performance indicators for the authority's industrial cities, free zones, and economic zones have been reviewed by the Board. By the end of 2023, the total amount invested, distributed among the 14 current regions, was around 19 billion Omani riyals.

There are currently 75,000 direct workers, and 34% of the workforce is Omani. Automation of eighty e-services resulted in direct revenues from these regions exceeding 61 million Omani riyals, a fifteen percent increase over the goal set for

2023. 38 million Omani riyals have been saved from the ongoing projects. The project to update the Authority's system regulations and the steps taken to complete the establishment of the previously announced zones were among the processes that the Board of Directors examined.

The Authority's Board of Directors approved the exemption from the requirement to provide tender bond for projects, in accordance with the exemption controls approved by the Tender Board.

The Board also reviewed and made appropriate decisions on a number of other topics aimed at improving commitment and governance during the meeting. These included the initiative to expand the green space in the Special Economic Zone at Duqm, the internal audit committees, and the matrix of powers for the Public Establishment for Industrial Estates (Madayn).

Reviewing the most important performance indicators for the regions supervised by the OPAZ by the end of 2023

Approval of exemption from the requirement to provide tender bond for projects



Strategic project and a successful partnership

The Duqm Refinery Project represents the successful partnership between the Sultanate of Oman and the State of Kuwait, which is the largest of its kind in the Arabian Gulf Region. The Duqm Refinery is one of the refineries that rely on the arrival of the raw material via ships and crude oil tankers through the Ras Markaz crude oil storage terminal's "an oil storage Station" through the Ras Markaz Pumping crude oil to the Duqm Refinery. It is filtered into several different products and derivatives, then pumped to a number of tanks at the liquid and bulk materials dock (oil quay) in the Port of Duqm then exported to the world.



His Majesty opens Duqm refinery in presence of Emir of Kuwait



The Energy Journey ... an interactive presentation presented by a group of young national cadres

Duqm - :

His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tariq presided this morning at opening ceremony of the Duqm Refinery and Petrochemical Industries Project in the Special Economic Zone at Duqm, in the presence of His Highness Sheikh Mishal Al Ahmad Al Jaber Al Sabah, Emir of the State of Kuwait.

The two leaders were received at the project site, by Sultan bin Salim Al Habsi, Minister of Finance; Imad Muhammad Al Ateeqi, Kuwaiti Minister of Oil; Abdul Salam bin Muhammad Al Murshidi, President of the Oman Investment Authority; Sheikh Nawaf Saud Al Sabah, CEO of the Kuwait Petroleum Corporation; Ahmed bin Hassan Al Dheeb, Vice Chairman of the General Authority for Special Economic Zones and Free Zones, and Mulham bin Bashir Al Jarf, Chairman of the Board of Directors of the OQ Group.

His Majesty and the Emir watched an interactive visual presentation, "The Energy Journey," presented by a group of young executives. The presentation focused on the stages of establishing the Duqm Refinery and Petrochemical Industries Project and explained its economic significance. The project will be the largest joint investment project between the Sultanate of Oman and the State of Kuwait. The OQ Group of Oman and the Kuwait Petroleum International Company are partners in the project, which has a capital exceeding three and a half billion Omani riyals.

Abdul Salam bin Mohammed Al Murshidi, President of the Oman Investment Authority (OIA), delivered a speech in which he said that the opening of this joint project between Oman and Kuwait symbolizes the deep-rooted relations between the two countries since ancient times and represents a culmi-



nation of a common heritage. He added that both countries have joined forces to work on the Project, which is the largest investment project between two Gulf countries in the refinery sector.

The President added that the Project was honored to have its foundation stone laid by His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tariq in 2018 and that today sees the result of a great effort.

He added that the project is located in the Special Economic Zone in Duqm, whose strategic importance is widely recognized, due to its unique location and the components and incentives it possesses that make it an attractive area for investments.

The President of the OIA explained that in conjunction with the opening of the Duqm Refinery, two other projects have been completed: the Marafiq Com-

pany project, which supports the refinery in terms of energy and water, with an investment of 196 million Omani riyals, and the Omani Tank Company project, which supports the refinery's work in terms of storing oil in Ras Markaz, with an investment of 200 million Omani Riyal.

Sheikh Nawaf Saud Al-Sabah, CEO of the Kuwait Petroleum Corporation, also gave a speech in which he said that the commercial operation of the Duqm Refinery – the largest joint Gulf project – indicates the historic brotherhood between the Sultanate of Oman and the State of Kuwait.

He explained that after reaching full commercial operation, the project will achieve the strategic objectives of the Kuwait Petroleum Corporation, which seeks to enter into investment opportunities with


The refinery project's foundation stone was laid in 2018 and today it sees the light





The celebration is not the last stop on the road to success, but rather it is a well-deserved pause to appreciate the efforts of the male and female workers at the Duqm Refinery to complete the path forward

global partners to develop its refining capacity in promising markets.

He added that today's celebration is not the last stop on the road to success, but rather it is a worthy pause to appreciate the efforts of the male and female workers at the Duqm Refinery to achieve the progress made so far. He said the oil and gas industry faces difficult challenges, the most important of which is the global trend towards energy transformation. This, he said, requires working together to ensure the safe and profitable operation of the refinery, to become a global example of innovation and leadership in the worldwide refining industry.

His Majesty the Sultan and His Highness the Emir unveiled a memorial to commemorate the historic moment of the opening of the Duqm Refinery.

His Majesty and the Emir then watched a presenta-

tion that told the story of the project from its very beginning right through to the project's completion and opening, to create a global economic icon with a promising future.

His Majesty and the Emir then visited the main control room of the refinery to learn more about the various operations of the plant. They listened to a detailed explanation about how it raises the refining capacity of the Sultanate to more than 500 thousand barrels per day and makes it possible to secure the maximum benefit from petroleum materials. They were also told about the role of the control room and its advanced systems to monitor the progress of supply line operations in accordance with the highest standards of security and safety.

In honor of the occasion, His Highness the Emir of Kuwait, accepted a memorial gift presented by the





management of the Duqm Refinery and Petrochemical Industries Company.

The Emir then wrote a message in the register for VIP visitors, in which he praised His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik, the government and the people of Oman for their cooperation, which transforms the partnership between Kuwait and Oman, especially in investment in industries and petrochemicals, crystallizing current and common future visions. He said he hoped for more cooperation aimed at consolidating the close relations that bring together Kuwait and Oman and achieve their interests for the good of their peoples.

At the conclusion of the opening ceremony, a memorial photo was taken that included His Majesty the Sultan, His Highness the Emir and a group of executives from the Duqm Refinery and Petrochemical Industries Company.

The Duqm Refinery and Petrochemical Industries in the Duqm Special Economic Zone is the first Gulf refinery to rely on imported crude oil in its operations. It aims to stimulate oil projects in the Arabian Gulf region and enhance the market position in the refining and petrochemical sector, in addition to creating business opportunities and supporting small and medium enterprises through the local added value program.

The opening ceremony was attended by a number of Their Highnesses and Excellencies, members of the Council of Oman, a number of Their Excellencies, the delegation accompanying His Highness the guest, a number of CEOs of Oman Investment Authority companies, CEOs of international oil companies, and a number of sheikhs and notables from the Al Wusta Governorate.

The largest joint project within GCC ... indicates the historical brotherhood between the Sultanate of Oman and the State of Kuwait



Duqm Refinery celebrates 100th export vessel



The company has succeeded in exporting more than 4.1 million tons of products to its customers around the world

The company's leading role in the global supply chain, as its 100th shipment reflects its strategic vision and extensive practical experience

Duqm - :

OQ8, a \$9 billion joint venture between Oman's OQ and Kuwait Petroleum International (KPI), announced the dispatch of its 100th export vessel, from its terminal in Al Duqm. This milestone highlights OQ8's flawless safety record since its commencement in May 2023 and underscores its vital role in enhancing global supply chain resilience, having successfully exported over 4.1 million tons of products to global customers.

Al Duqm's location and proximity to key markets along the Indian Ocean has been instrumental in facilitating seamless trade across critical markets, from Brazil to the Gulf of Mexico, East Africa to India, enhancing the Refinery's value proposition to global partners. David Bird, CEO of OQ8, emphasised the company's pivotal role in the global supply chain. "Our 100th shipment reflects our strategic foresight and operational expertise," Bird stated.

He added, "Located outside the Strait of Hormuz, our terminal is a vital link in global trade, offering a secure and dependable route for the flow of energy and commodities. This strategic position has been crucial in enabling seamless trade across key markets world-

wide, enhancing our proposition to global partners.

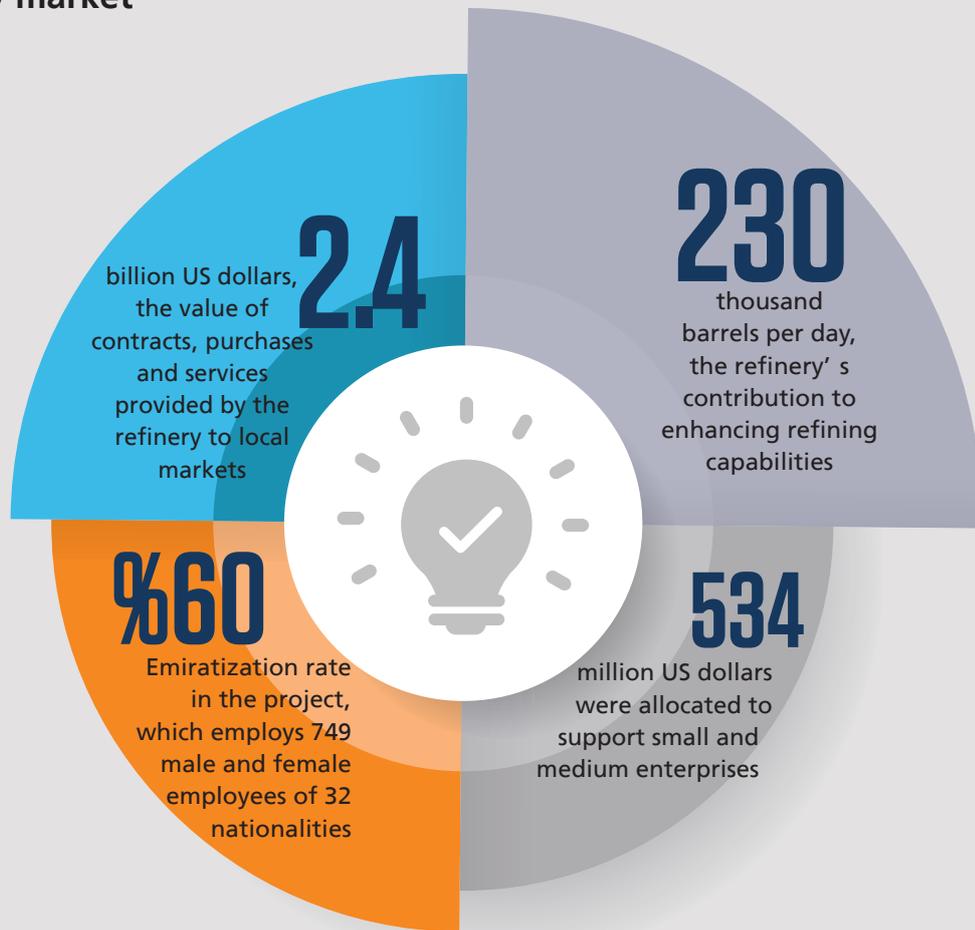
Our commitment to being a reliable supplier of high-quality products has never been stronger, and this milestone further cements our reputation in the global market." OQ8 has set new benchmarks in maritime logistics, demonstrating its capability in safely managing the global supply of refined products.

The terminal loaded a record-breaking 850,000 barrels of naphtha onto one of the largest vessels it has serviced, an LR2, achieving a loading rate of 47,000 barrels an hour. The refinery's adaptability is further highlighted by its ability to handle ships of all sizes, efficiently loading up to 44,000 tons of Petcoke in less than 68 hours. The terminal also smoothly facilitated large LPG shipments, up to 5,500 metric tons, and introduced night-time operations for unloading crude oil at Ras Markaz Terminal – a significant achievement in less than a year of operation.

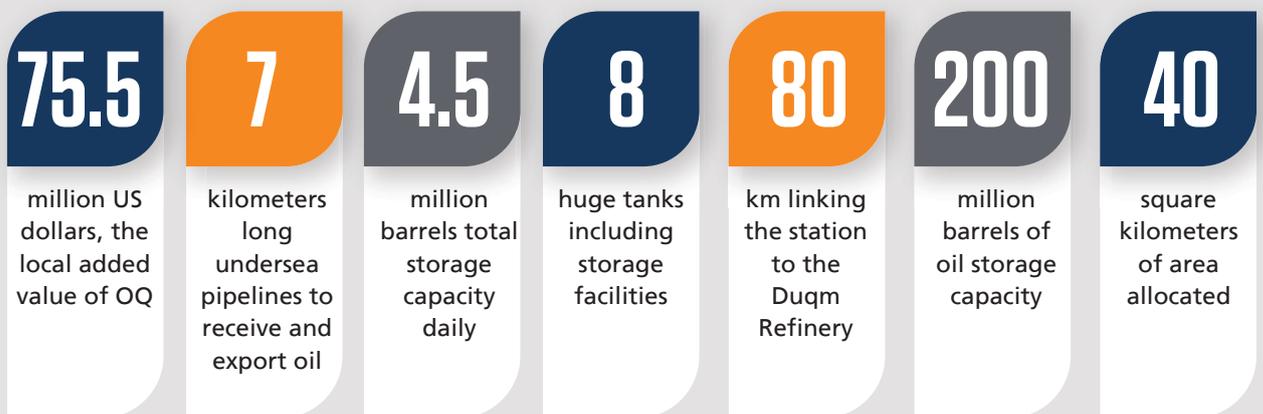
As OQ8 gears up for its first sulphur shipment, it continues to showcase its commitment to diversifying export products and enhancing its service offerings. Mubarak al Numani, Chief, Finance, Commercial and SCM, shared his insights on the achievement. "This milestone is a testament to the hard work and dedication of our team," Al Numani remarked.

Duqm Refinery

A valuable addition to the global energy market



Ras Markaz Facts & Figures



The Public Authority for Special Economic Zones and Free Zones continues to carry out its Organizational Transformation Program



Study and analysis of the current situation in the Authority lasted 3 months

The study was completed in accordance with international best practices

Muscat - :

The Public Authority for Special Economic Zones and Free Zones (OPAZ) is advancing its Organizational Transformation Program. This initiative aligns with Oman Vision 2040's strategic directions and aims to establish Oman's special economic and free zones as preferred investment destinations. By fostering a sustainable, investor-friendly environment, OPAZ will continue to attract more high value local and international investments.

In 2023, OPAZ made significant progress in implementing its new Transformation Program, collaborating with International Development Ireland (IDI) to create a comprehensive plan en-

compassing OPAZ's six strategy pillars and twenty-eight sub-objectives.

Huda Abdullah Al-Habsi, head of the OPAZ Transformation Team, explains: "The completion of a comprehensive Current Situation Analysis (CSA) benchmarked OPAZ's performance against international best practices in key areas such as Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) attraction, ease of doing business, the regulatory environment, aftercare and facilitation and organizational excellence. Subsequently, the OPAZ Transformation Program was launched based on these findings."

OPAZ then successively led on the formulation and implementation of a comprehensive corporate plan for 2024, encompassing operational and strategic priorities, major development pro-

jects, and all key features of the Transformation Program. A central project from the plan includes developing a comprehensive investor database to enhance planning, data management and investor relations. This effort will support strategic planning, investment attraction and the expansion of existing FDI projects in Oman.

The Transformation Program's notable objectives include developing a national vision and strategy for economic and free zones, enhancing the business regulatory ecosystem, developing a standardized One-Stop-Shop (OSS) Portal to meet the needs of investors across all OPAZ Zones, creating specialized marketing outreach plans, proposing new Sub-Zones in SEZAD, and establishing a stakeholder relationship management plan. The program also focuses on unify-

ing services, ensuring corporate compliance, and embracing digital transformation. These efforts aim to achieve balanced regional development, support urban and social facilities, build a culture of investor focus, and excel in internal and external communication quality.

The expected outcomes include enhanced efficiency, performance, productivity, innovation, skills development, and the creation of a world class investor centric culture.

OPAZ currently oversees 22 zones, including the Special Economic Zone at Duqm, three free zones (Sohar, Salalah, and Al Mazyouna), nine industrial zones managed by the Public Establishment for Industrial Estates MADAYN, and eight zones under development, with two being free and two economic, and five industrial zones across Oman.


Developing the strategy includes (6) basic pillars and 28 goals


Developing a national vision and strategy for economic and free zones



Targeting more than (50) SME during 2024

OPAZ launches the “Equal National Opportunities” Initiative



◆◆◆
Presents innovative products to Omani entrepreneurs

Muscat - :

The Public Authority for Special Economic Zones and Free Zones (OPAZ) organized the “Equal National Opportunities” initiative. H.E. Dr. Ali bin Masoud Al Sunaidy, OPAZ Chairman, was present as several Omani business owners and entrepreneurs partici-

pated in the event.

The initiative aims to support Omani entrepreneurs and SMEs owners by organizing an introductory exhibition at the Authority’s premises for the eleven Omani entrepreneurs who own these projects. For an entire day, the entrepreneurs showcased their creative products, talked about their experiences





and project successes, shared ideas and insights with OPAZ representatives and staff, and opened up the opportunity to purchase their products

The event began with the opening of the exhibition, which was held on the sidelines of this initiative. The exhibition showcased many ideas and highlights the work carried out by the participating projects. There were numerous concepts and stand-outs from the work completed by the participating projects in the exhibition. The participants shared their experiences, triumphs, and obstacles encountered as entrepreneurs with the ceremony's sponsor and attendees.

OPAZ seeks to build enduring relationships with these business owners to assist SMEs owners in locating their projects within its supervised industrial, free, and economic zones and utilizing the resources, benefits, and incentives that OPAZ provides for these projects. In addition to strengthening the innovation culture and its role in enhancing added value, these objectives contribute to the authority's vision of making the regions it oversees (the ideal destination for investment). Additionally, they enable investors to utilize cutting edge technologies and solutions by enabling them to incorporate digital transformation and artificial intelligence into their projects.

Presenting project experiences and successes and exchanging experiences with officials and employees

Success stories and challenges faced in entrepreneurship



More than (854) incoming calls

OPAZ services garner 92% satisfaction rate from beneficiaries



The results included an evaluation of a number of services in the zones that the OPAZ supervises

The toll-free number 1919 handled more than 845 incoming calls to the center, including 99 international calls, 265 investment-related requests, and 450 inquiries about how and how to invest

Muscat - :

OPAZ unveiled the results of its customer satisfaction indicators, showcasing a satisfaction rate of 92% by the end of December 2023, a noticeable increase from 86% in June 2023. These results encompassed the evaluation of various services provided by OPAZ in the supervised zones. The assessment included the Omap platform, a comprehensive digital mapping system that offers integrated geographical maps for special economic zones, free zones, and industrial cities. This platform empowers users to access services and detailed information through digital maps and tools, facilitating efficient navigation and utilization of the zones.

The evaluation results also encompassed the central compliance system "Eltizam," the investor relations management system, the unified electronic cadastral drawing service, environmental permits, trademark registration, the central inspection system, electronic registration of SMEs, and other services.

Confirming the report of the Authority's Call Center, to which the toll-free number (1919) was allocated, more than (845) incoming calls to the Center were handled, including (99) international

calls, (265) investment-related requests, and (450) inquiries about the quality and methods of investment, during the period from the beginning of July 2023 to the end of December 2023, while the Center issues periodic reports on communications, proposals, and the level of evaluation of beneficiaries of services through the Center.

Notably, the OPAZ Call Centre is equipped with modern technical systems and operates interactively to record transactions, requests, and transfer them to the competent authorities in the regions supervised by OPAZ. The centre communicates with callers without any delay as it has systems in place to manage reports and proposals.

It is worth mentioning that OPAZ pays great attention to improving the level of services provided to investors and its clients, in order to achieve their aspirations and goals and their deep experience in electronic dealing with the Authority, within the framework of the Authority's competencies in planning, development, regulation, supervision, facilitation, post-service provision, operation, business acceleration, marketing and investment attraction, in addition to institutional excellence, which contributes to achieving the objectives and vision that OPAZ seeks to achieve.



Conrad Prabhu

OPAZ's expanding portfolio: 22 investment hubs and counting

Four years into its mandate as Oman's foremost institution responsible for administering the nation's industrial clusters, the Public Authority for Special Economic Zones and Free Zones (OPAZ) has witnessed its portfolio balloon to a total of 22 investment hubs and continues to grow.

Encompassing a total area of over 2,200 square kilometers, these hubs – comprising a mix of SEZs, free zones, industrial cities, and future airport cities – present an unparalleled range of investment options to both local and foreign investors. Scattered across the length and breadth of the country, each offers a unique value proposition leveraging its geostrategic location, connectivity with transport and logistics infrastructure, access to markets, and proximity to modern seaports.

As of mid-2022, these hubs had collectively attracted an impressive RO 14.9 billion worth of local and foreign investment, underscoring Oman's burgeoning regional appeal as a destination for industrial, manufacturing, logistics, and other economic activities. Encouraged by this robust investment trend, OPAZ has initiated the development of a further eight new zones aimed at bolstering the industrial sector's contribution to GDP growth in line with targets set out in Oman's 2040 Vision.

Presently in operation are 14 SEZs, free zones, and industrial cities, each a powerhouse in its own right. The largest by far is the Special Economic Zone at Duqm, which recently made headlines when Their Majesties, Sultan Haitham bin Tarik of the Sultanate of Oman, and Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, Emir of the State of Kuwait, jointly inaugurated the Duqm Refinery as an enduring symbol of robust fraternal ties between the two countries. Equally thriving in their respective strategic locations are Sohar Port and Freezone, Salalah Free Zone, and Al Mazunah Free Zone, each capitalizing on their proximity to clearly defined market geographies.

Complementing these four flagship zones, primarily oriented towards international markets, are nine industrial cities that have long been drivers of Oman's non-oil GDP growth. Supervised by Madayn, an arm of OPAZ,

these industrial cities are located at Rusayl, Suhar, Samayil, Al Wadi al Kabir, Nizwa, Sur, Buraimi, and Raysut, with Knowledge Oasis Muscat (KOM) hosting the nation's sole IT Park.

However, it's the eight new investment zones – currently in the early stages of development – that underscore Oman's long-term potential as a manufacturing and industrial growth engine. Noteworthy among these is the Al Dhahirah Economic Zone (EZAD), jointly developed by Oman and Saudi Arabia not far from the border crossing established by the two countries in The Empty Quarter (Rub Al Khali). Covering an area of 388 square kilometers, EZAD will leverage its advantageous proximity to the massive Saudi market to target investments in manufacturing, mining, oilfield services, logistics, renewable energy, and other sectors.

In the north, Al Buraimi Governorate is poised to host its first Special Economic Zone (SEZ) at Al Rawdha in the Wilayat of Mahdha. Covering an area of around 55 square kilometers, Al Rawdha SEZ aims to capitalize on its proximity to economic powerhouses in the Gulf and the modern road network connecting Al Mahdha with major markets in the region.

Furthermore, Oman's inaugural Airport Free Zone is under development at Muscat International Airport. Asyad Group, under a concession awarded by OPAZ, will develop the 1.7 square kilometer facility to serve as a global logistics hub. Meanwhile, the expansion of new industrial cities continues with new hubs planned at Thamrait, Al Mudhaibi, Seeh Al Saraiyya, Shinas, and Mahas.

"With a portfolio of 14 hubs in operation and a further eight under development, local and international investors now have a wide array of options to choose from, ensuring that the value proposition offered by our clusters aligns with their core interests," said OPAZ media release. "Combined with our business-friendly regulatory environment and attractive investment regime, Oman is rapidly evolving into a destination of choice for investors, drawn also by its favorable geographic location, excellent infrastructure, and tranquil political environment."

Inauguration of projects in food industries, petrochemicals and mining

Salalah Free Zone, Hosts OMR 23.4 Million in New Investments and Export-Oriented Businesses



The opening represents an important step in promoting industrial progress and economic growth

Salalah - :

In a high-level inauguration ceremony, three new plants kicked off operations at Salalah Free Zone (SFZ), adding OMR 23.4 million to the existing investments and businesses hosted by the free zone.

Under the patronage of HE Dr. Mahad Said Baowain, Minister of Labor, the inauguration ceremony was attended by HE Dr. Ali Masoud Al Sunaidy, President of the Public Authority for Special Economic Zones and Free Zones (OPAZ) and a host of top government officials.

Salalah Free Zone – operated by Asyad Group – presented an overview of the three high-value ventures, the first being an OMR 9.6 million food processing plant by the Special Integrated Food Company (SIFCO).

The second venture is phase one of Al Namariq Mining Company's quicklime plant, an OMR 10 million Omani-Iraqi joint investment. The third is an OMR 3.8 million fabric and plastics manufacturing and packaging plant by Apex Transgulf Manufacturing (APEX) that aims to serve local and regional markets targeting various industries including healthcare,





food and beverages.

Commenting on the latest investment in Salalah Free Zone, Dr. Ali Mohammed Tabouk, CEO of Salalah Free Zone, stated: “these new additions hosted by our free zone reflect the critical role of SFZ in driving industrial progress and stimulating economic growth in Oman, and capitalizing on logistical synergy with the Port of Salalah to enhance the value chain by linking it to the port’s direct shipping line network and Asyad Group integrated logistics solutions. We are proud of the strategic transnational partnerships that we unveiled today with market players from Yemen, Iraq and Pakistan which will bolster the manufacturing and value-added capabilities in the Sultanate.”

“All three plants are equipped with the latest production technology and hardware that allow them to optimize their production capacities and product quality, while capitalizing on the unique competitive advantages offered by SFZ,” Tabouk added. “Such new ventures enable sustainable development in

Oman by enhancing the country’s industrial infrastructure, increasing exports, and boosting trade. We look forward to supporting our partners’ growth and contribution to Oman’s economy.”

In 2023, Salalah Free Zone reeled in around OMR 728 million in investments with SFZ leased plots reaching 1.2 million sqm. Usufruct agreements in the free zone also increased to 129 with total investment exceeding OMR 4.5 billion.

Aligned with Asyad Group and OPAZ’s investment strategy, this inauguration is further proof of the stakeholders’ commitment to creating an attractive and stable investment environment that unlocks business opportunities and stimulates growth across free zones.

By improving its integrated logistics solutions and land offering, SFZ is becoming a major hub for regional and global businesses to expand into Oman, create distribution centers, and capitalize on the fast, seamless access to the largest consumer markets around the world.

The factories are equipped with the latest technology and equipment



At approximately 177 million riyals

Sea Fishing Port, Freight and Customs Services Terminal, and main roads at Duqm Port inaugurated



The largest commercial fishing port in the Sultanate of Oman



The largest commercial fishing port in the Sultanate of Oman, with an area of 7.5 square kilometers



It was built to receive the largest international commercial fishing vessels, as its basin reaches a depth of 10 metres

Duqm -

Special Economic Zone at Duqm (SEZAD) celebrated the inauguration of the marine fishing port, the Freight Services and Customs Terminal, and the main roads No. 1 and 5 at Duqm Port. The opening ceremony was sponsored by His Excellency Lieutenant-General Hassan bin Mohsen Al-Sharqi, Inspector General of Police and Customs, in the presence of a number of public and private sectors officials.

During the opening ceremony, Eng. Ahmed bin Ali Akaak, acting CEO of SEZAD, said: "With the completion of the Marine Fishing Port, the Shipping and Customs Services Station, and the main highways at Duqm Port, the primary and fundamental infrastructure system in SEZAD is completed. He explained that the total cost of the three new projects amounted to about 177 million Omani riyals."

The largest commercial fishing port in Oman, the Sea Fishing Port in Duqm, spans 7.5 square kilometers and was built to accommodate the largest inter-

national commercial fishing vessels, with a depth of 10 meters, according to Engineer Ahmed Akaak. It is made up of two 3.3 km long breakwaters and 1.3 km Fof permanently installed ship docks. Six floating berths and a dedicated quay for Coast Guard police boats have been made available to the port.

The customs station project, he noted, is part of the third package of projects at the Port of Duqm, which includes a number of buildings within the Port of Duqm. The main road No. (1) is approximately 3.93 km long and is a dual road with two lanes in each direction. Similarly, the main road No. (5) is around 3.3 km long and is also a dual road.

"SEZAD represents a model of economic integration," Akaak continued, "as it includes several economic and service development zones: a fishing port, a multipurpose port, a dry dock for ship repair and development, multiuse areas for tourism, industry, and logistics, and a modern residential city. All of these are served by a road transport network that connects Duqm to the various zones in Oman."





The Fishing Port in Duqm

Fishery factories, fish sales outlets, artisanal and commercial fishing vessel servicing areas, and a fisherman's training center are all housed within SEZAD's fishing port. To facilitate fish transport vehicles, a network of paved roads has also been built. Both the fish and food industries complex and the fishing port span 7.8 and 7.5 km², respectively. Both are important regional economic drivers that will help draw both domestic and foreign companies with a focus on fishing and related industries. Environmentally friendly green energy initiatives are something that the Public Authority for Special Economic Zones and Free Zones (OPAZ) is also looking to accommodate at the Duqm fishing port.

It is worth mentioning that the Sea Fishing Port in Duqm is developing and implementing commercial facilities for Marsa Al Duqm Investment Company, which is a consortium led by a number of Oman Investment Authority companies, represented by Oman Fisheries Development Group, Asyad Ports Company,

Al Wusta Fisheries Industries Company and Oman Food Investment Holding Company "Nataj". The consortium also includes the French Port of Loriente, which is one of the largest fishing ports in Europe.

Cargo and Customs Services Terminal

The ceremony included the opening of the customs station within the projects of the third package at the Port of Duqm, which consists of buildings designated for the Port of Duqm Company. The station consists of one stop shop building, a building for truck registration, a building for transit permits, inspection buildings designated for the Royal Oman Police and the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Water Resources, as well as a medical clinic affiliated with the Ministry of Health. In addition, it has customs gates for the movement of vehicles into and out of the port, management of the import and export procedures, and utility facilities such power plants, sewage stations, and firefighting water tanks.

The works of the freight and customs services sta-


The port is provided with 6 floating anchors and a special dock for Coast Guard police boats


Reclamation of land to construct service buildings with a total area estimated at 412 thousand square meters



The shipping and customs services station contains several buildings and services for customs clearance

3 new projects that enhance infrastructure and keep pace with Duqm's aspirations

The largest commercial fishing port in the Sultanate of Oman



Supported by a food and fishery industries complex



Sea fishing port



Its area is 7.5 square kilometers



Close to the air cargo building at Duqm Airport



Shipping and customs services station



One stop building



Truck registration building



The transit permits building and inspection buildings
medical clinic



Customs gates designated for the passage of trucks
Various service buildings

Main roads 1 and 5 in Duqm Port

2

Road No. (5), about 6.7 km long

1

Road No. (1), about 3.93 km long

4

Double roads with LED lighting

3

Road shoulders are wide and comfortable

The station contains 8 km of roads and parking lots designated for the station



tion included infrastructure facilities containing a potable water network, sewage network, electricity network, communication, rainwater drainage channels, etc. in addition to 8 km of roads and parking lots for vehicles designated for the station were built.

Main roads No. 1 and 5 at Duqm Port

Roads (1) and (2) are vital projects in SEZAD. Both roads connect the Port of Duqm area with the refinery, the city center and many strategic projects that are being implemented in the Heavy & Medium Industries Zones. Road No. (1) connects the port and the Dry Dock with the National Road 32, which facilitates access to the port projects for those coming from the center of Duqm and from the Governorate of Muscat via the Muscat – Sinaw – Duqm road. Thus, the road is the third thoroughfare leading to the Port of Duqm and the dry dock, while Road No. (5) stretches from the existing crossroads connecting both roads (1) and (6) and ends at the Duqm Port Bulk Liquid Dock.

The two highways have been built in accordance with normal requirements, with an average total width of 40.9 meters, an internal shoulder of 1.5 meters, an external shoulder measuring 3 meters, and a lane width of 3.75 meters. In general, the road is between two and four meters above the surrounding terrain.

Road No. (1) is a dual road that spans around 3.93 km and has two lanes in each direction. Similarly, Road No. (5) is a dual road that spans approximately 3.3 km.

The two service roads, each measuring approximately 6.7 km in length, the installation of LED lighting for the new roads, soil development projects (Sabkha), and the building of water drainage channels are all included in the two road (1) and (5) projects.

It is worth mentioning that SEZAD is one of the zones affiliated with OPAZ. It is about 550 km away from the Omani capital, Muscat. SEZAD was established on 26 October 2011 as part of the Sultanate of Oman's plans to establish a modern investment city close to the world's shipping lanes and in a strategically significant location on the Arabian Sea. The zone has been allocated 2,000 square kilometers in order to draw in various investments. High-level infrastructure has been established, comprising contemporary facilities like an oil refinery, a fishing port, an international airport, a multipurpose port that can accommodate regional industrial, commercial, and logistical projects, and a modern road network connecting it to different investment zones and the total investments in the zone are estimated at more than 6 billion Omani riyals.



Main Road No. 1 is about 3.93 km long and is a dual carriageway



Main Road No. (5) is about 3.3 km long and is a dual carriageway





It accommodates 50 million cubic meters of water

Inauguration of Wadi Jurf and Wadi Saay protection dams projects and the government berth 1 Km at Port of Duqm

Dams were a system of protection against the dangers of floods and surface water discharge

Providing the highest levels of protection for facilities, large projects, and residents of the SEZAD

Duqm -  :

His Excellency Dr. Ali bin Masoud Al Sunaidy, Chairman of the Public Authority for Special Economic Zones and Free Zones (OPAZ), sponsored the inauguration ceremony, which was attended by several governmental and private sector representatives.

H.E. Eng. Ahmed bin Ali bin Issa Akaak, Acting CEO of SEZAD, stated during the opening ceremony that the project to protect SEZAD fell within the scope of protection from flood risks and drainage of surface water resulting from potential rainfall, thereby offering the maximum protection for large projects, facilities, and local residents. The dam lakes were designed to accommodate the storage of about 50 million cubic meters of water and secure its access to the sea through drainage channels that was

created earlier.

H.E. Akaak explained that SEZAD celebrates also the completion of the infrastructure works at the government berth in Duqm Port, which is roughly one kilometer long and is divided into two areas — one designated as a berth for Military authorities and the other for civil uses. There are gates and roads separating each area from the other.

Wadi Jurf and Wadi Saay protection dams project

Wadi Jurf dam is roughly 19.4 meters tall and 1600 meters long. Its base is about 100 meters wide, and its thickness gets thinner as it gets higher, ending in an 8-meter-wide dam body at the top. The dam lake has an estimated storage capacity of 32.8 million cubic meters of water.





Wadi Saay Dam has a height of approximately 16.4 meters, a length of 3665 meters, and a base width of 100 meters. The intended capacity of the dam lake was 17 million cubic meters of water.

3 Water Drainage Channels

The flood protection system in Duqm includes 3 channels to discharge surface water in a safe way from dams to the sea: Wadi Dangert channel, Wadi Jurf dam channel, and Wadi Saay dam channel.

The drainage channels have been thoughtfully chosen and planned to align with the wadis' surface runoff as well as the volume of flow from the dams and sub-wadis that empty into the main wadis beneath the dams and the three channels. The Wadi Dangert canal is 11 km long and varies in width from 40 meters at its highest point to 100 meters at its seaward outlet. The Wadi Saay channel is approximately 9 km long and 320 meters wide at its confluence with the Jurf channel.

Flowing from the west, the Jurf Channel collects the waters of Wadi Ashnan, Wadi Jurf, and a few tiny valleys and reefs west of SEZAD before emptying into the sea. The channel stretches approximately 12 kilometers in length and 450 meters width at its widest point, which is at the mouth on the shore of the Duqm Sea, to 750 meters.

Infrastructure works at the government berth at the port of Duqm

The government berth project at the Port of Duqm includes a berth for government agencies divided into 5 zones distributed for government uses and facilities, including the Royal Yachts, the Royal Navy of Oman, the Coast Guard of the Royal Oman Police, the Sultan's Special Force, and the fifth zone designated for civil, commercial, and tourist uses. The project also includes a security gate for the administration, housing, and maintenance workshops. Boats, related equipment and firefighting systems in addition 2 Helipad for Helicopter.



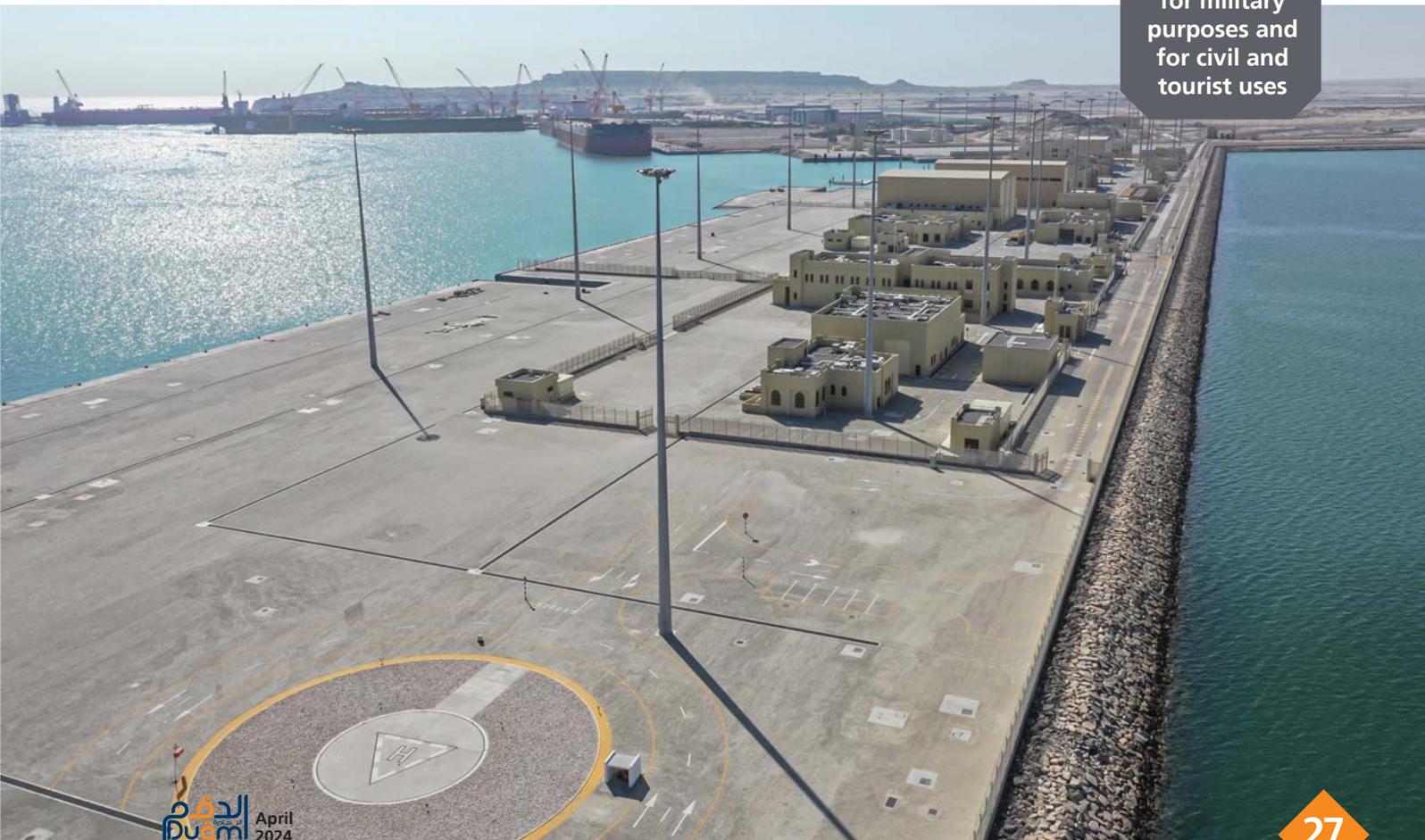
Dam lakes can store about 50 million cubic meters of water



The length of the government berth at Duqm Port is about 1 kilometer



The pier was allocated for military purposes and for civil and tourist uses



Dams project to protect Wadi Jurf and Wadi Sayy



Providing maximum protection for large facilities and projects



It accommodates 50 million cubic meters of rainwater

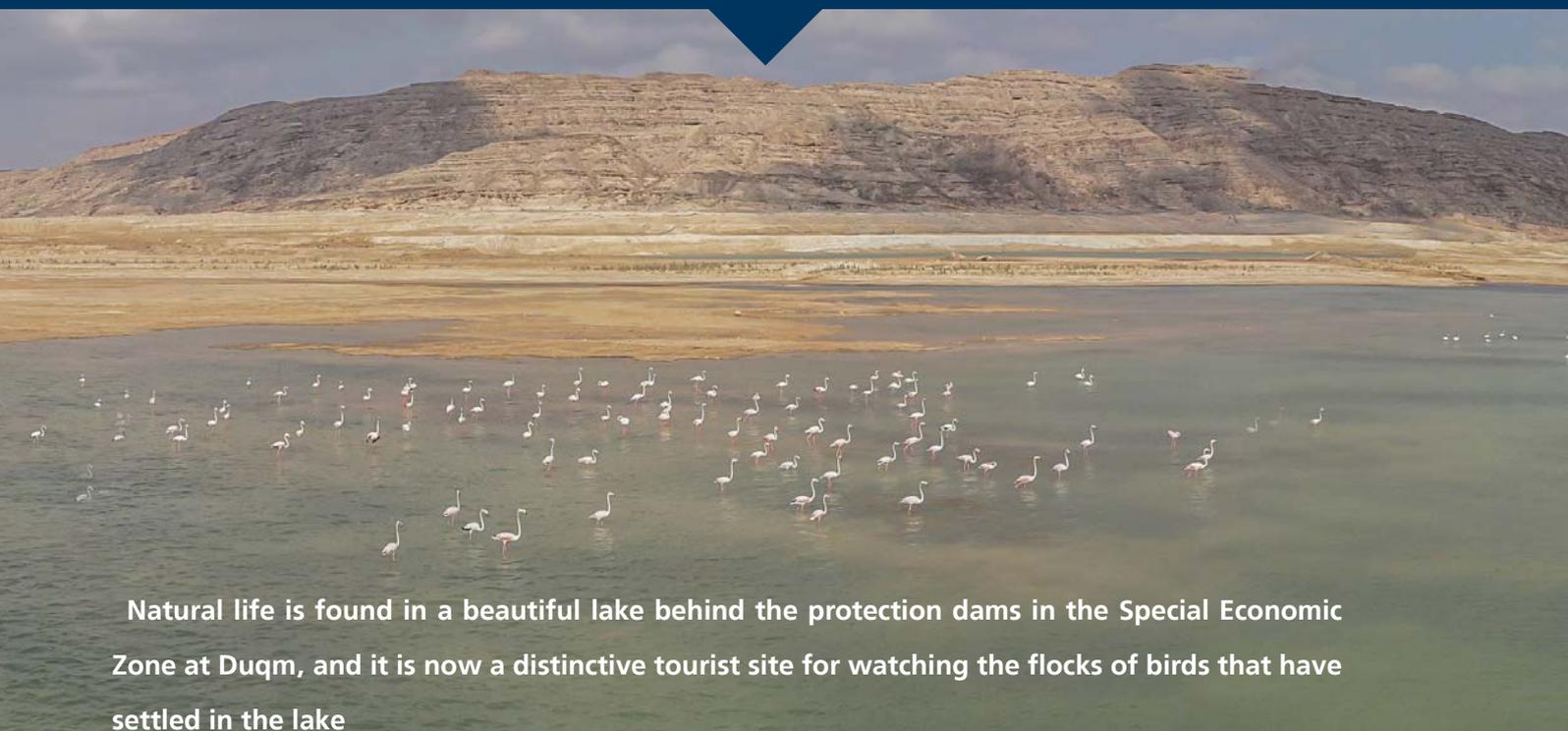


Sayy Dam is 3,665 meters long and accommodates a storage amount estimated at about 17 million cubic meters of water



A Jurf dam with a length of 1,600 meters and can accommodate a storage amount estimated at about 32.8 million cubic meters of water

Picture and comment



Natural life is found in a beautiful lake behind the protection dams in the Special Economic Zone at Duqm, and it is now a distinctive tourist site for watching the flocks of birds that have settled in the lake

More than 2,460 hotel rooms in Duqm provide a variety of relaxing experiences



Duqm - :

Over the past few years, The Wilayat Duqm has seen a notable increase in the number of hotel establishments due to the growth of the Special Economic Zone at Duqm, as well as an increase in the number of infrastructure projects and services. With more than 2,460 rooms and suites, the number of visitors to the Zone, coming for business, tourism or residence purposes has increased.

In view of that, the investment rate in the hospitality sector has increased as reflected in the increase in the number of hotel rooms through the operation of 3 new hotel properties; Duqm Express Hotel, Al Madina Express Hotel, and the Royal Plaza Duqm Hotel,

along with the Grand Orchid Hotel Apartments and the Duqm Plaza Hotel last year. Duqm also boasts other hotel options, like the Crowne Plaza Hotel, the Park An Hotel, Madinah Hotel, Asian Hotel, the Ocean Hotel Apartments, Royal Land Hotel for Delux Suites, and a number of youth houses and guest houses such as Duqm Stars, Discovery Duqm Apartments, Dar Al Jawhara, Guesthouse, Duqm Suites, and the Duqm International Hotels and Apartments.

The demand for business accommodation services in the hotel sector has led to Duqm achieving a very good occupancy rate over the past few years. The number of hospitality properties has increased from 12 to over 15, offering guests a variety of experiences during their stay and relaxation.





September
2021

• **Royal Land Hotel
Deluxe Suites**

- 32 suites
- 3 Stars
- 93368000 

November
2023

• **Duqm Express Hotel**

- 55 Rooms
- 2 Stars
- 92787334 

December
2023

• **Al Madina Express Hotel Duqm**

- 55 Rooms
- 2 Stars
- 97617127 

December
2021

• **Duqm Hotel**

- 52 Rooms
- One Star
- 97485485 

September
2022

• **Duqm Plaza Hotel**

- 20 Rooms
- One Star
- 90248228 

September
2022

• **Grand Orchid Hotel Apartments**

- 20 Rooms
- One Star
- 92164662 

January
2024

• **Royal Plaza Hotel**

- 68 Rooms
- 3 Stars
- 99168510 



34.5% of the first phase of National Road 32 in Duqm has been completed

Duqm - :

The management of the Special Economic Zone at Duqm (SEZAD) continues to carry out the works of the first phase of the National Road 32, where the completion rate reached 34.5%. The 16 km long road project starts from the road in front of the Duqm Refinery northwards to the entrance of the Duqm center southwards.

The works of the first phase of the road include the construc-

tion of six traffic lanes, three lanes in each direction with a width about 120 meters, separated by a hardscaped Center Median, between the two directions with road shoulders on both sides for each direction, in addition to service roads on both sides with a total length of about 23 km and a width of about 7.3 m. The works also include the construction of 4 signalised intersections, one roundabout, and the installation of smart lighting poles (LED) and road signs. The road was designed with high specifications to





avoid the accumulation of surface water and flooding, through the construction of 3 major concrete bridges for the wadis in Saay, Jurf, and Dangert.

The project works include all civil works for the building of the road, including excavation, backfilling, laying of base courses, asphalt paving, concrete construction works for transformers, bridges and tunnels required at intersections with secondary roads, in addition to the works of extending service networks and lighting,

and other complementary works, landscaping, ground services, and channels for future services.

It is worth mentioning that the second phase of the National Road 32 is being worked on with the same specifications and dimensions of the southern section of the road, which is about 13.8 km long, while the National Road 32 coming from the Wilayat of Mahout towards the Wilayat of Duqm is a major thoroughfare for the overall layout of the main road network in SEZAD.



As part of its plan to increase the green area

Completion of 100% of the project of planting 5000 trees in SEZAD

Duqm -  :

The management of the Special Economic Zone at Duqm (SEZAD) continues to implement its plan to increase the green area in the zone. Work is underway to afforest several vital sites, including main and service streets, in addition to afforesting a number of parks.

Abdullah Al-Alawi, from the Afforestation and Gardens Department confirmed that 100% of the project has been completed, with over 5,718 trees already planted against a target of 5,000 by the end of 2023. Thus, the green area, currently spanning approximately 34,000 square meters, is expected to burgeon to over 50,000 by mid-2024. This expansion will feature diverse trees and soil covers carefully selected to thrive in the region's unique climatic conditions.

He explained that the agricultural nursery in Duqm, whose area is estimated at 5,000 square metres, constitutes a primary source of trees that are compatible with the nature of the project, to be the primary and main incubator for the production of seedlings and ornamental trees before they are planted in gardens, parks and on the shoulders of streets, in addition to being a station for agricultural experiments and an incubator for new types of plants and trees. SEZAD has also allocated part of the nursery to be operated and managed by one of the emerging SMEs in the field of afforestation in the context of SEZAD management's endeavor to involve and



support the local community in the development of Duqm.

Several investment lands have been allocated by SEZAD management under the same framework so that agricultural nurseries might be established nearby. By reducing the implementation costs of environmentally friendly types and producing those that are appropriate for the local environment, this will assist to increase the amount of green space. The Public Authority for Special Economic Zones and Free Zones, along with the Environment Authority (EA), has also allocated one of these lands to establish a wild plant breeding nursery under EA management to serve the initiative of cultivating 100,000 wild trees at the level of Al-Wusta Governorate and the implementation of the national initiative to plant 10 million wild trees.



OPAZ delegation visits Jordan



Aqaba - :

H.E. Eng. Ahmed bin Hassan Al Dheeb, Deputy Chairman of the Public Authority for Special Economic Zones and Free Zones met during his visit to the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan with H.E. Nayef Hamidi Al-Fayez, Chairman of the Board of Commissioners of the Aqaba Special Economic Zone Authority. This visit was part of a delegation organized by the Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Investment Promotion with the aim of expanding the horizons of cooperation and achieving the common interests of the two brotherly countries. During the meeting, aspects of cooperation, fields of investment, business, services, environmental activities, logistics, the port system, renewable energy projects and green industries were discussed.

H.E. Al Dheeb provided an explanation on the size of investments in the Special Economic Zone, free zones and industrial cities, and the allocation of an area of approximately 250,000 square kilometers for clean energy industries in the Special Economic Zone at Duqm and other AI technologies, in addition to projects for modern industries,

mining, gypsum, medical and pharmaceutical industries, petrochemical industries and projects to produce green hydrogen and its derivatives in cooperation with international multinational companies..

A presentation on Al Rawdha SEZ, Wilayat Mahdah, in the governorate of Al Buraimi, and the growth of the integrated economic zone on the Saudi Arabian border—which was created with the intention of integrating the industrial and logistical movement—were also included in the agenda. The two zones feature land ports that will make it easier for goods to be moved between different countries. These zones will be integrated with the existing free zones in Salalah, Sohar, Mazyouna, Muscat International Airport, Duqm Port, and the adjacent port of Salalah and Sohar for the project of linking a railway with the Arab Gulf countries.

The Aqaba Development Corporation, the Aqaba Authority's investment branch, Aqaba Company for Ports Operation and Management, the Ayla project, and tourism initiatives on the southern shore were among the projects and operating companies that were visited, along with a number of industrial projects and cities in the Aqaba region.



Reverse Logistics Operations

The Association for Supply Chain Management (ASCM), a government association, defines reverse logistics as referring to returning products from end users back across the supply chain to the retailer or manufacturer. It is therefore a system for managing the flow of used or unwanted products for the purpose of “value recovery” or safe disposal to preserve the environment and human public health.

The term “reverse logistics” was first used in literature and publications by James R. Stoke in the Logistics Board Bulletin in 1992.

According to Wikipedia, the knowledge and research that have been created in the reverse supply chain has increased significantly in the last 20 years.

Researchers believe that this increase in published or electronic intellectual literature is a direct result of the great role of the successful positive results of entrepreneurs and non-profit institutions on the one hand, and relying on them to save the planet on the other. Especially with the growth of e-commerce, which appeared 3 years after the first use of the term “reverse logistics”, specifically in 1995.

However, with the Covid epidemic of 2019, it has evolved into a revolution in both buying and selling, forcing individuals to stay at home and make fewer trips to markets in person. At that point, people were left with little choice but to make purchases online. E-commerce, in reality, gave logistical operations and land, sea, and air ports a huge impetus never seen before, which helped entrepreneurs achieve a qualitative leap. Due to the rise in product purchases and consumption, it is now especially more important for entrepreneurs to reverse the supply

chain, reduce pollution, and halt the depletion of resources inside and outside the earth.

The supply chain usually ends when it reaches the customer and the reverse chain of these goods is overlooked as a result of the lack of interest in them, especially in developing countries where the emergence of what is now known as the reverse supply chain or reverse logistics has been delayed. That is, the direction of consumed or damaged products to the other direction, that is, their return to the first source, depending on the nature of their components when sorted and analyzed, so that several elements come out of them according to their composition, such as gold and silver. These elements are found when recycling mobile phones, for example. Some recyclers also sell pulp to companies specializing in the production of paper and cardboard, which again use it to produce new stationery.

We often hear or read the word sustainability. What is sustainability and what role do reverse logistics play in the practical application of this word?

Reusing parts of products and goods for as long as feasible can help to prevent the planet's natural and physical resources from being depleted. This is known as sustainability. Thus, it is in the best interests of all of us as human beings to support the humanitarian objective of promoting reverse logistics operations and the businesses that engage in them. It is the only hope left for human beings to face climate change resulting from human activities.

After these products are repaired and refurbished, reverse logistics businesses give sustainability targets. The planet's health and environmental catastrophes would have gotten out



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of hand before humanity could have stopped it without these counteracting mechanisms.

The need for recycling has arisen as a result of several things, most notably the exacerbation of the waste problem and its direct negative repercussions on human health, but another important factor cannot be overlooked, which is the quest of man himself to protect the wealth of the subsoil for future generations in a way that does not prejudice the well-being of current generations.

The process of recycling products follows a different path and direction than the well-known supply chain, which is why it has been given many names in literature and intellectual publications. The most well-known of these is the after-sales supply chain, which transfers goods from the customer to the factory via an intermediary known as an entrepreneur, who is the topic of our article in this issue.

These things with reached the end of their useful life also include consumables that the customer wants to get rid of because they are no longer fit for use or consumption, or goods that were unintended owing to design flaws.

The PREZERO company, which was founded in 2009 and whose concept originated with waste disposal logistics, is one of the industry's well-known success stories. The organization currently employs thousands of waste return and recycling specialists.

One of the most well-known businesses in the Arab world in this sector is Oman Environmental Services Holding Co.; it handles electronic waste, damaged auto tires and debris from building and demolition projects, all of which improve environmental protection in Omani.

With 2,000 square kilometers, the Special Economic Zone at Duqm (SEZAD) is the biggest special region in the Middle East and North Africa. With the presence of cutting-edge superstructure and infrastructure, such as the international airport built to handle all international flights and the seaport equipped with the newest technologies, not to mention the modern road network connecting the zone to other cities and economic regions both inside and outside the Sultanate, the telecommunications service, the expansion of the development of residential areas for workers and families, and other services that can be considered a distinct superstructure, investors and entrepreneurs enjoy the advantages and capabilities of the Special Economic Zone and practice profitable projects by all standards in one of the types of reverse logistics operations. With the good planning and management of the project, the chances of success increase, especially since it provides many services to all stakeholders-- in-

dividuals, companies, institutions and the local environment, to name a few.

A plethora of benefits are available to entrepreneurs who take advantage of the incentives offered by SEZAD. These include substantial tax exemptions for businesses, exemptions from customs tax on raw materials, the availability of allocated land suitable for these kinds of projects, and affordable, long-term contracts that make it easy to obtain land in SEZAD. The provision of expedited customs clearance services, visa issuance, and any other services deemed necessary to facilitate business, commercial, and industrial operations in SEZAD, together with the absence of a minimum capital requirement.

When young people, both male and female, ask for instances of this kind of reverse logistics operation, they may respond that there are a variety of concepts, such as recycling and the safe disposal of ship waste that arrives at the port. In addition, empty containers that have been unloaded of goods can be restored and sold; these are particularly in high demand on the local and international markets for recycled steel and aluminum containers. Another option is to specialize in offering consultation and training services in the management of reverse logistics operations to job seekers who are drawn to these kinds of projects.

Aside from the port and the businesses that operate there, there are other projects that are essential to the environment, like the e-waste collection project, the oil collection project from restaurants, hotels, and homes, or the processing of car and truck oils used to make biodiesel. Though there are too many to list, decision-makers in our free and industrial zones as well as special economic zones will undoubtedly support them wholeheartedly.



Clean energy projects to unlock major investment opportunities in green manufacturing

MUSCAT -  :

The emergence of a green hydrogen industry in the Sultanate of Oman, bolstered by substantial foreign investment, promises to unlock vast opportunities in local manufacturing, green metallics, and other challenging-to-abate sectors.

Presently, agreements have been inked for six green hydrogen projects, aiming to collectively produce close to 1 million tons of green hydrogen annually by 2030. Enormous quantities of equipment, notably solar panels, wind turbines, and electrolyzers, will be deployed during construction—volumes that Omani authorities suggest could potentially be manufactured locally, aligning with Oman's localization strategy.

Mindful of the immense investment prospects presented by the burgeoning clean energy economy, the Public Authority for Special Economic Zones and Free Zones (OPAZ) is gearing up to seize these opportunities. With oversight of a diverse portfolio of investment destinations—Special Economic Zones (SEZs), free zones, and industrial cities—OPAZ is well-positioned to accommodate manufacturing industries catering to the hardware requirements of green hydrogen projects, as well as downstream ventures utilizing locally sourced clean energy to produce low-carbon goods for global markets.

The hardware demands of Oman's green hydrogen industry are staggering. To meet its long-term target of scaling up green hydrogen production to 7.5–8.5 million tons annually by 2050, Hydrogen Oman (Hydrom LLC) has estimated Oman's requirements, including 300 million solar panels, 10,000 wind turbines with a renewable capacity of 180 GW, and 5,200 electrolyzers with an aggregate capacity of 100 GW, among other products. Excluded from these projections are equally massive quantities of various other products, such as solar accessories, mounting equipment, cabling systems, racks, and additional hardware.

"Indeed, the market for components, parts and systems for the generation of green energy will be one of the largest in the world and the need for upgrades, repairs and maintenance will be significant in the coming years," said OPAZ media release.

"The many thousands of wind turbines, and many millions of solar PV cells, necessary to build out the green hydrogen projects, will require local support from manufacturers, both domestic and from abroad," he further stated.

Investment opportunities are expected to burgeon with the availability of zero-carbon green hydrogen or its derivatives, such as green methanol or ammonia, from 2030 onwards. With a portion of this production slated for domestic consumption, local and international investors are anticipated to leverage this environmentally friendly energy resource to manufacture an array of low-carbon goods for global markets.

Already, the Special Economic Zone at Duqm (SEZAD), where the majority of green hydrogen projects will be based, has attracted the interest of prominent international players for their green initiatives. For instance, India's Vulcan Green Steel has commenced work on the Middle East's first hydrogen-powered green steel plant at Duqm. Additionally, companies like Vale, Mitsui, and Kobe Steel are contemplating plans for similar low-carbon metallics ventures at the SEZ.

The availability of green steel, and potentially green aluminum in the future, is poised to attract players in the Electric Vehicle (EV), automotive, and white goods sectors. Given the logistical challenges of cost-competitive transportation of green hydrogen to industrial hubs in Europe and the Far East, it makes strategic sense for players in these sectors to establish part of their manufacturing facilities near reliable clean energy sources, with Duqm holding geopolitical advantages.

These advantages are complemented by an array of benefits for investors, including favorable regulatory frameworks, low tariffs, attractive incentives, and world-class support infrastructure, all underscoring OPAZ's commitment to fostering a rewarding operational environment for businesses in Oman.



SEZAD Completes Dualization of More Than 27% of Duqm Airport- Ras Markaz Road



Duqm - :

The dualization of the main road from Duqm Airport roundabout to Ras Markaz (54 km long) constitutes a step forward in the establishment of a strategic road network within the masterplan of the Special Economic Zone in Duqm (SEZAD).

Eng. Abdullah Salim Al Hakmani, Manager of Technical Affairs at SEZAD, said that the project cost stands at RO 57 million.

He affirmed the completion of more than 27 percent of the 54-km road from Duqm Airport roundabout to Ras Markaz, noting that the whole project is expected to be completed by mid-2025.

Al-Hakmani said that the project to develop the duality of the main road from Duqm Airport to Ras Markaz is one of the important projects proposed within the main road network in the Special Economic Zone at Duqm SEZAD, as it connects the road to one of the most prominent

vital projects in the zone, which is Ras Markaz station and the "Dahar" village from the southern side at the airport roundabout. Duqm, where the development stages of the main road network were completed. He added - in a statement to the Oman News Agency - that the road will connect those coming from the south to the center of the Special Economic Zone at Duqm and will serve the growing traffic movement and transport of goods between strategic projects in the region, noting that the cost of the project amounts to 57 million Omani riyals.

He pointed out that the total length of the road is 54 kilometers, including the implementation of a link to Ras Markaz consisting of four traffic lanes, two lanes in each direction, in addition to 8 roundabouts and the installation of smart lighting poles, as it was designed with high specifications to avoid the accumulation of surface water and valleys through the construction of concrete bridges for sewers. Valleys, explaining that the project is being followed up and implemented by the "Tatweer".



Tender Issued for Infrastructure Works at Muscat Airport Free Zone



Issuing tender for the initial phase of the Muscat International Airport Free Zone project

Preparing detailed plans to enhance the economic importance of the airport free zone

Muscat - :

Oman's Asyad Group, a prominent global integrated logistics provider, has taken a significant step in enhancing the nation's logistics infrastructure by issuing tenders for the initial phase of the Muscat International Airport Free Zone project. This move signals an open invitation to private entities to engage in a pivotal logistics project poised to bolster the sultanate's economic development, according to a statement from Asyad Group.

The Muscat International Airport Free Zone is anticipated to significantly boost air freight access and logistics. It is envisioned as a crucial component of Asyad's integrated logistics ecosystem, improving connectivity across land crossings, seaports, free and economic zones, and the dry port within Oman. The project underscores Oman's strategic vision to establish itself as a leading global logistics hub and an attractive destination for foreign direct investment by offering unparalleled commercial and tax incentives.

Aligned with the objectives outlined in Oman Vision 2040, Asyad Group emphasises its dedication to fostering partnerships within the private sector through this initiative. This approach reflects the group's strategy to involve private companies in Oman's economic and logistics sector growth. Following an agreement in December of the previous year to manage, operate, and develop the free zone, Asyad Group has shown significant progress in advancing its plans to support Oman's economic expansion.

The scope of the infrastructure development work

includes, but is not limited to, site clearance, earthworks, site grading, and the construction of access roads, entry points, and utilities. This interconnected network of logistics hubs will provide exceptional support for air freight and seamless access to global supply chains, making it an ideal platform for transporting pharmaceuticals, food products, e-commerce shipments, and other goods.

Faisal Ali Al Balushi, Director (Muscat International Airport Free Zone) at Asyad Group, extended an invitation to local companies to participate in this key project. "We invite all local companies to submit their bids and take part in this vital project, and we look forward to building our partnership with the private sector. This free zone will offer an excellent opportunity for Oman's private sector to grow and capitalize on the competitive advantages and investment prospects it offers," Al Balushi remarked.

He further highlighted the collaborative nature of the new free zone, stating, "The new free zone is a collaborative undertaking that we aim to deliver together with private partners. It reflects Asyad Group's unwavering commitment to developing our partnership with the private sector to build Oman's leading air logistics hub, drive economic growth, and unlock limitless opportunities for SMEs in the logistics industry."

The Muscat International Airport Free Zone project represents a strategic endeavor by Asyad Group to enhance Oman's logistics capabilities and economic prospects, serving as a testament to the nation's forward-looking vision and commitment to fostering private sector participation in its economic development.





OPAZ organizes its annual media briefing

Muscat - :

The Public Authority for Special Economic Zones and Free Zones (OPAZ) recently held its annual media briefing, which was attended by His Excellency Dr. Ali bin Masoud Al-Sunaidi, OPZA Chairman, His Excellency Eng. Ahmed bin Hassan Al-Theeb, OPAZ Vice Chairman, CEOs of the Special, Free, Industrial and Economic Zones supervised by OPAZ. The briefing was attended as well by several high-ranking officials, CEOs of various economic zones, and representatives from the media. The purpose of the briefing was to highlight the achievements of OPAZ and the regions under its supervision in 2023, as well as to outline the targets and plans for 2024.

One of the key topics discussed during the briefing was the growth of investments in sev-

eral vital sectors, including green, metal, pharmaceutical, and petrochemical industries. OPAZ emphasized its commitment to attracting environmentally friendly industries and achieving zero neutrality by 2050, in line with Oman Vision 2040. These efforts aim to enhance investment opportunities and create a favorable investment environment.

OPAZ oversees a total of 22 areas, which include 14 special economic zones such as the Special Economic Zone at Duqm and Khazaen Economic City, three free zones including the Sohar Free Zone, Salalah Free Zone, and Mazyona Free Zone, and nine industrial zones operated by the Public Establishment for Industrial Estates (Madayn). Additionally, there are eight other zones currently under development, two of which are 2 economic zones and the rest are free zones. Furthermore,


The volume of investments stood at about 19 billion OMR by the end of 2023





The number of areas supervised by OPAZ stood at 14 existing areas and 8 under development in various governorates

there are five industrial zones spread across various governorates of Oman.

The average Omanization rate hits 34%, of which more than 75,000 direct employment opportunities at various administrative and technical levels.

Investment size

OPAZ announced during its annual media briefing that the cumulative committed investment in all regions until the end of December 2023 amounted to approximately OMR 19 billion. The Special Economic Zone at Duqm accounted for a total cumulative investment volume of around OMR 6 billion by December 2023. Additionally, the free zones recorded a cumulative investment volume of about OMR 5.3 billion, while the industrial zones reached a cumulative investment volume of OMR 7.3 billion. Khazaen Economic City witnessed an investment volume of OMR 429 million.

Accomplishments in 2023

Throughout the year, the total volume of committed investment increased by OMR 3.5 billion in all areas overseen by OPAZ. In the Special Economic Zone at Duqm alone, the amount of committed investment added in 2023 reached approximately OMR 2.3 billion. This substantial growth can be attributed to the successful completion of several major projects in the region. Moreover, the free zones experienced an increase of over OMR 800 million in committed investment during 2023, while the industrial zones saw an addition of more than OMR 203 million. Khazaen Economic City also witnessed a noteworthy increase in committed investment, amounting to about OMR 126 million for the year.

In terms of services, OPAZ facilitated the establishment of 2,187 new commercial registers in the areas under its supervision. Furthermore, it issued 2,183 public service licenses, 1,921 activity licenses, and 258 building permits. Additionally,





OPAZ granted 3,351 licenses to work and investors, along with 465 environmental permits and licenses. These one-stop services provided by OPAZ demonstrate its commitment to supporting businesses and streamlining the regulatory processes.

92% satisfaction rate of beneficiaries of OPAZ services

During the annual media briefing, OPAZ unveiled the impressive results of its customer satisfaction indicators, showcasing a satisfaction rate of 92% by the end of December 2023, a noticeable increase from 86% in June 2023. These results encompassed the evaluation of various services provided by OPAZ in the supervised areas. Notably, the assessment included the Omap platform, a comprehensive digital mapping system that offers integrated geographical maps for special economic zones, free zones, and industrial cities. This platform empowers users to access services and detailed information through digital maps and

tools, facilitating efficient navigation and utilization of the areas.

The evaluation results also encompassed the central compliance system "Eltizam," the investor relations management system, the unified electronic cadastral drawing service, environmental permits, trademark registration, the central inspection system, electronic registration of small and medium enterprises, and other services. The high satisfaction rate reflects the effectiveness and quality of these services, demonstrating OPAZ's commitment to briefing the needs and expectations of its customers.

Institutional Transformation Program

In pursuit of continuous improvement, OPAZ initiated the implementation of the Institutional Transformation Program, which underwent several stages, beginning with a comprehensive study and analysis of the current situation within OPAZ and the regions it oversees. This process resulted

An integrated infrastructure within the allocated land areas exceeding 2200 square kilometers capable of accommodating the requirements of various economic sectors







The average Omanization rate hits 34%, of which more than 75,000 direct employment opportunities at various administrative and technical levels

in a series of recommendations, projects, and initiatives aimed at supporting transformation and developing a strategy for OPAZ. The strategy encompasses six main pillars and 28 sub-objectives derived from the tasks and competencies of OPAZ.

Prominent objectives within this strategy include assessing the current situation, enhancing institutional performance and work mechanisms, fostering staff training and knowledge transfer, formulating and implementing marketing and promotion strategies, attracting local and foreign investments, identifying infrastructure requirements, services, and facilities, and reviewing regulations and policies to better serve investors. These efforts are dedicated to creating an attractive investment environment across all regions in the Sultanate of Oman.

As part of its commitment to environmental sustainability and digital transformation, OPAZ ceased the use of paper in both internal and external correspondence starting from July 1, 2023,

except specific interactions with certain official bodies. This transition reflects OPAZ's dedication to embracing innovative practices and reducing its ecological footprint while maintaining effective communication channels.

New areas overseen by OPAZ are under development

OPAZ is developing a number of new zones such as the Economic Zone at Al Dhahirah EZAD, which covers an area of 388 square kilometers, as well as the Economic Zone at Al Rawda with an area of 56 square kilometers, and the Muscat International Airport Free Zone with an area of 1.7 square kilometers, which will be operated by Asyad Group. Work is also underway to develop a number of industrial zones supervised by The Public Establishment for Industrial Estates "Madayn", such as Mahas Industrial City, Ibri Industrial City, Seih Al-Sarya Industrial City, Al-Mudhaibi Industrial City, and Thumrait Industrial City.



Eye on the Authority

Summary of key performance indicators in the zones supervised by the OPAZ until the end of December 2023



1472 number of investment applications



19 billion Omani Riyals, cumulative investment volume



30 percent Omanization rate



334 Number of signed agreements



2187 number of commercial records



3.5 billion riyals, the volume of added investment



73380 number of workforces



OPAZ Awarding advisory services tender for the implementation of infrastructural facilities for the first phase of (EZAD)

Muscat -  :

The Public Authority for Special Economic Zones and Free Zones' awarded the tender for consultancy services of designing and supervising of the implementation of infrastructural facilities for first phase of the integrated economic zone at Al Dhahirah governorate (EZAD) to a consortium of an Omani company and a Saudi company. The area of the first phase is 20 square kilometers. The land port plan will be implemented in a preliminary phase covering 6.5 square kilometers, and Asyad Group will be responsible for managing and operating it. The remaining land will be developed for future expansions to keep up with the land requirements of all economic sectors.

"The tender works also include the detailed design of the infrastructure facilities, the preparation of the documents for the tender of the construction works, and the supervision of the implementation of the works, the completion of the project, operation and delivery. The tender also includes supervision of a number of key components such as the land port, road, electricity and telecommunications networks, water, irrigation and sewage networks, gas network, solid waste management, administrative buildings, and horticulture works" Engineer Yahya bin Khamis Al Zadjali, Advisor to the Chairman of the Authority for Planning, explained.

Engineer Yahya added: The establishment of EZAD was motivated by several goals, including optimizing the advantages of its strategic border location with the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, boosting

intra-regional trade between the two nations, bolstering development initiatives and economic diversification, opening up new markets for the Omani economy as well as the Gulf economy, and reaping the benefits of the competitive elements.

It is worth noting that the integrated economic zone in Al Dhahirah Governorate is located about 20 kilometers from the Rub' al-Khali border crossing with the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, and the zone is about 100 kilometers away from the Ibri Industrial City project.





General policy for supervision, control and compliance in economic, free, and industrial zones approved

Muscat - :

The Public Authority for Special Economic Zones and Free Zones (OPAZ) has approved the overall policy for supervisory, control, and compliance in industrial zones, free zones, and special economic zones, as well as the companies operating in them. The decision specifies the parameters of the general policy of supervision, control, and compliance's scope of application, as well as the aims and purposes of OPAZ's supervisory and control work, the duties associated with it, and the expectations for the control staff's professional behavior. It also included the electronic central compliance system, the drawing of the supervisory and control work plan, the mechanism for determining the requirements and scope of the supervisory works, the types and purposes of inspection, and the record, results and procedures of compliance.

By adopting Decision No. (62/2024), the Authority established the overall guidelines for monitoring and looking into violations, as well as methods for gathering and storing proof and evidence, handling legal violations, and taking appropriate action to ensure that the zones and projects that operate within them adhere to the rules, laws, and guidelines that govern their operations. Together with the office and field inspection procedures carried out by specialists to guarantee that the zones under the Authority's supervision and the projects that are carried out there adhere to the laws, rules, policies, and directives that have been adopted in relation to labor affairs, environmental management, occupational safety and health, the provisions of the investment environment, risk assessment, and the

necessity of using digital platforms for control and inspection work.

The decision stated that each region's management would be in charge of creating an administrative unit within the operator's organizational structure or designating one of the already-existing units to handle the control and inspection of businesses operating in the region. They would also be in charge of creating an annual work plan for the control and inspection of projects to guarantee their compliance with the laws, regulations, policies, and instructions approved by the Authority, as well as developing an emergency response plan for each region, training personnel on it, and putting it into action in coordination with the competent authorities. In the reports item, the decision stated that the specialists would receive reports from the specialists with recommendations on how to improve the situation within the allotted time frame. Additionally, the specialists would submit periodic reports to the Authority using the forms specified, along with the executive position statement of the inspection action plan, within the scheduled time frame.

Notably, OPAZ's management was eager to adopt this policy in order to fulfil its supervisory and control responsibilities on the economic, free, and industrial zones; foster a culture of commitment; develop a unified methodology for supervisory and control work; ascertain the legal and regulatory compliance of the areas under the Authority's supervision; establish roles and responsibilities; and formulate the governance of supervisory work in a way that serves the interests of all involved parties. All of these factors help to establish the Authority's credibility with investors and contributes to the development of a favorable investment climate and financial sustainability.



With a value of 44 million Omani riyals Signing 5 new agreements in the industrial and commercial fields in the Salah Free Zone

Salalah - :

Salalah Free Zone, a regional business hub for industrial and logistics activities, has signed five new investment agreements worth RO44mn with a local and international investors from Kuwait, Iraq, Jordan, and Hong Kong.

The first agreement was signed with Naseem Salalah Trading and Manufacturing Industries Company, representing Iraqi investment, to establish a factory to produce paper tissues with an investment of RO38mn.

The zone signed second agreement with Kuwait Engineering Industries Company, which will establish a modern factory for manufacturing air conditioning devices bearing the brand name 'Moria' at an investment cost of RO4.56mn. The factory will have a production capacity of 90,000 air conditioning units annually.

The third agreement with Tawfiq Medical Supplies Company from Jordan includes the establishment of a specialised factory for the production and refilling of blood sugar test strips, with an investment amounting to RO760,000 and a production capacity of up to 100mn sugar test strips annually.

The fourth agreement was with an Omani firm, Wadi Hawjar Company, to establish a specialised factory for mixing and producing raw materials from frankincense derivatives with an investment amounting to RO247,000.

The fifth and last agreement was with Green Stream Solutions Company from Hong Kong, which plans to establish an import, repackaging, and export company for potash fertilizers in Salalah Free Zone with an investment of RO57,000.

The agreement signing ceremony was attended by Dr Ali bin Mohammad Tabuk, CEO of Salalah Free Zone, and a number of officials in the region and investing companies.

Earlier this month, Salalah Free Zone, which is operated by Asyad Group, celebrated the inauguration of three new export-oriented projects in the foods, petrochemicals, and mining industries.

Salalah Free Zone reported impressive investment growth in 2023, securing new investments worth RO728mn during last year.

The zone signed nine new investment agreements, allocated 1.2mn square meters of leased land, and issued eight construction permits during 2023, according to data issued by Salalah Free Zone.

Salalah Free Zone achieved significant milestones during 2023, including a substantial increase in investment size, quantity, and the leasing of extensive land areas, emphasizing the zone's commitment to the sultanate's economic development.

These accomplishments have led to a substantial surge in the cumulative investment in Salalah Free Zone, now exceeding RO4.5bn. The land occupancy rate has crossed the 50% mark, with 129 investments and a leased land area of 6mn square meters, the data showed.

By December 2023, as many as 39 projects were operational in the Salalah Free Zone, with an additional 21 projects under construction, showcasing the zone's growing attractiveness to businesses and investors.

Salalah Free Zone, in collaboration with Omani authorities, is dedicated to providing comprehensive support facilities for hosted industrial projects. The zone's goal is to identify opportunities across various economic sectors and establish enduring partnerships with customers. This involves creating modern, integrated infrastructure in a strategically located area, offering attractive incentives, a secure environment, and reliable services.

As a premier hub for high-quality industrial and logistical activities, Salalah Free Zone extends various economic incentives, advantages, and facilities to investors. Noteworthy among these are tax exemptions and the right to full foreign ownership of investment projects.

Additionally, the zone's strategic location next to the Port of Salalah, overlooking major global shipping routes, positions it among the world's top-tier commercial ports.



Industrial Cities News

New furniture factory in Al Buraimi Industrial City



Al Buraimi Industrial City, managed by the Public Establishment for Industrial Estates (Madayn), has signed an investment agreement with Golden Palaces for Trade and Investment to establish a furniture manufacturing factory. The factory will cover an area of 17,000 square meters, with an investment of RO7mn.

Combining traditional features with modern technology,

the factory will use sustainable materials to produce high-quality contemporary furniture designs.

The project aims to fulfill 10% of the local market demand and export 90% of its products to European, American, and Middle Eastern markets, thereby creating new job opportunities and contributing to the national economy.



Potable water pipes factory in Samail established

Samail Industrial City, managed by the Public Establishment for Industrial Estates (Madayn), has signed an investment agreement for the establishment of a factory specialized in the production of drinking water pipes, cooling and domestic floor heating systems, as well as electricity pipes. The project is built on an area of 2,630 square meters, with an estimated investment volume of half a million Omani riyals.



Al Rusayl Industrial City signed OMR 1.7 million investment pact

Samail Industrial City, managed by the Public Establishment for Industrial Estates (Madayn), has signed an investment agreement with the Global Logistics Services Company, establish warehouses on a 21,250 square meter plot with an investment of OMR 1.7 million.



Suhar Industrial City inked (8) investment Pacts worth OMR 28.4 million



Suhar Industrial City, which is operated by the Public Establishment for Industrial Estates "Madayn", signed eight investment agreements to establish projects in various industrial sectors such as: plastics, food, fodder, cement, medical devices, and mattresses with a total investment volume exceeding (19.4) million Omani riyals on a total area exceeding (71,900) thousand square meters.

The first investment agreement was signed with the United Feeds Company for project spanning an area of 22,500 square metres, with an investment of OMR12 million.

The second agreement was signed with Sedra International Industries Company to establish a project focused on manu-

facturing plastic raw materials across 11,757 square metres, with an investment of OMR3.7 million. The third pact, with Omran White Cement Company, involves establishing a cement manufacturing project covering 11,250 square metres, backed by an investment of OMR1 million. The fourth agreement was signed with Al Madina Food Industries to establish a project of tea blending and packaging over 4,910 square metres, with an investment of OMR850,000.

Besides, Suhar Industrial signed specialized projects agreements to manufacture plastic products, medical devices, and mattresses.

The fifth agreement was signed with Omar International



Furniture to establish a project specialized in the manufacture of mattress, where the project is covering 7200 square meters with an estimated investment of one million Omani riyals. The sixth agreement was signed with Al-Iman Trading and Investment Company to establish a project specialized in the manufacture of plastic products from non-hazardous waste, where the project is covering 4700 square meters, with an investment of OMR 850,000. The seventh agreement was signed with the Quality Company for Medical Supplies to establish a project specialized in the manufacture of medical, surgical and veterinary tools and devices, covering 5 thousand square meters, with an estimated investment of OMR 550,000. It is hoped that these projects, when ready, will provide various job opportunities for national cadres.

Suhar Industrial City has also signed an investment contract with Multi Bond Metal Company to establish a plastics-focused manufacturing project.

The project will manufacture a variety of products including

sheets, strips, tapes, pipes, hoses, and related accessories. With an investment of OMR9 million, the project is set to be located on a 30,000-square-metre area within Phase 7 of Suhar Industrial City.

One of Suhar Industrial City's strategic projects, the Plastic Industries Complex (LPIC), aims to add value for the Sultanate of Oman by bringing high-quality industries local and utilizing cutting-edge technology in this field. It also offers potential incentive packages for investors and a welcoming atmosphere for foreign and regional investors. Along with finding and developing an environmental and health system for the LPIC project through research and development, as well as finding specialized training and qualification centers for the various levels of cadres and competencies required by this sector, the presence of industries supporting the LPIC project, which operates under the auspices of OQ, will significantly contribute to reducing imports and will reflect positively on local industries.





Madayn celebrates the opening of the first phase of the Ibri Industrial City project

The total area of Ibri Industrial City is 10 million square meters

17.8km the length of the road network and the water network with a length of 24.7 km

The Public Establishment for Industrial Estates “Madayn” celebrated the opening of the first phase of the Ibri Industrial City project within the program of the Secretariat General of National Celebrations to inaugurate key national projects.

His Excellency Najeeb bin Ali Al Rawas, Governor of Al Dhahirah, stressed that the opening of the first phase of the Ibri Industrial City project comes as a continuation of the plans of the Government of the Sultanate of Oman to distribute economic develop-

ment to the various governorates of the Sultanate of Oman, in line with the national priorities of Oman Vision 2040, and to create a competitive environment attractive to local and foreign investment.

“the presence of an industrial city in Al Dhahirah Governorate will contribute to a qualitative leap in economic aspects, manufacturing industries, added value, stimulating various trade aspects, creating job opportunities for job seekers, in addition to encouraging exports, developing international trade and en-





couraging the establishment of export industries, as well as to stimulating other economic sectors, such as transport, banking and others.” Al Rawas added.

Speaking at the inaugural ceremony of Ibri Industrial City infrastructure project (Phase One), Salah Nasser Al Alawi, Director General of Ibri Industrial City, said, “The industrial city spans an extensive area of 10 million square metres, with Phase One successfully completed at a cost of OMR9 million, covering 3 million sqm. The presence of a fully-equipped industrial city will serve as a pivotal factor in driving development and fostering an ideal environment for the private sector to engage in a diverse range of industrial, commercial and service activities.”

Al Alawi further highlighted the commitment of Madayn to promote investment in Ibri Industrial City through the introduction of a comprehensive incentive package.

“These incentives resulted in a notable increase in investor interest, with 10 projects now underway in Ibri Industrial City, boasting an initial investment totalling OMR6.5 million. Several of these projects have already commenced construction and development activities,” Al Alawi noted.

Ahmed Mohammed Al Farsi, Director of Projects at Madayn’s Directorate General of Facilities and Infrastructure, stated that Phase One of the development project of Ibri Industrial City, includes the construction of roads, truck parking zone, water network and water tank, firefighting network, sewage networks and collection tank, dyke for protection against rainwater, and security system with surveillance cameras.

Al Farsi elaborated on the completed phase featuring the construction of 17.8 km of road network and a 24.7-km water network.

Dr. Said Khalifa Al Quraini, Director General of Investment Development at the Public Authority for Special Economic Zones and Free Zones (Opaz), highlighted the Authority’s commitment to two core functions: ‘Planning and development’ and ‘regulation and supervision.’

Al Quraini affirmed that Opaz is dedicated to streamlining procedures for investors and providing robust after-service support to promote business continuity and growth. “Opaz collaborates with key stakeholders to promote and attract investments, aiming to enhance the added value of targeted sectors and expedite economic progress in Duqm while actively getting engaged in accelerating the implementation of development plans in various governorates to boost the country’s competitive advantage,” Al Quraini said.

Meanwhile, Zakiya Mohammed Al Balushi, Director of Planning and Studies at Opaz, delivered a presentation on the Economic Zone Project at A’Dhahirah Governorate. She added that the economic zone is geared up to undertake an instrumental role in facilitating cross-border trade and investment.

Further, four investment contracts worth OMR7 million were signed during the ceremony to establish a factory specialised in the oil and gas industry, a food industry factory (roasted coffee) a manufacturing factory (coal and its derivatives) and a light industries (cardboard) project.


**Incubates
10 projects
with an initial
investment
size of OMR
6,500,000**


**4 new invest-
ment agree-
ments worth
OMR 7 million
inked**

“Madaen” launches the “Explore” platform to introduce the investment opportunities in industrial cities



The Public Establishment for Industrial Estates “Madaen” officially launched the “Explore” platform as part of the continuous efforts to provide an attractive business environment for investments and stimulate the localization of projects in various fields by enabling investors to know the opportunities available in industrial cities in various governorates of the Sultan-

ate of Oman under the auspices of Engineer Dawood bin Salem Al-Haddabi, CEO of “Madaen”.

Engineer Alya bint Abdullah Al-Nasiriya, Director of Planning and Geographical Systems at the Directorate General of Facilities and Infrastructure in Madaen, said that the “Explore” platform comes within a package of digital systems implemented by

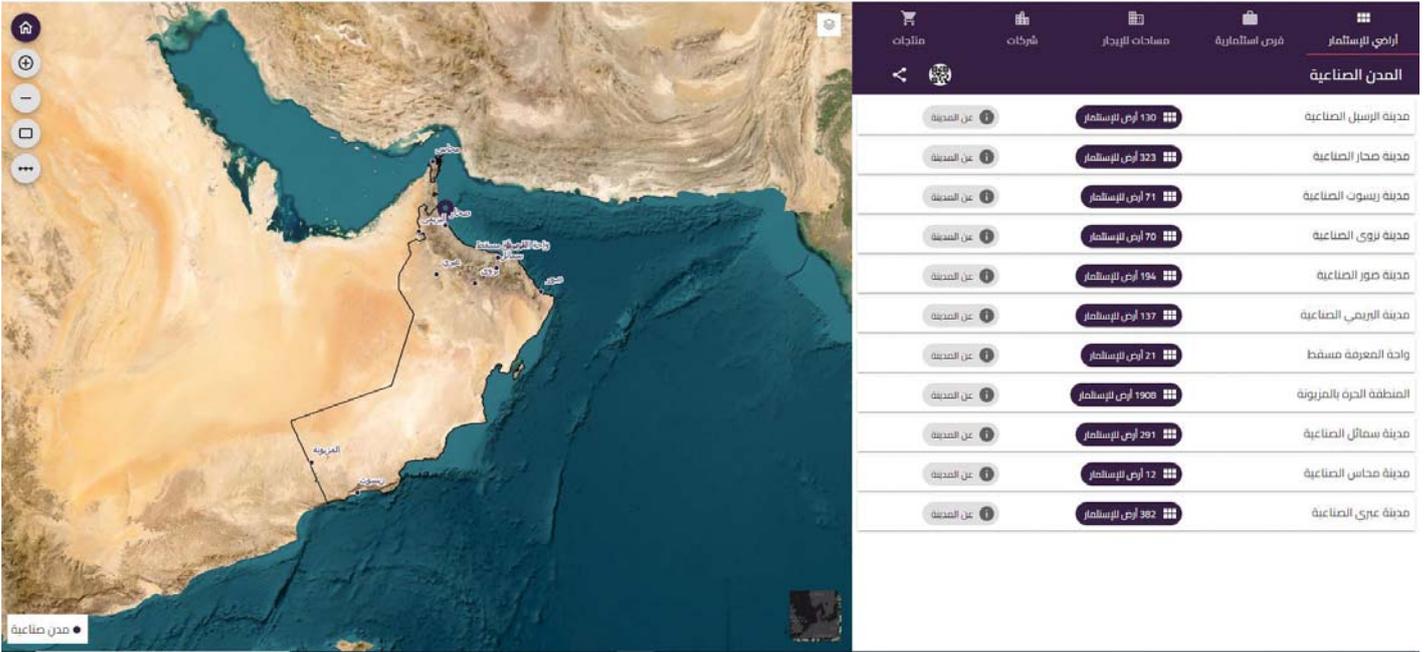
Muscat

Objectives of the “Explore” platform

Providing an attractive business environment for investments and stimulating the localization of projects

Know the opportunities available in industrial cities





Madaen during the Digital Transformation Executive Plan emanating from the objectives of Madaen Vision 2040 (2021-2025) to provide an enabling digital environment for the industry and attract investment and develop sustainable digital solutions to build an effective and competitive industrial sector.

Al Nasiri pointed out that this system enables investors and those wishing to invest to browse the information of each industrial city in terms of area, leasing policy, investment data, and type of activities, know the list of companies and investors based in each industrial city, and browse the data of localized companies such as commercial activity, contact information, and company location. In addition to displaying the office spaces in the Muscat Knowledge Oasis from a two- and three-dimensional perspective, and the possibility of searching for the most appropriate investment opportunities by identifying the types of ex-

isting industrial and commercial activities, specifying each location and specifying the required space.

Al Nasiri added that the “Explore” platform provides, via the electronic link, a set of services to the current investor in “Madaayn” and the potential investor, starting with the service of displaying available and updated investment opportunities to enable those wishing to invest to browse these opportunities in various industrial cities according to commercial and industrial activities.

She added that the “Explore” platform offers through the electronic link a set of services for the current investor in “Madaayn” and the potential investor, starting with the service of presenting the available and updated investment opportunities to enable those wishing to invest to browse these opportunities in various industrial cities by commercial and industrial activities.

Develop sustainable digital solutions to build an efficient and competitive industrial sector

Browse information for each industrial city in terms of area and rental policy

Know the list of companies and investors located in each industrial city

Muscat





The Special Economic Zone at Duqm begins providing services in the schemes whose status of the public utility was lifted within the general scheme

Duqm - :

The Special Economic Zone at Duqm SEZAD administration has completed the procedures to implement the Council of Ministers' decision to develop, execute and supervise municipal services and public facilities whose public utility status was lifted within the general scheme.

The administration started providing municipal licensing services, technical affairs services, as well as training staff to provide these services in conjunction with the completion until fully outfitting a specific office to handle municipal services in the old Ssay commercial district.

On the other hand, Tatweer Company, acting on behalf of the

SEZAD administration, started preparing roads, opening corridors, cleaning certain sites, and putting up directional signs in addition to working to assess the current state of services in schemes whose public utility status was lifted.

The total area of the schemes whose public utility status was lifted within SEZAD scheme is 33 square kilometers, distributed over 9 different schemes, including the old Ssay commercial district scheme. A number of industrial, commercial, commercial/residential, and residential uses are covered under the scheme.

Numerous infrastructure projects that match the goals of residents and investors are being implemented in SEZAD. A variety of investment areas in the fields of real estate development, renewable energy, logistics, tourism, and industry are included in the zone.





OPAZ observes the Earth Hour 2024

Muscat - :

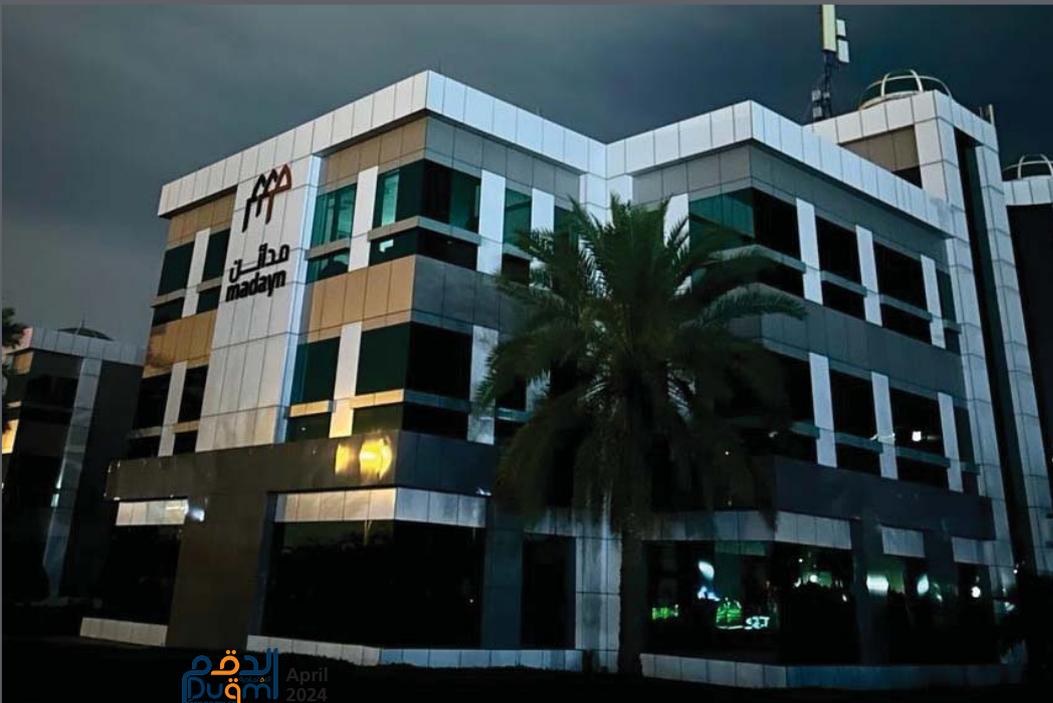
As part of its ongoing commitment to social and environmental responsibility, the Public Authority for Special Economic Zones, Free Zones (OPAZ) and all industrial zones and cities it oversees participated in the activities to observe earth Hour for the current year. It is a global event that expresses the world's commitment to protecting the environment and addressing the challenges of climate change.

The participation of the Authority and affiliated zones to mark Earth Hour comes as part of its strategy to preserve the environment, promote awareness of the importance of sustainability, and

contribute to promoting global sustainability and solidarity with the global community in facing environmental challenges.

Earth Hour seeks to draw attention to key environmental challenges such as climate change, greenhouse gas emissions, air and water pollution, biodiversity loss, and natural resource degradation. In addition, the initiative encourages individuals, communities and institutions to take steps to reduce their negative environmental impacts and contribute to building a more sustainable future.

The celebration of Earth Hour traced back to 2007, when The Nature Conservancy Worldwide organized the first hour-long lights out initiative in Sydney, Australia. Since then, it has evolved into a global initiative, urging that the lights be switched off within one hour dedicated to the event.





Saleh Al Maamari
Editor-in-chief



This interest from the Sultanate of Oman's leadership, led by His Majesty, may God protect him, embodies the support and interest in economic and development projects meant to foster policies and programs for economic diversification, broadening the country's revenue streams

The dream has come true

The Special Economic Zone at Duqm was honored by the visit of His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tariq, may God protect him, in the presence of His Highness Sheikh Mishal Al Ahmad Al Jaber Al Sabah, Emir of the State of Kuwait, to inaugurate the Duqm Refinery and related projects on February 7 this year.

Their historic visit served as evidence of the two presidents' interest in their two fraternal countries, which have strong social, economic, and historical ties. The official visit was warranted because the investment initiative is the largest between the two Gulf countries. Sisterly countries have aligned their economic interests around this project, which is a perfect example of a successful model.

This ambitious and high-quality project has been given to the prospective land of Duqm. With a shared history, culture, and religion, there is no doubt that this visit highlights the numerous aspects and economic benefits between the Omani and Kuwaiti sides. It also opens up new opportunities for the Sultanate of Oman, which enjoys a stable environment conducive to large-scale, strategic international companies and continues to draw in new investors from Kuwait, the GCC, the Arab world, and other countries.

This interest from the Sultanate of Oman's leadership, led by His Majesty, may God protect him, embodies the support and interest in economic and development projects meant to foster policies and programs for economic diversification, broadening the country's revenue streams, open up new avenues for sustainable economic growth, and strengthen efforts to draw investment to economic, free-and-industrial zones in order to meet Oman Vision 2040's goals.

The refinery has experienced notable growth in its global exports since its opening, which strengthens its position as a successful catalyst for forging other international alliances to invest in a variety of economic sectors. It has evolved into an integrated infrastructure for both production and investment.

Duqm refinery is an important tributary of the industrial sector in the Sultanate of Oman, as it is one of the heavy industries in terms of investment value and productive energy, as well as contributing to the establishment of many high-value-added manufacturing industries

On the seventh of February, the people of Al-Wusta Governorate as well as from all Wilayats welcomed and celebrated this auspicious visit of His Majesty and His Highness the Amir of the State of Kuwait. Duqm has been awarded a historical mark that attests to the improvement of the two friendly nations' economic and cultural ties.