

**Ithraa Chairman:**  
The Sultanate is taking a  
confident step towards  
balanced and sustainable  
economic growth



## Construction of Maysan Square Duqm starts in 2021



Taking steps forward for **Duqm Smart City**



Oman Drydock (ODC) records 15.3%  
increase in number of vessels



Omani talents rolling up their  
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# Optimistic about the Future

We are starting the year 2020 with full optimism that the Special Economic Zone at Duqm (SEZD) will record more success that would contribute to achieving its goals of being a hub for local and global investments. This optimism is reflected in a number of facts.

Kicking off the year positively, SEZAD started executing its five-year plan that extends until the end of 2024. This plan focuses on fulfilling the Zone's requirements during the next phase to make Duqm, by 2030, the preferred destination for various economic activities. Hence, SEZD's infrastructure goes in line with the requirements of investors, community and visitors, especially the different means of transportation that connect Duqm internally with the rest of the Sultanate's governorates.

The new five-year plan, approved by SEZAD's Board of Directors at the end December 2019, focuses on the investments that are attracted to the Zone to support the national economy and achieve social and economic development in SEZD particularly and Al Wusta Governorate generally.

Further to its importance, this plan brings many challenges, some of which are related to preparing SEZAD's staff for this task while another is focused on attracting local companies to invest in the Zone. Other challenges include global challenges, slow economic growth in a number of sectors in the Zone and the world as well as the oil price fluctuation, which is the main drive influencing major global economies.

However, we have confidence in the ability to face and overcome these challenges, competency of Omani staff and international expertise working in Duqm, and positive response of Duqm community towards the main objectives of the plan.

Furthermore, 2020 started with the Zone witnessing the completion of many infrastructure projects at the Port of Duqm fishing port and the main road network, connecting the different investment zones to each other. The accomplishment of these projects raises the Zone's competitiveness to be one of the key regional and international investment destinations.

We are very thrilled with the increased number of investments in the Zone despite the challenges of the global business environment. The volume of investments in the Special Economic Zone at Duqm exceeded US\$ 14 billion by the end of last year. This brings a positive beginning for SEZD to start a new year, praying to the Almighty Allah to make 2020 a better one for Oman, its people and leadership.



Yahya bin Said Al Jabri  
General Supervisor



**Kicking off the year positively, SEZAD started executing its five-year plan that extends until the end of 2024. This plan focuses on fulfilling the Zone's requirements during the next phase to make Duqm, by 2030, the preferred destination for various economic activities.**



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**الدقم**  
الاقتصادية  
Duqm

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

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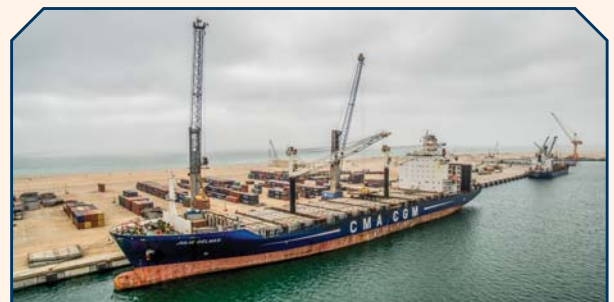
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Both roads connect Port of Duqm with the Duqm Refinery and other strategic projects

Creating a third route leading to Port of Duqm and Drydock and an easy connection between Duqm Refinery and Renaissance Village

# Two new roads opened for traffic in Duqm



Aerial image of Road (1)

## Duqm - :

The Special Economic Zone at Duqm (SEZD) witnessed in November 2019 the opening of roads (1) and (5) with its related projects to traffic. Both roads are key projects in SEZD as they connect the Port of Duqm with the Duqm Refinery and many other strategic projects, which are being implemented in the heavy and medium industries zones.

Road (1) connects the Port of Duqm and Drydock with the Sultan Said bin Sultan Road, the main road in Duqm, making it easier for those coming from Duqm downtown and from Muscat via Sinaw to access the port's projects. Hence, this road becomes the third route leading to the Port of Duqm and Drydock.

Additionally, Road (1) marks an easily accessible connection between Duqm Refinery and Renaissance Village, which is home for many of those working at the refinery project.

Road No (5) starts at the existing intersection connecting roads (1) and (6) up to the berth of liquid and bulk materials at the Port of Duqm. The length of this road is about 3.3 km, while the Road (1) is around 3.73 km long, with both roads are dual consisting of two lanes on each carriageway.

The development agreement of Roads (1) and (5), which was signed in February 2018, also includes the construction of two service roads extending to 6.7km long, installation of new LED lighting, implementation of soil improvement works and construction of water drainage channels.



Intersection connecting different roads including (1) and (5)



## Ithraa Chairman: The Sultanate is taking a confident step towards balanced and sustainable economic growth



### Muscat - :

His Excellency Yahya bin Said Al Jabri, Chairman of the Public Authority for Investment Promotion and Export Development «Ithraa» and Chairman of the Special Economic Zone Authority at Duqm (SEZAD), confirmed that the Sultanate is moving in a confident and solid step towards balanced, diversified and sustainable economic growth. This allows the Sultanate to have a high capacity and flexibility to face the various economic challenges that might arise due to the different regional and international economic changes.

Oman's strength is backed by a wise visionary leadership, supported by national capabilities and sincere efforts of citizens that are dedicated to ensure fruitful development and prosperity spread all over the Sultanate.

Speaking during the opening ceremony of the Oman Economic, Industrial and Free Zones Summit 2019, held in October 2019 in Muscat, His Excellency Yahya bin Said Al Jabri pointed out: "Oman has made significant strides, both socially and economically. Our accomplishments include increasing the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and the per capita, upgrading the infrastructure and social services across the entire Sultanate, freeing trade and integrating in the global economy, and capitalising on Oman's relative advantages in terms of strategic location, stable political environment and strong relations with neighbouring countries and the world".

The second edition of the Summit was organised by Ithraa in cooperation with the Free Zone Watch Foundation and supported by the Special Economic Zone Authority at Duqm under the theme «Oman a diversified hub for logistics and industry». Through its interactive sessions, the Summit shed light on the efforts of the economic, industrial and free zones in supporting economic diversification, encouraging local and foreign investments and promoting the available investment opportunities.

#### A highlight on economic diversification efforts


Commenting on organising this Summit, His Excellency Yahya bin Said Al Jabri stated, "This Summit provides a national platform for



reviewing the Sultanate's efforts towards diversifying its economy and developing promising production sectors, highlighting the national and regional developments and challenges facing these efforts and generating ideas on how to best tackle them".

His Excellency also said: "The Sultanate has also come a long way in terms of diversifying its economy, utilising and promoting non-oil revenues, attracting local and foreign direct investments, enhancing market mechanisms, encouraging individual initiatives and entrepreneurship, deepening economic freedom landscape, and providing a conducive regulatory environment for investments and doing business".

"In this regard, Oman concluded numerous bilateral and multilateral agreements with key regional and international trade partners including: the Unified Economic Agreement between the Countries of the Gulf Cooperation Council, WTO Agreement, Free Trade Agreement with

  
**The Sultanate has come a long way towards economic diversification and strengthening of non-oil resources**

  
**Promoting economic freedom and providing a suitable regulatory environment for investment and doing business**





While presenting the documentary film about the Special Economic Zone at Duqm

**Direct foreign investment is key for economic growth and technology deployment**

**Using the oil surplus revenues to establish and develop ports, airports and economic and industrial zones**

the United States, and the GAFTA Agreement among many other bilateral agreements aimed at encouraging and mutually protecting investments and avoiding double taxation” he added.

#### Foreign direct investments

Underlining the importance of the Foreign Direct Investments (FDI), Al Jabri said that the FDI were key to Oman’s economic growth, higher productivity, technology localisation and access to new and important markets.

“In 2017, the value of Oman’s total FDI capital assets reached OMR 9.2 billion (USD 23.9 billion) with investment cash flows in the same year registering more than one billion Omani riyals (USD 2.6 billion), a high growth rate of 13.9%” he noted.

#### Economic diversification programme

His Excellency Yahya bin Said Al Jabri pointed out that with the National Programme for Enhancing Economic Diversification, the wise government embarked on a strategic path to drive comprehensive economic and social development and gradually shift the economy from oil-reliance to diversification spearheaded by promising production sectors where the Sultanate boasts clear relative advantages.

The Programme is anchored in Oman’s Vision 2020, which was adopted in 1996 as an official government roadmap and implemented through the successive five-year development plans, starting with the Fifth Five-Year Plan (1996-2000) and on to the Ninth Five-Year Plan (2016-2020). The latter strongly emphasised on the economic diversification programme by fast-tracking the programme’s execution in the wake of the major drop in Omani oil revenues in 2015.

His Excellency stressed that this drop was seen as a great opportunity to introduce qualitative and structural reforms to the investment and doing business ecosystem at the macro-eco-

nomic and target sector levels, notably manufacturing, tourism, mining, logistics and fisheries.

Moreover, His Excellency noted that through these Five-Year plans, financial surpluses generated from oil revenues were invested in the establishment and development of Oman’s ports in Salalah, Sohar, Duqm, the new Muscat International Airport, and regional airports (Sohar, Salalah, Duqm and Ras Al Hadd). Furthermore, the financial surplus was directed at establishing and developing seven industrial cities in various locations in Oman, in addition to Knowledge Oasis Muscat, three free zones (Salalah, Sohar and Mazyunah), one SEZ in Duqm and launching the development of a land port and logistics village in Al Batinah South Governorate as part of Khazaen project.

His Excellency Al Jabri further said, “These facilities together formed an integrated and interconnected ecosystem for localising investments and developing the value and supply chains for target production sectors, manufacturing and tourism, thus positioning Oman as regional hub”.

#### High ranks for Oman

Reflecting on the study conducted by Standard Chartered Bank, Al Jabri said that according to the bank’s recently published report “Trade 20”, Oman was ranked first in the Middle East and ninth among 66 markets worldwide on the “trade potential” indicator.

The latter was designed to measure the progress that markets have made in the past decade. The study also assesses markets against 12 metrics, including (Inward stock of FDI, export volume growth, GDP growth, infrastructure readiness, e-commerce, ease of doing business and export diversity).

#### Tanfeedh Programme

In order to highlight and drive the momen-



# Chairman of State Council: The conference marks an opportunity to highlight fields of investment in the Sultanate

## Muscat - :

His Excellency Dr. Yahya bin Mahfoudh Al Mantheri, Chairman of State Council, said that the conference reflected the Sultanate's efforts towards economic diversification and provided the opportunity for participants and investors to know fields of investment in the Sultanate such as the industrial sectors, commercial ports, agriculture, fisheries, banks and tourism.

His Excellency added: "The Royal Decrees issued in 2019 in regards to developing the legislative structure for many economic laws related to investment serve providing the right platform for investment in the Sultanate".



turn of national efforts, His Excellency Yahya bin Said Al Jabri, stated: "The launch of the National Program for Enhancing Economic Diversification (Tanfeedh) constituted an unprecedented government initiative towards moving the Ninth Five-Year Plan from objective identification to the design of appropriate mechanisms and execution tools. This would enable the fulfilment of objectives through coordination, concerted efforts, rigorous follow-up, performance assessment and early resolution of barriers and challenges hindering the proper execution of Tanfeedh Program".

"The programme established economic indicators to be met by 2020 as follows: grow non-oil activities by 4.3% annually, manufacturing by 6%, tourism by 5.3%, logistics 5%, fisheries 6% and mining 6%, in addition to ensuring no less than 80% of the initiatives specified for key production sectors are funded by the private sector" His Excellency emphasised.

### Creating investment environment

In this regard, I would like to point out to the initiatives undertaken by the wise government, including the issuance and update of a number of economic legislations that are in line with global best practices, and together, forming the foundations of a quantum leap in the investment and doing business environment:

### Updating the Commercial Companies Law

Issuing a new Bankruptcy and Insolvency Law.

Updating the Foreign Capital Investment Law.

Issuing the Privatisation and Public-Private Sectors laws.

Issuing a new Mining Law.

Updating the bylaws of the Public Authority for Investment Promotion & Export Development (Ithraa).

### Factors for investment decision-making

The Summit, inaugurated by His Excellency Dr. Yahya bin Mahfoudh Al Mantheri, Chairman of the State Council, discussed several aspects including factors for investment decision-making,




ing, strategic changes in regional trade, and internal developments that make the Sultanate an ideal logistics hub for potential investors.

### Exploring investment opportunities in the Sultanate

On the other side, Azzan bin Qasim Al Buisaidi, CEO of the Public Authority for Investment Promotion and Export Development «Ithraa» said, "Organising this Summit comes within the framework of the marketing plan of «Ithraa» to promote foreign investment in the Sultanate, particularly in the Special Economic Zone at Duqm, as well as industrial and free zones. There are many companies overseas interested to explore investment opportunities in the Sultanate".

The Summit on its first day focused on the efforts of the economic, industrial and free zones towards economic diversification and its role in encouraging local and foreign investments. A number of bilateral meetings were arranged to bring together participants with officials from Ithraa, the Special Economic Zone at Duqm and other parties participating in the Summit. However, the second day was dedicated to site visits held in the Special Economic Zone at Duqm, Port of Salalah and the Free Zone in Salalah.

  
**Summit reviews the efforts of the economic, industrial and free zones towards economic diversification and investment promotion**



# OMAN ECONOMIC, INDUSTRIAL & FREE ZONE SUMMIT 2019



During the second session of the conference

## Sessions shed light on how to attract more investments to the Sultanate

**Simon Penney: The proximity of Omani ports to shipping routes enables them to flourish and secure a larger share of global trade flows**

**Geographical location, quality, efficiency, and logistics are the most important factors for successful investments**

### Muscat - **الدقم**:

The different approaches explaining ways of attracting more investments to the Sultanate were discussed during the sessions held at the Oman Economic, Industrial and Free Zones Summit 2019. As well, the investment opportunities and challenges from a European perspective were touched on in different presentations.

The sessions indicated that the Sultanate is making constant efforts in the economic diversification strategy, and is on the way to achieve more progress and prosperity. They also stressed that foreign investments have succeeded in the Sultanate due to its political and security stability, in addition to its strategic location linking the East with the West and the well-formed legislation and regulations that serve investors.

Simon Benny, the UK's Trade Commissioner to the Middle East, Pakistan and Afghanistan, said that the "enduring friendship" has had a positive impact, not only in the goods and services as well as increased trade and investment, but crucially in exchange of ideas and strengthening of relations at every level. He also affirmed that the UK's Department of International Trade, continues to encourage UK companies to do more business outside of the UK, noting that the Sultanate is a very important destination in this regard.

He pointed out that the UK is already the number one investor in Oman, making up approximately 50 per cent of all the foreign direct investments (FDI) in the Sultanate. Simon also underlined the promising role of Omani ports and free zones in driving Oman's economic development. Their relative proximity to East-West shipping routes will enable them to flourish and secure a larger share of global trade flows.

### Investment decision-making factors

In the first session, titled Factors for Investment Decision-making, speakers touched on the importance of the geographical location, which marks one of the most important factors to achieve success for investments, in addition to other factors including efficiency, cost per square metre, logistics and the ability to reach a wide-ranging database of customers.

During the session, moderated by Ben Ewing, Head Partner of CMS Law Oman, the speakers highlighted the most important industrial destinations in the Sultanate. From the speakers' point of view, these destinations are the most suitable investment locations for investors from different countries around the world. They also stressed that there are great advantages offered by the Sultanate to investors in comparison to the investment opportunities available in other countries.

Moreover, the speakers called for the necessity of establishing unified rules and regula-







tions for all economic, industrial and free zones in the Sultanate. Besides, they urged local banks to contribute in supporting and financing major development projects in the country.

#### Major investment opportunities

The second session, which was moderated by Dr. Ismail bin Ahmed Al Balushi, the CEO of the Special Economic Zone Authority at Duqm, addressed the main investment opportunities in the Sultanate. It also highlighted Oman's efforts towards diversifying the sources of income by focusing on five main sectors that provide new economic opportunities, such as fisheries sector, the importance of benefiting from International expertise in aquaculture development, high-tech fisheries development and food industry.

The session also shed light on the importance of developing the mining sector in the Sultanate, and making the most of the opportunities offered by the industry sector through heavy, medium and light industries in various industrial zones.

In this regard, Hilal bin Hamad Al Hassani, CEO of the Public Establishment for Industrial Estates – Madayn, highlighted the commercial opportunities available in the various industrial estates in the Sultanate, explaining that the an-

nual growth rate in Madayn is 6 per cent. He also advised that Madayn has an easy induction programme for investors willing to explore investment opportunities in the Sultanate. Furthermore, Al Hassani announced that Madayn will launch two new industrial estates in Thumrait and Shinas for the private sector to invest in.

#### Sharing experience of Renaissance Services

In the third session, Renaissance Services Company presented its exemplary experience of establishing an integrated village for workers in Duqm. The model project was addressed to the audience by Stephen Thomas, CEO of Renaissance Services who briefed them about the story of this project, the challenges and lessons learned from this unique experience.

#### Logistics and digital transformation

The fourth session, titled Logistics, Infrastructure and Digital Transformation, discussed the quality of the infrastructure of shipping and logistics sector to support business requirements. The session, moderated by Claudia Massi, CEO of Siemens Oman, also stressed on the importance of modern digital technologies to increase the industrial competitiveness in the Sultanate.

**Speakers are urging to take advantage of the available investment opportunities in the industry sector**

**A spotlight on the quality of infrastructure of the shipping and logistics sector to support business requirements**

**Participants stress on the importance of modern digital technologies to increase industrial competitiveness**





# Summit participants observe infrastructure in Duqm and Salalah

**Dr. Ismail Al Balushi:** The visit enabled participants to get first-hand knowledge of investment opportunities in Duqm

**100 participants from 25 countries visited Port of Duqm, Drydock and Duqm Refinery**

**Founder of German «ENO»:** Duqm incentives are encouraging and able to attract investments



**Duqm - Salalah - **

On the sideline of the two-day Oman Economic, Free and Industrial Zones Summit, the participants visited the Special Economic Zone at Duqm, Salalah Port and Salalah Free Zone on the second day of the summit. The visits aimed at exploring the different investment opportunities available in the zones.

Around 100 delegates from 25 countries were received at the Special Economic Zone Authority Headquarter at Duqm. Commenting on this field visit, Dr. Ismail bin Ahmed Al Balushi, CEO of the Special Economic Zone Authority at Duqm (SEZAD), said that the visit was an opportunity to familiarise the delegation with the projects, investment opportunities, and infrastructure in the Special Economic Zone (SEZD).

Al Balushi added that the investment in the Special Economic Zone at Duqm is witnessing good demand, whether from local or foreign investors, stressing that SEZAD receives many requests from investors willing to invest in the Zone.

Upon arrival at SEZAD's headquarter, Eng. Saleh bin Rashid Al Hashmi, General Manager of Planning and Engineering at the Special Economic Zone Authority at Duqm, briefed the delegation on the masterplan of the Zone, highlighting the key projects and infrastructure that are currently being developed.

Additionally, Saleh bin Hamoud Al Hassani, General Manager for Investors Services at the Special Economic Zone Authority at Duqm,

presented to the delegation key available investment opportunities in the Zone, projects developed in Duqm as well as the advantages and investment incentives granted by SEZAD to the investors. He also shed light on a number of successful investment projects in Duqm.

Likewise, the delegation was briefed on the capabilities of the Port of Duqm, Drydock, Duqm Refinery and many other projects that are already operating in the Special Economic Zone at Duqm (SEZD).

Reflecting on this visit, Taylo Pleuger, Founder of the German company, ENO, commended the package of advantages and facilities provided by the Special Economic Zone at Duqm to foreign investors. He endorsed that these incentives would encourage investors to set up projects in the Zone. He also affirmed that the visit was an opportunity for him to learn more about the investment opportunities available in the Zone, while praising the infrastructure available in Duqm.

## Visual presentations about Salalah Free Zone

On the other side, another delegation of participants visited the Free Zone and Salalah Port, visual presentations were presented highlighting the investment opportunities available at the Free Zone in Salalah and incentives provided to investors in addition to the services provided by Salalah Port. The delegation also paid a field visit to a number of economic establishments and projects.



## Dr. Ismail Al Balushi appointed as CEO of SEZAD

Muscat -  :

The Board of Directors of the Special Economic Zone Authority at Duqm (SEZAD) has appointed Dr. Ismail bin Ahmed Al Balushi as the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of SEZAD with effect from January 1, 2020.

Prior to his appointment as CEO, Dr. Ismail Al Balushi, who was the Deputy CEO of SEZAD since 2013, was serving as the CEO of SEZAD from January to December 2019.

Dr. Al Balushi comes with over 26 years of experience in different commercial and economic sectors and has been managing a number of leadership positions in various private and government bodies including the Ministry of Commerce and Industry and the Capital Market Authority. The latest of these positions was the Vice-President of the Capital Market Authority during 2000 to 2013.

Dr. Ismail Al Balushi is a PhD holder in banking sector from Mohammed First University in the Kingdom of Morocco.



## Setting up two mobile filling stations to supply equipment and vehicles of Duqm Port with diesel


Muscat -  :

The Port of Duqm has signed a five-year agreement with Oman Oil Marketing Company «Oman Oil» to supply the equipment and vehicles of the port with diesel. Under this agreement, Oman Oil Company will set up two mobile diesel stations, with each providing 65,000 litres of diesel.

The two dynamically designed stations are around 40-feet long and can be easily transported and installed. Each station can be operated by only one operator and is equipped with smart systems against theft and vandalism and has contraceptives against pollution and emissions.



## Granting the investigation right to a number of SEZAD'S Employees

Muscat -  :

His Excellency Sheikh Abdul Malik bin Abdullah Al Khalili, Minister of Justice, issued a decision authorising some employees of SEZAD the investigation right.

The decision, issued on December 8, 2019, was provided for the General Director of Control and Compliance, Director of the Environmental Control Department, Head of Environmental Inspection Department, Head of the Department of Hazardous Materials and Wastes, Head of Environmental Monitoring and Pollution Control Section, Environmental Specialists, Environmental Inspectors, Assistant Environmental Specialists, and Environmental Controllers. Each shall

be granted the right to investigate in accordance with the provisions of the Law on Environment Protection and Combating Pollution, the Law on Protection of Sources of Potable Water from Pollution, the Law on Nature Reserves and Wildlife Conservation, a system for the circulation and use of chemicals, regulations and decisions issued in implementation of its provisions.

In applying the provisions of the Commercial Register Law and the regulations and decisions issued for the implementation hereof, the decision authorised the right of investigation to the Director of the Commercial Registry Department, and head of the Projects Licensing Department, each within his purview.

According to the above decision, the Director of Work Permits, Visas

and Customs Department, the Director of Risk Management, Head of Licenses and Visas Section, Head of the Omanisation and Labour Supervision Department, Head of the Occupational Health and Safety Department, Labour Inspectors, and occupational health and safety specialist are empowered with the investigation in applying the provisions of the Labour Law, each within his purview.

In applying the provisions of the Tourism Law and the regulations and decisions issued in implementation of provisions hereof, the decision granted the right of investigation to: Head of the Technical Permits Department, Inspection Specialist of tourist establishments, and a hotel classification specialist, each within his purview.



# SEZAD signs a usufruct agreement to establish business park “Maysan Square Duqm”



**RO 43m,  
the total  
cost of the  
project and  
construction  
begins next  
year**

**The project  
confirms the  
confidence  
of Omani  
investors  
in Duqm  
and reflects  
SEZAD's  
efforts to  
attract local  
investments**

## Muscat - :

The Special Economic Zone Authority at Duqm (SEZAD) and Maysan Properties signed a usufruct agreement to establish the business park “Maysan Square Duqm”.

The agreement was signed by His Excellency Yahya bin Said Al Jabri, Chairman of the Special Economic Zone Authority at Duqm (SEZAD) and Sadiq bin Jaffer bin Sulaiman, CEO of Maysan Properties.

The business park “Maysan Square Duqm” will be built over an area of 122,000 sqm bringing 20 buildings that include a commercial complex comprising various shops, restaurants, cafes and offices. As well, the projects offers a number of freehold properties, rental apartments, serviced apartments, business hotel, multi-purpose hall and other leisure and retail facilities.

### Five phases of development

The complex will be built on an area of







**Construction of 20 buildings providing leisure and retail facilities**

100,000sqm, standing on a common base with a public square. The project will be developed in five phases, starting from 2021; with the first phase will witness building 3 pavilions.

#### **Cost of the project**

The total cost of developing “Maysan Square Duqm” project is RO 43 million and is expected to offer around 500 direct job

opportunities.

Establishing this distinct project comes in line with the ongoing efforts of the Special Economic Zone Authority at Duqm (SEZAD) to attract local investments and encourage them to invest in the Zone. The project confirms the confidence of Omani investors in the Special Economic Zone at Duqm and its capabilities to grow.

**Offering freehold properties, rental apartments, serviced apartments and a business hotel**





Smart Cities  
Project in-Charge  
at Tatweer:

**We have  
started  
taking  
steps  
forward  
for**

# Duqm Smart City

**Selecting  
Port of  
Duqm and  
the Rock  
Garden  
District to  
activate 5G  
Service**

**We are  
working with  
“Omantel”  
to identi-  
fy Duqm’s  
needs for  
technical  
solutions  
that are com-  
patible with  
smart cities  
require-  
ments**

Duqm - Mohammed Al Shezawi

Eng. Tariq bin Mohammed Al Mujaini, Smart Cities Project in-Charge at Oman Company for the Development of the Special Economic Zone at Duqm (Tatweer Duqm), stated that the company started to take practical steps that can make Duqm a Smart City. In an interview with Duqm Economist Magazine, Al Mujaini pointed out that such steps had started before the company signed the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Oman Telecommunications Company «Omantel»; and a number of smart cities around the world were studied thoroughly to benefit from at the planning phase to make Duqm a smart city of its own. He stressed that Duqm is ready to experience such a change. Tatweer Duqm carries out infrastructure works in the Special Economic Zone at Duqm on behalf of the Special Economic Zone Authority at Duqm (SEZAD), as a 100% affiliate company of SEZAD. Tatweer Duqm is the executive arm of SEZAD in the field of infrastructure, project and asset management as well as development and management of investments.





One of the under-construction buildings in the Rock Garden District

### An ideal District

Eng. Al Mujaini expressed that "Tatweer, in collaboration with SEZAD, has selected the Rock Garden District to host a number of smart cities projects, as the district is a potential destination to have certain applications and solutions of smart cities. The design of the Rock Garden District in-roads pays a great attention to such concept. Also, other smart cities projects will be implemented in coordination with already established projects within the District. Therefore, SEZAD urges big companies to apply smart cities solutions and site visits will be arranged to observe some projects in the Rock Garden District".

Al Mujaini also noted that smart cities solutions will not only cover that particular district, but will include other facilities, sites and investment projects within the Special Economic Zone at Duqm (SEZD), which comply with the standards of smart cities. In addition, the modern roads at Duqm are floodlit with LED while traffic lights are smart-controlled to facilitate the traffic flow.

### Cooperation with Omantel

As far as cooperation with Oman Telecom-

munications Company «Omantel» is concerned, Eng. Al Mujaini said that the MoU, signed by both companies on April 8th, 2019, states the provision of technical solutions to make Duqm a smart city. "The companies are working on a study to highlight SEZAD's necessities of technical solutions that are compatible with the requirements of smart cities. Efforts are exerted to create a smart community in Duqm that is permanently linked to IT as well as to implement the best of these technical solutions. The MoU covers some key areas such as infrastructure, public services, tourism services, security and safety services, smart port solutions, campus solutions, traffic lights and road lighting system, smart building management and waste management".

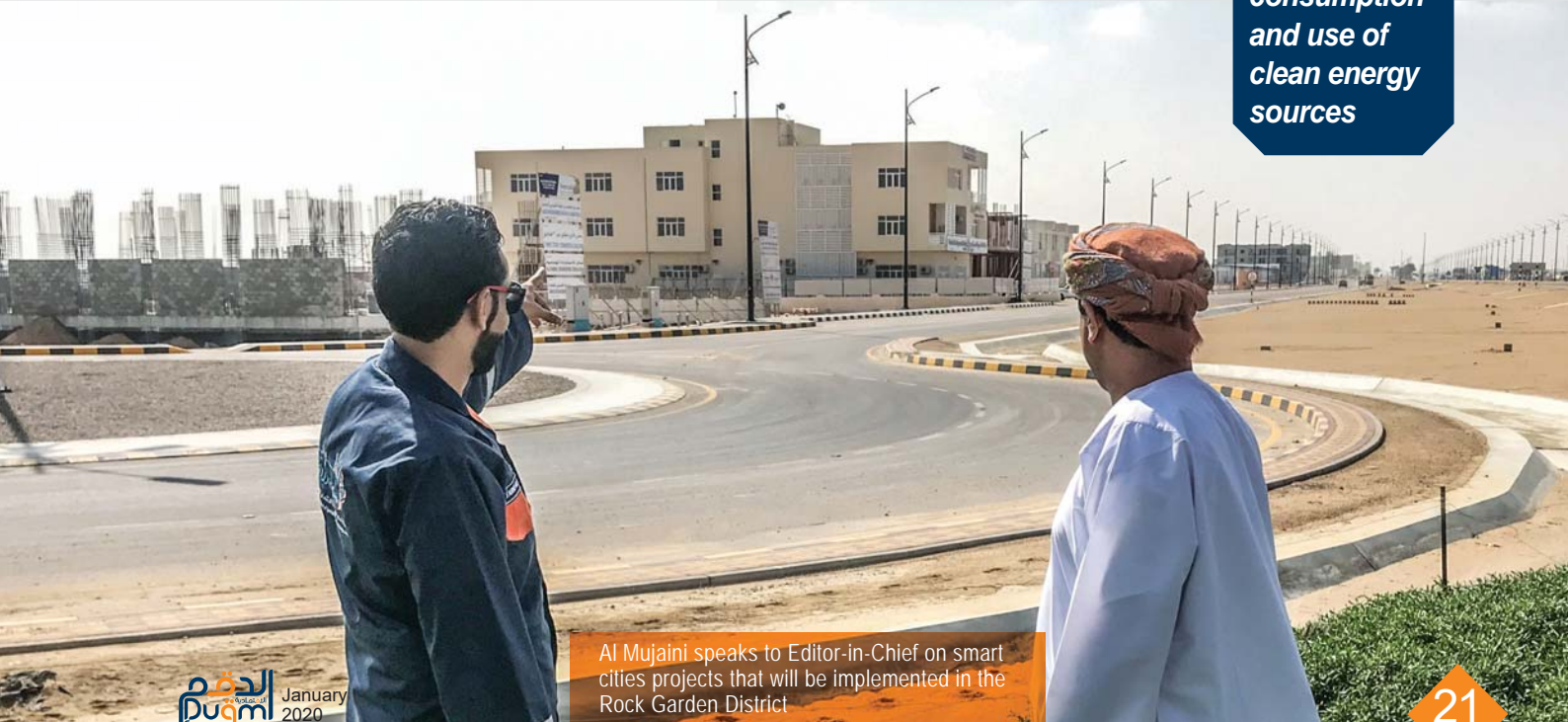
Post signing the MoU, a workshop was held for representatives from SEZAD, Tatweer, Omantel and other specialised companies to study the service of Internet 5G provided in Duqm.

### Tatweer's Current Initiatives

To shed light on the initiatives implemented by Tatweer in regards to smart cities, Eng. Al Mujaini said: "Tatweer introduced different initiatives such as developing an LED lighting

**Several projects in the field of smart cities will be carried out in the Rock Garden District**

**Implementing multiple initiatives in the field of smart cities including facilities management, reduction of electricity consumption and use of clean energy sources**



Al Mujaini speaks to Editor-in-Chief on smart cities projects that will be implemented in the Rock Garden District

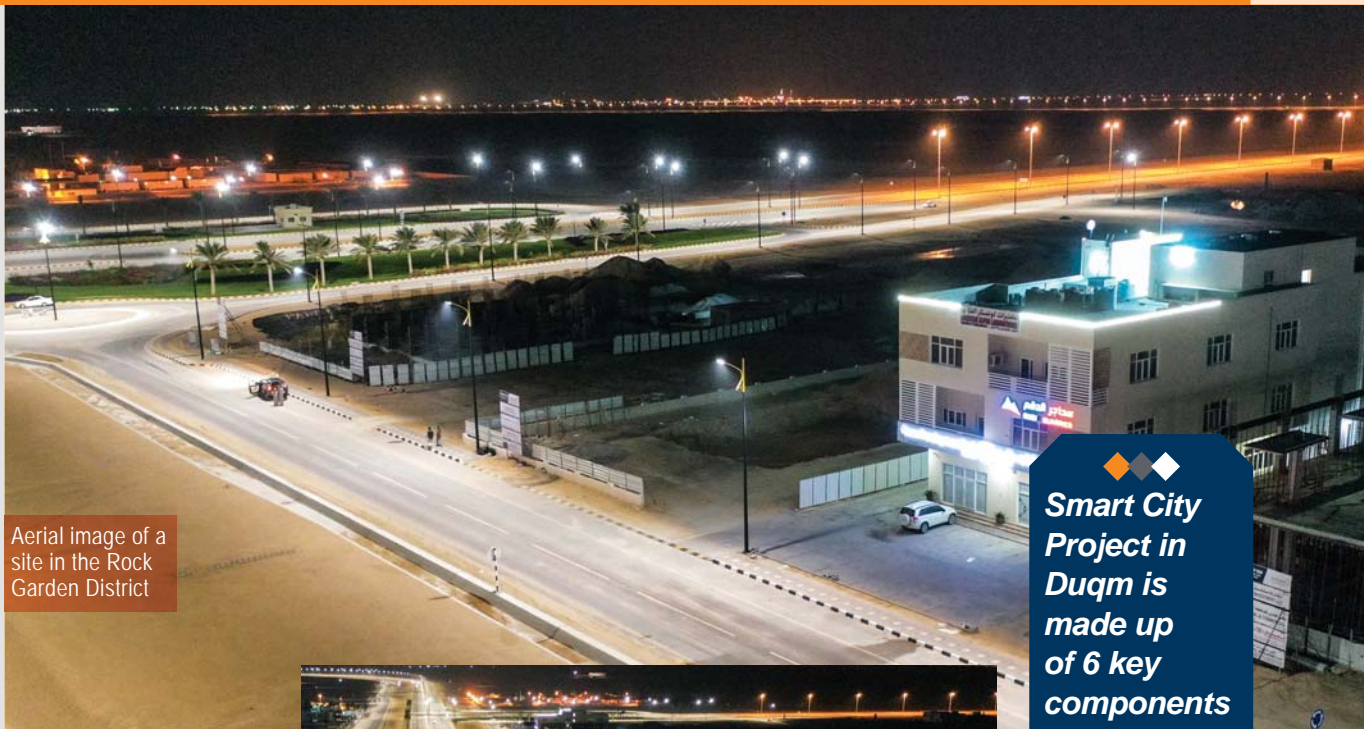


# Smart City Vision

Duqm will become a multicultural society, expecting significant communities arrived from China, India and visitors from all over the world. Smart City Plan will help to take advantage of this situation. Successful model: Singapore.



Prepared by: 



Aerial image of a site in the Rock Garden District

Smart City Project in Duqm is made up of 6 key components

system for most of the projects, applying a smart remote control system for lights to reduce electricity consumption to 50% of its common value and adding smart control systems for traffic lights”

“Tatweer’s current initiatives also include developing standards for the current projects allowing the implementation of a smart system to manage facilities and buildings by controlling all equipment and systems used in these facilities and creating a database for all assets of the currently established projects. This will simplify the process of managing, operating and maintain facilities” Al Mujaini added.

Moreover, Eng. Al Mujaini added that current initiatives are extended to include the use of clean and renewable energy resources to generate electricity. Solar panels



are already used in SEZAD’s Headquarter in Duqm to generate energy to light parking spaces. Another initiative is providing a supervisory control and data acquisition system (SCADA) to monitor and control water tanks performance. This helps solving any water-shortage related issue; as such technique serves to identify any potential problem before it happens.

Smart cities have become an essential requirement facilitating business and providing a better life for residents



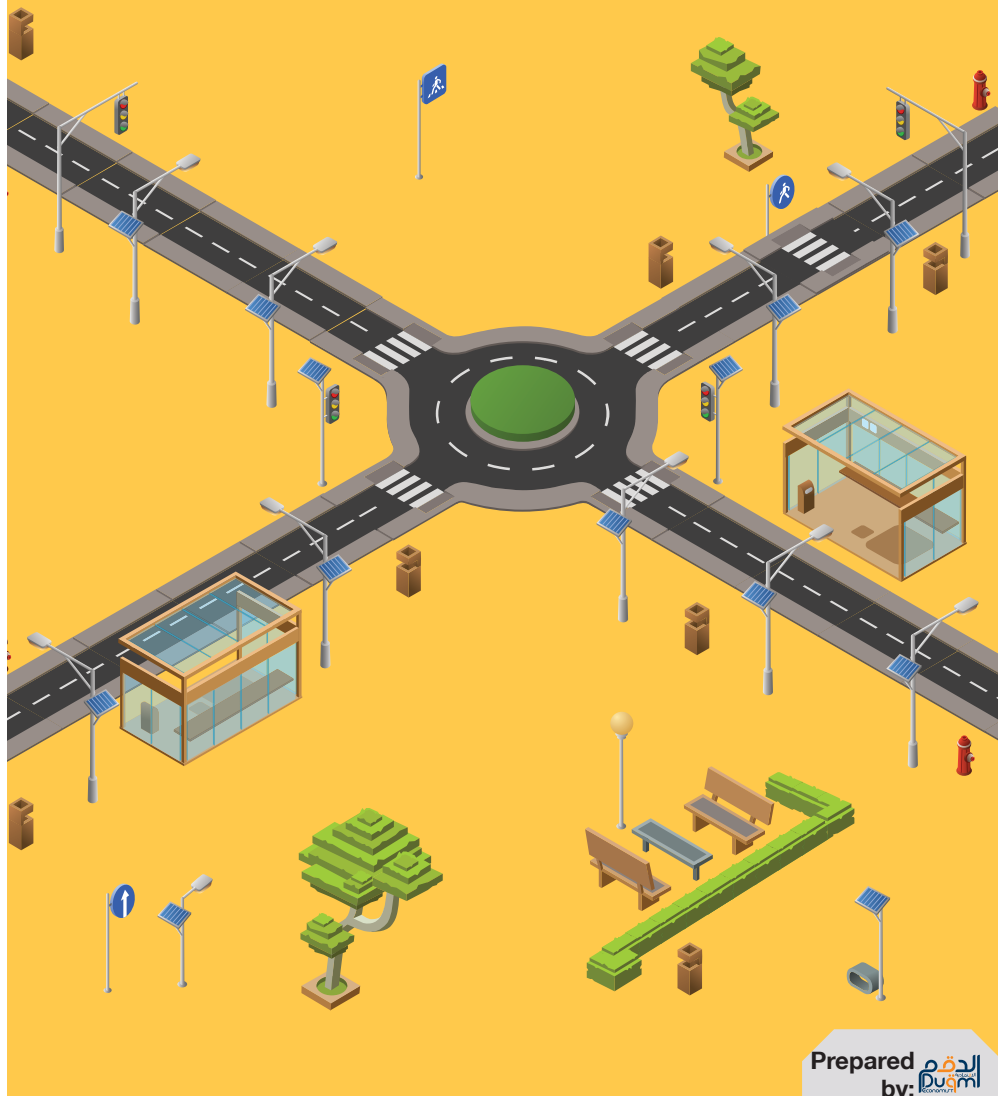



Focus on sustainable transportation, smart traffic control and communication infrastructure

Innovation, increase of productivity, and e-government are major goals of Smart City Project

## Smart Lighting

Energy efficiency in lighting is one of the key pillars of smart cities



Prepared by: 

### Objectives

In regards to objectives of the smart cities project, Eng. Al Mujaini stated that smart cities are usually capable of using the data collected from daily works to be processed in later phases and turned them into information. These data can be exerted in a way that serves providing a better life for residents of these cities and to ensure a better management of the cities and the development of its efficiency and sustainability. He highlighted that today's world increasingly requires the existence of smart and dynamic cities that are based on technology and talents. Such cities target the facilitation of various aspects related to people's activities and day-to-day tasks.

### 6 Key Components

"The Smart Cities Project in Duqm is made up of 6 key components that are lifestyle, transportation, environment, people, economy and

business, and government. Regarding the aspect of lifestyle, focus will be given to cultural opportunities, social coexistence, safety, housing quality, educational facilities, tourism and social unity. As for transportation, the focus here will be directed to sustainable transportation, smart traffic control, flexible work and communication infrastructure. Tackling environment, we will shed light on environmental safeguard, sustainable resources, management, reduction of pollutants and weather forecasts" Eng. Al Mujaini explained.

He added: "When dealing with the aspect of people, the focus will be accorded to training, creativity, participation in public life, integration and diversity. Moreover, the economy and business will concentrate on innovation, productivity, flexible work and partnership. Finally, government aspect will highlight the significance of e-government, transparency, policies and citizen contributions".

# 5G subscriptions to top 2.6 billion by end of 2025

Duqm - :

Ericsson expects the global number of 5G subscriptions to top 2.6 billion within the next six years, driven by sustained momentum and a rapidly developing 5G ecosystem. The forecast is included in the November 2019 edition of the Ericsson Mobility Report, alongside a range of other forecasts with an end-of-2025 timeline and communications service provider insights.

The average monthly data-traffic-per-smartphone is expected to increase from the current figure of 7.2 GB to 24 GB by the end of 2025, in part driven by new consumer behaviour, such as Virtual Reality (VR) streaming.

The report also projects that 5G will cover up to 65 percent of the global population by the end of 2025 and handle 45 percent of global mobile data traffic.

2019 is the year leading communications service providers in Asia, Australia, Europe, the Middle East, and North America switched on their 5G networks. South Korea has already seen a big 5G uptake since its April 2019 launch. More than 3 million subscriptions were collectively recorded by the country's service providers

by the end of September 2019.


China's launch of 5G in late October has also led to an update of the estimated 5G subscriptions for the end of 2019, from 10 million to 13 million.

Given its current momentum, 5G subscription uptake is expected to be significantly faster than that of LTE. The most rapid uptake is expected in North America with 74 percent of mobile subscriptions in the region forecast to be 5G by the end of 2025. North East Asia is expected to follow at 56 percent, with Europe at 55 percent.

Other forecasts include total number of cellular IoT connections now seen at five billion by the end of 2025 from 1.3 billion by end 2019 – a compound annual growth rate of 25 percent. NB-IoT and Cat-M technologies are estimated to account for 52 percent of these cellular IoT connections in 2025.

Year-on-year traffic growth for the third quarter of 2019 was high at 68 percent, driven by the growing number of smartphone subscriptions in India, the increased monthly data traffic per smartphone in China, better device capabilities, an increase in data-intensive content, and more affordable data plans.

  
**5G to cover up to 65 percent of the world's population by the end of 2025**


  
**Smartphone users to consume a global average of 24 GB per month and increase on total number of cellular Internet of Things connections estimated at 5 billion**





## Information Technology Manager at SEZAD

Developing technology systems to keep pace with the aspirations of investors and promote their e-experience with SEZAD

  
E-services  
accelerated  
investors'  
businesses



Mohammad Al Hooti, Digital Transformation Project Manager, explains the Project to a number of employees

### Muscat -

Ahmed bin Saleh Al Farsi, Information Technology Manager at the Special Economic Zone Authority at Duqm (SEZAD), affirmed that SEZAD pays a great attention to developing its technology systems to keep pace with the aspirations of investors and to enhance their e-experience with SEZAD. Al Farsi stated that SEZAD has recently launched a number of e-services which impressively facilitated the chances for investors and customers to receive SEZAD's e-services instead of visiting the headquarters either in Duqm or the One Stop Shop in Muscat. In his interview with Duqm Economist Magazine, the Information Technology Manager added that the first of these was to have a link to "Invest Easy" Portal, affiliated to the Ministry of Commerce and Industry. Thus, investors can register their companies as well as their investment activities carried out in the Special Economic Zone at Duqm (SEZD) via "Invest Easy" Portal. He also pointed out that the cooperation between SEZAD and the Ministry of Commerce and Industry reflects the interest to achieve integration of SEZAD's services with other governmental bodies.

### E-Services

As a concern to the e-services delivered by SEZAD to investors via its portal ([www.eoss.duqm.gov.om](http://www.eoss.duqm.gov.om)), Ahmed bin Saleh Al Farsi, Information Technology Manager at the Special Economic Zone Authority at Duqm (SEZAD), noted that in 2018, SEZAD launched the first phase of this portal to start delivering its e-services since July 1st, 2018. The services concerning land usufruct application include land allocation whether commercial, industrial, tourist or else based on investor's request, allocating the proposed location of land, preparing the topographic map and demarcation.

  
Setting out  
12 days only  
to complete  
e-applications  
instead of 30  
days as stated  
in the bylaw

  
Paving the way  
for investors  
to register  
their projects  
through  
"Invest Easy"  
Portal



# DUQM DIGITAL GATEWAY

[www.eoss.duqm.gov.om](http://www.eoss.duqm.gov.om)

**Brings a better experience**

You can log in via



 **E-Services**   
    



**Submitting applications for Lease Management via the online portal for investors based within or outside the Sultanate**

**Dispensing with the recurrent demand for copies of ID cards and records post implementing the Document Management System at the One Stop Shop (OSS)**

**Providing investors with various options to submit their applications via services portal**

SEZAD has set out 12 working days to complete e-applications from the date of submission until allocation of land, notifying investor with approval and providing him with a copy of the Usufruct Agreement. This is instead of the 30-day period stipulated in the bylaw regulating Usufruct state-owned lands in the Special Economic Zone at Duqm (SEZD) issued in 2015.

Al Farsi also clarified that the e-services delivered by SEZAD allow investors applying for land usufruct, whether from within and outside the Sultanate, to follow up with their applications, pay fees electronically and inspect the location of the land proposed for the project, which could be reached via mobile navigation systems. He pointed out that foreign investors are not obliged to be present in the Sultanate in such stage; however, they can complete their registration in SEZD commercial register and sign the usufruct agreement during their visit to the Sultanate.

#### **Digital Transformation Project (E-Transformation)**

To highlight the Digital Transformation Project (E-Transformation) carried out by SEZAD, Al Farsi stated: "SEZAD commenced the execution of this project back in 2015; in the times, where the Digital Transformation Committee for E-Services was formed to supervise the execution of SEZAD's governmental applications and follow them up to guarantee their compliance with Oman's digital strategy. In 2015, the One Stop Shop system for documents management was implemented and it has contributed to document investors' applications for any future requirement".

He added, "Throughout the last few years, we could identify the services provided by SEZAD and could be transformed into e-services. Therefore, we categorised the services related to investment into 5 main phases including marketing and promotion, investment opportunities, building approvals, building and construction, and commercial operation. According to such stages, the e-services, which can be delivered by SEZAD have been already identified".

#### **Various E-Services**

During the interview, Al Farsi touched on

other e-services, delivered at SEZAD's portal including: Land Usufruct application that has been launched recently, building permit, environment and social impacts studies, demarcation, land allocation via navigation systems, project elevation and site plan approval.

He said that investors can log in into the services portal on their mobiles or via emails or electronic authentication by using smart cards represented in the ID card and residence card for non-Omanis residing in the Sultanate.

#### **E-Payment**

Al Farsi remarked that SEZAD has started the application of e-payment system long ago via connecting SEZAD to the e-payment systems of the Central Bank of Oman and another local bank. This system allowed investors to pay fees using their credit cards or direct debit cards issued by local banks.

#### **Launching the Internal Portal**

Al Farsi pointed out that back in 2015, the internal portal, which includes various applications for employees, was launched to process different administrative tasks online. In addition, due to the increase in number of employees and services delivered externally, there was an urgent need to expand the security services of SEZAD's internal network in order to ensure protect the huge amount of information communicated between employees in different systems and correspondence.

#### **Connecting SEZAD with Other Government Institutions**

SEZAD has already established cooperation with other governmental institutions in regards to connecting the services delivered to investors. In view of that, Al Farsi explained, "Until the end of 2019, SEZAD was connected to 5 government institutions that are the Ministry of Commerce and Industry, Oman Chamber of Commerce and Industry, the Ministry of Manpower, the Public Authority for Small and Medium Enterprises Development and the Public Authority for Social Insurance. This connection has allowed for the exchange of investors' data by and between SEZAD and these institutions in order facilitate procedures for investors and customers; as no particular





Using digital channels facilitates procedures for investors

document that was previously submitted to any of such institutions would be required for re-submission.”

“Accordingly, this has contributed to the acceleration of investors’ businesses. SEZAD and the Directorate General of Customs are currently studying steps to e-connect SEZAD to “Bayan” system of customs clearance”, he further added.

#### Technology Infrastructure Projects and Information Security

Al Farsi mentioned also a number of technology infrastructure projects that are being carried out internally by SEZAD. He revealed that the key project was connecting the 5 different branches of SEZAD during the early years of establishing SEZAD. It was very essential to link the branches in Duqm and Muscat to one another via a unified network. Visual and non-visual communications were also provided amongst SEZAD’s branches; allowing meetings to be held in one branch where employees of other branches could join from their offices.

He added that the technology infrastructure projects carried out by SEZAD also include

the establishment of two data centres; one based in Duqm and the other based in Azaiba. A third data centre was established for cases of emergency. Another project is providing all employees with laptops facilitate their task management while moving between Muscat and Duqm.

#### Updating IT Strategy

Wrapping up his interview, Ahmed bin Saleh Al Farsi, Information Technology Manager at the Special Economic Zone Authority at Duqm (SEZAD), clarified that “SEZAD is currently working on updating its IT strategy, aiming to meet SEZAD’s requirements and needs for the years to come. The updates cover the administrative and financial tasks, services offered of investors and the requirement of all SEZAD’s departments. The objective of this initiative is to keep pace with the progress taking place in the Special Economic Zone at Duqm (SEZD). Likewise, this will enable SEZAD to keep up with the aspirations of investors regarding the services offered to them and the digital world, specifically with regard to revolutions, industrial intelligence, the virtual reality and interactive maps projects.



Applying e-payment system in collaboration with the Central Bank of Oman and a local bank

Highlights of the technology infrastructure projects: e-connecting Muscat and Duqm, completing of administrative works online and establishing 3 data centres

Updating SEZAD’s IT strategy aimed at meeting up with its requirements and fulfilling its needs for the years to come



CEO of Oman Data Park (ODP) speaking to :

## “I recommend establishing an integrated logistic city in information technology and communication in Duqm”

  
The proposed logistic city supports local market and reduces costs for companies

  
I urge the private sector to establish logistic projects in Duqm and open new horizons for direct imports from manufacturing countries

  
I aspire that Duqm would take the lead of cities embracing fourth industrial revolution systems



### Duqm - :

Maqbool Al Wahaibi, CEO of Oman Data Park (ODP), praised the plan developed by the Special Economic Zone Authority at Duqm (SEZAD) to turn the area into a smart city. He stated that the Company supports such trend and works to enhance the provision of smart solutions in Duqm. Al Wahaibi also stressed that attracting major investments in the sector of communication and IT shall boost the position of Duqm in such field.

During an interview with Duqm Economist, Al Wahaibi added that the available capabilities established in the Special Economic Zone at Duqm (SEZD), which is characterised by its vast spaces and advanced infrastructure such as the port, the airport and modern road network qualifies the Zone to attract major companies operating in the sector of communication and IT. He recommended the establishment of an integrated logistic city in the field of information technology and communication to fulfill any demand of goods and products placed by Omani companies.

CEO of Oman Data Park pointed out that the Sultanate is witnessing a huge demand on the products of information technology sector. “Statistics have shown that during the period extending from 2011 to 2015, the imports of IT devices only (apart from communications) have reached 288,1 million Omani Riyals; as such were imported from nearly 60 countries, 61% of which were coming from the United Arab Emirates”, the CEO commented.

He added that the establishment of a logistic

city in Duqm operating in the field of information technology and communication shall have a hand in fulfilling local demands. It shall also reduce cost for Omani companies while it supports local market as well as the GCC markets and markets neighbouring Duqm. The CEO affirmed that the infrastructure in Duqm qualifies it to make a base for success elements in such sector.

“We need to purposefully think of attracting investors interested in logistics of information systems and communication to serve economic and other sectors in the Sultanate. Communication systems and devices have become a must for each sector whether economic, social, cultural, sports or else” he advised.

Moreover, Maqbool Al Wahaibi urged Oman's private sector to step forward and invest in such field as many products, devices, systems and spare parts related to information technology and communication are not imported from manufacturing countries. However, they are imported from mediators, so it is adequate to open new horizons for direct imports from manufacturing countries to the Sultanate.

### Fourth Industrial Revolution

Al Wahaibi expressed his high hopes that Duqm would take the lead of countries embracing fourth industrial revolution systems such as big data, cloud systems, smart and Artificial Intelligence (AI) systems. He added that Duqm is all set to be the heart, where many fourth industrial revolution systems would rush, as it is a modern city with integrated infrastructure at first place.



Data Cloud Center of  
Oman Data Park in Duqm

Second, it is an industrial city. Third, it is fitted out to embrace manufacturing centres of what can be produced under the umbrella of fourth industrial revolution processes.

#### Data Center in Duqm

Maqbool Al Wahaibi, the CEO of Oman Data Park (ODP), praised the zeal for the Cloud Data Center established by the Company in the Special Economic Zone at Duqm (SEZD). The centre was officially launched in early 2018.

Al Wahaibi stated that the zeal for services delivered by the Company via its data centre based in Duqm verifies the soundness of the Company's decision to invest in Duqm. He pointed out that many companies that are not operating in such area have started to use the data centre in Duqm mainly to store their cloud data asserting that the Cloud Data Center applies the directions given by SEZAD to make Duqm a smart city of its own.

"There are various dynamics that made companies benefit from the services delivered by the Cloud Data Center in Duqm including most notably the infrastructure, which the area is known for" he added.

He also commented that the centre proved its efficiency during the cyclone which hit Duqm back in September 2019; as it was not affected by the cyclone due to the infrastructure founded in Duqm. He indicated that the presence of a data centre in Duqm encouraged officials of major companies to visit the area and consequently explore investment opportunities available in there.

#### Increased Demand

Al Wahaibi confirmed that the demand for benefitting from the Cloud Data Center in Duqm is constantly increasing. The number of companies, which started to derive benefit from the services delivered by the centre, has reached almost 40 including a number of major entities such as Arab Financial Services (AFS) that was attracted from outside the Sultanate and was based in Muscat and Duqm. In addition, there are other companies operating in the field of banking and investment that started to rely mainly on the Cloud Data Center in Duqm.

#### Numerous Advantages

During his interview, Al Wahaibi highlighted the advantages achieved by the companies based in Duqm. He noted that there is a direct connec-

tion between the two cloud data centres based in Muscat and Duqm. Consequently, it has become easier for companies, which mainly follow Muscat' Center to use Duqm's as well and vice versa. He emphasised that in case of any unforeseen incidents, data can be transferred to Muscat smoothly and within few minutes.

Through his words, Al Wahaibi urged companies operating in the sector of oil and gas as well as the ones operating in Duqm Refinery Project to benefit from the services delivered by the Cloud Data Center in Duqm. He indicated that this shall contribute to the reduction of financial burdens incurred by these companies especially the ones operating temporarily in Duqm as they need a centre to store their cloud data.

#### Aiding Companies in Their Quest for E-Transformation

Maqbool Al Wahaibi also asserted that Oman Data Park (ODP) has great potentials that qualify it to assist major companies operating in Duqm as well as inventors to add to their quests for E-Transformation. He mentioned that the relations already established by and between the Company and Omantel stating that such partnership enables the Company to deliver high quality services of smart solutions and any smart systems to companies operating in SEZD.

"Such systems target the provision of the best services to companies using our cloud centres and simultaneously aim at providing any technical support required by such companies", he added.

#### Providing Technical Support for Companies

As far as the services provided by the Cloud Data Center in Duqm to the companies operating in the Zone are concerned, Al Wahaibi affirmed that the Company's services include providing human cadres qualified to deliver any technical support to the companies operating in the Zone. In addition and via the Company's Information Security Center, professional support can be delivered to companies. He said that Oman Data Park (ODP) is keen to deliver the latest and the best global systems and programmes in such business; as the Company today owns an advanced cloud system, (NIBULLA), which was released back in 2019. NIBULLA contributes to the reduction of costs for companies and at the same time, it provides higher quality. Besides, during 2019, the Company launched Microsoft AZURE System; a modern system that provides advanced services to companies.

**Zeal for the  
Data Center  
in Duqm  
is leveling  
up ...  
Investment  
proved to be  
a success**

**Major  
companies  
started to  
store their  
cloud data in  
Duqm**

**We are ready  
to provide  
any technical  
support  
services to  
companies  
operating  
in Duqm.  
We are also  
ready to  
cooperate in  
the field of  
information  
security**



الدقم Duqm

هيئة المنطقة الاقتصادية الخاصة  
Special Economic Zone Authority

Sultanate of Oman

سلطنة عُمان



# DUQM

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**Dr. Mohamed Khalefa Sarrab**  
Deputy Director of Communication  
and Information Research Center



## Smart Streets

### Real-Time Feedback for Adaptive Traffic Signals in Smart Cities

The smart city concept becomes a trend for the city's evolution and development. This concept aims to improve the quality of life, to enhance the performance and interactivity of urban services, to reduce costs and resource consumption. One of the assets of a smart city is traffic management that is the main issue in our daily life trips. A smart traffic management system allows the regularisation of traffic flow through the city by the control of traffic signals and sensors.

There is a high demand for a concrete solution to many traffic problems in our cities today to adjust the crises and to maintain traffic fluidity. These problems can be related to congestion due to peak times, the rapid increase of vehicle number, accidents with the obligation to take into account priorities to ambulance or police intervention, a special event with VIP guests etc. To succeed in our mission, we need to have real-time information related to traffic data and citizens' feedback to optimise the traffic flows. These data can be collected through the use of sensors, traffic counters, smart cameras, commuter GPS and Bluetooth. The smart technological innovations are based on data; the biggest challenge here is to collect, analyse and manage these data which has exponential growth.

In the new era of smart cities, the Internet of Things (IoT) paradigm can play a major role in intelligent traffic management systems combined with big data analytics and machine learning. This type of solution is based on the use of Internet of Things (IoT) combined with Big Data analytics and Machine Learning. To build a traffic management system using predictive capabilities preceded by a supervised learning method to prepare the system. It's important for any smart street solutions to start with a pre-study phase on advanced technologies and smart cities especially those interested in traffic management as well as study the existing work to identify the appropriate solution for the cases in Oman.

The traffic congestion is a serious problem which adversely affects the daily human life and also the environment through different causes. With city congestion, how can we end the traffic crisis? One way to calm the situation is to make the traffic lights and other means on the street more intelligent by connecting them together so that the timing of the traffic signal can be adjusted to maintain traffic liquidity. Perhaps it is not surprising

that e.g. Muscat is started to be a very overcrowded city, especially during peak times, the times of go and return from work and schools. Generally, there is a growing need for a practical traffic management system that does not assume all vehicles are equipped with GPS and all drivers know how to use it.

Traffic management needs high-tech computerised approaches to overcome the traditional methods that normally involve the traffic policemen, safety cameras and traffic lights. Analysing collected road traffic data is a key requirement for the establishment of road traffic conditions on any given road segment. Developing a traffic management system that centrally monitors and control traffic signals and regulate the traffic flow throughout the city in response to demand is very important, as it will.

- Prioritise traffic in response to demand in real time (Ambulance, Policy and VIP).
- Smoothing traffic flows, reduce cities everyday congestion markedly.
- Enable a much more effective response to traffic incidents, especially on the highway.

The use of static traffic signals with fixed timer values which can be too long or too short without any reflection of the situation need. Using the real-time data, the traffic signals timer values will be dynamic to be adapted to the situation and dynamic changes of vehicle flow using predictions and after learning phase. The process consists of the current traffic conditions extraction, traffic flow computation, and optimisation. The result will be to automatically turn the traffic signals to green for a longer period of time for one congested road.

The road traffic can be analysed based on real-time and historical data that previously captured and stored for future use. The initial background research findings show that there is a great need for a real-time traffic management system that enforces traffic redirection on demand, due to the tremendous variability in traffic scenarios in major cities like Muscat, Sohar, and Salalah.

The most significant purposes of smart streets are to reduce congestion problems in cities through better utilisation of existing resources like establishing alternative roads strategy, to treat critical situations with Emergency Vehicle Prioritisation for Ambulance, Fire brigade, Police and Guest or VIP movement, and to manage adequately the traffic according to current traffic on roads.



on the 49th National Day celebration

# SEZAD honours supporting partners during Hikka



Attendees during the ceremony held in Duqm

**Dr. Ismail Al Balushi: Duqm is among the most prominent economic zones worldwide and marks a destination with diversified economic investments**

**Infrastructure projects proved its efficiency and capability and protection dams stored 24 million cubic metre**

## Duqm - :

On the sideline of celebrating the 49th National Day, SEZAD paid tribute to government entities, companies and individuals who have made positive contributions to tackle the impacts of Hikka Cyclone that hit Duqm in September 2019. Around 24 government and private bodies were honoured during the ceremony held at SEZAD's Headquarter in Duqm.

In this regard, Dr. Ismail bin Ahmed Al Balushi, Chief Executive Officer of the Special Economic Zone Authority at Duqm (SEZAD), expressed profound thanks and appreciation to all partners for their efforts and support to deal with the diverse weather condition, Hikka. The CEO stressed that the Special Economic Zone at Duqm (SEZD) has been able to be among the most prominent economic zones in the world and becomes a destination with diversified economic investments.

Speaking on the occasion, Dr. Al Balushi commended the contributions of employees from SEZAD and other companies operating in the Zone towards achieving these accomplishments, confirming that all efforts have had a great impact on the successes made in the Zone. Looking forward, he noted that the coming phase requires making double efforts to serve the country.

It's worth mentioning that the infrastructure proj-



Dr. Ismail addressing the audience

ects in the Special Economic Zone at Duqm (SEZD) proved its efficiency and capability to withstand the tropical cyclone Hikka. Therefore, employees at the Port of Duqm, Drydock and other projects reported to office the next day post the cyclone. The amount of rainfall in Duqm during the cyclone, Hikka, was 119 mm and the protection dams stored around 24 million cubic metres of water.





Oman Drydock  
(ODC) records a **15.3%** increase in number of  
vessels during 2019

Said Al Maawali to **الدوقم**:

## We are expecting Operating Earnings for 2019

Duqm - **الدوقم** :

Eng. Said bin Hamood Al Maawali, the CEO of Oman Drydock Company (ODC), praised the results made by the Company in 2019 pointing out that the number of vessels delivered by the Company during the year has exceeded 158 compared to 130 delivered in 2018 i.e. an increase of 15.3% has been recorded.

In his interview with Duqm Economist, Al Maawali attributed such performance to the efforts exerted by the Company to attract as many vessel owners as possible as well as to the reputation acquired by the Company in global market and the installation of up-to-date systems such as BWST and Scrubber.

He stated that 2019 has witnessed an increase in the number of vessels owners, who decided on Oman Drydock Company (ODC) to carry out the maintenance works of their vessels especially key shareholders such as Maersk Line, MSC, NYK and others. He also indi-



Said Al Maawali



**We are working on the diversification of Company's income sources as well as studying the manufacturing of small-sized vessels**



Company's technical and vocational performance urged major vessels owners to make the Drydock in Duqm a choice to settle upon

We are focusing on operational efficiency.... Our plan includes the installation of a floating dock

Granting local companies the priority in supplying materials required for Company's works



Haitham Al Taie, General Manager Finance and Corporate Support in Oman Drydock receives Maritime Standard Award

cated that the most notable reasons that urged vessels owners to favour cooperating with Oman Drydock Company (ODC) go back to the distinguished development in the Company's technical and vocational performance as well as its capacity to carry out highly efficient works.

#### Increase in Operational Efficiency

Al Maawali pointed out that 2019 has witnessed an increase in the Company's operational efficiency as well as in the number of workers covering the works carried out in the Drydock. In addition, the Company has installed up-to-date systems for the vessels which will help to attract more of them.

He stated that the Company's plan developed for the following phase includes the installation of a floating dock to meet up with the increasing demand for the Company's services and to enhance its performance. The Company will also change some of the operating systems to level up its operating efficiency.

#### Making Profits

Al Maawali expected that during 2019 the Company will make operating earnings prior to the dates agreed and that will be a first! He clarified that the Company is branching out its income sources via carrying out oil and gas collateral works, iron and structural works for Duqm Refinery in addition to targeting the vessel-building arena.

#### Global Recognition

Through his words, Eng. Said bin Hamoud Al Maawali tackled the global recognition for the

Company during 2019. He indicated that back in October, the Company was awarded "The Best Practices" during its participation in Maritime Standard Gala for 2019 that was held in Dubai. The Company was also awarded an ASME U and NBIC R stamped certificate for the authorisation to manufacture liquefied gas pressure pipes. He indicated that such certificate is deemed a milestone for the Company and a new level added to the high and competitive quality of the Drydock.

#### Supporting Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs)

The CEO of Oman Drydock Company (ODC) asserted that the Company pays a great deal of attention to owners of small and medium projects; in June 2018, the Company held an event dedicated to such entities in Crowne Plaza Hotel to introduce their owners to the arenas covered by the Company as well as to make them familiar with the opportunities available in such regard. The event was approached by many project owners; actually a number of them did succeed in concluding contracts with the Company in order to develop their works and stabilise them in a way that positively reflects on the national economy. In addition, the Company granted local companies the priority in supplying the materials required for Company's different works.

#### Community Development

Al Maawali added that Oman Drydock Company (ODC) plays a vital part in developing the local community of Al Wusta Governorate as it







In a workshop, Al Maawali speaks about, fishing fleet, vessel-building industry and the role played by the Company to support fishing sector and invest in it

assists and supports various charities including projects providing drinking water for neighbouring villages near Duqm, building mosques and supporting educational institutions whether at higher education or lower education levels. The Company also offers free scholarships for students and rehabilitates schools by delivering necessary supplies and other needs in addition to providing educational encouragements for outstanding students. Hence, the Company contributes to enhancing the performance of such institutions and to elevating them on the road to achieve their goals fully.

#### Enhancing the In Country Value (ICV)

Eng. Said bin Hamoud Al Maawali mentioned the role played by the Company in enhancing the In Country Value (ICV) within the Special Economic Zone at Duqm pointing out that the Company develops real estate market by running Duqm Frontier Town, which provides modern housing facilities including a number of villas, apartments as well as labour camps for workers. He stated that the Company provides housing facilities for many companies operating in the area and that will consequently raise the number of such companies and enrich the area's economy accordingly.

#### Strategy of In Country Value (ICV)

Al Maawali also mentioned the strategy applied by the Company stating that such strategy focuses on employing national workforce and qualifying them while providing trainings to raise their efficiency levels. It also directs its focus to local community by providing essential services as much as possible. The Company also gives priority of supplying materials required for its works to local companies aiming at supporting local production and developing

national entities. The Company also provides job opportunities to owners of small and medium enterprises (SMEs) to cultivate their works, gain clients' trust via complying with approved terms, mastering their work and delivering it on time. In addition, the Company has shown great interest in participating in international conferences and forums related to marine industries to represent Oman and enrich real estate market in the region.

#### Qualifying Oman's Youth

Tackling the Company's plan to qualify the Omani youth and to increase the rate of Omanisation, Al Maawali stated that national workforce is one of the main pillars for developing Oman Drydock Company's (ODC) performance. The Company seeks to increase such rate and to qualify national cadres in all administrative levels; especially supervision and leadership ones, in addition to technical level in its Production Unit. He added that during 2019, the Company signed an initiation for a training programme in conjunction with employment for a forklift and equipment operator post. Such programme will provide 35 job opportunities. The programme will be announced in the Q1 of 2020.

#### Increase of Omanisation Rate

Al Maawali emphasised that Omanisation in supervision and leadership posts has reached almost 70% while it is 55% in technical posts and 12% in labour category. He asserted that the Company provides Programmes to improve personnel skills. Such Programmes include On-the-job training, which comprises assigning employees with special projects to provide them with expertise required for occupational development. Employees are also enrolled in training courses as per their work requirements.

**Employment of national workforce is our priority**

**Initiating a training programme in conjunction with employment for a forklift and equipment operator post**

**Omanisation rate in supervision and leadership posts is 70%**





## Port of Duqm records strong performance in 2019

Port of Duqm CEO speaking to **الدوقم**  
Economist

### Major shipping lines marked Duqm as a destination for their containers

Interviewed: Saleh bin Nabhan Al Maamari

Port of Duqm carries out many commercial operations every day on the commercial berth, although its construction works are not yet completed. This strategically located spot in Oman attracts many of those interested in the ongoing development of this giant project, which will make a diversion on the map to make Duqm a global destination connecting East and West.

Reggie Vermeulen, CEO of the Port of Duqm, shares with the Duqm Economist Magazine latest figures of the port's performance during 2019 and sheds light on the company's directions for 2020, during the following interview.

**We are preparing for a better 2020 through implementing several commercial actions**

**Our vision is to make Port of Duqm the region's most preferred multi-purpose port**

#### **How was the performance of Port of Duqm during 2019?**

The performance of Port of Duqm has been strong during the past year 2019. Despite the fact that the start of importing the cargo requirements of Duqm Refinery project were delayed from mid-2019 to end of 2019, Port of Duqm was able to attract alternative cargo flows filling up the created gap at our multi-purpose terminal.

The dry bulk exports are increasing, and we are preparing for a better 2020 through implementing several commercial actions. We hope that a larger amount of quarries in the direct vicinity of the Port will start operations soon,

which should cause a major boost to our export volumes. The container volumes increased substantially in comparison to 2018.

Even though the overall volumes are still modest, it is very important that we were able to increase the amount of port calls by the feeder vessels operated by Oman Shipping (from 2-weekly to weekly calls), which has boosted the overall reliability and attractiveness of the service.

In the meantime, all the major shipping lines have marked Duqm as destination for their containers, which facilitates overall containerised trade to and from Duqm. From land promotion point of view, the Port of Duqm had a satisfactory year, with substantial sales suc-





cesses in its both logistics and industrial land areas.

***With near completion of commercial berth. What is the marketing plan for the port?***

The marketing strategy entirely focusses on the preparation for the grand opening of the Port. The Port is currently operating within a 'pre-development' set up, which means that operations are ongoing while construction works in the Port area yet to be fully finalised. The Port of Duqm has successfully started operations in its multi-purpose, dry bulk and early container operations terminal, and has built up the volumes in these different segments accordingly. Other areas, like RORO, liquid bulk and food cargoes are being explored as well and marketing action plans are enrolled accordingly.

This approach allows the Port of Duqm to go for a 'flying start' once the port will formally open. It is the clear vision of the Port of Duqm to become the region's most preferred multi-purpose port, and the entire marketing strategy is built around that.

**Major Shipping Lines**

***What are the existing shipping lines for the port until 2019 and the most prominent shipping companies reaching out the port?***

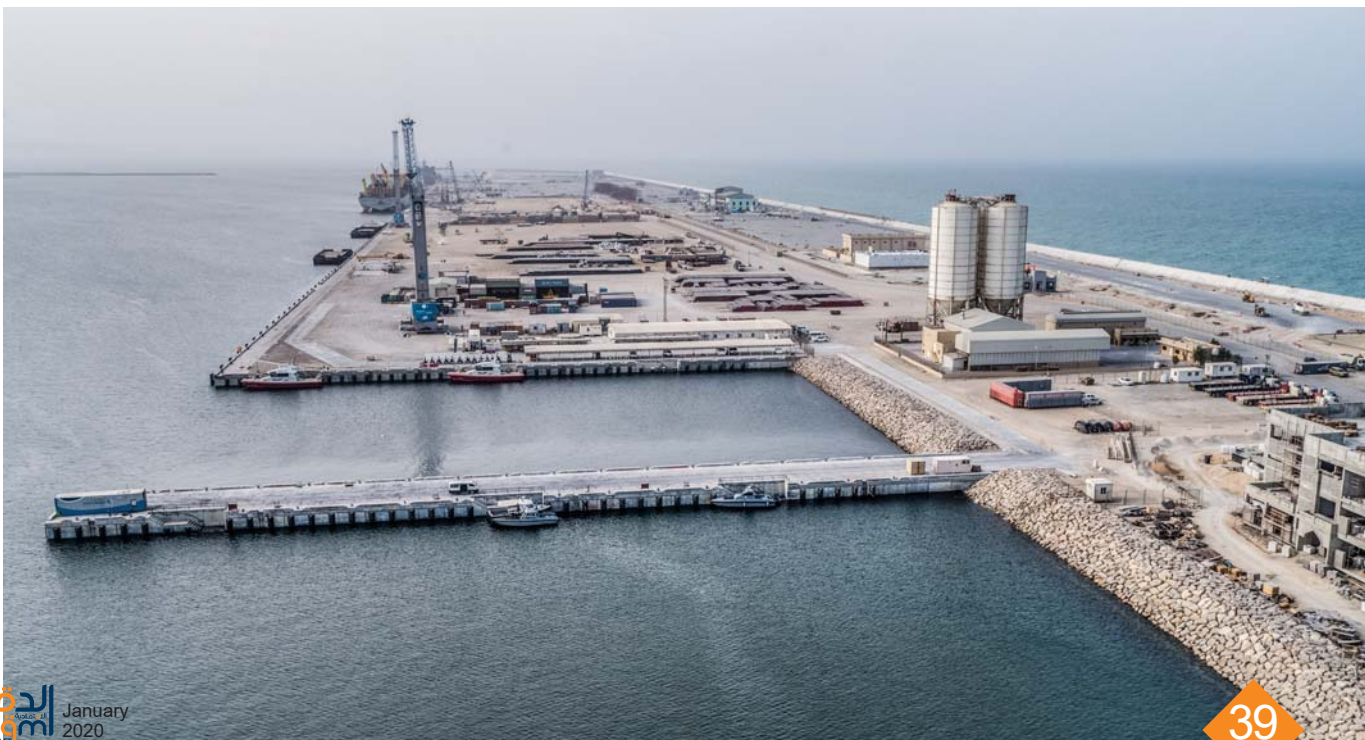
Due to the current set up of the early operations container terminal, we cannot expect to receive direct calls of large container vessels as of now. This is expected once the container terminal will be fully equipped in the course of 2021. However, the largest achievement so far is that all major shipping lines (like Maersk, CMA CGM, MSC, Hapag Lloyd, Evergreen, etc.) have acknowledged Duqm as the end destination for their containers, and containerised cargo is being shipped to and from Duqm accordingly, while making use of the operational feeder vessel.

For our multi-purpose and dry bulk terminal, we have already received all major shipping lines, such as BBC Chartering, MOL etc. A number of major shipping lines are anticipated to call Duqm as a destination once the container terminal is up and running, expected in the course of 2021.

**Logistics and industrial lands record great sales success**

**Oman Shipping Company raises the number of feeder vessels coming to the port**

**We received requests from major shipping lines to use the multi-purpose and dry cargo terminal**





# A Japanese delegation explores investment opportunities in Duqm



Japanese delegation during the brief on the master plan

**The delegation affirms that the visit opens opportunities for developing economic and investment relations between Oman and Japan**

## Duqm -

As part of the ongoing efforts to promote Oman as an international investment destination, the Special Economic Zone at Duqm (SEZD) welcomed a Japanese business delegation on a 2-day site visit. Intended to boosting the Oman-Japan business relations, the visiting delegation comprised of around 20 Japanese business people, investors and representatives of different Japanese companies. The visit came on the sideline of the 5-day business programme organised by the Public Authority for Investment Promotion and Exports Development (Ithraa).

The high-profile Japanese delegation was received at the Headquarter of the Special Economic Zone Authority at Duqm (SEZAD), where they were briefed on the masterplan of SEZD, with detailed presentations delivered highlighting the Port of Duqm and Drydock Company. Afterward, the delegates were toured around a number of corporates and operations sites of different projects in the Zone. Among the visited companies and sites were Port of Duqm, Oman Drydock, Duqm Refinery, Renaissance Village, Fishing Industries Zone, and the Japanese company, Sumitomo Corporation.

## Exploring investment opportunities

Japanese delegation much admired the visit, which served strengthening of cooperation and business and investment relations between the Sultanate and Japan. It also aimed at creating economic partnerships between the Omani companies and their Japanese counterparts.

Shusaku Kichise, Executive Director at Japan External Trade Organization stated, "This was my first visit to the Sultanate of Oman and the Special Economic Zone in particular, in which i was able to see the various economic projects that are developed in the Zone. As well, I had the opportunity to learn about the latest developments and updates in the march of Duqm development. Undoubtedly, such informative visits contribute to attracting potential investors, whether from Japan or any other country from around the world. Therefore, I'm also looking forward to visit Duqm again to further explore possible investment opportunities».

## Prime location for Port of Duqm

Masaki Nakajaki, General Manager of Sumitomo Corporation-Middle East, commended the Port of Duqm, which is one of the key components of the Special Economic Zone at Duqm. "We have visited many interesting projects which already exist in the Special Econom-



Listening to corporate presentations





**Suzuki: Great investment opportunities in oil and gas sector at Duqm**



**Nakajaki: Port of Duqm's location on global trade routes is a source of attraction**



**Majima: Looking forward to share our expertise in the field of digital solutions**

ic Zone at Duqm and others that are still under construction. However, among all these projects, I was very much attracted by the Port of Duqm because of its prime location in line with the Sultanate's geographical strategic location on global trade routes."

#### **Investment opportunities in Oil and Gas**

Expressing his delight upon the visit to the Special Economic Zone at Duqm, Hiroki Suzuki, General Manager of JGC Corporation - Middle East Office, pointed out: "The 2-day visit to the Zone marks an opportunity to discover the available investment opportunities, especially in the oil and gas sector. As a representative of one of the Japanese companies concerned about providing the necessary services for this important sector, I believe there is a number of potential investment opportunities in Duqm. Through these opportunities, we will be able to strengthen the co-operation between the Omani and Japanese companies operating in the oil and gas sector."

#### **Developing digital solutions**

Satoshi Majima, Deputy General Manager at Hitachi, Ltd- Middle East Branch, remarked: «I was really surprised to know that the Special Economic Zone at Duqm covers a spacious area of about 2000 square kilometres. We at Hitachi group will discuss ways of starting cooperation with companies and projects operating in Duqm. Our intention is to provide our support and expertise in the field of digital solutions to Omani counterparts, so they could better serve their customers.»



**Shoji: Duqm will be a perfect economic destination for the whole world**



**Shusaku: I'm looking forward to visit Duqm again to further explore possible investment opportunities**

#### **A promising future for the Zone**

Tomoo Shoji, Second Deputy General Manager of Idemitsu Shokai Co. Ltd said, "I first visited the Sultanate in April 2000 to work in different environmental projects and I have been visiting Duqm over the past years, starting in 2001 where there was nothing there at that time. Today, I'm being part of a business mission with a Japanese delegation who showed interest to explore investment opportunities in different key sectors such as water and electricity by providing engineering and technology services, food and fisheries business and logistics. Thus, I believe the major promising future of Duqm lies in the downstream business and projects like the refinery".

"With the strategic location of Oman, Duqm will be a perfect economic destination for the whole world as considering Port of Duqm will be a cost effective solution for many companies worldwide", Shoji further added.



The delegation on a visit to Fishing Port



# Postal services corporates explore investment opportunities in Duqm

Getting familiarised with the available facilities at the airport and customs clearance services at ports



Delegation looking at the masterplan

## Duqm - :

The Special Economic Zone Authority at Duqm (SEZAD) welcomed in December 2019 a delegation of 32 CEOs of corporates providing postal and courier services with representatives from the Directorate General of Customs. The delegation paid this visit to get familiarised with the investment opportunities available in the logistics sector and potential success of e-trading business in the Special Economic Zone at Duqm (SEZD).

During the visit, organised by SEZAD in cooperation with the Telecommunications Regulatory Authority (TRA), the delegation was briefed on the various facilities and services provided at the airport to motivate postal services providers to open new outlets presenting local and international services. Besides, they were introduced to the customs clearance services at airports and seaports and other services provided by the Royal Oman Police in this regard. The different land, sea and air transport networks that link Duqm with other governorates of the Sultanate and rest of the world were also presented to the delegation.

The delegation also visited a number of key existing projects in SEZD such as the Port of Duqm,

Drydock, Duqm Refinery, Renaissance Village, Chinese Industrial City and Karwa Project.

### Observing infrastructure

Ahmed bin Saleh bin Abdullah Al Mawali, Advisor for the Regulations of Postal Services in the Telecommunications Regulatory Authority, stated that the visit was fruitful and positive and allowed about 18 postal services operators to get familiarised with the infrastructure at the Special Economic Zone at Duqm.

"What we have seen on ground is thrilling as Duqm is a huge project and the Special Economic Zone Authority at Duqm has done a great job in establishing the infrastructure. This will urge providers of postal services to start their services which will definitely thrive the Zone along with other sectors", Al Mawali added.

### Exploring available opportunities

In this regard, Moustafa Osman, Country Manager of DHL in the Sultanate, commented: "The company will have an important and effective role in the Zone and we are in direct contact with the Special Economic Zone Authority at Duqm to know the available opportunities so we can provide our services and contribute to the growth of the Zone".

Ahmed Al Mawaali: Duqm infrastructure motivates postal service providers to operate in SEZD



During the visit to Oman Drydock

**Misbah Qutb**  
An Egyptian writer specialised in  
economic affairs  
mesbahkotb@gmail.com



## SMART COMMUNITIES SURROUNDING SMART CITIES

Economists have been talking about the forward and backward relations that are related to economy, as a whole or particular sector only. What they mean is the items sold by a sector to the entire society, and the complete or incomplete products and intermediate goods and services it purchases. This domain is subject to a full-fledged epistemological dictionary and mathematical foundations to measure the degree of correlations and interactions between projects, sectors or economic activities.

In parallel, the industrialists have been talking about «clusters», which indicate the industrial projects in the orbit of a large industrial hub and benefit from feeding it with all its needs or receiving its products and adding value to them before selling or only marketing them if ready for the end consumer.

One can find successful or unsuccessful examples of such clusters in any country regardless of its size where contractual, environmental, social, legislative and local factors - and perhaps others - play a role in determining such success or failure of an industrial cluster.

Asian models, especially in China and India, have become the most prominent in this field and the highest in terms of reflecting the close linkages and interactive sustainable and scalable relations between the big and the small.

In the Special Economic Zone at Duqm (SEZD), there are general issues concerning the interrelations, interconnections, and levels of interdependence and integration with the surrounding environment and with the national economy as a whole. The projection is that this project would contribute, when completed, a significant percentage in the country's GDP. Distinctive features exist as well in terms of its connections based on the location, design, levels of implementation, nature of the project and the prospects currently open to it and those that unfold every day.

In a previous article in Duqm Economist entitled «Alliance with the Evening», that is, the alliance between multidimensional development and the surrounding desert, I pointed to the iridescent signals emitted from the project to its surroundings in the desert. Here I note that one of the important signs is that the project in terms of design, progress, management, and aspirations, should be at par with the historical juncture as reflected by every wave from the Arabian Sea that embraces the shores of Duqm.

Perhaps the two ports of SEZD, i.e. the big port and the fishing port, clearly explain how the exciting maritime history of the Sultanate is still open to new additions. This is actually so because those who have had a constructive adventure spirit down the history and spread language, religion, heritage and customs are still working, thinking and communicating with the sea on the same approach: the sea that provides livelihood and involves ambiguity given the ships, people,

cultures, goods, inputs and tales it brings along.

I think that what has been going on in the fishing domain is the most important revitalisation of this very important craft not only in terms of fishing tools, but also in terms of renewing culture, customs, heritage, fashion and human relations so that the present, the past and the future are dovetailed in a form of discreet modernity.

As for the strategic commercial Port of Duqm, it is another story. It is certain that those who planned it have in their minds that the concept of ports has totally transformed in recent decades, taking advantage of the Singapore model (the port country). Ports are no longer just transmitting and receiving stations for bulk or liquid goods, containers and travelers but also modern cities in all dimensions: industrial or service, or a mixture thereof.

Perhaps the presence of the port in milieu that combines industrial areas, fishing, oil refinery, airport, new Duqm City, hotels, resorts, modern housing compounds, and the Drydock for ship repair clearly shows that Duqm with all its contents is a sea, land and air springboard for the Sultanate.

The overall picture of the surrounding or nearby urban social formation to Duqm now, but this will appear gradually, and it is useful for residential development to continue within a fully planned framework so that harmony and integration between the housing and population centers surrounding Duqm and the entire region becomes at its best.

Duqm will play a role -may be not intended- at the beginning of planning in terms of being the political, economic, commercial and cultural transit of the Sultanate as a whole. The citizens, residents and tourists will pass through or stay in it one day even if there is no practical purpose for sleeping so that they enjoy living even for one night in the embrace of a unique style of a modernity-Arab-speaking region with neither accents nor distortions.


It is also certain that the site by its nature will require everyone not to have any unplanned residential gatherings - I do not say random because this is impermissible at all - and therefore it is useful at the same time for the planning to be strict while preserving the vital natural green, agricultural or mountainous environment milieu as is. Not infringing on nature is one of the most important social responsibilities of projects and the people of the entire region.


When we talk about smart cities, the concept may be often one with a technological core, but there is how to be smart to open the way for the instinct to develop and innovate without any feeling of alienation. Therefore, the villages that surround Duqm need the stakeholders to open vistas for simple digital services and productive projects, modern stores to build and repair boats and fishing nets, cafes in the spacious clean space, playgrounds for traditional sports, and singing, music, art, equestrian competitions, etc. to engage everyone involved in a multi-smart entity in harmony.



# 2020 is a promising year for A'Soud Global School, with more achievements to come



  
We are  
the first to  
set up the  
benchmark  
of private  
education  
sector in  
Duqm

  
Introducing  
fun-learning  
environment  
with brilliant  
entertaining  
facilities for  
students

## Duqm - :

Mr. Francis Murphy, Headmaster of A'Soud Global School in Duqm expressed his positive aspirations that the school would record more achievements, reflecting the commendable public interest in the school since starting the first term in September 2019.

In his interview with Duqm Economist Magazine, Mr. Francis pointed out: "The 2020 will be a very promising year, bringing more success to Duqm and A'Soud Global School in Duqm alike".

A'Soud Global School in Duqm (AGS) has already taken off announcing the start of its academic journey (2019-2020). Kicking off the first term last September, the school welcomed students from different ages and na-

tionalities into its state-of-art premises to have a quality education.

### Setting the benchmark in Duqm

Inspired by the phenomenal success of its previous schools in Muscat, the decision was made to open the branch of A'Soud Global School in Duqm. This recently opened branch comes among the finest international schools in Oman under the management of English Education Management Company LLC, and is the flagship educational facility of one of the Sultanate's leading business groups – Al Tamman Holding in joint venture with the reputed UAE-based educational group Al Najah Education.

"We have selected to place the school in Duqm in order to set up the benchmark of private education sector in the area. We are pro-







viding high quality educational services backed with an international curricula and attractive learning ambiance. This reflects our objective of introducing fun-learning environment with brilliant entertaining facilities for students", commented Mr. Francis Murphy, Headmaster of A'Soud Global School in Duqm.

#### **State-of-the-art facilities and insightful curriculum**

This international school is located at the city centre and its well-resourced campus is spread over 15,000sqm. It features state-of-the-art facilities, which include stimulating and spacious classrooms, outdoor multi-games courts, swimming and splash pools, a football pitch, an indoor multi-purpose sports hall,

a library, ICT room, art and drama room, and laboratories.

Giving a top priority to the learning resources, A'Soud Global School in Duqm offers Cambridge International Curriculum for its students. In its first phase, the school welcomes students from Kindergarten (KG1) to Grade 5 with the capacity to admit around 200 students. However, in the following years, the school will grow to an Upper Preparatory and Senior School preparing students for the International General Certificate of Secondary Education (IGCSE). This is a content-rich academic programme designed to prepare students for further study wherever they are situated in the world.

#### **An inspiring learning environment**

The school brings a team of qualified professional British, International and Arabic teaching and support staff. "We have a team of experienced international standards teaching staff who are skilled to nurture excellence, offer students a vibrant and challenging environment for learning. With the appropriate resources available, the teaching and support staff aim to develop independent and creative

**The school brings qualified professional teachers, an international educational curriculum and a well-resourced modern campus**



**The content-rich academic programme is designed to prepare students for further study wherever they are situated in the world**





**We aim to develop independent and creative minds whilst equipping students with the capability of achieving their aspirations**

**We strive to build strong relations with the local private schools and nurseries**

minds whilst equipping students with the capability of achieving their aspirations - both academically and morally", the Headmaster commented.

Additionally, the extracurricular activities on offer at the school allow students to gain access to skills that may not be nurtured elsewhere. These can range from imagination games and creativity to mathematics and sports. Therefore, when school students develop new and exciting skills, they grow more confident and learn how to communicate and work with others properly.

He added, "Operating in line with the overall vision of A'Soud Global Schools, Duqm branch aims to create a school where love of learning, mutual respect, celebration and fun is at the forefront of everything they do. This would serve to offer students a fun-filled unrivalled learning experience. As well, it will enable students to respond to the rapidly changing world in which they will pursue further study and work in the time to come".

#### **Supporting local community**

Mr. Francis Murphy, Headmaster of A'Soud Global School in Duqm stated, "The Duqm branch of A'Soud Global School aims to provide quality education to the children of those working in Duqm. Our school will undoubtedly play a major role in the development of the educational ecosystem here, where it will bring families and companies together for the betterment of the community by fulfilling educational needs and requirements".

The school's support to the community in Duqm goes beyond only providing educational services. According to the Headmaster, A'Soud Global School in Duqm is always striving to give back to local community through various approaches. In this regard, he remarked: "We are building mutual under-

standing and strong relations with the local private schools and nurseries that are run by volunteers. Believing in the importance of partnership, team of A'Soud Global School in Duqm is sparing no effort to offer support and cooperation needed by these educational institutions. Likewise, we work on integrating with the community by extending invitations so they join us on different occasions and activities organised by the school throughout the year".

#### **Commendable interest**

Since opened its doors in September 2019, the school received a commendable interest from parents and families of various backgrounds and segments. Enthusiastically, the school's management is setting positive expectations on the years to come for the school and educational sector in Duqm.

"Far from being seen as an option for elite and expatriate families only, many local families are nowadays investing in international schools to ensure their children receive quality education with learning and qualifications that prepare them well for university. Therefore, our top management is intending to build many international schools in different parts of the Sultanate in the coming years," said the Headmaster.


Moreover, A'Soud Global School in Duqm would be working to offer special packages to attract employees of different corporates to enroll their children at the school. This comes as part of the profile-raising strategy and collaboration with corporates operating within the Special Economic Zone at Duqm (SEZD).

Referring to the saying "nothing ventured, nothing gained", Mr. Francis Murphy, Headmaster of A'Soud Global School in Duqm, concluded with a positive anticipation of the future in the coming years.



# Omani talents rolling up their sleeves to build Duqm



Duqm -  :

Over the past years, The Special Economic Zone Authority at Duqm (SEZAD) has attracted onboard many young Omani talents who will contribute in building Duqm and be part of the success story of the Special Economic Zone at Duqm (SEZD).

Last year, SEZAD increased the number of employees to keep pace with the acceleration of development in the Zone, on one hand, and enhanced the services provided to investors on the other hand. Over 60 Omani male and female employees were hired last year with most of them are fresh graduates.

In this section, Duqm Economist Magazine sheds light on the newly appointed employees in SEZAD where they share their experience and express opinions.



## Proud of my professional experience

Marwah is a Bachelor degree holder in General Chemistry from Sultan Qaboos University in 2015. She is a fresh graduate landed in Duqm to start her career journey in 2019 as an Environmental Inspector in the Environmental Regulatory Department.

Commenting on her experience, Marwah pointed out that "Being a female working in Duqm is a blessing unlike how others look at it as a challenge. The working environment in Duqm is very inspiring and colleagues are highly supportive. I'm really grateful for the experience of being part of the team developing the environmental regulations at the Special Economic Zone at Duqm. What's happening in Duqm is really promising for the future of Oman".



## Promoting investment in the Zone

Thuraiya Al Zarafy graduated with a Bachelor degree of business and commerce focused on marketing and international business from Monash University, Malaysia. She joined SEZAD in 2019, bringing with her 7 years of rich local and international experience in sales and marketing.

"As a Marketing Specialist, I play a key role along with the marketing and promotion team to attract local investors and Foreign Direct Investments to the Special Economic Zone at Duqm (SEZD). I also participate in overseas promotional campaigns and roadshows to meet with potential investors and business leaders in various sectors. In addition, I escort business delegations during site visits in Duqm as well as contribute in building the corporate brand of SEZAD within and outside the Sultanate. To me it is a great opportunity to be part of a project that can contribute on a massive scale to the Omani economy", Thuraiya expressed.



**Marwah Al Hashmi:** The working environment in Duqm is very inspiring



**Thuraiya Al Zarafy:** It is a great opportunity to be part of a project that can contribute on a massive scale to the Omani economy



**Amal Al Harrasi:** I spare no effort in playing a key role to achieve SEZAD's mission



#### Reducing expenditure

Amal Al Harrasi, Procurement Specialist in the Administration and Management Services Department, said: "Working in the Procurement Department allows me to seek the best suppliers in the market as well as explore different cost effective deals for SEZAD. Working for the Special Economic Zone at Duqm, being the largest economic zone in MENA brings me great opportunities to approach regional and international markets seeking professional suppliers".

Amal is a Master degree holder in Business Administration from the Modern College of Business and Science, Oman. She brings 4 years of experience in procurement.

#### Meeting the interests of stakeholders

Marwa Al Hinai is a Bachelor degree holder in Business Management and was appointed in SEZAD early 2019 to join the infrastructure management team in Duqm.

Explaining her professional responsibilities, Marwa stated: "My duty is focused on receiving complaints either from investors, employees or residents and work on solving them immediately, so I strive to keep the satisfaction bar high always. Working with a team of different qualifications and expertise was a motive to hone my skills and enrich my experience. As well, being an employee based in Duqm is another opportunity to build my self-confidence and shoulder a different responsibility that helped me prove the competency of Omani women in whatever they do and wherever they are placed".

**Marwa Al Hinai:** I strive to work on solving the complaints immediately, so the satisfaction bar remains high



**Asim Al Amri:** I'm proud to contribute in delivering SEZAD's mission to develop Duqm



#### Contributing to achieve SEZAD's vision

Commending the experience of working at SEZAD, Asim Al Amri explained, "Working as a project engineer for different infrastructure projects including dams and sewage treatment plant is a very insightful experience indeed. I'm really proud to be part of this national development project in the Special Economic Zone at Duqm. I'm really proud to contribute in delivering SEZAD's mission to develop Duqm as a promising economic destination with diverse investment opportunities".

Asim works as a Mechanical Engineer in the Infrastructure Management Department. He graduated from the University of Mississippi, USA with a Bachelor degree in Mechanical Engineering in 2017. Post-graduation, Asim managed to equip himself with some practical skills from the training experiences, which he had in different corporates. Prior joining SEZAD in April 2019, he undergone a 6-month training course to prepare him to come onboard.



#### A thriving experience

Said Al Farraji working as an Environmental Inspector in the Environmental Regulatory Department explained, "Working at SEZAD is a thriving experience that meets my professional aspirations. Throughout the first year of employment, I have attended 4 technical courses which helped me enrich my knowledge and hone my practical skills and abilities. A number of different learning opportunities have been obtained through the different inspection duties and site visits escorted to different projects and businesses in Duqm".

Said is a Bachelor degree graduate in Environmental Biology from Sultan Qaboos University in 2017. Post-graduation, he has been always dreaming to work on environment-related projects and working at SEZAD provides him the sought-after opportunity and made his dream come true.

**Said Al Farraji:** Working at SEZAD is a thriving experience that meets my professional aspirations



#### **Inspiring and innovation-provoking environment**

In this regard, Nada Al Siyabi, the IT Business Analyst in the Information Technology Department, sheds light to her experience on the innovation and creativity front. Nada is a Bachelor degree holder in Software Engineering from the Higher College of Technology. She is very skilled cadre bringing 2 years of rich experience in software development.

"I really enjoy working at SEZAD as through the digital solutions and applications which I develop I could contribute to enhance the experience of our investors. Likewise, I work on developing different applications dedicated to serve the employees. The working environment at SEZAD is very inspiring and helps developing my skills and abilities in the field of IT and communications," Nada enthusiastically expressed.



#### **New horizons**

Marwan Al Habsi is a fresh graduate started his career path at SEZAD as an HSE Specialist in the Risk Management Department. However, he got involved in different training opportunities over the past years, post graduating from the Higher College of Technology in 2017 with a Bachelor degree in Electrical Engineering.

Marwan affirmed, "Being an engineering graduate, but working in HSE field is a great opportunity which opened new horizons for me. Over the past 10 months of working as an HSE Specialist in SEZAD, I could come across learning lessons that contributed to diverting my career path to a thriving field. Experiencing Hikka Cyclone was a real development lesson for me to work under pressure and experience crisis management".

**Nada Al Siyabi: Introducing digital solutions and applications that contribute to enhance the experience of investors and promote the Zone**

**Marwan Al Habsi: Experiencing Hikka Cyclone was a real development lesson of crisis management**



#### **Providing job opportunities**

Reflecting on the positive impact of SEZAD's mission of developing Duqm, Athra Al Junaibi commented: "Being a resident of Duqm, I'm really grateful to contribute to the national mission of developing Duqm, which served providing job opportunities for locals. Throughout the years, Duqm will witness a facelift, making a positive social and economic impact on people's life".

Athra works as an Administrative Employee in the Compliance and Enforcement, handling secretarial tasks for the department. She is a Diploma degree holder in Business Management from Dhofar University.



#### **Building the bright future of Duqm**

Touching on the promising future of Duqm, Mustafa Al Balushi, SME Specialist in the Partnership and Development Department, remarked: "Working with SEZAD is a unique opportunity as what we are doing today would bring the prospective success and bright future of Duqm. SEZAD provides us with almost all the incentives and facilities that every employee looks for, so it's our responsibility to payback for SEZAD and Oman overall by bringing our best expertise".

Mustafa is a Bachelor degree holder in Business Management from Gulf College, coming with 10 years of experience in business development through different positions he handled in various private and government bodies.

**Athra Al Junaibi: Duqm will witness a facelift, making a positive social and economic impact on people's life**

**Mustafa Al La-wati: Working with SEZAD is a unique opportunity to contribute in building the bright future of Duqm**



# Saudi-Omani Forum reviews investment opportunities available in the Sultanate



**Yahya Al Jabri: Saudi Arabia is a strategic partner of the Sultanate and we look forward to further trade and investment cooperation**

**The forum calls upon Saudi investors to explore investment opportunities in Duqm**



**Riyadh - Jeddah (Saudi Arabia) - الدقم :**

The Saudi-Omani Forum, held in Riyadh and Jeddah, Saudi Arabia, discussed opportunities for joint cooperation in the economic and investment fields, enhancing the existing partnership between Omani and Saudi companies, and attracting more Saudi investments to the Sultanate.

The forum, which was held in December 2019, highlighted the investment opportunities available in the Sultanate through a number of presentations conducted by the Omani participants.

The Sultanate's delegation to the forum was headed by His Excellency Yahya bin Said Al Jabri, Chairman of the Public Authority for Investment Promotion and Export Development (Ithraa) and Chairman of the Special Economic Zone Authority at Duqm (SEZAD) and included a group of officials from Oman Chamber of Commerce and Industry, the State General Reserve



Fund (SGRF) and a number of companies

## **A Strategic Partner**

His Excellency Yahya bin Said Al Jabri said that the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia is the Sultanate's strategic partner in the field of mutual investments, noting that the Sultanate is looking forward to more trade and investment cooperation between the two countries in tourism, logistics and other sectors.

His Excellency also expressed his thanks to the Saudi side for the kind hosting and the utmost attention paid to improve cooperation, considering that the forum provides an opportunity for both sides to discuss ways to enhance collaboration between them in various economic sectors.

## **Inviting businessmen to invest in Duqm**

During the forum, His Excellency Yahya bin Said Al Jabri, called upon Saudi businessmen and investors to explore the available investment opportunities in the Sultanate in general and Duqm in particular in light of the incentives and facilities





provided to investors, stressing on the importance of taking advantage of available opportunities in Duqm by Saudi investors in various sectors.

#### **Promoting Trade and Investment Links**

His Excellency Dr. Sami bin Abdullah Al Abidi, Chairman of the Council of Saudi Chambers, affirmed that the forum was held to enhance commercial and investment ties among the business sectors of the two countries and provide an opportunity for them to discuss ways to enhance the level and volume of cooperation in economic fields and to identify opportunities for investment in the Sultanate, looking forward to expanding the horizons of collaboration between the two countries. He expressed his hope to visit the Sultanate accompanied by a number of Saudi businessmen and investors to familiarise themselves closely with the available investment opportunities and the advantages and facilities enjoyed by investors in general and the Saudi investors in particular.

#### **Identifying Investment Opportunities**

His Excellency Dr. Ahmed bin Hilal Al Busaidi, the Sultanate's Ambassador to Saudi Arabia and its permanent representative to the Organization of Islamic Cooperation explained that the forum aimed to introduce the many promising investment opportunities in the Sultanate and the stimulating and attractive economic environment for investment, indicating that the Sultanate looks forward to more areas of economic and investment cooperation with all GCC countries, especially Saudi Arabia.



#### **Investment Environment in the Sultanate**

During the forum, a number of working papers and presentations of investment projects in the Sultanate were presented. Azzan bin Qasim Al Busaidi, CEO of the Public Authority for Investment Promotion and Export Development (Ithraa) presented a working paper highlighting the investment environment in the Sultanate and the incentives and advantages offered to investors.

He also spoke about access to the global markets, the modern and advanced infrastructure in the Sultanate, and the capabilities of the Sultanate's ports that are close to the key markets in India and East Africa, and provide natural resources, energy, finance and other investment advantages.

He shed light on a number of promising investment opportunities, noting that «Ithraa» provides a package of services and support necessary for investors to establish their projects in the Sultanate and help them to export their products to the global markets.

#### **Bilateral Meetings**

The forum witnessed bilateral meetings between the participating delegation, businessmen and representatives of Saudi companies. The bilateral meetings discussed ways of commercial cooperation in light of the bilateral relations represented in the customs union and the common gulf market that allows freedom of movement of individuals, goods and services among the GCC countries, and the practice of various economic and commercial activities for individuals and institutions in addition to the step taken by the Sultanate and Saudi Arabia in establishing the direct land port that links between the two countries and opens the way for the flow of goods traffic between the Sultanate and Saudi Arabia.



**Chairman of the Council of Saudi Chambers: The forum enhances trade and investment ties between the business sectors in both countries**

**The Sultanate's Ambassador to Saudi Arabia: We look forward to more economic and investment cooperation with all the GCC Countries**



# Crowne Plaza Duqm records high levels of hotel occupancy in 2019

**Suha Amri: The increase in occupancy rates reflects touristic and investment boost**

**Diving, adventures, sports and environmental tourism top the list of the most interesting activities**

**A high demand to visit the Arabian Oryx Sanctuary, the Rock Garden and Pink Lakes**

**Promotional offers of "Omran" contributed to enhancing the performance of hotels and boosted domestic tourism**

## Duqm - :

Crowne Plaza Duqm Hotel is set to implement new and various recreation activities in 2020 in the Governorate for its guests following the increase of occupancy rates witnessed during 2019; as occupancy rates during certain days and occasions stretched between 80% to 100%.

Suha Amri, the Marketing Officer at Crowne Plaza Duqm Hotel, stated that 2019 has witnessed a remarkable increase in occupancy indicators whether for investors and businessmen or for tourists. During the first quarter of 2019 (Q1 of 2019), the Hotel recorded an increase of 18% in tourists guests compared to the first quarter of 2018 (Q1 of 2018). In addition, it witnessed an increase in the number of businessmen and investors, who choose Crowne Plaza Duqm Hotel to be their residence in Duqm.

Such figures reflect touristic and investment boost in Duqm as such arenas witnessed, in 2019, an increase in new projects as well as in the progression of the number of the construction of various projects such as Duqm Refinery, Ras Markaz Crude Oil Storage Station and the Chinese Industrial City.

### Tourists Groups

Suha Amri added that during 2019, the Hotel received tourists from France, Germany, Italy and various Asian and European countries. She also indicated that the most interesting touristic activities performed included diving, adventures, sports and environmental tourism; as there was a high demand to visit the Arabian Oryx Sanctuary located nearby Duqm, the Pink Lakes and the Rock Garden, which is a signif-



Suha Amri







icant tourist attraction located in the Special Economic Zone at Duqm.

#### **A Major Stop on The Road**

She indicated that Duqm is a major stop on the road from Muscat to Salalah; as many tourists hit Duqm on their way to either Muscat or Salalah for a break. In addition, the location of Duqm- neighbouring a number of tourist attractions- made it a choice for residence. She emphasised that the cooperation achieved by and between the Crowne Plaza Duqm Hotel and tourist agencies in Muscat has contributed to the increase of tourist numbers received by the Hotel.

During her interview, she praised the promotional offers and programmes provided by Oman Tourism Development Company (Omran) to encourage domestic tourism as well as the promotional prices offered by the Company throughout its different hotels.

"These prices have contributed to enhancing hotels performance and to boosting domestic tourism" She said.

#### **Diversity of Invertors' Nationalities**

As for businessmen and tourists guests, Suha Amri, the Marketing Officer at Crowne Plaza Duqm Hotel, stated that there is diversity in the nationalities of the Hotel's guests, who are Turkish, Germans, French, Chinese, Japanese and many other Arabs. She indicated that investors groups of businessmen and officials of various companies are hotel regulars.

#### **Encouraging Conference Tourism**

In her interview, Amri tackled the services delivered by the Hotel to encourage conference tourism and said that the Hotel includes a large hall that can accommodate 400 people as well as a number of smaller

halls that are designed for meetings. She added that the Hotel provides conference preparation services and all the necessary needs, whether in or out. She indicated that in 2019, the Hotel witnessed many seminars and forums for which it provided the necessary support and assistance.

#### **New Services to Deliver**

Suha Amri pointed out that 2019 has witnessed the introduction of new services and activities such as the «Spa», which comprises 7 treatment sessions, sauna rooms and a steam room. In addition, other activities will be introduced in 2020 including the "Food Market" held on Tuesday night of each week. Such market- as explained by Amri- is unique as it embraces international cuisines that contribute to facilitating the catering service for guests.

She said that the Hotel management will seek cooperation with the Omani Women Association as regards handicrafts; a corner will be allocated in the Hotel area to enable the Association to display artisans' products, which will help in marketing traditional Omani crafts.

#### **High Expectations**

Wrapping up her interview, Suha Amri expected the numbers of tourists and hotel guests to increase following the increase of flights between Muscat and Duqm which are currently 6 trips flown by Oman Air. She added that Duqm possesses various touristic capacities that attract seekers of beaches, clear skies, temperate weather and tourist attractions that we have mentioned earlier. With the increase in the number of flights to Duqm, it is expected that the tourist traffic in the region will increase accordingly.

**Receiving  
tourist  
groups from  
France,  
Germany  
and Italy ...  
We focus on  
promoting  
conference  
tourism**

**Implanting  
new  
recreation  
activities  
in 2020...  
We are  
expecting  
an increase  
in tourist  
numbers  
as flights  
numbers go  
up**





## Duqm Refinery organises fun-filled event to highlight cultural richness of the governorate

**Dr. Ismail Al Balushi:** We hope to create an annual engagement platform for local businesses in the governorate

**Jasim Al Ajmi:** The bazar event comes as part of our commitment to develop the local community

### Duqm - :

In a bid to create a positive impact and build strong ties with the local community, Duqm Refinery recently organised "Duqm Bazar" event during 25 - 27 December in the Wilayat of Duqm.

The bazar event focused on enhancing the relationship with the local community through enriching the area with a series of cultural and entertainment events that will lead to increasing the social, economic and tourism activities in the governorate of Al Wusta.

The event included several activities such as SME market, handicrafts exhibition, competitions, games, live shows, traditional Omani folklore musical bands. Besides, the event included a food truck corner, camel riding activities among other activities.

### Create an annual business platform

Commenting on the event, Dr. Ismail bin Ahmed Al Balushi, CEO of the Special Eco-

nomic Zone Authority at Duqm, the event patron stated, "Local community is one of the main pillars that contribute in the success and sustainability of Duqm Refinery project and the other projects within the Special Economic Zone at Duqm. We hope to create an annual engagement platform for local businesses from Al Wusta and other governorates. In addition to that, this event will provide networking opportunities between local SMEs in Duqm and other SMEs across the Sultanate and encourage positive interaction between them."

On the other side, Jasim bin Hassan Al Ajmi, Head of Corporate Sustainability at Duqm Refinery, pointed out "Organising Duqm Bazar event comes as part of our commitment to develop the local community and to provide opportunities for SMEs to showcase their products and services to the local community. Also, we aim at highlighting the cultural richness of the governorate in addition to positioning Duqm as a new destination for business and tourism in Oman."





# Tawasul forum highlights needs for developing Duqm community



## Duqm - :

Tawasul Foundation organised on January 6 its first forum under the patronage of His Excellency Sheikh Ahmed bin Salim bin Rashid Al Mahrouqi, the Wali of Duqm, and attended by CEOs of the founding companies of Tawasul and a number of youth and community representatives from Duqm.

Tawasul is a development foundation established by the Special Economic Zone Authority at Duqm (SEZAD) in 2018 in partnership with a number of active community service corporates operating in the Zone. Among the founding partners are Duqm Refinery & Petrochemical Industries Company LLC, Oman Company for the Development of the Special Economic Zone at Duqm (Tatweer), Port of Duqm Company SAOC (PDC), Oman Drydock Company (ODC), Oman Airports Management Company SAOC (OAMC), Sebacic Oman SAOC and Nahdat Duqm Holding Group. Tawasul was established to implement sustainable community projects that serve local communities in Duqm in particular and Al Wusta Governorate in general.

This first forum aimed to bring together locals of different segments from Duqm to discuss opportunities, challenges and the needs required to develop Duqm. During the forum, a number of important factors and issues were brought to discussion in a very interactive and innovative manner.


Muna bint Said Al Shukaili, CEO of Tawasul



Muna Al Shukaili

Foundation, pointed out: "Partnership and dialogue are key pillars of our strategy towards community development and building a database of sustainable community projects. This forum was an opportunity to engage society, officials and social activists in an open a dialogue where priorities and challenges were highlighted. As well, it served as a platform to present different recommendations, solutions and reviews with fruitful outputs were received".

The forum focused on different key topics such as introducing Tawasul Foundation and its role in the Special Economic Zone at Duqm (SEZD), thoughts of Duqm youth towards development, entrepreneurship and its role to promote economy as well as career progression and its impact on employee's future to develop expertise and competencies. In addition, a number of inspiring success stories of people from Duqm in particular and Sultanate in general were also presented to the audience.

  
*Discussing challenges, opportunities and inspiring success stories of people in Duqm*



  
*Muna Al Shukaili: Partnership and dialogue are key pillars of our strategy*



# Duqm plants 1000 trees to mark Oman Environment Day



**School students and community participated in planting 430 trees in Duqm Public Park**

## Duqm -

The Special Economic Zone Authority at Duqm (SEZAD), in cooperation with 14 companies operating in the Zone, marked the Oman Environment Day through planting over 1000 trees in 2 different locations in the Special Economic Zone at Duqm (SEZD). Falling on January 8 ever year, the 2020 edition came to promote the concept of together

for a sustainable environment.

To observe the occasion, the Special Economic Zone at Duqm hosted a number of different activities over 3 days starting on January 6 where school students, members of Omani Woman Association in Duqm and community planted around 430 trees at Duqm Public Park. This activity aimed at promoting awareness among students on the importance of preserving the environment and introducing more en-







vironment-friendly initiatives.

The second day (January 7) is dedicated for corporates operating in the Special Economic Zone at Duqm and community to join forces and plant 600 Casuarina trees in the Middle Industries Zone at the Port of Duqm, near-by Duqm Refinery. The third day (January 8) saw the closing ceremony, which was held at SEZAD's Headquarter in Duqm to thank the participants of the Oman Environment Day.

The Special Economic Zone Authority at

Duqm (SEZAD) is always keen to embody the Sultanate's role played in preserving the environment and protecting it from pollution. SEZAD's environmental programmes, aimed at promoting awareness on the importance of environment conservation and aligning it with sustainable development, are continuing throughout the year. These programmes include organising environmental activities, seminars, lectures, and clean-up campaigns covering the Zone, beaches and villages.

**Lash greenery at the industrial area of the Port of Duqm**







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



*The story of Duqm construction cannot end with the completion of work at the Port of Duqm, the refinery, Duqm airport, or other projects. Whenever a phase is accomplished, it will be followed by other construction phases*

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## Building Duqm .. Building Experiences

### (1)

The projects at SEZD are characterised by allowing their workers to gain new experiences every day and develop their skills significantly, whether the work is administrative or technical, and whether the employee is a fresh graduate or has long experience for more than 20 years.

### (2)

In a previous interview I held a year ago with Engineer (Louw Dekker), one of the construction managers at the oil berth in the Port of Duqm, who enjoys more than 40 years of experience, he told me that Duqm helped enriching the experiences he gained from his work in more than 20 countries all over the world.

### (3)

On the other hand, in the poll we publish in this issue of Duqm Economist Magazine about the new employees who joined SEZAD, I find that enthusiasm, interest to gain knowledge and build self-confidence are the reasons behind their keenness to have their contributions in building the SEZD; this vital project which is one of the largest strategic projects in the Sultanate. This project can be described as a major workshop held on an area of approximately 900 square kilometres, representing 45% of SEZD's area of 2000 square kilometres.

### (4)

Everywhere at this country, there are loyal people who work actively, whether their work is in SEZAD, public companies or private sector companies. Thanks to these sincere efforts, construction of Duqm is continued. It is a story that started in 2007 when construction started in the Port of Duqm as a small port. The scope and activity of this port expanded thereafter, with the government's desire to make Duqm more than a Drydock for ship repair. This area located in the centre of the Sultanate off the Indian Ocean and near the global shipping lines gained more importance with the establishment of SEZAD, which supervises a project that grows day after day and everyone contributes to its establishment and care for it.

### (5)

The story of Duqm construction cannot end with the completion of work at the Port of Duqm, the refinery, Duqm airport, or other projects. Whenever a stage is accomplished, it will be followed by other construction phases. The dream that started with the issuance of Royal Decree No. (85/2006) Designating the Development of Duqm city in Al Wusta Governorate a Public Utility Project" cannot stop at a certain phase. In every decade, we will find a new addition that preserves the vitality of this project, and with any progress in this project, Omani experiences are capable of winning the bet and achieving the impossible continue to be built.