OCCI COMPLETES 43 YEARS IN THE SERVICE OF THE OMANI PRIVATE SECTOR
We extend warm salutations to
His Majesty Sultan Qaboos bin Said
as we celebrate our 46th National Day.
May the Almighty bless us with greater success
and prosperity in the years to come.

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the people of Oman &
on the blessed occasion of the
46th National Day

مع الإطلاع المباركة للعيد الوطني السادس والأربعين المجيد
يسرنا أن نرفع أسمى وأجمل التهاني
إلي المقام السامي لحظة صاحب الجلالة
السultan قابوس بن سعيد المعظم
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OCCI completes 43 years in the service of the Omani private sector

"Ta’asees" initiative for graduates in Oman approved

"Does the Omani Economy have an Identity"

The First Badiyah Tourism Forum Highlights Sharqiyyah Sand Beauty
Interview with the founder and CEO of Talal Abu Ghazala Group,

Forum on Investment Opportunities in Sharqiyah

Oman beyond the sky during the reign of Sultan!!!

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Sohar Aluminium and all its employees express their heartfelt congratulations to

His Majesty
Sultan Qaboos Bin Said
and to the people of Oman on the occasion of the glorious 46th National Day.

Inspired by His Majesty Sultan Qaboos Bin Said's vision, we at Sohar Aluminium dedicate ourselves to playing a key role in enriching and empowering the lives of citizens of Oman for a future brimming with prosperity.

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Editorial

Oman First on the Arab Level in Initiating Business Index

Oman Chamber of Commerce and Industry is proud of the achievement made by the Sultanate at ‘Doing Business Report’ issued by the World Bank as the Sultanate came 66th on the world level and the 1st on the Arab level and 32nd on the world level in ‘Initiating Business Index’.

The Sultanate jumped 127 notches compared to last year ranking. It advanced by four points in the transboundary trade to fall 67th on the world level compared to 71st at the previous year.

The success is attributed to the steady efforts made to promote business environment, provide the investor-friendly regulatory framework and attract local and foreign investments. OCCI, as the voice of the private sector, hails the continuous efforts made to provide high quality business environment in the Sultanate. At the same time, it stresses the importance of intensifying and continuing efforts made to make Oman a global hub for investments.

During the coming period, efforts should shift from theory to practice and ensuring easy processing of private sector transaction. The Omani private sector should have more opportunities to take more projects from the government. OCCI is optimistic of the two royal decrees establishing the National Training Fund and the Implementation and Follow Up Unit. The two entities will play a role in improving business environment and turning the Sultanate into an international business hub.
OCCI COMPLETES 43 YEARS IN THE SERVICE OF THE OMANI PRIVATE SECTOR

- MORE THAN 707 OWNERS OF SMES PARTICIPATED AT OCCI TRADE DELEGATIONS
- OCCI AWARD FOR ECONOMIC RESEARCHES AND STUDIES PROMOTE SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH
- INVEST IN OMAN FORUM TO PROMOTE INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITIES IN THE SULTANATE
- PROMOTE TO INSPIRE INITIATIVE TO SUPPORT BUSINESSWOMEN
OCCI Economic Researches and Studies Awards

OCCI Economic Researches and Studies Awards are organized by OCCI to promote research environment and develop the scientific skills of students at the higher education institutions. It also aims at coming out with solutions and proposals for addressing the different changes faced by the Omani private sector in particular and the Omani economy in general.

The competition seeks to achieve the following aims

- Encourage researches to address the issues of concern in the Sultanate.
- Promote scientific research and identify talented Omani researchers.
- Enhance cooperation between the relevant research stakeholders.
- Create a link between the research organizations and private sector organizations.
- Benefit from the outcomes of the scientific researches.
- Publish the specialized economic researches and studies.

Winner of the first award is the research

- by the College of Applied Sciences in Rustaq under the theme ‘The Industrial enterprise and its effect on Cultural Identity: A Study on Analysis of the Omani workers in Sohar Industrial Area – The aim of the study is to highlight the major practices in the industrial enterprises in the Sultanate of Oman and its effect on the culture of the Omani female workers. The study relied on the cultural identity and the constructive theory to understand the effect and impact on the culture of individual and the institution. The outcomes of the study were linked to previous studies. The researcher found that there is a mutual effect between the female employees and the company. While companies have their own policies and procedures, the Omani female workers have their own values and attitudes. These values play a key role in how far they would accept and reject work practices. This means that the cultural identity affects the personal behaviors and that the identity may change due to interaction with others.

Winner of the second place is

- the research submitted by Al Sharqiyah University under the title ‘challenges and opportunities of the family companies in North Al Sharqiyah Governorate). The study aimed at highlighting the opportunities for the development of family businesses in North
Al Sharqiyah Governorate, the challenges facing them, the opportunities for growth and the future plans. To do this study, the researchers interviewed about 73 business owners and managers in the governorate. The study concluded that the government initiatives including financing startup companies and providing training courses have been useful in developing family businesses in the governorate. On the other hand, the major challenges facing the growth of businesses including high cost of raw material, operations and tough competitions. The business owners also complained of lengthy procedures for registering businesses.
The winner of the third place is the research submitted by Sultan Qaboos University under the theme 'work productivity in the Sultanate of Oman: Diversification Manual). The study aims at analyzing the work productivity in the different sectors. The study was limited to private sector output during the period from 2010 to 2015. The study pointed out that the productivity indicators for sector (product by each employee) is still low compared to international standards. The indicator has been going downward during the term of the study. This refers to the poor efficiency of production. Despite some slight gains made in the productivity of some sectors namely mining, quarries, financial brokerage, transport, warehousing and communication, still the improvement of production at work is due to increased job opportunities resulting from increase in public expenditure.

Invest in Oman Forum
Invest in Oman Forum, organised by Oman Chamber of Commerce and Industry and the General Union of Chambers of Commerce, Industry and Agriculture for Arab Countries started at Grand Millennium Hotel.
The forum aimed at promoting the available investment opportunities as well as the political stability witnessed by the Sultanate under the wise leadership of His Majesty Sultan Qaboos Bin Said. It is true that the Sultanate provides investors with many competitive edges such as high quality infrastructure, trained manpower, financing facilities, liberal trade policy and investor-friendly environment.

The forum reviewed a number of business opportunities in industry, mining, tourism, oil and gas fields.

Promote to Inspire initiative to support businesswomen
The ‘Promote to Inspire’ initiative includes organizing a number of panel discussions that cover a number of issues of interest for entrepreneurs. The discussions cast light on the success of stories and how successful entrepreneurs managed to address the challenges they faced till they achieved the prospective success. The initiative targets businesswomen in the Sultanate and other entrepreneurs.

Trade delegations
OCCI has been very keen on enhancing the private sector organizations in the Sultanate and their peers abroad.

During the past period, OCCI operated a number of trade delegation to many countries including Germany, Turkey, China, Spain, Russia, Belarus and South Korea. The aim of such delegations is to maximize the benefit of participants, attract foreign investments and create partnerships with the different countries of the world.

The programs of such visits included visits to the free zones and B2B meetings to promote the business opportunities in the Sultanate. OCCI also organized meetings with senior officials in these countries as well.
Heartiest Congratulations to
His Majesty Sultan Qaboos bin Said
the people of Oman &
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46th National Day

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Talal Abu Ghazala:
I was challenged by the exodus experience and took oath to become better than my enemy
Al Ghorfa magazine has this interview with the founder and CEO of Talal Abu Ghazala Group, which includes a number of professional services companies in areas such as management, consultancy, training, legal services, translation, intellectual property, IT&C and others. The Group has 86 offices round the world.

You are a very renowned Arab figure with decades of experience behind your back. Who has played a role in shaping your personality and pushing you to what you are today? There are three factors that played a role in shaping my personality. When I was a 10-year-old child, I experienced the forced exodus which ended me and my family at one of the refugee camps in Lebanon. I decided to avenge from my enemy and become better than him in terms of education and other aspects. I managed to prove myself very well.

I also don’t try to imitate successful person but rather do better than them. The third factor is the love for everyone as such love provide you with a positive energy.

The number of unemployed in most Arab countries is ballooning despite the fact that many of them are holders of university degrees. How do you see the private sector role in absorbing such graduates? Before speaking about the role of the private sector organizations in absorbing the job seekers and reducing the growing number of unemployed, we have to ask the question ‘do our education institution supply the market with graduates who can take over the available jobs at the labor market? Company management focus mainly on maximizing gains for shareholders. I quote here Adam Smith, the father of economy, who said ‘baker bakes not to feed people but rather to earn his living’. Each private sector organization should provide graduates with the skills and knowledge required by the labor market.

Oil Crisis, a blessing or a curse
Dr. Talal Abu Ghazalah believes that the economic recession is a blessing in disguise because crisis help us to revise our policies and plans and double our efforts to become more competitive. I also believe that economic boom has great possibility to make people lazy and thus deter many from looking for out of the box solutions. My group of companies was not affected by the crisis. On the contrary our group achieved the highest growth rate in 2016; thanks to our success in introducing the required change to our services to meet the needs of the market. We have operations in
86 countries therefore we are under pressures by the conditions in a given country or geographic area. To put it in a nutshell, each stage is a learning experience and we have to come out with lessons that help in introducing the required changes and arrange our priorities.

No to foreign investments on the expense of the national investment

“ It is not acceptable to focus our efforts on attracting foreign investments and forget local investments. I have always been against the laws that encourage foreign investment. I have always raised the question, which is more important for us to encourage foreign investors to invest in our countries or to use our resources to encourage local investments? We should bear in mind that encourage local investment ensures that the capitals will not leak outside the country but rather will help to achieve more economic growth. When our performance improves and when our local investments are healthy, the foreign investments will race against each other to have a toehold in our countries.

In 2014, the first book about Dr. Talal Abu Ghazala was published. What is the message you wanted to convey through this book?

I did not write this book. It was written by a woman I did not meet even once. She compiled the book in her own and sent to my office the final draft and asked permission to publish this book. I then asked the media team in my office to revise and edit the book which was done already.

Didn’t you ask her about her reasons to compile this book?

I asked this question but when I learnt that she is a graduate of the Accountant Complex, one of the community service initiatives under my supervision, I was sure that she sought to bring benefits to the society in general.

Will your group attach priority to social responsibility?

Sure, but our philosophy in this area may look different from -many organizations. I am not ready to give a dollar in cash but instead I have a fully integrated organization called TAG Foundation which provides high quality training and contributes to building capacities. The beneficiaries from such programs become qualified to have an independent source of income and contribute to the growth of their countries.
Congratulations to
His Majesty Sultan Qaboos bin Said
and the people of Oman on the occasion of the
46th National Day anniversary

ACWA Power Barka SAOG, an Omani Joint Stock Company, is a 456 MW gas fired power plant and 42.5 MIGD seawater desalination plant situated on the coast near Barka. Due to the world class operational performance for last 13 years, we are recognized as Top Performer and Leader in every aspect of the business:

- Flawless performance resulting in a top merit order plant
- Operational innovation – expansion of water facilities which utilizes existing resources to create synergies
- Commercial innovation – Share Split resulting in affordability for a wider range of investors
- Financial innovation – Euromoney Award for hybrid financing deal with extended tenor, a first in the related sector - MENA market
- Top Performing Companies – awarded AIWA award for two consecutive years under Large Market Capitalization for Top Performing Companies in Oman
- OHSE Leader – 14 years without a Lost Time Incident”
OCCI “Promote to Inspire’ Initiative Hosts Social Networking Entrepreneurs

Traditional marketing methods are losing ground, Areej Al Khurafi says

Social Networking changed the marketing scene, Hashr Al Mantheri says

The success of social networking depends on the having professional marketing strategy, Sabaa Al Busaidi
The use of social networking is growing and gaining momentum among various sectors of society. Many companies have invented ways to use such platforms for marketing and promoting their own projects through such network. In this connection, OCCI Businesswoman Committee organized a panel discussion as part of “Promote to Inspire” Initiative. The discussion aimed at shedding light on a number of success stories by entrepreneurs.

The seminar covered the role of media and social networking in helping companies achieve their own goals. The panel discussion hosted a number of entrepreneurs who utilized such platforms and later started companies for marketing social networks.

Areej Al Khurafi, an entrepreneur from Kuwait, highlighted her own experience in Kuwait. She said that she started a humble shop for selling accessories and women costumes. She shed light on the growth stages and how it has used social networks in promoting her project.

‘We used social networks in marketing our project, with the help of some social networking specialists. We also created new tools because many traditional tools are no more effective as they have been in the past’, she added.

Hashr bin Khamis Al Mantheri, the owner of a brand and marketing company and one of the speakers at the panel discussion said’ communication with the customers have been one sided with no tools to get their feedback. The social networking has changed this by helping companies to get immediate feedback from customers. This helped companies to respond quickly to any negative comments and take necessary corrective measures to ensure success of their products’.

Sabaa Al Busaidiyah, a marketing specialist said ‘achieving success in social networking depend on having a high quality marketing strategy’.

‘We need first to focus on the identity and brand image of the company and at later stage we may focus on the content’, she added.

Ghaneya Al Balushiyah was much encouraged to be the owner of the first e-radio in the Sultanate. While presenting her experience she said’ I believe that there is no way to wait for the job opportunity to come. I also believe that if I miss the opportunity, I have to create it. This is exactly what I have did after failing to get a job in media fields. Now I turned my dream to work in media field into reality.

Halima Al Abdul Salam, an active user of social networks and owner of a social networking company said that her success in this field encouraged her to resign and set her own company in 2014.

It should be noted that the initiative, which targets women entrepreneurs in the Sultanate, includes a number of panel discussions that will cover various issues about entrepreneurs. The initiative hosts successful entrepreneurs who have made their way in entrepreneurship fields. This panel discussion is the second after the great success of the first panel discussion.
OCCI Branch in North Sharqiyah Organizes Promotional Exhibition

OCCI branch in North Al Sharqiyah organized a promotional exhibition at the College of Technology in Ibra for businesswomen. A number of businesswomen and owners for very small enterprises participated at the exhibition.

The exhibition was opened by Alyaa Al Hasiyah, Assistant Director General of Education at North Al Sharqiyah and Munirah Al Harthiyah, Head of the Businesswomen Committee at OCCI Branch in the governorate.
The exhibition included a number of corners that included products such as incense, perfumes, traditional costumes, ready to wear clothes, traditional cuisines, accessories, cosmetics, natural flowers and gifts. It also included corners for the handicrafts and Omani dresses.

Munirah Al Harthiyah, Head of the Businesswomen Committee at OCCI Branch in Al Sharqiyah Governorate said that the conference aims at encouraging businesswomen to display their products before students at the College of Technology. The exhibition help participants to display their products and share experiences in products packaging.

It should be noted that the four-day exhibition aimed at promoting the products of the businesswomen and raising public awareness of such products and the importance of encouraging them by buying their products.
Economic Study on "Basis and Criteria of the Economic Identity"
"Does the Omani Economy have an Identity"

By Dr. Abdul Salam Yahya
Economic Expert at "OCCI"

Contents

• Abstract of study
• Introduction to the economic identity
• Is the Oman’s economy of a large or small volume (volume of production and diversity of the economic base?)
• Degree of economic exposure - Is the Oman’s economy a closed economy or an open economy?
Abstract of study

This study highlights the problem of identifying the national economy identity in the Sultanate of Oman, in terms of the principles and criteria against which an identity for the Oman’s national economy can be drawn and what is the strategy the State must pursue to achieve the economic identity. This can be done through focusing on the essential issues related to the importance of identifying the economic identity, relationship between the production volume, diversity of the economic base and the economic identity, as well as knowledge of size of the private sector and opening up to the world markets.

The importance of identifying the economic identity lies in that the existence of caption, identity or bold line pursued by the state’s institutions and adopted in their strategic plans related to the development growth will certainly lead to achieving the desired goals of state. These goals are embodied in achieving the sustainable development and economic stability, as the economic identity plays an important role in identifying orientation of communities and identifying their options for the different aspects of activities, including political, economic and social aspects. In addition, this leads to determining the general path of the state, unification of laws governing the economic identity and achieving this declared, clear and applicable identity.

Through the study, it became clear that the subject of economic identity is not a new one. There are many examples in the history of economic thought about the fundamental issues against which an economic identity is identified. In terms of theories: since the 18th century, foreign trade theories emerged: the theory of comparative advantage under which a country is specialized in producing the goods and services it has a comparative advantage in their production, or the modern theories in the field of trade, such as theory of Heckscher - Ohlin” which focuses on the intensity in the capital or labour element.

In terms of the economic systems: through the feudal era - Mercantilist era, then the modern systems, as two main identities are drawn from the literatures of political economy. The first is capitalist identity, which lies in the system of market economy or a liberal (free) economy governed by the market forces (supply and demand).

The second is the socialist identity, which means that power of state controls the economic activity through the comprehensive central planning. A new economic schools emerged among the capitalism, the first and the socialism, the second, have mixed between them to produce the so-called the social market economy (mixed economic system) adopted by many countries.

In the field of growth and its levels, there are developed countries, developing countries, rich countries and income-middle or poor countries. There are also the least developing or poorest countries. On the other hand, there are countries in which some general features are evolved, such as manufacturing, agricultural production, tourism or trade... etc. These matters depend upon the conditions and capabilities of the state identifying the nature of its economic resources.

Objectives of this study centered around the capabilities (natural resources and human resources) and the peculiarities in the Oman’s economy, which can make the Sultanate of Oman an industrial - agricultural country or make it as service-oriented country in the field of tourism, foreign trade or world of business...etc.
In this “economic - social” sense, it was possible that the Oman’s economy can take its position or true identity over the time and with intensifying the efforts. However, this hasn’t been achieved as required due to some internal effects and external challenges which hinder creation of right climate to achieve a distinctive identity for the Oman’s economy to be consistent with its correlated economic, social and cultural rules and balances which are significant for growth and sustainable development.

Perhaps, we describe the Oman’s economy as a capitalist economy mixed with some socialism, a socialist economy mixed with some capitalism or it can be described as closer to the modernity (related to the modern era). However, and with fairness of the previous stage, the Sultanate of Oman made during the last three decades achievements on more than one level in the field of economic and social development. If some of these achievements haven’t lived up to the world averages, they are considered high level in many aspects.

Accordingly, the following principles and criteria were used to know if the Oman’s economy has a distinct identity with clearly definite goals:

- Is the Oman’s economy of a large or small volume (volume of production and diversity of the economic base)?
- Degree of economic exposure - Is the Oman’s economy a closed economy or an open economy?
- Indicators of the structural imbalances in the Oman’s economy (Dutch disease and phenomenon of Gulf disease)
- Public and private sectors and the extent of their contributions to building the Oman’s national economy

The study concluded with a set of results, but the most notably one is:

The economic identity plays an important role in identifying the orientation of communities and their options for the various activities, including political, economic and social activities. Identification of economic identity is considered the bold lines pursued by the institutions in the state and adopted in their strategic plans regarding growth and development, which lead surely to achievement of the state’s desired goals, such as sustainable development and economic stability.

There is no doubt that the Sultanate of Oman has gained over the last three decades achievements on more than one level in the field of economic and social development... etc. Omani experiment included everything, from industry, agriculture through tourism, then the heavy industries, petrochemical industries, import and export. But all of these attempts were unable to create a clear identity for the national economy in the Sultanate or in a more precisely manner, it can’t be said that the Oman’s economy is a tourism-, agriculture- or industry-based economy or specialized in the knowledge economies (education and human resources development). Also, it can’t be said that the Sultanate has cities with touristic, industrial, cultural and artistic identity...etc.

Lack of clarity for the Oman’s economy identity came as a result of many difficulties. The most important one of them is non-consideration of the principles and criteria identifying the economic identity in the previous economic plans, or in the sense that there is no a definite option to be considered, planned well, implemented and followed-up, in order that a definite economic identity or character can be created.

Lack of inclusion of the economic identity in the previous development plans resulted in continuation of imbalance in the national economy structure. So, it is still a yield and single-resource economy suffers from lack of diversity in the production base. On the other hand, it suffers from the phenomenon of “Dutch Disease” in terms of dominance of the oil sector and services sector upon the whole economic activities. In addition, the economy suffers from the phenomenon of “Gulf Disease” represented by dominance of expatriate workers upon all jobs in the private sector, noting that it already suffers from not having the fair share of investment in the mega-projects in the Sultanate.

Accordingly, the study concluded with many recommendations related to the importance of building and refining an economic identity for the Oman’s economy which should be taken into account when developing any future plans. The most important ones are the following: Firstly, it must be noted that the conditions are favorable to the prosperity of the Sultanate, as it achieves a state of security stability and owns human workforce and high growth of populations from the regional and geopolitical perspective. The Sultanate also has many characteristic natural elements (broad environmental diversity and established cultural landmarks) which enable it to gain advantage of the touristic identity according to the comparative advantage theories. On the other hand, the Sultanate is characterized by a strategic location, making it the gate of Middle East which links it with the Indian Ocean Rim Association and the rest of the world. Thus, and with three free economic zones available, the Oman’s economy identity should certainly be determined based on its strategic location, giving it the logistic advantage which should be taken advantage of in the field of encouragement and revival of the foreign trade in terms of exports, imports and re-exports.

Principles and criteria of identification of the economic identity (Has the Oman’s economy an identity?)

General introduction to the economic identity:

This study aims to addressing the problem of identifying the national economy identity in the Sultanate of Oman, in terms of the principles and criteria against which an identity for the Oman’s national economy can be drawn and what is the strategy which the State must pursue to achieve the economic identity. This can be achieved through focusing on the essential issues related to the importance of identifying the economic identity, relationship between the production volume, diversity of the economic base and the economic identity, knowledge of size of the private sector and opening up to the world markets.
At the beginning, there are many issues and concepts come to the mind when dealing with the term “Economy Identity”. Is this term means the economic phenomena in the society or concepts and the economic systems which it depends upon?
The subject of economic identity is not a new one. There are many examples in the history of economic thought about the fundamental issues against which an identity of economy is determined. In terms of theories: since the 18th century, foreign trade theories emerged: the theory of comparative advantage under which a country is specialized in producing the goods and services it has a comparative advantage in their production, or the modern theories in the field of trade, such as theory of Heckscher - Ohlin which focuses on the intensity in the capital or labor element.

In terms of the economic systems: through the feudal era - Mercantilist era, then the modern systems, as two main identities are drawn from the literatures of political economy. The first is capitalist identity, which lies in the system of market economy or a liberal (free) economy governed by the market forces (supply and demand). The second is the socialist identity, which means that power of state controls the economic activity through the comprehensive central planning. A new economic schools emerged among the capitalism, the first and the socialism, the second, have mixed between them to produce the so-called the social market economy (mixed economic system) adopted by many countries.

In the field of growth and its levels, there are developed countries and developing countries, rich countries and income-middle or poor countries. There are also the least developing or poorest countries. On the other hand, there are countries in which some general features are evolved, such as manufacturing, agricultural production, tourism or trade... etc. These matters depend upon the conditions and capabilities of the state identifying the nature of its economic resources.

Those are models for various and multiple features and identities. Indeed, these features can only be the fruit of economic activity which the society is characterized by over a long period of time. But, what is the economic identity?

In the fact, there are many definitions of the economic identity. One of these definitions is found in the Wikipedia, stating: The economic identity centers around the economic and social features and characteristics in a country, against which the economic and social options available to the society can be identified.

From this point, the raised question must center around the capabilities (natural resources and human resources) and the peculiarities in the Oman’s economy, which can make the Sultanate of Oman an industrial - agricultural country or make it as service-oriented country in the field of tourism or foreign trade...etc.

Importance of identifying the economic identity
Economy is the main element for life in any country and the driver for the rest of sectors. So, if the state’s economy hasn’t a clear and well-defined identity and laws, this will result in confusion and inability to determine the economic path of the state. One of the most important reasons of successful economies is the choice of economic identity which will be adopted as a work approach, for example: when talking about Germany, dependence of Germany’s economy on the advanced technologies comes to the minds. Germany became the biggest and most important exporter for technology in Europe and whole world. Who can deny that both Mercedes-Benz and Volkswagen represent a prominent identity and landmark in the Germany’s economy? The touristic identity of economy is an indication to both: Thailand’s economy and Spain’s economy. China is a model for the successful economy in the field of manufacturing, and became the factory of the world par excellence.

The availability of caption, identity or bold line pursued by the state’s institutions and adopted in their strategic plans related to the development growth will certainly lead to achieving the desired goals of state. These goals are embodied in achieving the sustainable development and economic stability, as the economic identity plays an important role in identifying orientation of communities and identifying their options for the different aspects of activities, including political, economic and social aspects. In addition, this leads to determining the general path of the state, unification of laws governing the economic identity and achieving this declared, clear and applicable identity. ... The economic identity leads to orientation of the national economy. So, if the state chooses the field of manufacturing, then the national educational institutions must formulate curricula suitable for this objective. For example, Thailand designed educational courses in the field of tourism, because the state’s economy identity is the tourism. Roads, ports and airports system has been allocated to achieve this goal, and port receives the touristic ships is different from the port aims at export of the heavy industries. So, it is important for any laws system that the economic identity must be clear, well-defined and applicable to achieve welfare of society and the sustainable civil state.

This is a general introduction to identification of the economic identity for any country. What we have in Oman? Has the Oman’s economy an identity? or the legislator leaves the economy without an identity and leaves country with no interference?

In this “economic - social” sense, it was possible that the Oman’s economy can take its position or true identity over the time and with intensifying the efforts. However, this hasn’t been achieved as required due to some internal effects and external challenges which hinder the creation of right climate to achieve a distinctive identity for the Oman’s economy to be consistent with its correlated economic, social and cultural rules and balances which are significant for growth and sustainable development.

Perhaps, we describe the Oman’s economy as a capitalist economy mixed with some socialism, a socialist economy mixed with some capitalism or it can be described as closer to the modernity (related to the modern era). However, and with fairness of the previous stage, the Sultanate of Oman made during the last three decades achievements on more than one level in the field of economic and social
development. If some of these achievements haven’t lived up to the world averages, they are considered high level in many aspects. As for the Oman’s economy identity, one who follows the economic development plans in the Sultanate of Oman can easily detects that Omani experiments included everything, from industry, agriculture through tourism, then the heavy industries, petrochemical industries, import and export. However, all of these attempts were unable to create a clear identity for the national economy in the Sultanate, because simply there is no a definite option to be considered, planned well, implemented and followed-up, in order that an identity for the national economy can be created. Another reason is that the previous plans didn’t take into account the capabilities and resources available in the Sultanate which can be used and consulted when planning to create the national economy identity. The most important principles and criteria which can be consulted to know whether the Oman’s economy has a definite and well-defined identity or not, are the following:

- Is the Oman’s economy of a large or a small volume (volume of production and diversity of the economic base)?
- Degree of economic exposure - Is the Oman’s economy a closed economy or an open economy?
- Indicators of the structural imbalances in the Oman’s economy (Dutch disease and phenomenon of Gulf disease)
- Public and private sectors and the extent of their contributions to building the Oman’s national economy

Firstly: Is the Oman’s economy of a large or a small volume (volume of production and diversity of the economic base)?

Indicator of production volume and diversity of the economic base helps us to know the importance and weight of the Oman’s economy in the regional economy system, represented by the GCC economy or in the frame of Arab country’s system, helping in choosing the best alternative of the national economy identity.

Through analyzing the data of table (1), it became clear to us that contribution ratio of GDP in the GDP of the GCC doesn’t exceed 5% on average during 2010 - 2013. This contribution came in the penultimate rank, and it is from the share of Bahrain that doesn’t exceed 3%, while Qatar contributes with around 11% in the GDP of the GCC.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State</th>
<th>2013</th>
<th>Average 2010 / 2013</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sultanate of Oman</td>
<td>78.183</td>
<td>70.282</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kingdom of Saudi Arabia</td>
<td>744.336</td>
<td>668.652</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Qatar</td>
<td>203.235</td>
<td>172.113</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bahrain</td>
<td>32.898</td>
<td>29.603</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GCC states</td>
<td>1636.830</td>
<td>1447.501</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arab countries</td>
<td>2.37</td>
<td>2.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Italy</td>
<td>2.13</td>
<td>2.151</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table (1) - Indicator of the GDP of Oman in the frame of regional and international economic system (Million Dollars - Current prices)

Source: Prepared by the researcher depending upon: Statistics of Arab Monetary Fund and International Monetary Fund.

If we take into consideration that contribution of GCC states in the total GDP of the League of Arab States is estimated at about 57%, amounted to nearly 5.2 trillion. It is equal and closer to what is produced by one country in the European Union during the same period. We conclude from this that the Oman’s economy from the conglomeration of GCC states’ perspective or from the regional perspective represented by the League of Arab States is a completely small-volume economy, which determines the general frame of its economic identity in this respect.

By examining the data included in the table (2) which helps us in understanding the diversity of economic base for the Oman’s economy, it became clear that:

Oil sector contributes in the GDP of Oman with ratio of 40% during the period 2002 / 2001 and around 45% during the period 2010 / 2011. While agriculture sector (2001/2002) contributes with ratio of 2.2-1.5%, industry sector contributes with 9.0-8.0%. While the agriculture sector (2011/2010) contributes with ratio of 1.4-1.00%, industry sector contributes with 12-10%. Oil exports contribute with a ratio of 81.0% - 77.0% during 2001 - 2002 and around 70 - 75% of the total Omani exports during 2010 - 2011. We conclude from this that the Oman’s economy is still dependent upon the oil sector and extractive minerals, giving it another dimension in its economic identity, and identifying it as a single-resource economy (depleting resource - volume of production and prices are determined externally).
Table (2): Ratio of the economic sectors contribution in the GDP of Oman (2011/2013)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>2001/2002(%)</th>
<th>2011/2013(%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Agriculture</td>
<td>2.2-1.5</td>
<td>1.40-1.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oil and mining</td>
<td>40.0 - 45.0</td>
<td>50.0 - 55.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Industry</td>
<td>9.0-8.0</td>
<td>10.0 - 12.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oil exports from the total exports</td>
<td>77.0 - 81.0</td>
<td>70.0 - 75.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Secondly: Standard: Degree of economic exposure

This standard is considered an indicator measuring the relationship of the national economy with the international economy and determining its identity in terms of opening up to the international system. It is calculated via ratio of the foreign trade (exports + imports) to the GDP (Hurikat 2006). This indicator shows its relevance with the international economy. As the ratio is increased, degree of connection of GDP rates with changes in the foreign trade movement is also increased. The effect of changes occurred in the world market is increased, thus economic dependence is increased. The degree of economic exposure of the Oman’s economy can be known via the data included in the table (3).

Table (3) - Indicator of degree of economic exposure of the Sultanate of Oman

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Degree of economic exposure %</th>
<th>2011 / 2013%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>102. %</td>
<td>1973 - 1985</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>80.5 %</td>
<td>1986 - 1999</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>89.6 %</td>
<td>2000 – 2009</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>102.5 %</td>
<td>2010 - 2015</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Prepared by the researcher depending upon: the previous source.

Since the Oman’s economy depends heavily on the oil exports, indicator of economic exposure was calculated after dividing periods based on the sharp fluctuations in the crude oil prices. Through analyzing the data included in the table above, it was noted that the Oman’s economy marked high degrees of the exposure to the external world during the periods of increases in the oil prices, i.e: 1973 - 1980, then 2000 - 2009 and during 2010 – 2014. The ratio of exposure indicator ranged from 95% on average. We conclude from this that the Oman’s economy is an economy opening up to the external world not a closed one. Data regarding the general orientation of the Sultanate’s exports and imports as shown in the figure (1) indicates to the continuous increase in the volume of exports and imports, supporting the idea of economic openness in the Sultanate. It also supports the Sultanate’s dependence with high degree on its trade partners in covering its various imports.

Figure (1): The general orientation of Oman’s exports and imports during the period: 1990 - 2014 (Billion Dollars)

Source: Prepared by the researcher depending upon: previous source.
The First Badiyah Tourism Forum Highlights Sharqiyah Sand Beauty

We invite public and private organizations to promote local tourism especially in desert, says Mohammed Al Said

Tourism has become an integrated industry, says Ali Al Hajri

By Ibtisam al Saadi

Sayyid Mohammed bin Salem Al Said invited the public and private organizations to promote domestic tourism especially desert tourism. He also urged local media to promote tourism potentials in the Sultanate both locally and globally as one of the fastest growing sectors and a contributor to economic diversification.

While addressing the gathering at the opening of the First Badiyah Tourism Forum which was held 30th Nov to 9th, Sayyid Mohammed bin Salem Al Said expressed happiness over the activities of the Forum which play an important role in promoting for cultural and heritage tourism in the wilayat of Badiyah and the rest of the wilayats in North Al Sharqiyah Governorate.

The ten-day forum was organised by Oman Chamber of Commerce and Industry (OCCI) branch in North Al Sharqiyah under the theme “Economic Development and Tourism Enrichment”. The first version of this Forum aims at enhancing the efforts made by the government to activate the tourism industry and diversity sources of national
economy especially the tourism sector has great potential to be one of the key contributors to the GDP subject to proper utilization of natural, historic and cultural attractions.

The 1st Badiyah Tourism Forum sought to activate tourism activity in North Al Sharqiya in general and the wilayat of Badiyah and the wilayat of Wadi Bani Khalid in particular. It also aimed at casting light on the major tourist attraction in the area and builds real public private partnerships in organizing cultural, tourism and sports activities on the sidelines of the forum. The Forum also sought to benefit from the experiences of the nearby countries in the field of promoting tourism especially the forums and festival tourism. The Forum highlight the importance of the Sultanate’s rich history and culture through the many seminars, competitions, traditional games, traditional art performances and other activities.

Ali bin Salem Al Hajri, Treasurer of OCCI and Chairman of OCCI branch in North Al Sharqiya Governorate and General Supervisor of the Forum said that the Forum aims at highlighting new tourism vision that activates the business activities in the region and help in creating tourism based economy. He noted that Badiyah has many tourist attractions that meet the needs of the different categories of tourists.

He added that tourism is no more based on seminars and traditional program but rather has become an integrated industry. He noted that the First Badiyah Forum seeks to promote the different tourism potentials in the wilayat of Badiyah such as the golden sands, the mountains, aflaj and springs. Moreover, the Forum provides an ideal opportunity to promote the various investment opportunities in the tourism sector.

He pointed out that The 1st Badiyah Tourism Forum seeks to activate tourism activity in North Al Sharqiya in general and the wilayat of Badiyah and the wilayat of Wadi Bani Khalid in particular. The opening ceremony included the launch of tourism sties manual in the wilayat of Badiyah and the wilayat of Wadi Bani Khalid through smart applications. This was followed by a student Operetta under the theme ‘tourism is a culture’. The chief guest then honored the sponsors of the event and all those who contributed to its success. He then toured the cultural village and its contents.

The Cultural village
The cultural villages hosted more than 25 corners that reflect the social, economic and cultural aspects of the wilayat. It also provided life examples about the agricultural life, traditional arts and desert environment. The village also included corners for the public organizations and NGO. Officials at these corners distributed handouts on the visitors.

The list of participants at these corners included Omani Woman Association in Badiyah and Wadi Bani Khalid, Traffic Safety Committee, the Social Integration Fund, Royal Oman Police, Civil Defence, Tourism Directorate in North Al Sharqiya, Directorate General of Health Services, Badiyah Municipality, Consumer Protection, Al Rafd Fund, Oman Development Bank, Aged Friends Team, Fine Arts Group, Badiyah Museum, Businesswoman Committee at OCCI Branch in North Al Sharqiya and other committee that prepared intensified programs and shows for visitors of the cultural village.

Tourism and Economy Seminar
The Tourism and Economy Seminar, which was organized under the auspices of Ayman bin Abdallah Al Hasani, Vice Chairman OCC for Economic Affairs and Branches, discussed the financial subsidy provided to SMEs, means of simplifying government procedures and developing strategies that promote business in the tourism sector. Mohammed bin Khamis Al Husaini, Director of Researches and Economic Studies at OCCI presented a working paper that focused on four main themes namely the effect of tourism and its importance as one of the key options for economic diversification, the economic value for tourism and the requirements to ensure balance between modernity and authenticity.
He highlighted the fact that the Sultanate has great tourism potentials that qualify it to become a global tourism hub. The Sultanate has many competitive edges such as getting 0 mark in terms of terrorism threats and securing the 9th ranking on the world level in security index. He presented an overview on the Tourism Vision 2040 which seeks to increase the number of inbound tourists and maximize revenues.

Creating an Integrated Map for Desert and Water Tourism
Simon Karma CEO of Al Sarooj Co said that tourism is an important industry for the local and global economies. The Sultanate needs to invest in this sector as it has rich tourism potentials that help it attract a large number of visitors. The Sultanate needs to develop a plan for providing the required facilities at the tourist attractions, increasing the number of tourists and maintaining its local identity. He stressed the need to develop an integrated map for the desert tourism, oasis, water lakes and other tourism sites in North Al Sharqiyah Governorate.

Oman Development Bank Experience in Financing Tourism Sector
Eng. Ahmed bin Khalifa Al Hajri, Director of Corporate Branch at Oman Development Bank presented a working paper on the Bank’s experience in promoting tourism sector. He pointed out that 16% of the bank loans went for tourism project. He urged the youths to benefit from the finance provided by the Bank to tourism projects. He praised the seminar as the first of its kind that encourage youths to start their own ventures and contribute to the growth of their communities and national economy as well.

Growth of tourism sector contribution to GDP
Ahmed bin Amer Al Sawaie, Hotel Utilities Classification Specialist at the Ministry of Tourism presented a working paper where he reviewed a number of indicators about the growth of the sector. He pointed out that the number of hotel rooms increased to more than 11,000 that received 13 million nights. He added that more than 2.5 million tourists visited the Sultanate last year and the contribution of the tourism sector to the GDP stood at more than RO288 million.

An integrated marketing plan
Abdul Aziz bin Rashid Al Hasani, Deputy Chairman of Tourism Committee at OCCI presented a working paper on the experience of tourism camp owners. He pointed out that camps play an important role in promoting tourism. He added that OCCI is developing an effective marketing plan in collaboration with a number of organizations such as Oman Air.

Tourism Marketing Experience in Dubai
Anis al Areedh, Representatives of Alpha Tourism Company reviewed his company’s experience in Dubai. He highlighted the importance of integration between the private and public sectors in promoting tourism. He stressed the need to have a clear vision and to activate the private sector investments in tourism sector.

The forum witnessed poetry night
as elite poets from within the Sultanate and GCC countries took part. The event was presented by the media man Hussein Al Amri of U.A.E under the patronage of HE Sheikh Hamad Bin Hilal Al Ma’amari, Undersecretary at the Ministry of Heritage and Culture for Cultural Affairs. The night hosted Abdul Aziz Al Aliwi and Said bin Manea form Saudi Arabia, Said Al Hajri from Kuwait, Abdul karim Al jabari from Kuwait and the performer Mohammed bin Gharman from Saudi Arabia.

Shooting competition
More than 40 shooters from the different wilayats in North Al Sharqiyyah took part at the shooting competition. The competition was held under the auspices of Amer bin Mubarak Al Hajri, OCCI Board member in North Al Sharqiyyah and Head of the Real Estate Development Committee.

The competition aims at encouraging youths to practice and promote the different sports and ensure effective cooperation among the tourism, sports and economic organizations.

Horse and Camel Shows
Sheikh Mahmoud bin Abdullah Al Saidi, Wali of Badiyah sponsored the camel competition and honored winners of the race. He thanked the organizers and sponsors for their contribution to the success of the race.
OCTAL extends its most sincere congratulations to

His Majesty Sultan Qaboos Bin Said

and the people of Oman on the joyous occasion of the 46th National Day

العيد الوطني

National Day

46th

OCTAL
OCCI Marks the Omani Woman Day ...
OCCI chairman says: We are keen on involving women in OCCI’s delegations and events,

Abeer Al Makhini: A remarkable improvement in women venturing business,

OCCI joined the rest of the organizations in marking the Omani Woman Day which falls on 17th of October each year.

Commenting on the occasion, Said bin Saleh Al Kayoumi, Chairman of OCCI Board of Directors said “we are happy to take part in celebrating the Omani Woman Day especially the Omani woman has been accorded with great care. In many occasions, H.M the Sultan stressed the role of the Omani woman in building the nation.

He added that OCCI is keen to honor chairpersons of the businesswomen committee at OCCI HQS and branches as they are the voices that represent the interests of the businesswomen and women entrepreneurs. ‘

He pointed out that OCCI is keen on involving women at its delegations and events because the Oman woman play an important role in the development process. Involving them in such activities promote their role in the economic activities at the different wilayats and governorates.

Woman as a partners in development and growth Commenting on honoring chairpersons of OCCI businesswomen committee said ‘The Omani woman is a partners in the development process. Allocating a day for the Omani woman by H.M the Sultan proves that she has strong presence in various walks of live especially entrepreneurship.

‘ She added that the number of women who turn into entrepreneurs is growing. The business women committees’ role in motivating these women is very crucial. We seek to cast light on the leading models through initiatives such as ‘We Promote to Inspire’, which was launched by the Committee in June 2016’, she added.

‘ The Omani women has provided its ability to run SMEs and has become member of many boards. We need to provide the Omani woman with the required infrastructure to enable it to play a bigger role in society. We also need to enhance the spirit of solidarity in society, she furthered.

‘ I wish to see more women occupying supervisory and leading roles in various private sector organizations. I am sure they will have succeeded if they are provided with the proper opportunities, she concluded.
"Ta’asees" initiative for graduates in Oman approved

Al Kiyumi: 46 Ventures will be announced soon for job seekers
Ta’aees initiative targeting fresh graduates has been approved by the OCCI board at its meeting, Said bin Saleh Al Kayoumi, Chairman of Oman Chamber of Commerce and Industry board of directors, said. During the press conference at OCCI headquarters, Al Kayoumi said that the initiative aims at identifying fresh graduates who desire to set up innovative, feasible and viable projects.

He pointed out that there are 46 business projects submitted by a group of top private sector companies. Projects will be also announced every three months as OMR1 million have been allocated to set up a Fund to support and empower entrepreneurs in the Sultanates.

He also pointed out that the current contracts and projects include sale and repair of auto tyres, three shops, auto spare parts in Hayma, Liwa and A’ Seeb, agency for a marble factory in Al Suwaiq and Al Mudhabii, Taxi Musandam Project, usufruct for laundry shop and other projects as well.

He added that OCCI in collaboration with the private sector will provide direct and indirect subsidy to start-up companies through two pathways through the Fund. Loans with quick turn around and easy terms will be availed to set up projects. The second way will be through awarding contracts and businesses to the start-up companies either through OCCI or through the major private sector companies.

The government will be also urged to give priority in certain tenders to these companies to help them enhance their presence in the local market and then move to the regional and international markets.

He also pointed out that there are special terms to benefit from Ta’aees initiative, such as the applicant should be a job seeker. The application should be submitted by a team of 2-4 Omani people as individual participation is not allowed. Applicant for the competition, which should be between 18 to 35 years old, may not take part in more than one team. The team members should have the necessary skills to manage the project. The proposed project should be viable for implementation and serve the needs of the local market.

The idea of the project should be creative and should not be submitted to a similar competition. The team should be dedicated to full time management of the project in case they win.
Oman Development Bank (ODB) in cooperation with OCCI branch in North Al Sharqiyah Governorate organized the Investment Opportunities Forum in North Al Sharqiyah Governorate under the auspices of Sheikh Yahya bin Hamoud Al Maamari, Governor of North Al Sharqiyah in the presence of Ali bin Salem Al Hajri, Treasure of OCCI HQ and Chairman of the BoD of OCCI Branch in Sharqiyah.

Introducing business opportunities

The Forum targeted businessmen and women, craftsmen and job seekers. It highlighted the investment opportunities in North Al Sharqiyah Governorate and cast light on the activities of ODB with relation to financing various projects. The forum reviewed a number of successful experiences in the local market.
Providing loans and ensuring better management

Hamad bin Salem Al Harthy, Director of Oman Development Bank delivered a speech where he welcomed participants and speakers at the forum organized by ODB at the various governorates in the Sultanate.

He noted that ODB is one of the fruits of the blessed Renaissance under the wise leadership of His Majesty Sultan Qaboos Bin Said.

He added that the three main aims of the ODB are providing loans to Omani companies and establishments, guaranteeing loans provided by other banks and financial organizations and finally managing the loans and grants provided by the government.

Competitive edges

He also said that ODB shows some special interest in governorates with high investment potentials because some governorates have more competitive edges than others. Investors therefore pour to governorates that have more investment opportunities in the different fields.

Project finance mechanisms

Haitham bin Said Al Maskari, Director of ODB, Sur branch highlighted the procedures for financing the investment projects.

Nasser bin Seif Al Shabibi, OCCI branch in North Al Sharqiyah Governorate highlighted the role of OCCI in promoting business opportunities.

The representative of the Public Establishment for Industrial Estates highlighted the investment opportunities in industrial sector in North Al Sharqiyah Governorate.

Promising business opportunities in agriculture and tourism sector

Eng. Ibrahim bin Yaaqub Al Numani, from the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries presented a working paper on the investment opportunities in agriculture and animal wealth fields in North Al Sharqiyah Governorate.

Mohammed bin Ahmed Al Amri, from the Public Authority for Craft Industries presented a working paper on the investment opportunities in handicrafts and craft industries and how they may contribute to diversifying sources of national economy and ensuring optimum benefits from the available natural resources.

The Forum included an exhibition for 40 successful projects in North Al Sharqiyah Governorate, which have been financed by ODB for the different sectors.
Oman Chamber of Commerce and Industry (OCCI) has launched ‘Tasees’ initiative that targets the graduates who have the necessary capabilities to establish their own enterprises. Through this initiative, the young people can submit an idea for a commercial project or compete for a project awarded by the private sector to fulfill the needs of the market. The initiative aims to establish a company and evaluate its performance within 12 months.

The first-of-its-kind initiative comes with a new philosophy to boost the national economy and the culture of entrepreneurship. It aims to provide more job opportunities for the young people and offer them loans with no conditions or guarantees. Thus, the young people do not incur any financial obligations while implementing their projects. The graduates secure zero-interest loans for their projects, and they should be serious about bearing the responsibility and building their future.

‘Tasees’ offers several commercial projects awarded by the private sector and announces the establishment of some companies each three months. The chamber, in cooperation with the private sector, provide these start-ups with the direct and indirect support in two ways. The first includes establishing a fund with OR 2 million capital to provide these companies with financial facilities as per easy and affordable mechanisms, while the second includes awarding these start-ups with contracts. In addition, the start-ups are given the priority to carry out the awarded projects, which helps them strengthen their foothold in the local market and then foray into the regional and global markets. These projects are distinguished by being not offered through similar initiatives.

‘Tasees’ was warmly welcomed by the young job seekers, as they can benefit from its unprecedented advantages. However, this initiative requires good marketing and support from the mass media that should promote the culture of entrepreneurship, especially as the government institutions suffer from disguised unemployment, while other young people look for job opportunities.

Accordingly, it was necessary to increase the size of ‘Tasees’ fund and the number of private companies that offer projects meeting the needs of the market. The initiative offers more job opportunities to the young people who can achieve the relevant requirements. The projects should be monitored quarterly, to ensure workflow and seriousness of entrepreneurs and avoid the incurrence of early losses, because the young people do not have the necessary administrative and accounting experiences to avoid such losses.

It was also necessary to set regulations or a mechanism for the projects, and provide the young people with the social insurance and health care services.

We hope that the private institutions and companies will participate in the initiative and that the young people will seize the available opportunities, because ‘Tasees’ will not succeed without the cooperation between the two parties.
Happy 46th National Day Oman

S&T congratulates
His Majesty Sultan Qaboos bin Said
and the people of Oman on the occasion of the
46th National Day

بمناسبة العيد الوطني
السادس والأربعين المجيد

تقدم شركة الخدمات والتجارة بالنيابة عن تشكيلات الشركة إلى
المقام السامي لولي عهده حضرة صاحب الجلالة
السلطان قابوس بن سعيد المعظم حفظه الله ورعاه
والشعب العماني الغالي.
Al Buraimi chamber's delegation seeks cooperation with French private sector

- Signing MoU with Ardennes chamber
- Exploring investment opportunities at SIAL Paris
- Participating in 3rd GCC France Economic Forum
- Identifying investment opportunities in Paris Asia

By Hilal Al-Naqbi
Al Buraimi branch of Oman Chamber of Commerce and Industry (OCCI) sent a business delegation to France, headed by Sheikh Buti Al-Neyadi. Economic diversification attracted the Omani delegation to Paris. This delegation included members from Al Batinah North, Musandam and Al Buraimi governorates, as well as the head of Businesswomen Committee at the branch.

The delegation welcomed the economic cooperation and investment partnership with the representatives of the French private sector in the different fields.

**SIAL Paris 2016**

The delegation commenced its mission with visiting the Global International Food Products Exhibition (SIAL Paris 2016) that was attended by nearly 7,000 exhibitors from 104 countries. In addition, the event attracted more than 155,000 visitors. The delegation expressed its admiration at the different food and beverage products showcased in the exhibition. Some members discussed the different areas of cooperation with the other participants in the exhibition to capitalize on the productive capabilities of these companies.

**Visiting Ardennes region**

The delegation members met with the officials and traders in Ardennes region, France. The meeting was
attended by Humaid Al-Maani, Omani ambassador to France, and Brigitte Renault's, director-general of the French Departmental Council, as well as some officials from the public and private sectors. The two parties discussed the available areas of cooperation and the way of developing them to achieve continuing trade exchange between the representatives of the private sector.

Ardennes governor welcomed the Omani delegation, and expressed his country's interest in boosting the economic cooperation with the Sultanate. He said France seeks to seize the available opportunities to develop the local economy, create more job opportunities and encourage exports. The governor pointed out that the two parties have promising areas of commercial and economic cooperation, most prominent of which are manufacturing, agricultural production, construction and general services.

He highlighted the strategic location of Ardennes that is located near the main ports on the North Sea, such as the Belgian Port of Antwerp, the Port of Rotterdam as well as the ports of north-west Europe, which represents a favorable opportunity for investors looking to expand their business.

On the other hand, the Omani ambassador said the Sultanate has started building its relations with France since the 18th century, stressing the strategic importance of Ardennes that is located in the heart of Europe, near Germany, Belgium, Netherlands and Amsterdam’s large port. He added that all of these fundamentals encourage building strong economic relations between the two parties.

Al-Neyadi expressed the delegation's delight at the warm welcoming and the significant attendance by French traders and investors, which reflects the depth of relations between the two countries. He added that the meeting between the two parties enabled traders to exchange ideas and experiences, in addition to exploring the different economic opportunities and fundamentals in both countries.

MoU with Ardennes chamber
OCCI’s Al-Buraimi branch and Ardennes chamber have signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) that aims to strengthen the commercial relations between the representatives of the business community, as well as exchanging trade delegations and capitalizing on the opportunities available in the various economic sectors. The delegation also visited Euro Structure Company in France, which is specialised in designing and manufacturing steel structures for buildings and airports.

The company's General Manager Marina Stadler made a detailed presentation, in which she explained that the factory was built over 18,000 square meters at a total value of 12 million euros, with a production capacity ranging between 500-600 thousand tons a month.

3rd GCC France Economic Forum
Oman Chamber, represented in Al Buraimi branch, Al-Raffd Fund and some Omani traders, participated in the 3rd GCC France Economic Forum that was held on 19 October 2016. The event was organized by the Federation of Chambers of the Gulf Cooperation Council (FGCC) and Franco-Arab Chamber of Commerce, and was attended by Sheikh Humaid Al Ma’ani, Oman ambassador to France, as well as other Arab ambassadors, top French officials and entrepreneurs.

The forum included a session about boosting investment and trade exchange between France and GCC countries. Some points were discussed, including the prospects of economic and commercial relations between the GCC region and France as well as the investment climate and the joint GCC market. In addition, the session discussed the strategic
projects between France and the GCC as well as the role played by sovereign funds and financial institutions in funding the joint projects. Moreover, the forum looked into the opportunities available in the different sectors such as health, medical products, modern technologies, digital economy, renewable energy, transport and railways.

Paris-Asia Business Center
The delegation concluded its mission to France with visiting Paris-Asia Business Center - a 350,000 sq m trade exchange area that started its operations in 2012. The first phase will be launched at the end of next December. This area focuses on the French-Asian investments, especially importing and exporting, as it receives all exporters and producers who wish to benefit from the services and facilities available in the area.
The center is located near Charles Airport, 20 km away from Paris. It is considered a new platform for cooperation and international investment. Thanks to its strategic location, the center achieves its objectives that are represented in boosting the investment activities such as the exchange of goods and tourism business.
Omani Products Promotion Committee Honors Participants at the "OPEX" Exhibition Held in the Islamic Republic of Iran
OCC Chairman meets D.G of the Arab Labor Organization

Muscat – HE Said bin Saleh Al Kayoumi, Chairman of OCCI met on Monday 5/9/2016 with Fayez bin Ali al Mutairi, director general of Arab Labour Organization (ALO). Present at the meeting was Mr. Abdul Azim Al Bahrani, OCCI Director General.

The meeting discussed means of enhancing relations between the two organizations as well as between OCCI and the private sector. The DG of the ALO expressed his delight over his visit to the Sultanate and the meeting he had with the Sultanate officials. He noted that the meeting discussed means of enhancing cooperation between the Organization and OCCI in the coming period especially the coming period requires the joining of hands of all parties. He hailed the cooperation among the tripartite parties in the Sultanate namely the government, employers and employees. He described the Sultanate's experience as role model that can be applied in many countries in the region and the world as well. He also praised the support provided by the relevant stakeholders in the Sultanate to the ALO and its programs.

On his part, OCCI Chairman stressed the important role played by the Arab Labor Organizations in developing human resources and ensuring maximum utilization of the potential in achieving the prospective socioeconomic development. He also praised its role in ensuring optimum coordination among stakeholders and maintaining the union rights as well as in providing advice to the tripartite parties. He added that he is proud of the Sultanate’s experience in the union work and described the relationship among the tripartite parties as balanced and growing constantly.

OCCI Chairman proposed to organize a Gulf Forum under the theme 'Employment and Productivity' to cast light on the challenges facing nationalization of jobs at the GCC States. The Forum may come with practical recommendations that help in linking nationalization to productivity in the Gulf economy.
OCCI organized a workshop on the basics of scientific research. A number of OCCI staff members and representatives of some public and private organizations participated at the workshop presented by Dr. Helal bin Ali Al Miqbali of Tamkeen IT Consultancy Center.

The workshop aimed at highlighting the nature of scientific research and its importance. The workshop discussed the elements of scientific research, its tools and uses in different fields. It also discussed the approved resources in scientific researches and how unique topics are selected for scientific researches. The study also highlighted the importance of scientific research and its role in community development.

Mohammed Bin Khamis Al Hussaini, Director of Economic Researches and Studies at OCCI said that scientific research is a mean for development in all fields of life. He noted that those who fail to keep pace with the developments in scientific research will get out of the market and competition. He made reference to the Economic Research Award for Higher Education students. The first version which was held this year stresses our interest in promoting research and development.

It should be noted that the workshop comes within the efforts made to promote scientific research which plays an important role in the growth of the national economy.
The delegation of OCCI Branch in Dhahirah Governorate concluded its visit to the international marble exhibition which was held in Turkey. The delegation was led by Seif bin Said Al Badi, Vice Chairman of OCCI. The delegation comprised 37 businessmen and owners of SMEs from Ibri, Yanqul and Dank.

The delegation was briefed on the latest developments and products in this fields. The delegation managed to ink deals with a number of exhibitors.

Seif bin Said Al Badi, Head of the Delegation said that the participation aimed at developing the performance of SMEs and reviewing the latest technologies and practices in this field. The delegation also sought to enter into partnerships with elite companies to benefit from their accumulated experience in this field.

Mohammed bin Khamis Al Saadi, a participant at the delegation said that the participation provided an opportunity to meet with exhibitors and explore with them means of entering into partnerships.

Mohammed Abdullah Al Ghafri, a member of the delegation said that the exhibition provided us with the opportunity to benefit from the wide range of products that may help in meeting the needs of the local market.

It should be noted that more than 3 specialized companies participated at the international marble exhibition to display marble block, alabaster, onyx and calcified stones.
The 46th National Day is an important historical event. Oman celebrates this glorious occasion on the 18th of November that marks the birthday of Omani leader and nation.

Omanis love their leader Sultan Qaboos bin Said Al Said for his wisdom and goodness. Thus, the best present offered by the beloved leader to his people was the New Oman, with all of its developments and achievements at the local and international levels. These gains cannot be compared to those achieved before 1970s. Figures and reality show that the Sultanate experienced several developmental leaps, and thus many of the community’s dreams have been achieved. The country, for example, became an important milestone for peace and harmony, away from the uncomfortable storms.

Omanis should maintain these great gains and roll out their sleeves to keep them, because this country deserves prosperity, security and safety. What a great nation!

Board member of Oman Commerce and Industry (OCCI) and head of OCCI branch at Al Dhahirah governorate

Ali bin Saleh bin Ali Al-Kalbani
Omani delegation showcases national products at Expo Indonesia

By Ibtisam Al-Saadi
The 31st Trade Expo Indonesia 2016 was a great opportunity for businesspersons to showcase their national products and promote the investment opportunities available in the sector of small and medium-sized enterprises. The exhibition, held in Jakarta, was attended by several businesspersons from everywhere in the world.

Oman Chamber of Commerce and Industry (OCCI) sent its 14-member delegation to participate in the exhibition. The delegation was headed by Hamoud Al Saadi, chairman of OCCI South Batinah’s board of directors. The visit aimed to explore new partnerships as well as investment opportunities in the different sectors such as commerce, industry, tourism and services. It also aims to boost the economic relations between Indonesia and Oman, as well as identifying the different investment activities in the sectors of agriculture, medicine, food, electricity, infrastructure, construction, decoration, clothing and home accessories.

The opening ceremony included a forum of commerce and investment, held under the auspices of Joko Widodo, President of Indonesia.

During the forum, the president said his country organized this commercial exhibition that aims develop the cooperative relations and economic partnerships between the Indonesian private sector and its international peers. He stressed the prominent role which businesspersons should play to achieve cooperation and effective partnerships serving the interest of the national economy.
Following the exhibition, several Indonesian products were showcased in the porches of the exhibition.

Al Saadi said the exhibition allowed businesspersons to share their production and manufacturing experiences with their Indonesian counterparts. "We look forward to more cooperation in the field of small and medium-sized enterprises, especially as the economies of both country are stable."

The head of Omani delegation met with the president of Indonesian Chamber to discuss the investment opportunities in both countries, as well as the development of bilateral commercial and investment relations. They also discussed the investment climate and the most important sectors which Omani and Indonesian businesspersons can invest in. Omani businesspersons were invited to attend the furniture and handicraft exhibition that will be held in March 2017.

Zahir Al-Shukaili, CEO of the Royal Foundation for Development and Investment, said his participation in the Indonesian commercial exhibition was a good opportunity to explore the opportunities in the global market, especially Asia that has the real opportunities for expansion and development.

Zakia Al-Rawahi, CEO of Al-Nasim Clothing Factory, said the exhibition was a good opportunity to know the developments of the textile sector that is distinguished by diversification and multi-options that helped the factor deal with more than one commercial foundation.

Yaqoub Al-Tamimi, CEO of Green Carpet Co., said the meetings held with the Indonesian companies helped us know the latest developments in the fields of food and agriculture as well as the mechanism of importing the necessary equipment and materials. Abdullah Swailim, CEO of the World of Palaces for Gifts and Novelties, said the delegation’s visit to the Indonesian exhibition helped businesspersons know more about the field of gifts and novelties, and it is considered a good opportunity to form more partnerships in the future.
Omani women play a remarkable role in the world of commerce, depending on their financial, administrative and technical capabilities. They also play a significant role in major companies and institutions, and some of them hold leading administrative positions. Omani women receive the necessary support from some institutions that are responsible for business in the country such as Oman Chamber of Commerce and Industry (OCCI).

OCCI, represented in Businesswomen Committee and the Embassy of Netherlands, has organized "Khutwa" initiative, to boost the role of businesswomen and open new horizons for business. The initiative also supports female entrepreneurs who wish to join the private sector, especially tourism and logistics.

The event was attended by more than 40 female entrepreneurs who work in tourism and logistics and other sectors. It was also attended by Dr. Muna Al Jardaniyah, under-secretary for technical education and vocational training at the Ministry of Manpower, Barbara Joziasse, ambassador of the Netherlands at the Sultanate and Abeer Al Mukhaini, head of Businesswomen Committee.

These initiatives launched by OCCI will strengthen women’s presence in the different business activities, especially if they manage to market her products locally and globally. "Khutwa“ aims to promote awareness of woman’s role in developing a vital economic sector in the Sultanate, as well as encouraging Omani women to play a major role in the local economic institutions. In addition, the initiative aims to establish a network of decision makers and successful entrepreneurs in the private sector.

Through the initiatives organized by the chamber inside and outside Oman, the Omani entrepreneurs can acquire more experiences through the participation in the different conferences, exhibitions and workshops that offer attractive commercial opportunities. They can also learn how to overcome the challenges related to doing unfamiliar business activities.

Several recent studies showed that the future of global economy mainly depends on female entrepreneurs whose number increases globally. Omani women have a prominent role in the different business fields, especially after the Ministry of Commerce and Industry allowed them to practice some business activities from home. This requires flexibility and facilities from the concerned authorities such as municipalities, the Ministry of Manpower and Royal Oman Police.

Global studies confirm that women are now the hidden engine of international prosperity, and react positively to the national economies. They also have become an essential participant in the major business development system, as well as part of the labor force in many sectors. In the last three years, women have become the world's largest developing economic power, and achieved further growth, according to the World Bank reports.

In addition, some reports indicate that unemployment and layoff were positive for women in the world’s largest economies, especially the US, where the number of female employees is almost equal to those of men. Economists argue that the increased participation of women in the labor force was the main driver of growth over the past two decades.

We hope that Omani women will make several achievements and benefit from the initiatives launched from time to time. All women are allowed to compete for the different economic activities, and their slogan should be success in business. They should also acquire some necessary experiences from their predecessors.
Al Baleed Resort Salalah by Anantara held its grand opening under the auspices of Abdul Aziz bin Mohammed al Rowas, Advisor to His Majesty Sultan Qaboos bin Said on Cultural Affairs. The new luxury resort in Dhofar brings striking and authentic architecture framed by lush tropical gardens, walkways surrounded by towering palms and eye-catching water features to create an air of tranquility and serenity. Comprising 136 rooms and villas, the resort offers indulgent luxury with handcrafted furnishings and rich textures throughout to enhance the contemporary Middle Eastern ambience. Overlooking either the Arabian Sea, lagoon or picturesque gardens, each room is equipped with contemporary comforts including interactive LED TVs, spacious walk-in dressing rooms and luxurious Amouage bath products, evoking the region’s indigenous fragrances. The resort’s 40 premier and deluxe rooms all feature a spacious bedroom, en suite bathroom with rain-shower and separate bathtub, walk-in dressing room and media hubs with portable bluetooth speakers alongside a terrace or balcony, 8 one-bedroom villas and 88 one and two-bedroom pool villas entice guests with personalised villa host services and separate living areas, with pool villas benefiting from private temperature-controlled swimming pools, the first of their kind in Salalah. The exclusive three-bedroom Royal Beach Villa is the epitome of luxury, boasting commanding views of the sandy bay and idyllic lagoon.
Sheraton Oman Hotel re opened

Sheraton Oman Hotel, a 14-storey tower, which dominates the skyline in Muscat, re-opened its doors in October 2016.

Owned by Al Hashar Hotels LLC, under the umbrella of the Al Hashar Group, and in association with Twenty14 Holdings, Sheraton Oman features 230 modern and spacious rooms, including 27 suites with panoramic views of the Al Hajar mountain range. The hotel was inaugurated by His Highness Sayyid Haitham bin Tariq Al Said, Minister of Heritage and Culture.

Speaking on the occasion, Sheikh Al Muhannad Al Hashar said, “Sheraton Oman, the tallest building in the country, has played a key role in shaping the hospitality sector in Oman since it first started business in 1985. The hotel interior has been completely redesigned, leaving the exterior shell as it is. With this magnificent transformation, the hotel is well positioned not only to be a leader in the sector, but also to support the efforts of the Ministry of Tourism in promoting the country’s tourism potential at the international level.

“The renovation of Sheraton Oman reflects the brand’s approach to an elevated and customized design and further reinforces Sheraton as a trusted voice in global travel,” said Alex Kyriakidis, President and Managing Director, Middle East and Africa, Marriott International. “Marriott International remains committed to setting new hospitality benchmarks in Oman and being a part of the country’s development. With a strong presence in the sultanate across three hotels, we are also on track to double our portfolio in the country with four new properties and over 1,000 rooms set to open in the next five years.”
The GCC Custom Union Authority held its 45th joint meeting with the GCC private sector representatives. The meeting, which was held in Riyadh, under the chair of Mr. Saleh Al Khlaiwi, Director General of Customs at the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and Chairman of the Authority, reviewed a number of issues on the agenda and decided the following:

1. Hold preparatory meeting before the next meeting between the Authority and the GCC private sector to prepare a joint working paper for the coming meetings.

2. The GCC private sector should benefit from the written documents issued by the GCC custom authorities before the import. These documents include data on the item reference and the rules of origin for goods to be imported from non-GCC countries. These documents are binding at all check points for a limited period of time unless they are based on accurate decision.

3. Avoid recurrence of repeating the procedures taken at the first entry point at the other border check points. This is in line with the resolution taken by the GCC Supreme Council at its 32nd Summit which was held in December 2011. The Summit decided to ensure non
repetition of the procedures taken with goods at the first entry custom point. The custom role at the other check points should implement only the procedures which were not taken at the first entry check point. During the 105th meeting of the GCC Financial and Economic Committee which was held in June 2016, it was decided to approve six ports for getting the tariffs namely Jeddah Islamic Port, Khalifa bin Salman, Al Shaikh, Doha, Khalifa and Sohar.

4. Avoid repetition of the custom duties ‘the clearance’ on the goods moving among GCC States. The private sector should provide the documents for custom duties that have been completed at the first entry port to avoid paying the duties against. This is in line with the decision taken by the GCC Economic and Financial Committee during its 102nd meeting which was held in May 2016 applying the automatic transfer on the new vehicles purchased from the agents in the GCC with the aim of crossing borders to one of the neighboring countries and transfer the fees to the destination country of the vehicle.

5. Benefiting from the earlier clearance facilities that help clear the good before they arrive to the GCC states as this will ensure smooth running of trade.

6. Publish instruction and decisions issued by the Custom Authorities and provide all Custom Centers with the decisions and instructions issued by the GCC custom authorities.

7. The private sector will maintain coordination with the GCC custom authorities as per the following mechanism

A- Providing intensified training for importers and exporters to advise them of the standard procedures manual at the entry point at the GCC states and benefit from the facilities provided to them.
B- Prepare and organize training workshop to enhance the performance of the custom clearers with relation to filling the custom manifesto, the rules of origin and value as this will ensure accuracy of the GCC custom statistics.

8. The clearance agencies should be provided with the needed facilities including laboratories for testing the foodstuffs in cooperation with the relevant organizations.

9. Considering providing an exemption of custom duties for goods and products manufactured manually (without having industrial license) by one of the GCC SMEs or manual workshops. This step aims at promoting entrepreneurship in the GCC states.

10. The custom authorities, the chambers of commerce and FGCC should furnish the GCC Secretariat General with a list that includes the officer in charge at each point and his substitute.

11. Reduce and facilitate the document cycle and standardize the procedures at the various GCC custom points through creating an e-link and accepting the documents electronically in line with the Standard Custom Law.

12. Facilitate the procedures for the movement of empty trucks, as per the agreements in this regard to enhance inter trade and avoid jamming of trucks at the various borders points.
• Administrative System of the State should interact and cooperate with the private sector

  • OCCI BoD Blesses Ta'asees Initiative
  • RO 1 million allocated for supporting entrepreneurs and establishing 46 companies in a year
Indicators say 2017 will be a tough year for the private sector

Coinciding with the Sultanate’s celebrations of the 46th National Day, OCCI Board of Directors (BoD) approved Ta’aasees initiative and blessed the allocation of RO1 million to set up a Fund for financing entrepreneurs. The Board also approved the establishment of 46 small and medium companies as part of this initiative throughout the year extending from November 2016 to November 2017. The companies established will be unveiled every three months. The Board also discussed a number of economic development and events of interest for the private sector in the Sultanate. OCCI BoD started the meeting which was held at OCCI HQs by expressing sincere greetings to H.M the Sultan on the occasion of the 46th National Day.

The BoD affirmed OCCI and private sector keenness to play an active role in the sustainable development process taking place in the Sultanate. The Ta’aasees initiative’s idea evolves around supporting entrepreneurship in the Sultanate and helping the government in creating new avenues for job seekers through SMEs. It is expected to empower the Omani youths, who constitute a considerable percentage of the population, and help them become entrepreneurs. OCCI, in collaboration with the private sector, will provide the nascent SMEs with direct and indirect support by utilizing the capital of RO 1 million. They will be provided credit facilities. The Government will also urge the private sector companies to give priority to the nascent SMEs in awarding their tenders to help them integrate their presence at the local market. The initiative targets graduates who are job seekers and who are interested to start their own ventures. OCCI believes that such youths have the capability to contribute to the growth of the Omani national economy.

During the board meeting, OCCI affirmed the cooperation and partnership with the government trend to activate the entrepreneurship sector and increase the number of youths who are dedicated to the management of their projects as this will increase the number of SMEs, which are the backbone of any given economy.

At this framework, the Board stressed its support for the national training fund and pointed out that the Royal Decree establishing the national training fund ushers well for the training sector and may replicate the success stories of the banking, oil and gas and communication sectors.
Economic Societies Need More Regularization

OCCI BoD discussed the economic society and stressed OCCI’s support for society societies and its cooperation with them in the organizations of many events during the past period. At the same time, the BoD stressed the need to regularize such societies to be consistent with the government trends especially OCCI is the only legal representative of the Omani private sector. The BoD hailed the cooperation by the Ministry of Social Development in supporting this file. The BoD authorized OCCI Chairman to coordinate with the existing and under incorporation economic societies within the framework highlighted by the Board to reach a common ground about activating the role of such societies in collaboration with OCCI in the integration of economic sector and enabling such societies to play a more active role in the coming stage.

With Government Fees and Taxes BUT

The BoD discussed the ministerial decision that affect the performance of the private sector including levying fees on the real estate sector and the effect of the same on the real estate sector. The BoD decided to coordinate to having a meeting with the Minister of Housing, the Chairman of Muscat Municipality and a number of real estate developers to discuss the decision, its reasons and implications. The BoD also discussed increasing the fees on expatriate workers, the municipal transactions and rushers. In this regard, OCCI said that it understands the tough conditions facing the government due to oil price drop and its direct and indirect implications on the national economy. The BoD believes that media organization should take into consideration the current development to ensure optimum streaming of all efforts to ensure the growth of national economy. This approach will not give space to non-official media which may promote wrong interpretation of the decisions and actions taken.

The Board said that at the time the government is facing tough economic conditions such as reduce cash flows, it is high time to empower the private sector and reschedule the domestic loans to activate the role of the private sector in the growth of national economy. The relevant organizations are reluctant to reschedule the loans due to Basel requirements. In this regard, OCCI believes that some countries are implementing Basel requirements partially to meet the interests of their peoples. OCCI affirmed its understanding of the challenges facing the government to provide additional sources of income. The government should consider not imposing any additional taxes or fees because this approach will deter investors from investment in the Sultanate. The investor will be trapped in two options, either to freeze investments/funds or take his investments outside the country that provide him with incentives. The economic crises that faced the Sultanate resulting in losing a number of major companies from the private sector. They also resulted in reduced cash flows for some companies. The companies that managed to survive are those subsidized by the government. OCCI forecasts the disappearance of a number of SMEs and deteriorating performance of a number of big companies if the government did not take the necessary measures to eliminate the difficulties they are facing. The private sector hinges hope on the outcomes of the National Diversification Program "Tanfeedh".

The Board pointed out that countries that focused on imposing high taxes and fees on the private sector have lost considerable investment and became non-investment friendly countries. It should be noted that before pumping any investments, the investor will question about the taxation system, the financial system, the transfer of funds and the legal framework. During the economic financial crisis in 2008, many countries tend to reduce tax, increase liquidity and subsidize the private sector because higher taxes result in economic recession.

At the same time, OCCI BoD pointed out that the Omani private sector is ready to provide every possible support to the government initiatives subject that the government should also address the challenges facing the private sector and provide radical solutions for them. The government needs only to provide real facilities, eliminate red tape and having to deal with many organizations to process a single transaction. The government may also provide preferential treatment to the private sector against certain fees when many organizations are involved in processing a single transaction. OCCI Board will submit a proposal about this issue to the relevant organization.

Sincere Confidence in the private sector

His Majesty Sultan Qaboos Bin Said provides unlimited subsidy to the private sector. At the royal speech at the opening of the annual session of the Council of Oman in 2012, H.M the Sultan said ‘the private sector is one of the main pillars for development. At the royal speech in the occasion of the 25th national day H.M the Sultan said " The Omani private sector should be more active, roll up its sleeves and prove its efficiency and ability to compete. The governmental administrative system must react to, and co-operate with, the private sector. It must not allow bureaucracy and routine to hinder its good performance. With this, the process of development can reach its goals. To help the private sector to carry out its role, as outlined by H.M the Sultan, OCCI believes that it is important to ensure collaboration of the efforts by the public and private sectors so that they are more integrated and achieve H.M the Sultan vision.