40 Years of Media coverage for economy, trade and investment issues
VISION
Devoloping the Omani private sector and make it a key partner in sustainable economic development.

MISSION
OCCI is the official representative of the Omani private sector inside and outside the Sultanate. It is an active tool in making decisions of interest for the sector. It seeks to develop it through the available tools and programs to enhance economic growth in the Sultanate.
تابعوا حسابنا على السناب شات

Chamber_Oman
40 years of economic, commercial and investment issues coverage

The Sultanate achieves a distinctive transition in tourism sector development

OCCI Al Wusta branch participates in Omani woman Day...

The distinctive triple experiment that overcame obstacles Agricultural greenhouses .. Hydroponics.. fisheries farming
Romanian -Omani Forum discusses Commercial Exchange

OCCI takes part in the world Investment forum in Geneva

80 Omani companies deliver Omani products in East Africa markets

OCCI ‘s Award Honouring Ceremony in Al Batinah South for SMEs and students companies

Al Sharqia North Forum

Real estate funds new destination for foreign investment in Oman
OCCI Celebrates the 40th anniversary of the establishing, printing and publishing Al Ghorfa magazine, which was founded on the urgent desire to have an information platform with visions, ideas and proposals that contribute to finding solutions to the challenges and obstacles faced by the private sector.

Since its issuance, Al Ghorfa has played an important and pivotal role in documenting the historical periods and stages of the Chamber, and documenting the various events and activities it has embraced in 45 years.

The first issue of the magazine was issued in November 1978 during the Sultanate’s celebrations of the eighth national glorious day. The Chamber aims to achieve a set of objectives, including a means of communicating information and presenting what is happening in the development arena and Omani renaissance. At the same time, the tongue of the traders and labours, their efforts, their aspirations along with identifying the Omani renaissance especially in economy. Moreover, to promote the Omani perspective on various economic issues at the regional and foreign levels.

The magazine includes analysis, report, investigation, article and dialogue along with news, as well as presentations and trade shows, It has addressed its readers in English alongside the Arabic language; Commercials were introduced as a source of financing to cover the expenses of the issue and to contribute to the promotion of Omani products.

The magazine continues to follow a clear and ambitious methodology to improve its performance, whether through output or content, so that it can achieve its objectives in spreading awareness of economic concepts, promoting national products, and advocating to contribute to economic development and exit to the outside world with Omani economic concepts and visions.

The editors of the magazine, along with the editors and employees of the Chamber, contribute a group of writers and economists from inside and outside the Sultanate.
40 years of economic, commercial, and investment issues coverage

Al Ghorfa is established for economic media

Prepared by: Editorial Team
Mohammed al Ansy: “Al-Ghorfa links the employees and decision-makers in the government.”

Hamad Al-Hanai: “Al-Ghorfa is a media platform for the private sector in the Sultanate.”

Salimah Al kalbania: “Encouraging meeting for SMEs entrepreneurs.”

AL Ghorfa celebrates 40 years since it was issued. OCCI represented by the circle of media and publishing issues the magazine periodically per two months in both Arabic and English. It specializes in the sectors of investment, commerce and economy. In conjunction with the glorious 8th National Day celebrations in 1978, the first issue of Al-Ghorfa magazine was published, which contained many Omani achievements after the crowning of his majesty Sultan Qaboos Bin Said the glorious —may Allah protect him— in 1970. Since then Omani trade flourished and the government began to carry out many investments in the field of infrastructure on which modern economy relies. His Majesty as well, highlighted the successful national enterprises such as pressure pipes used in water transferring and sewage system.
The magazine started its work by using typing machine and hand writing, nowadays the magazine is designed by advanced programs and high quality printers.

Al Ghorfa attracts a number of Omani and non-Omani writers to publish their articles and the most famous economic Figuers as well, through interviews and the most vital conventions and seminars related to economic affairs. It also reviews OCCI activities and events in private sector.

The first issues of the magazine were printed in black and white, and today it is issued in colors, including Golden, and its topics are published in social networking sites (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Whattsapp) in addition to the electronic site of OCCI and its issues reach about 234 issues.

“Al Ghorfa” has reviewed the views of a number of its readers to recognize their personal impressions about the magazine and its importance to promote the Sultanate Economy.

A linking Point
Mohammed Al-Ansi said: “As far I’m concerned, I believe that “Al Gurfa” magazine is the link between the employer and decision-makers on the governmental behalf, and also is the tool that delivers the correct information and new projects or projects under study.”

He added: “As the years passed, we noticed clear developments in the editions of Al-Ghorfa. We always note that the employees working on the issues of the magazine are working to keep up with what is new and what contributes to delivering the information to the trader or the employer to be aquainted with the recent economic news nationally and internationally. We are
very grateful for the efforts made to achieve success and develop the private sector through the topics, surveys and reports presented by Al Ghurfa”.

**A Media platform**

Hamad bin Humaid Al Hinai, Owner of Jawhara Sweida Water Est., Said: “Al-Ghorfa is a media platform for the private sector in the Sultanate. It also plays an important and vital role in highlighting economic issues related to the development aspects of the country. We highly appreciate the employees’ exerted efforts and their continuous pursuit to highlight the activities and events held in the OCCI headquarters of the as well as at the level of branches, in addition to highlight the most important economic activities of interest to the private sector.

**SMEs Support**

The owner of AL- Muniam for trading Salimah Mohammed Al- Kalbaniah –said : “Al Ghorfa” magazine has given a positive boost to economic activity which encouraged men and women entrepreneurs to participate positively concerning the published topics and to support SMEs and to promote economic diversification .Through interviews published on the pages of the magazine. I find coverage of the most important programs and activities and events carried out by the OCCI’’.  

Al Kalbanieh added: “Al Ghorfa sought to discuss the needs, aspirations and changes that have taken place in the private sector, and has provided for that many studies, recommendations and visualizations that will improve the economic level.”

**Ancient magazine**

Abdulla bin Salim Al Zaidi, owner of Al-Maqsura International, said: “Al-Ghorfa Magazine is one of the oldest magazines published by OCCI. It carries among its pages the most important economic events and activities. It also contains many surveys, interviews and economic studies, which are published periodically. It is a Media and advertising tool for the private sector institutions in the Sultanate. The magazine is also considered one of the renewable magazines. It discusses economic topics with all objectivity and has many followers whether paper or electronic, and addresses its readers in both Arabic and English”.

**Sectors Services**

Hamad bin Amer Al Habsi, a Member of the Omani Journalists Association, said: “Al Ghorfa magazine is an important media platform and a remarkable edition that provides knowledge, statistics and economic and commercial topics that serve the economic, commercial and industrial sectors. The magazine is regarded as an important feedback to those who are interested in these sectors which serve the national economy .the magazine is characterised with adopting practical and real studies and topics in many subjects. the fact that there is a specialized magazine steadfast for more than 40 years evolving and providing everything that is new to the business on the one hand and the small investor and institutions of all kinds, especially large institutions and small and medium enterprises, is a worthy achievement. The follower of the magazine’s journey over the past few years ,are aware of its importance to traders and investors, especially through
its various sections of real articles and real experiences that give small investors the experience in the various economic fields. As well as, the introduction of laws relating to the labour market and labour force laws and business activities is an opportunity for those interested to know everything that is new and everything that is raised in the sectors of work. In addition to the news covered by the magazine on the activities of OCCI branches in the governorates, trade delegations and events from various conferences, meetings and seminars. All this diversity serve the economic, commercial and industrial sectors on the one hand and businesspersons and those interested in these sectors on the other hand.

Al Habsi concluded: “We congratulate the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Oman for celebrating the 40th anniversary of the publication of the magazine and wish the organizers more success, excellence and best wishes.”

Radical transition

Walid Bin Khalfan Al-Hasni – employee at public affairs and educational information at the education Directory at A’Sharqia North, cleared that Al-Ghorfa magazine is celebrating 40 years since it was published which embodies the information identity maintained by OCCI and its persistence to keep up with current economic developments. The magazine reviews economy and investment nationally, regionally and internationally. We as well appreciate the noticeable development and the remarkable transfer that the magazine witnesses in the terms of content, tabulation, design, final output of its pages and distinctive columns, and its economic impact accordance with the development studied and systematic. In this regard, we applaud the organizers and their professionalism and subjectivity, which enabled this information platform to be a partner in the construction and development process in our precious country.”
Keeping up with the needs
Salem bin Mohammed Al-Barashdi, a reporter for Oman newspaper in Wilayat of Ibra said: “We congratulate Al-Ghorfa magazine for completing 40 years of publication. It is a role model in paper press which is still supreme regardless of the challenges that confront printed press recently. The magazine as well keeps up with the variables of developmental stage within all sectors. Additionally, contributed to the revitalization of the economy, and was a vital extension to the sector of small and medium enterprises. Which dealt with it intensively and comprehensively.

Forums Tourism
Ahmed Al-Mamari from the General Authority for Radio and Television: “Al Ghorfa magazine has played a fundamental role in creating tourism and economic investment opportunities and in the economic and tourism movement in general in the various governorates of the Sultanate. Perhaps the most important of these roles is the step that Al- Ghorfa launched in its coverage of the meetings and conferences that are full of interviews, data and statistics, and the efforts of its writers in promoting events, particularly in the governorates and the accomplished positive outcomes. We hope in the coming period to highlight on forums tourism, and its leading role in the economic and tourism sector and seek to apply this concept and inculcate its culture on the young. Additionally to pay more attention to the productive families and to provide space to display their services and marketing them effectively, and to encourage entrepreneurship and the adoption of youth initiatives in this sector. ”
OCCI Al Braimi Branch reviews investment and partnership opportunities with the private sector in Turkey

In the context of its continuous plan to send trade delegations to a number of countries, OCCI Al Braimi Branch sent a trade delegation consisting of 11 men and women entrepreneurs to the Republic of Turkey during the period from Oct 21st to Oct 27th. To review the aspects of cooperation and investment among private sector representatives and to propagate the available economic opportunities in the Sultanate.

Zahir Bin Mohammed Al Kaabi Al Braimi Branch Chairman presided over the delegation which included Eng Abdullah Bin Ahmed Al myasi, the GM of Al Braimi industrial Zone. To present and propagate the available opportunities in the Industrial sector in the Sultanate, Al Braimi Governorate in particular.

The delegation members’ main fields were industrial, commercial, constructions and contracting, transportation, education, health, and tourism.
Zahir Bin Mohammed Al Kaabi asserted that the delegation to Turkey aims to recognizing and utilizing the Turkish experiments and experiences in the world of business. Also, to the establishment of commercial and industrial companies and to find direct channels of communication between the business communities of the two countries. Additionally reviewing economic and commercial opportunities between the two countries and to support investors and encouraging them to establish their own different projects, to enhance existing trade and investment relations and increase the volume of trade exchange between the Sultanate and Turkey.

Omani delegation meets Istanbul Chamber
According to the program prepared in coordination with the specialized committees in Istanbul, the delegation members met Ibrahim Doghan, a member of the executive council in Istanbul Chamber of Commerce. In the presence of Dr Kanaan Maghribly, the Honorary Consul of the Sultanate in Istanbul, where they discussed aspects of developing relations between the two sides and talk about the potential and investment facilities available to serve the revitalization of economic mobility between the two countries in various fields.

The two sides also discussed in the bilateral meetings that followed; the cooperation in the establishment of Omani-Turkish trade partnerships, the opening of agencies for some Turkish products and services in the Sultanate, as well as the exchange of experiences in the fields of joint ventures.

Meeting of the Federation of Chambers of and the Commodity Stock
The delegation also met with the vice presidents of the Commodity stock in Istanbul, where they identified the role of the Turkish Commodity Stock in the service of investors, business development and increasing trade relations between Turkey and the world countries. He emphasized that the strong relations between Turkey and Oman are a motive for entrepreneur’s persons in the two sides to enhance the volume of their joint trade cooperation and benefit from the strategic advantages.
Meeting of the Omani-Turkish Business Council

During their visit to Istanbul, members of the delegation attended part of the meetings of the Omani-Turkish Business Council held on October 22nd at the Council on Foreign Economic Relations. Sheikh Salem bin Abdullah Al Rawas, President of the Council from the Omani side headed the meeting and Mart Toman of the Turkish side, in the presence of the Council members in both countries.

During the meeting, they reviewed aspects of cooperation in the fields of trade and investment in various promising sectors, in addition to the definition of the most important elements and facilities provided by both countries to support and strengthen economic ties and raise the volume of trade. Eng. Abdullah bin Salem Al Miyasi, Director General of Al Buraimi Industrial Area, gave a visual presentation on the industrial environment in the Sultanate. In addition to an explanation of the most fundamental elements and investment opportunities available in the industrial areas spread throughout the Sultanate. The meeting also researched the establishment of a Turkish commercial bank proposal in the Sultanate. In the context of keenness to support the areas of partnership and provide financing services for projects and investments with positive returns to representatives of the business community and increase the contribution of the private sector in the national economy of both countries.

Bilateral Meetings

After the meeting, members OCCI Al Braimi Branche met with their Turkish counterparts at the Council of Foreign Economic Relations. The bilateral meetings were held to provide the opportunity for establishing trade partnerships and economic cooperation between entrepreneurs’ persons in both sides, as well as benefiting from pioneering experiences and to recognize closely the real investment opportunities.

On the other hand, a number of the delegation members payed a visit to a private school in Istanbul to recognize its experience in investment field in education sector, its role in improving the quality of education process and to assure the concept of self-employment concepts for students and the suitability of curriculums with the needs of job market.

ANKIROS International Exhibition

A delegation from the Oman Chamber of Commerce and Industry (OCCI) Al-Braimi Branch visited the 14th ANKIROS International Exhibition for Iron and Steel and Mining Technology. It was organized from the period October 25th to Oct 27th 2018 in Istanbul. The exhibition, which is the largest of its kind in the Eurasia region, was attended by many of the world’s leading manufacturers and companies specialized in the industries related to metals, steel, equipment and machinery. The delegation toured the exhibition, which is a
basic platform for discovering quality solutions for all related metal and iron industries. Iron, steel, ceramics, glass and rolling equipment as well as melting furnaces, heat treatment furnaces, casting machines, blasting and mixing machines and other exhibits. The delegation also discussed with a group of exhibitors the trade relations and ways of benefiting from the experiences and experiences of the companies in developing the technology of the equipment and machinery industry and its role in supporting production lines in industrial projects.

**Viva Factory**

On the other hand, the delegation visited the Viva factory for solutions and prefabricated houses in the Dilova industrial area where the factory production lines were identified in the field of prefabricated houses and their marketing outlets in most countries of the world.

**Commodity Stock and Enigol Chamber meeting**

On the closing day, the delegation met with the Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Commodity Stock in the Turkish city of Bursa, and Ozer Matli, member of the Council of the Federation of Chambers and Exchange of Commodities. The delegation members also met with Ali Ugur, Head of the Bursa Chamber of Commerce and Yavuz Yokardak, Head of the Enigol Chamber of Commerce.

During the meeting, the two sides discussed cooperation and means of enhancing the relations between the business representatives of the Omani and Turkish sides in various economic sectors. This will serve the aspirations of the two sides to enhance cooperation levels, increase trade exchange and support companies and institutions in opening new markets for their products and services. In the bilateral meetings that followed the official meetings, the owners and businesspersons of the two sides discussed the aspects of partnership in business and industry and the possibility of reaching the establishment of profitable trade cooperation. These meetings culminated in the signing of a memorandum of understanding (MOU) and cooperation between Al Fanar Almasi Trading Company from the Omani side, Marmara for the products of olives and their derivatives and the company Etoiden for poultry from the Turkish side, with the aim of establishing joint trade cooperation and cooperation in related fields.

**Anigol Furniture Exhibition**

Members of the delegation also visited the Anigol Furniture exhibition, They had a tour within the exhibition sections, meeting the participated companies and factories and discussing the cooperation opportunities in the furniture sector. A number of the delegation members also visited the Koklik Factory for furniture and textile where the factory production lines, equipments, raw materials and other textiles.

**Encouraging impressions**

After the visit, the members of the delegation noted their impressions. The head of the delegation explained that relations and partnership between the governments of the two countries reflected on the atmosphere of the visit in terms of the warm welcome received by the delegation from the competent authorities in Turkey. As well as the great welcome of the Turkish Chambers of Commerce and representatives of the Turkish business community, supporting many commercial understandings with their counterparts members of the Omani delegation, which had a great impact on the success of the visit. In addition to the outcome of the series of meetings and bilateral meetings that were organized between the two sides. Which define the investment environment, facilities, potentials and the available business opportunities. On his behalf, Yousuf bin Hamad Al-Azani, Deputy Chairman of the Board of Directors and Chairman of Yousuf Al-Azani Trading and Contracting Company, praised the volume of the economic and investment opportunities available between the Sultanate and Turkey, which require exploitation by private sector representatives in both sides to achieve profitable and productive returns in various commercial and industrial fields.
Yacoub bin Salem Al Tamimi, member of the Board of OCCi Al Buraimi Branch and owner of the Green Carpet for Agricultural Services, said that the visit revealed the desire of many investors and industrialists of Turkey to cooperate and establish investment and commercial projects in the fields of industry. Rashed bin Saeed Al Ghaithi, member of the Board of the Chamber Branch in Al Buraimi Governorate and Chairman of the Board of Directors of Al-Ghaithi Transport and Logistics Company, explained that the visit contributed to the nature of the tasks and the working system of the two commodity Stock in Istanbul and Bursa.

Eng. Abdullah Al Miyasi

Eng. Abdullah bin Ahmed Al Miyasi, Director General of Al Buraimi Industrial Zone, said that the visit was very successful and achieved its objectives, whether through meeting with Turkish businesspersons or visits by officials of Turkish chambers of commerce in addition to visiting some of the major companies and factories.

Hamad Al Zaidi

Hamad Bin Salem Al Zaidi, owner of Jabal Abha Trading Est, said that the visit was very useful in various fields. Our
Raya Al Alwia, member of the Board of Directors of the Branch and Chairman of Al Majal Trading Company, said that the success accompanied the delegation and considered that such visits enrich the entrepreneurs and work to expand trade and economic perceptions and help to open great horizons in the world of commerce and business.

Eng. Haitham bin Saleh Al-Hinai, Chairman of Al-Tammathol Trading and Contracting Company said that the visit to Turkey was a great opportunity to learn about the various investments in the field of real estate development and industrial planning. Meetings and visits to companies and exhibitions organized for Bursa City also opened new investment horizon particularly in the sectors of food and technology.

visit to the furniture and textile exhibitions culminated in a preliminary agreement for the opening of an exhibition of Turkish furniture and furnishings in the Sultanate.
The Sultanate achieves a distinctive transition in tourism sector development

Edited by: Rabeea Bint Saeed Al Harthiya

The Sultanate is the fifth best tourist destination for visitors seeking for stability in the world.

The eighth worldly in the indicator of Islamic tourism in 2017

The sixth regionally in the index of competitive travel and tourism

Tourism factors make Oman a rare tourist destination

The international tourism revenues have exceeded $1.5 billion annually
The Sultanate enjoys many tourist elements of a unique cultural and architectural nature, varies among natural, modern, heritage, Islamic and summer tourism. Moreover, its coastline and shores and its varied landscape and nature that characterize it. In addition to falaj, valleys and underground water, along with its soft golden sand with varied shapes and the existence of different geological, historic and heritage sites, which contributes in supporting tourism sector in the Sultanate.

**Advanced rates**

International organizations and institutions reports and indicators pointed out to the Sultanate massive progress in the development of tourism sector. And the national efforts aimed a tourism sector prosperity in the country under the leadership of HM Sultan Qaboos Bin Said the glorious. The reports pointed out as well to the advanced rates in the Arab and international indicators achieved by the Sultanate during the past year (2017).

**A unique tourist position**

An International report praised the massive development in tourism sector in the Sultanate during the previous years expecting the continuity of this development process, due to the mega investments carried out by the government in this sector. Moreover, the existence of infrastructure that support this sector to raise income resources. Colliers International for spas, entertainment and hosting report referred that the Sultanate could distinguish itself as a remarkable tourism centers, despite the competitions with other regional tourist destinations. It possesses many environmental, cultural and heritage destinations that attract tourists including four sites classified as heritage sites by the UNESCO. Oman 2040 vision aims at promoting the sector of tourism in the Sultanate. The strategy focuses on developing the sultanate as a unique destination that provides the different and various needs of the visitors. Additionally, developing the tourist experience introduced in the coastal Musandem Governorate. Rais Al had...
Sultanate got 67.9 points according to the General Index. While got 94 points in the index of safety during travel, and 80 in the index of accessibility to places of prayer. It got 100 points in the airport services index, 66.5 points in ease of communication, 64 points in the visa index, 47.7 points in the index of accommodation options, and 78 points in the index of air quality.

Wildlife
According to a report published in the Indian newspaper “First Post”, the Sultanate has tourist elements, especially the awesomeness of diversified wildlife, which made it a rare tourist destination, and noted in the report to the contents of the Ras al-Ganz reserve in A’sharqia south governorate of Green Turtles, which is one of the Seven species of marine turtles in the world are domiciled in the Sultanate. Annually, more than 20,000 turtles migrate from the Arabian Gulf, the Red Sea and Somalia to lay their eggs in the Sultanate. The newspaper noted of the government services offered to tourists who prefer to go in groups to the beach at night to watch a large turtle digging a hole in the sand, making tourists live a special moment with one of the most endangered animals in the world, which weighs more than 130 kg. Oman’s wildlife has many surprises for tourists, ranging from small dolphins off the coast of Muscat to Arab tigers in the Dhofar mountain series, as well as the country’s sand dunes.

The report has mentioned that the strategy aims to raise tourism sector contribution in the national income from 7.2% in 2015 to 6% in 2014.

The most welcoming Country
The British Broadcast (BBC) classified the Sultanate as the fifth best tourism destination for visitors who seek for stability in the world. The Sultanate is one of the world’s brightest countries in terms of weather. The warm weather is greeted by a “welcoming culture of faith, which in turn leads to openness to outsiders,” the BBC said in a BBC poll based on visitors’ In a survey entitled “Most Welcoming Countries in the World”.

Islamic Tourism
A report published by “Crescent Ritange” company on its website showed that the Sultanate has reached the eighth position in the Islamic Tourism Index 2017, which includes 130 countries around the world. The Sultanate ranked fifth in the index, which is a reference to tourist destinations to know the strengths and weaknesses in the area of attracting Muslim tourists. It is important for tourists to easily identify the best tourist destinations suitable for Islamic tourism. The Sultanate got 67.9 points according to the General Index. While got 94 points in the index of safety during travel, and 80 in the index of accessibility to places of prayer. It got 100 points in the airport services index, 66.5 points in ease of communication, 64 points in the visa index, 47.7 points in the index of accommodation options, and 78 points in the index of air quality.

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The First Post added that Wadi Shab in Wilayat Sur in A'sharqia South governorate is an ideal place for adventurous tourism, jumping from the cliff to the cold water, and there are rocks with pure Fairuzian water. It brings comfort to tourists at a time of greatest sun’s heat.

The First Post confirmed that the visit to the Sultanate is not complete without going to Dhofar, which described as the city of paradise loaded with waterfalls and fascinating views.

**Competitive tourism and travel**

The Sultanate ranked 6th in the Arab World in the 2017 World Travel and Tourism Competitiveness Index, which was ranked by the World Economic Forum’s Davos. The Sultanate ranked 66th globally and gained 3.78 points according to the index, which is issued every two years. It and includes 136 countries. The report pointed out that the number of tourists visiting the Sultanate yearly is about 1.897 million people, with revenues of about one billion and 812 million dollars annually, equivalent to 2.5% of GDP.

The international tourism revenues coming to the Sultanate of about one billion and 539.7 million dollars. While the tourism and travel sector employs about 53251 people, accounting for 2.7% of all jobs. The report of the World Economic Forum Davos noted that tourism contributes more than 10% of the world’s gross domestic product and provides one out of every 10 jobs in the world.

**Tourist elements**

Ali Bin Salim Al Hajri, Board Member and Chairman of the OCCI Branch of Sharqia North Governorate, and Chairman of the Tourism Committee, pointed out that the tourism sector in the Sultanate is a promising and pioneering and enjoys a great diversity in its fields, purposes and products. The Sultanate enjoys unique tourism resources, the world’s most attractive tourist destination and global tourism investment.

Al-Hajri pointed out that the more the tourism sector has qualified human resources, trained and skilled to keep up with the current and future development of the sector, the higher the sector becomes and has a prominent role in the economic development of the country in general. He paraphrased that meeting the needs of tourists and upgrading the level of service provided in tourist establishments result in the viability of the tourism process in the Sultanate, and to achieve the ability to compete with neighbouring tourist markets.

**Economic and social development**

On the role of tourism in economic and social development, Al-Hajri said: “Tourism leads to the improvement and development of the economy and the diversification of sources of income. The expenditure in this sector in return for service leads to the revitalization of the tourism sector and all economic sectors. The expansion of projects in the sector or the development of existing projects achieves comprehensive integration with other economic sectors, as well as the direct benefits of the sector in social development. For example, tourism projects in some governorates benefit the community and its members in providing job opportunities. The priority of employment should be for surrounding national cadres. The increase in the demand for services provided in the village or tourist city, whether in transportation, nutrition or shopping, and the daily activities of the local and foreign tourists, has a great economic and social impact on the tourism sector and creates many types of service activities, which Support the tourism sector.”

**Sectors integration**

Al Hajeri as well pointed out that all economic sectors contribute to the development and the improvement of the tourism sector, the most important of which is the real estate sector, which is closely related to the tourism sector. The real estate investments existing and spread throughout the Sultanate are an integrated tourism investment, particularly when they are designed in a modern way with new benefits.
Enhancing tourism activity
Al-Hajari pointed out that the development and promotion of tourism activity can be achieved through marketing and promotion in the right and innovative ways, in addition to the importance of providing the employers in the tourism sector with the knowledge, experience and techniques that qualify them to manage the systems in tourist establishments and keep pace with their development.

Tourist center
“The Sultanate can be one of the most important tourist attractions of the first class by exploiting the elements of tourism attractions. Tourism is an industry through which we explore the world and its peoples and customs. We must focus on developing the standard of tourism, i.e. developing tourist services and products whether new or updating existing one. Additionally, pays attention to education opportunities in the sector and tourist training and rehabilitation, which is a basic pillar.

Promotion and marketing
Al-Hajari pointed out that each region of the Sultanate and its villages have a unique advantage. If it is attractive in the winter, it may become a hotbed for visitors in the summer, which is only needs marketing and providing integrated services. Moreover, to escalate its quality standards and meeting the needs of tourists of all service facilities such as transport accommodation and other organizational and administrative procedures.

Stable steps
Saeed Bin Amer Al Harasi, a member of the main Tourism Committee, said that the tourism sector in the Sultanate is taking steady steps in boosting domestic output and has made significant progress in the development of tourist destinations. However, it lacks some bold steps, which in turn can enhance it. He pointed out that tourism plays a major role in promoting economic development through increasing domestic output, in addition to promoting social development by providing business opportunities for entrepreneurs or job opportunities for young job seekers.

He pointed out that the governorates of the Sultanate are endowed with many tourist elements that distinguish them from others such as climate, geographical, social and historical diversity, which contributed to the creation of an integrated system capable of competing regionally and globally.

Investment opportunities
On the investment opportunities in the tourism sector in the Sultanate, Al Harathi said that tourism investment is still reasonable, especially in terms of tourism services, due to complexities and bureaucratic.

He said: “We need some basic projects to complete the tourism system. There are some services that are expected for tourists, whether domestic tourists, or foreign tourists in general, such as a world zoo, aqua park and an international playground. Adventure sport, if the situation continues as it is, we may lose many foreign tourists.”

Development proposals
Al-Harathi said: “We have to separate the specializations between the Ministry of Tourism and other service agencies. There is still a confusion concerning the roles of each of them. The Ministry of Tourism has been assigned to some of the distinctive tourist sites, but did not accomplish any change, meanwhile, the ministry concerned protest against the validity of any work Service facilities, because this site is not within its competence.

“He added: “We must forbid monopoly in some tourist services, attract investors to the Sultanate, facilitate all procedures and support them to contribute to support this sector. Enhance Domestic tourism as well specially for the Omanis, in the terms of decreasing entrance fees, specially fees of tourist buildings and hotels, facilitate the establishment of hotels with one star and two stars to be a competitive option for some tourists, especially domestic tourism, the more the offer increased, the more the price decreased. We propose to hold a conference to attract investors, whether Omani or external to view some of the tourist sites, And what are the investment options in this site, provided that all the necessary permits for these sites to be presented during this conference and be ready for investment.”

Enhancing tourism activity
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Investment opportunities
On the investment opportunities in the tourism sector in the Sultanate, Al Harathi said that tourism investment is still reasonable, especially in terms of tourism services, due to complexities and bureaucratic.

He said: “We need some basic projects to complete the tourism system. There are some services that are expected for tourists, whether domestic tourists, or foreign tourists in general, such as a world zoo, aqua park and an international playground. Adventure sport, if the situation continues as it is, we may lose many foreign tourists.”

Development proposals
Al-Harathi said: “We have to separate the specializations between the Ministry of Tourism and other service agencies. There is still a confusion concerning the roles of each of them. The Ministry of Tourism has been assigned to some of the distinctive tourist sites, but did not accomplish any change, meanwhile, the ministry concerned protest against the validity of any work Service facilities, because this site is not within its competence.

“He added: “We must forbid monopoly in some tourist services, attract investors to the Sultanate, facilitate all procedures and support them to contribute to support this sector. Enhance Domestic tourism as well specially for the Omanis, in the terms of decreasing entrance fees, specially fees of tourist buildings and hotels, facilitate the establishment of hotels with one star and two stars to be a competitive option for some tourists, especially domestic tourism, the more the offer increased, the more the price decreased. We propose to hold a conference to attract investors, whether Omani or external to view some of the tourist sites, And what are the investment options in this site, provided that all the necessary permits for these sites to be presented during this conference and be ready for investment.”
Clear vision

Najla Bint Saeed Al Rahbia, owner of Wathaq International institution and a member of the Tourism Committee of OCCI, said: “Every year, the appropriate and clear vision in the tourism sector in the Sultanate is widened. Undoubtedly, the role played by the concerned parties is clearly contributing to creating a sound sector. In addition, is ready to receive this development and deal with it in an effective way. With regard to the Sultanate rare elements has helped in the further development and the ability to utilize this area and increase tourism attraction.

Al-Rahbi pointed out that tourism has contributed gradually and appropriately to making the economic and social development in the tourism sector an effective development capable of raising the rate of the demanded growth. It continues to play a greater role in the development of this sector. The continuous participations of the concerned parties in tourism sector in the Sultanate contribute in highlighting the elements of the sector internationally and regionally. The Sultanate’s participation in the celebration of the World Tourism Day, which will create an identified value for the sector.

Relating to investment opportunities in the tourism sector, Al-Rahbia said: “The investment opportunities in the tourism sector in the Sultanate are very wide thanks to the Sultanate’s tourist sites qualified for tourism investment. The private sector has a role in boosting these investments. We hope this role will be wider, due to its essentiality to make this sector more successful. “

“The Sultanate enjoys unique qualities and a unique aesthetic wealth that distinguish it from others. Therefore, it is not difficult for the Sultanate to reach the most advanced centers,” said Al-Rahbiya, Sultanate has advanced positions in which we are proud and exploiting the aesthetics of the country contribute in attracting tourists and to raise the rate of tourism growth in the Sultanate. When the tourist enters the Sultanate, the first thing he can feel is his security, privacy and stability. He travels safely and comfortably, wherever he finds the hospitality and good treatment of the Omani people. This is one of the factors contributing to the increasing number of visitors to the Sultanate.

Adding “The environmental diversity of the Sultanate, such as Khareef Salalah, the plains, the expansive coasts, the high mountains, the natural resources and the heritage sites have a great role to attract tourists, and a magical beauty that attracts the visitor’s attention.
OCCI Al Wusta branch participates in Omani woman Day...

Dr. Salim Bin Sulayem Al Junaibi Deputy Chairman for Economic Affairs and Branches, and Chairman of the Board of Directors of the OCCI in Al Wusta Governorate said: HM Sultan Qaboos bin said the glorious may Allah protect him appointed October 17th of each year to celebrate the Omani Woman Day. In recognition of her effective role, distinctive service and her active participation in development in all its aspects along with men. He added that this day is an incentive and a motivation for Omani woman in all fields to be of great help and dedicate all these efforts to increase her contribution in construction and development.

This was on OCCI Al Wusta Governorate branch participation in the celebration of Omani Woman Day on October 17th where 2018 ceremony entitled “Omani Woman is a partner in sustainable development” On this national occasion, OCCI signed agreements with a set of companies and enterprises working in the states of the governorate to support and enhance woman entrepreneurs’ activities and the productive families. OCCI and the private sector believe in the essentiality to support and encourage them to develop and promote their enterprises in order to contribute in society development.
Dr. Salem Bin Sulayem Al-Junaibi, OCCI Deputy-Chairman for Economic Affairs and Branches and Head of OCCI Al-Wusta Governorate Branch signed the first agreement with the Duqm Refinery to support and organize entrepreneurs and productive families Forum in the governorate. The second agreement with four companies that support the activities of woman entrepreneurs and productive families in the governorate and came as follows:
- The first agreement was signed with Lohb Trading Company in Wilayat Hima and represented by its owner Mohammed bin Salem Al-Harsousi.
- The second agreement with Saib Al-Rawl Company, represented by its owner Abdullah bin Ghadir Al-Junaibi in Wilayat Al-Jazer.
- And the third with Al-Ramah Logistics Company, represented by its owner, Ayman bin Sabih Al-Junaibi, in Wilayat AL Duqm.
- The fourth with the company Abha Al wusta for Trading and Contracting and represented by its owner Salem bin Ali al-Amari in Wilayat Mahut.

We are thankful and grateful for His Majesty Sultan Qaboos the glorious for honouring and appreciating Omani women on this national occasion. It reflects HM faith in the abilities and Potentials of Omani women and their tremendous role in development consequently they must do so with all diligence and dedication. “ said Shakirah Bint Khasib Al Busaidiya, owner of Al Basma Private School.

Rahma Bint Mubark Al Nawfalialh, owner of Ritaj Al Khalij for cosmetics said that this day is a day of honour by His Majesty Sultan Qaboos bin Said as a woman from the Sultanate. It is the motivation for us to continue giving. This celebration and this day contribute significantly to find a large area for women in all fields where they work and encourage them to resume creating and working. We have noticed a great development and support in boosting the projects of women entrepreneurs by the government and the competent authorities. Women also have priority in many authorities and receive continuous care and support. Thankfully, I started my project from 2010 and now I have two branches in AL Musana and Al swaiq and iam intended to expand my project.

“The Sultanate’s celebration of this day is a support and attribute for us as entrepreneurs and it is a motivation to continue to build our commercial projects and expand them and contribute in the national economy in the future, God willing,” said Samtah Bint Ali Al Awaisia, Head of Musira Woman Association.
In this edition, we interview Khalfan Bin Rashid Al Maamari, the owner of Nasaim Al Hori for trading. A visit to one of the agricultural greenhouses was behind the idea of his project which is regarded nowadays one of the prominent projects among the promising projects adopted by young Omanis.

Despite the challenges, he managed to overcome all the difficulties and fulfill success, thanks to his persistence and continuous research for suitable solutions.

A visit created an idea
Khalfan Bin Rashid Al Maamari the owner of Nasaim Al Hori for trading starts saying: the idea of my project installation of agricultural greenhouses, came into my mind in 1998 during my visit to one of the farms that contains a number of agricultural greenhouses. I as well worked in the field of codling in general and water codling in particular (desert air conditions) operating on a small amount of electricity and water. They have an operating and closing timer according to a certain temperature degree, pointing that this technique obtained a great acceptance and approval from clients throughout the Sultanate. The technique is...
also used in poultry, horse, and cattle and similar. Khalfan Al-Maamari, speaking to Al Ghorfa magazine on hydroponics, said that hydroponics is one of the growing cultivation in the Sultanate of Oman because of the rare water.

Hydroponics is characterized by its rapid production of up to a month and a half, which means cutting half of the period until the harvest. I planted Lettuce, strawberry and all kinds of pulses through hydroponics. In 2014, I started to think about fish farming, which is a unique experience and I am growing with capital investment. I have collected the necessary information from the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries, in addition to consulting a number of specialists.

**Full-time project management**

As for the most important requirements for the success of any project, Khalfan Al-Ma'mari said: There must be a comprehensive study that gives a clear picture of everything related to the project from the financial, administrative and technical aspects, and the full-time project management is an important factor for building any economic project. As well as personal follow up for each detail enhances the Opportunities for your project success.

**Fish feed**

Concerning the challenges facing the project, Khalfan Al-Maamari said: I had a problem finding fish feed, but then I worked on making fish feed myself because the high protein needed by fish is not available like other feed for poultry. Feed .I created a special mixture of this kind of feed. I prepared the poultry feed and added sardines with dates and then dried and grinded as the production of this mixture achieved good results and the experience was a tremendous success and the popularity of customers on fish even before extraction. I also did not own the capital and I did not get any support either from the government or from the private sector.

**Expansion Dream**

Speaking about his plans, Khalfan Al Maamari said: “I aspire to expand my project and provide it with modern techniques in the field of fish farming and benefiting from local and external expertise.

**Participations and projects implemented**

On his participation, Khalfan Al-Maamari said: I participated in the Environment Exhibition and Conference at the Sheraton Hotel Muscat. I also participated in the agricultural delegation sent by the Oman Chamber of Commerce and Industry in Al Dahirah Governorate to the Republic of Turkey in October 2018. I also visited the Canton International Exhibition in the Republic of China; the most important projects I have implemented are an integrated project in Sohar Port consisting of agricultural green house and two hydroponic systems.

**Entrepreneur is an opportunity for creativity**

In conclusion, Khalfan Al Maamari addressed the young people who aspire to establish their own projects, saying: Entrepreneurship provides an opportunity for young people to create more creativity, and there is no project without obstacles.
Romanian -Omani Forum discusses Commercial Exchange

Prime Minister Viorica Dancila: Calls Omani businessmen to study the Romanian projects in many sectors

HE Dr Ali Al Sunidi: imports and exports statistics between the two countries are currently reasonable

HE Qais Al Yousef: we believe that OCCI and Romania Chamber of Commerce and Industry are able to boost trade sector and organize mutual trade delegations visits

In the context of OCCI keenness to utilize the available methods and means for the sake to develop the performance of private sector, increase its production and raise its contributions in the national economy. OCCI exerts her utmost effort through well-organized reception and expeditions of trade delegations and official visits from around the world. Meeting with these delegations open the area for entrepreneurs to held meetings that pave the way to found partnerships and investment agreements between Omani companies and others in varied sectors. In this relevant, Prime Minister Viorica Dancila visits Oman In Nov 2018 for three days.

During the visit, the Romanian Omani Business Forum, where the Prime Minister of Romania met with a number of Omani entrepreneur’s persons and their Romanian counterparts, reviewed the opportunities and potentials available for investment in both countries in order to increase the volume of trade exchange between the Sultanate and Romania.
HE Dr. Ali bin Masoud Al-Sunaidi, Minister of Trade and Industry, opened the meeting in which he welcomed the Romanian Prime Minister and his accompanying delegation. He expressed the hope that this visit will open new horizons for bilateral cooperation.

HE said that the statistics of import and export between the two friendly countries are reasonable currently, compared to the solid relations between the two countries, pointing out that the Sultanate has a distinct geographical location and with the completion of infrastructure, it allows investors to utilize these opportunities and possibilities available in various fields.

On her behalf, the Romanian Prime Minister said that the Romanian government has the desire to cooperate with the Sultanate’s government to facilitate all means of increasing investments in both countries. Romania encourages the establishment of a partnership with foreign investors and called on Omani businesspersons to study projects launched by the Romanian side in various fields such as agriculture, transport, infrastructure, information technology, electronic security, health, education, education. The Romanian Prime Minister pointed out that her country pays a special interest in gas and oil sectors, in view of the great potential that the Sultanate possesses in these areas and along with the Romanian Experience. She praised over two countries old ties on the diplomatic relations. The 40th anniversary of the establishment of the diplomatic relationship between the two friendly countries to be celebrated in May next year, which will survey the restructuring and the variety of relations and bilateral ties. On the first of next January, Romania will take over the European Union’s rotating presidency, and in the past years, it has registered economic growth rates among the EU countries, becoming one of the business destinations for the businesspersons.

On the other hand, HE Qais bin Mohammed Al Yousef; Chairman of the Board of Directors of OCCI said that the volume of trade exchange between the two friendly countries reached more than 12 million US dollars by 2001. He pointed out that Omani imports from Romania reached about 56 million US dollars in 2013, While recorded in the year 2016 about 46 million US dollars.

He explained that the OCCI and Romania Chamber of Commerce and Industry can play a greater role to enhance trade, facilitate mutual visits of trade delegations, organize promotional exhibitions for products and services for both sides, as well as exchange of information and investment data, especially concerning the facilities and investment opportunities available. OCCI an RCCI of have signed a cooperation agreement about 5 years ago, and that the support of the Romanian Prime Minister and the accompanying delegation to re-crystallize and renew the agreement between the two chambers will push the bilateral economic relations Larger and broader.

He also pointed out that the trade and investment relations between Oman and Romania are improving thanks to the support and facilities provided by all concerned parties. The opening of the Embassy of the Republic of Romania in the Sultanate will contribute to enhancing these relations to greater levels, especially in the sectors of trade, economy, tourism, education and cultural exchange.

On this occasion, we congratulate your country on the opening of the embassy and wish the joint efforts more progress and success.

He emphasized on the Omani companies products and services have become of high international standards. We hope that the Omani products and services will find a place in the Romanian market as well and receive a percentage of imports to Romania. He also called on the private sector to boost communication and to build economic relations and establish strategic investment partnerships.

The meeting also included presentations from the Omani behalf on the Doqum Economic Zone and the available investment opportunities, facilities and services provided to investors, and another presentation concerning The Public Authority for Investment Promotion & Export Development (Ithraa). The Romanian side also made a visual presentation on the investment opportunities and sectors that the Republic of Romania is focusing on during the coming period.
OCCI Al Batinah South Governorate Branch organizes Al Batinah South Forum

Under the patronage of HE Tahir Al Amri....

17 financial parties participated in Al Batinah South Meeting

The Forum attracts women and men entrepreneurs to be updated with the most important financial services

The participated authorities are the main pillar to finance and support private sector institutions.

Prepared by Nasser Bin Juma Al Harthi

Under the patronage of His Excellency Taher bin Salem Al Amri, Chief Executive Officer of the Central Bank of Oman, Al Batinah South Forum for finance and banking facilities was held from Oct 24th to Oct 25th. In the presence of HE Qais Bin Mohammed Al Yousef, Chairman of the OCCI, Hilal bin Saeed Al Hajri Governor of South Batinah. As well as a number of members of the Board of Directors of the OCCI and sides and institutions and men and women entrepreneurs.

A set of different experts and institutions in the financial and banking sector and a number of entrepreneurs attended the meeting. The meeting was opened by Eng. Hamoud bin Salem Al Saadi, Head of the Chamber Branch in South Batinah governorate, where he welcomed the attendees and pointed out that the forum aims to review the financing programs available to funding companies. To explore the tools, opportunities and risks of financing programs available at financial institutions, and to provide opportunities for small investors to get a closer look at the features of the programs offered to suit their needs. And the most important financing products for productive households and housing loans. Eng. Hamoud Al-Saadi stressed that this forum comes in response to the Chamber’s branch Al Batinah South Governorate to provide all means to support institutions and companies in the governorate. Hence; the forum is an opportunity for real and effective partnership between the various governmental and private supporting sides. Moreover, between men and women entrepreneurs in order to serve the development of the private sector in Al Batinah South Governorate. This forum is a part of a series of events and seminars conducted by the branch, in order to support entrepreneurs and to develop the investment opportunities in Al Batinah South Governorate.

Hamoud Al Saadi

Al Saadi : The forum is an opportunity for real and effective partnership between the financial institutions and entrepreneurs .
The first day of the South Batinah Financial and Banking Facilities Forum witnessed the presentation of a number of worksheets by the Financial Banking Sector. Ali Hassan Mousa, CEO of the Association of Omani Banks spoke about the role of the sector in financing the projects. Hence, Aisha Al-Sayabiya and Saleh Ahmed Sumait, from Bank Dhofar, reviewed the main roles of SME banking products represented in capital financing, asset financing, capital asset financing, contract and receivables financing, real estate’s finance. As well as the most important free banking services, which are free consultations concerning the enterprises, its managing and the suitable finance for each. In addition to presenting workshops in cooperation with the expertise of banks and other stakeholders. Ali Al-Lawati from Bank Muscat also gave a visual presentation on Al Wathba’s programs for SMEs in Bank Muscat. He explained that there are approximately 160,000 thousand small and medium enterprises in the Sultanate. They represent 90% of the total number of companies. These small and medium enterprises contribute about 15-20% of the total domestic production of Oman. Most of these companies works in the retail and contracting sector. He pointed out that SMEs Sector has a mega attention on behalf of the Board of Directors and the Executive Administration of the bank. This is represented through Al Wathba Programme and a series of initiatives and memorandum of understanding (MOU) which the programme presents. Mr. Ali Shaker, Business Development and Strategic Consultant at Al Zubair Small Business Center, presented an overview of the Center’s most important efforts and programs, he also noted that 70% of the owners of small and medium enterprises are under the age of 30. And 36% of the owners of these enterprises are in Muscat Governorate. He cleared as well that the most important sectors of SMEs are wholesale and retail trade and construction and professional activities, professional and technical. He added that the lack of support services, regulations and legislation, financing is one of the most important challenges of growth in the SME environment in the Sultanate according to a study conducted by Zubair Center.
In A’Sharqia North Governorate, Sanad Services Center creates suitable job opportunities for job seekers, administrate, and operate many self-employment projects. It has a great role in creating direct connecting channels among the concerned in the light of technology development and modern communication technology that the Sultanate witnesses in all fields.

In this interview, we are going to focus on one of these centre’s owner who is distinguished by hard work and continuous giving without tirelessness. She is a successful model for an Omani young woman who runs her own business that embodies her supervision and her keenness on training and qualifying to provide outstanding services... It’s “Kholoud Salim Al- Masliha” who established “Kholoud AL_Maslhi for commercial services” on March 2013 at a small office with only two computers till she became able to expand it and to employ a girl who seeks for a job to help her accomplish the duties entrusted to the centre. Especially with the recent development, that SANAD witnessed which included many aspects such as the adoption of the new identity, the addition of a range of transactions and electronic services. In addition to the support received from the RAFID and the Board’s persistence to develop and sustain it, As well as the role it plays in implementing the government aspirations to accelerate the implementation of electronic government services.
Kholoud Al-Maslha cleared: Sanad contains a database and an advanced communication technology. It also receives job seekers applications and the individual initiatives. For those who seek to run their own business. She said: We seek to finish their transactions in one place starting from printing their own documents, government and private letters, submitting applications for electronic transactions, and resuming them from various government authorities that are related to business. As well as other services that we provide, that meet the needs of citizens as printing and copying papers and documents, and to finish some of the transactions electronically, which makes it easier for citizens to save time within one place.

**Various Services**

The center as well, presents vocational guidance for those who desire to establish small and medium enterprises (SME). We also investigate their training and qualifying potentials and their careers. Additionally, accomplishing the necessary procedures for establishing all kinds of projects, as well as our efforts in conducting periodic follow-up of the owners of these projects and helping them to ease the difficulties they face, supervise the small investment projects for women entrepreneurs, and provide the necessary technical and administrative support.

**Power expansion**

Almalshi added: Training courses for sanad’s owners and employees are very important. Experiences, efficiency and communication with the concerned parties are vital, spicially in making new decisions. It is important to expand powers of sanad centers in e-services to raise its efficiency.

**Job Rotation**

Kholoud bint Salim Al-Maslha pointed to some of the challenges she faced in the work. Which include the lack of national cadres that continue to work. She found that the job rotation in Sanad Canters is several and here emerges the need for training and qualification for the new employee, they need approximately six months to be acquainted with the electronic services. Moreover, to experience the work, the application of laws, and knowledge of the websites of the government agencies through which they complete some of transactions. In addition, to deal with the coordinators who crowd the center, and therefore the need to speed performance in providing service while taking care of quality, and to avoid mistakes as much as possible and unorganized job rotation cost the owner more time, effort and money.

**Improving competencies and developing systems**

Kholoud Bint Salim, the owner of Sanad Services center, thinks that the success of the employer in Sanad Services Canters can be achieved only by improving the competencies, keeping up with the technological, administrative and technical development of the systems and the networks of public institutions that provide services to the citizen and the employer. Moreover, to intense the communication between the centers and the government, particularly in making new decisions to inform and acquaint the owners of the centers with them to accelerate the tone of the work.

**Self-Employment projects**

Kholoud aspires to promote her project and to employ a number of job seekers from Omani young women as well as to create a permanent source of income for them. She says at the end of the interview: The government sector is no longer able to employ and absorb all the educational and professional outputs. As a result, young people should pursue the horizons of self-employment and to establish Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) at any sector that may achieve their aspirations, where they can create and innovate. Additionally to find out solutions to the obstacles and difficulties that may block their way.
The first section: tax Regulations. Origin, evolution and concept
A. Evolution of tax systems in the history of economic thought: The development of the country in economic activity has accompanied the evolution of the concept of taxation in economic thought, not only as a means of financial resources, but also as a tool of financial policy.

Taxation in the Physiological Ideology: Economic thought originated in France in the 18th century. Physicists’ economists took the idea of a unified tax on agricultural land as the sole source of wealth. Landowners were the only category that produced net income. The tax is levied on the income of the other classes, since a tax on these classes means that the landowners are the ones who bear its burden in the end. Due to the tax imposed on the entry of other categories, traders and manufacturers. For example, will raise the prices of services offered to the landowners by these categories by the tax, i.e. the tax ultimately deducted from the net output, i.e the ‘Land owners’ income.

Taxation in classical ideology: Classical economic analysis revolves around the idea of the neutrality of the state, limited to ensuring the normal functioning of public utilities to the minimum. There is a hidden hand stimulates the movement of market powers, and if there is any imbalance, it returns to its normal situation automatically without the interference of the state (Mohammad Abdulmatti, , Abdulmalik Al Hanai 1996, p. 24-25)

According to Adam Smith: Adam Smith identifies the four Maxims of taxation: collection expenses, appropriateness of collection, certainty, and justice. In addition, Adam Smith called for state intervention to be minimal, i.e. to take care of the errands of defence, justice, and the production of public commodities that the market is unable to produce, and thus clearly accepts the need for tax as a means of financing the guarding state. Tax at “John B. “Sai is proceeding with his tax treatment from his refusal to borrow and the budget deficit, because the increase in public expenditure on public revenues results in a budget imbalance. Then financing the increase in expenses through loans and the resulting interest. Thus, “Sai” justifies the imposition of taxation to confront the public expenditure,
Taxation in Keynesian Thought (New Classic School):
The global crisis in the capitalist economy in 1929 resulted clearly in shrinking demand, unemployment and the collapse of the stock market. This situation led to the emergence of a new economic thought that calls for the integration of the economy of public finance into the economic theory of “John Meynard Keynes. Keynes researched the methodology of facing unemployment in the context of comprehensive employment. Keynesian analysis of employment balance and Income can mostly encourages state intervention to support effective demand, embodied in three forms: taxes, public spending, and commercialization. In the field of taxation, the state can reduce the marginal consumption of some social classes if it raises taxes on their incomes. Keynes stressed the importance of effective demand in controlling the pace of economic activity. This is because governments resort whenever they expect a recession to increase effective demand Tax cuts and interest rates. Kenis believes that the authorities should make public investments, especially public investments financed by the state treasury, even if the deficit is in the large projects sector. As these investments are added to private sector investments, giving full investment volume that can achieve full employment for labour, and found “Keniz” that the authorities must adopt a public investment policy that accompanies the application in the private sector, if private investment develops satisfactorily, the state can reduce the volume of public investment. On the contrary, as private investment tends to shrink, the PA must develop the volume of public investment, which plays an integral role, because of the intervention of power in economic activity, unemployment is relatively low and a level of welfare is achieved for the society in exchange for high incomes. On the level of demand for consumption, by changing the original redistribution of entry through tax policy. In fact, the state can impose high taxes on high incomes while at the same time limiting or permanently exempting low incomes from the tax. ... Through tax policy, the state can encourage enterprises to invest, by granting them a tax exemption on goods purchased, or on goods sold ... etc. (Khadija Tabathi, 2011/2012, pp. 15-16)

Tax in the new-liberal school: The new economic liberalism revolves around three basic axes:
Ø making a significant increase in the extent of reliance on free markets, liberalization of trade and opening up to foreign investment flows.
Ø Launching areas of work for the private sector, both local and foreign, and considering and encouraging it in various ways, including privatization, its participation in the development pillar and the provision of services that were monopolized by the government or the public sector as utilities.
Ø A functional reduction in the role of the government and its interventions in economic affairs, specifically the withdrawal from the field of productive investment and to creating only the appropriate climate for the accumulation of domestic and foreign capital.

Thus, the new economic liberalism is a free market and an open economy driven by initiatives (Tawfiq Beydoun, p. 189)

The definition of tax and its characteristics: The traditional view of taxation in the past periods differed from the current period, where the tax was considered as the money deducted by the authority from the individual to cover the public expenses. The tax was defined in its traditional sense as follows: Michel Darren “as a compulsory-sum cut by the public authority on the funds of individuals in order to distribute the public burdens among them equally. The second defines tax as net financial tax paid by the individual duty of reparation to the State or a local public bodies, their final contribution to the costs of public burdens and without the benefit of a special return, it for what you paid taxes. Third definition: As Rifat Mahjoub defined it as a state-funded financial deduction by means of reparation from the wealth of other persons and without remuneration, for achieving public benefit (Khalil Awad, 2003, pp. 13-14)

According to the modern concept of taxation, it is defined as follows: The tax is in a contribution that takes a monetary form, forcing Normal and rational individuals according to their commissioning powers, in a final and freeways, in order to cover the general burdens and to achieve state intervention. The second definition is a monetary contribution, they were natural or rational individuals regardless of Whether or not they benefit from the public services of the State and the extent to which they benefit from such services. Taxes are imposed on them for financial, political, economic or social purposes. In the context of these definitions, we deduce the evolution of the objective of taxation from a financial objective to an economic, social and political objective that reflects the importance of this tool for the conduct of economic agents. (Saad Al-Oweil, 2013, p. 23)

C) The objectives of taxation for the purpose of development

The state, when imposing taxes on its citizens whether they are rational or natural persons, does not impose such taxes in vain, according to the whims of its rulers. Rather, it imposes such taxes after setting certain goals and that tax is major tool to achieve financial, economic, social objectives and others that draw the public policies.

Financial objectives:
that is to impose such taxes in order to obtain the necessary funds and revenues to fund the public treasury of the state to make public expenditure, when the State is committed to make the necessary expenditures in order to serve the citizens, it requires Financial resources in order to fulfill their obligations. One of these basic financial sources is taxes, and even the most important ones. (Khalil Hashishi, 2003, p. 28)

The financial objective of taxes also lies in redistribution of income and wealth and to prevent the accumulation of such wealth in a small category, by creating a mechanism to impose taxes on such wealth as in Germany and Scandinavia, or the application of tax escalation or increase the rate of taxes on goods that have acceptance by the rich.. In this way, these taxes are the share of the rich and they bear the burden of them. As for the poor classes, they are not affected by these taxes and this gives the possibility of increasing their income to spend on contrary with the rich.

Social objectives: To cut down the shameful social phenomena, especially for some goods, the state may impose high taxes on those types of goods. To prevent dealing and purchase, the best example of that alcohol and hence we see that the state uses taxes to put an end to the social problems within Society, either by increasing tax rates or reducing them

Economic objectives: Taxes can make a general economic impact, and they can have effects in some economic sectors. One of the most important roles for taxation in its impact on general economic activity is its role in the process of absorbing excess purchasing power and combating inflationary trends. In addition, the tax is used to encourage some productive activities, for example in tourism,
industry or agriculture sectors, for example, the State exempt those sectors (Mohamed Abdelmatti, Abdul Malik al-Hanaa, 1996, pp. 331-32)

The second Section - Tax, rules, components and types
A - The tax Components: Perhaps the most important components of the tax include:
- it's a monetary obligation
- it is compulsory obligation i.e. forced to pay it
- it pays definitively
- it's non- returnable obligation
- its purpose is to contribute to the development of the society, i.e., it enables the State to benefit from the proceeds of the tax to achieve public benefit (Mohammad Abdul-Mutti, Abdul Malik Al-Hanai, 1996, pp. 34-35)

B - Tax Rules
It refers to the set of rules and principles that the financial legislator is required to guide and take into account in determining the tax system in the State, which works to achieve the interest of the taxpayer on the one hand and the treasury of the public on the other hand.

Adam Smith is the first to organize and formulate it in his book “The Wealth of Nations”. In which he explained that one of the most important rules of taxation is the rule of justice and equality. He believes that the state's citizens should contribute to the expenses and from which a relative price of tax is determined from the income of the individual. The exempted amount of tax is always sole, no matter the amount of substance submitted is. However in modern times, financial scientists turned to the idea of progressive tax system after the Proportional tax system failed in achieving the desired justice, imposes this tax rates vary with the value of the tax base. Undoubtedly that the progressive tax achieves more justice. (Khadija Tabuthai, pp. 19-20)

As the tax is part of the general sovereignty of the state or one of its manifestations, so the state represented by the Council of Representatives or any title are concerned with tax submission. On the other hand, it was necessary that the authorities take into account the basic rules to submit these taxes, without prejudice to the right of citizens On the other hand, without harming the public treasury interest. Consequently, some basic rules had to be considered in order to operate tax submission on the achievement of its objectives. The most important of these rules are:

First: Justice or Equality:
In other words, citizens of the state should contribute to the financing of government expenditures according to their relative ability, i.e., their contribution to the appropriate proportion of their income, according to the nature of those incomes. Some believe that this justice is achieved when the sacrifice is equal to the taxpayers. This is to say that justice is achieved when all the members of society participate in carrying out the public burdens. This is based on the ability of each employer, the principle of ability to pay. The first principle is to treat all equal income earners equally in the payment of the tax. The second principle is to distinguish between those with equal incomes based on their own situation, such as financial and social obligations.

Second: efficiency and expenditure Economization:
The purpose of this rule is to collect the tax at the easiest ways that do not cost the tax administration in the State or the company large sums, especially in light of routine and complex procedures, which cost the state and institutions expenses may exceed the proceeds of entry. To guarantee the effectiveness of tax as a vital source on which the state relies, without loss of part of it. On the other hand, efficiency is viewed from a different perspective than the previous meaning. i.e., the tax does not negatively affects the economic efficiency and does not obstacle the use of resources.

Third: the rule of confirmation, or clarity and Certainty:
This rule is a manifestation of taxation submission, and that any tax submitted is obvious and clearly informed. In terms of the amount, the date of payment of these taxes, and the mechanism of paying these taxes. So that the tax is far from even though proportionately from arbitrariness and transgression. Taxation should not be vague interpreted by administrative departments. The purpose of this is that the taxpayer is certain of his obligations in a clear and unambiguous manner. Thus can know in advance his tax position in terms of taxes committed to pay, its price and all technical issues related to the tax. Any tax the taxpayer does not know its amount and the time and place where it is collected, these taxes are considered unfair and arbitrary and may lead to misuse and lead to embezzlement and exhaustion of taxpayers and burdens of their shoulders. Therefore should not be paid. In addition, here we note in the current tax systems are imposing Taxes in most countries are defined within the framework of the date of imposition and the date of maturity and the method of collection. First, financial and fiscal legislation should be clear enough to be understood by the public without difficulty or confusion. Second, the State should make available to the taxpayers all tax laws by publishing and clarifying in the newspaper Official or other means of publication (Saad Al-Oweil, 2013, pp. 26-27)

Fourth: the rule of appropriateness in payment:
Taxes should be collected in consideration with appropriateness, in terms of the most suitable time and the easiest method for the taxpayers. The best time to collect taxes is the taxpayer can get his salaries. While collecting taxes on industrial and commercial profits at the end of the fiscal year or when profits are realized. Taxes on real estate revenues from taxpayers shall be levied after payment of the rent allowances. The rule of appropriateness is one of the most respected rules in modern tax systems, whether these taxes are submitted on incomes or submitted on consumption. (Mohammed Abd al-Mutti, Abdul Malik al-Hanai, 1996, pp. 34-35). On the other hand, some writers views that there are other rules that should be in the process of imposing and submitting taxes. The most important of these other rules are the following:

1 - Simplicity
This rule means the ease and clarity of regulations and rules of taxation for the taxpayers, all this is to protect them on the one hand, and on the other in order to reduce the cost of collection of those taxes.

2. Diversity
The intended meaning of this rule is the diversity of forms of taxation, and this diversity will serve fundamentally in increasing tax revenues and in finding the fairness of taxes imposed, in addition to diversifying the tools available for economic policy.

3 - Flexibility
The flexibility here means two aspects, first: flexibility in the structure
of the tax and rates, depending on the situation of public finances, second: flexibility is the response of the tax system of economic variables without the need for any amendments to it, and the relative taxes are the best types of taxes that fulfill that objective.

C - Basic Types of Tax

There are many types of tax in the present time, as they differ relatively in their importance, as well as in the effects resulting from them, especially the economic and social effects. These taxes are divided according to several criteria as follows:

1. Multiple Tax standard:
The single tax: known for ages, where the state imposed only one tax. At the end of the eighteenth century, the French applied it when physicists called for the imposition of taxes on agricultural lands, considering that the land is the focus of the economy. Moreover, is the only source of production and wealth. The single tax system can be defined as a system that is limited to only one tax or one relative tax (basic tax) in addition to the imposition of other insignificant taxes.

Multiple tax:
We mean by the system of multiple taxes, subjecting the taxpayer to different types of taxes, resulting multiple basic of tax. This system is used due to the diversity of wealth sources, costs and income. According to some views of finance writers, the single tax is much better than relying on multiple taxes, in terms of tax rules, it is characterized as: more economical in terms of nature of the method of collection, more flexible in terms of response to change in the volume of economic activity. It is also more equitable, because it makes the comparison between financiers easier and easier for the unification of the tax burden... It is also the result of taking into account, as much as possible, the rules of tax neutrality and entertaining. It also gives the tax system an easy, simple and uncomplicated nature (Samer Naim) Abdel Rahim Melhem, 2006, p. 36)

2. Standard of existence and use (standard of direct and indirect taxes).

According to this classification, the tax is divided into two types: a type imposed on the existence of income and another imposed on the use of this income, according to basic considerations, perhaps the most important of which are the following (Khadija Tabathi, pp. 20-21):

ü The criterion for the nature of the taxable substance
ü The criterion for the method of collection
ü The criterion for transferring the tax burden
ü The standard of the tax base

On the basis of this criterion, the tax is divided into the following: (Mohammed Abdulmuti, Abdalmalik Al-Hinai, 1996, p. 20-21):

A. Taxes on expenditure:

Which is the taxes imposed on the areas of the use of income and wealth, when they spend, that is, in other words, the taxes imposed by the legislator imposed on the taxpayer and falls on it and applies to it when it consumes goods and services. The taxes on spending are reflected in customs taxes. These taxes have appeared so long ago that the existence of these taxes coincided with the emergence and emergence of social organization, which represents its peak and state pyramid.

B. Taxes on capital:

Capital taxes are imposed on capital and not on persons, ie, they are limited to capital, i.e. accumulated wealth, away from being viewed as a source of income or non-renewable. Thus, the increase in capital, whether periodic or non-periodic, is considered income, As in the case of income tax.

The tax on capital is imposed on the same money whether produced or not produced and whether its production periodically or not periodically, and therefore the tax to either be imposed on the capital or taken from the income generated if the rate is light or if it is imposed on the same capital and cut if the rate is high. It is imposed on the money owned by the person at a certain time. In this sense, these taxes are imposed on the property and if not produce income such as taxes on trains or jewellery. However, in return, these taxes have been subjected to some criticism. Perhaps the most important of which are: It affects capital and thus weakens its productivity and leads to a weakening of the general tendency of saving for these individuals. Such savings will result in taxation. In addition, they may have negative consequences on investment and capital flight to several types and ways: taxes on capital ownership Taxes on capital increase and taxes on earned wealth

C. Income Tax Standard:

Income taxes are one of the most common types of taxation in modern tax systems. This is in addition to meeting economic, social and financial objectives. Income is the primary and natural source of tax on a regular basis. Income is the economic component of the tax, except in limited and exceptional cases in all its forms. In addition, income is the most comprehensive criterion in order to express the ability of taxpayers to pay. It is necessary to identify the nature of the income, its nature, and the definition of the types of taxes imposed on income according to the tax regulations (Khalil Hashishi, 2003, p.20)

4 - Determination of the tax base.

Two processes determine the tax material:
- Determination of the taxpayer’s coast capacity, by recognizing the limits of the taxable material by excluding what the law requires to exclude, so as not to be taxed. By determining the limits of taxable income if imposed on income.
- Determination of the value of the taxable material, calculation of the amount of tax by quantification. The quantitative estimate of the taxable item is intended by the tax authority to accurately assess the taxpayer because any overstatement or underestimation is inappropriate. Excessive estimation leads to an unnecessary burden on the members of the community or beyond their ability to the tax pay. Which may lead them to move away from the productive activities they have allocated and lead in this severe damage to the national economy. On the other hand, the lack of appreciation is wasted on the Tax Authority access to funds can be used to satisfy public needs instead of resorting to the means of finance. Which is most expensive on the community. (Walid Zakaria, Hussam al-Din, p. 27).

(We will complete the completion of the study in the next issue of Al Ghorfa Magazine.)
**World Investment Forum**

**World Investment Map - Visions & missions**

Raid Al Shehhi: The conference focuses the light on facilities and privileges offered by the country for investors and entrepreneur.

Amr Al Siabi: Investors and governments should direct their institutions towards sustainable development objectives. World Investment Forum is an economic occasion and a significant world event to create investment policies.
World Investment Forum is an economic occasion and a key world event where investment policies are made.

It provides an area and platform to react among the participants from all over the world with different specializations. It aims to facilitate dialogue and to work on concerning the current emerging challenges that hinder investment development globally.

The World Investment Forum in its tenth tournament 2018 focused on the global challenges of international investment with the emergence of the age of globalization and industrialization, and provided an opportunity for open dialogues among all stakeholders involved in investment and exchange of ideas to develop qualitative initiatives to find solutions and boost global partnerships to achieve prosperity for all.

Concerning the forum, Raid bin Mohammed Al Shehhi, Board Member of the OCCI and the Head of the participating delegation, said: the main objective of the OCCI’s participation in the forum is to invest in all international and world economic meetings, to highlight the privileges and facilities that countries offer to investors and businessmen. In addition, to learn about the developments and updates of the world of investment. The forum is also an opportunity to open new horizons of work and economic and investment cooperation between the private sector in the Sultanate and participants from different countries of the world. OCCI Delegation participates in the World investment Forum 2018 in its tenth tournament held in Switzerland capital, Geneva, during the period from 22nd to 26th October 2018.

Blockchain technology
Shehab Bin Yousuf Bin Alawi, a participant in the delegation, said: “The participation in the World Investment Forum 2018 in Geneva is one of the important participations as it provided us with the opportunity to learn about the reality of investment in many economic sectors. Moreover, the opportunity to meet investors from around the world to discuss opportunities of investment and mechanisms of cooperation in the economic fields. In addition, during the course of the meeting, we learned about the Blockchain technology and its importance in the development of business performance and enforcing investment projects and their diversity. He also pointed to the great role of such world forums in drawing the road map for international investments, also introduces us to the top investors in the world.

Points of view...
Ghanim Bin Dhaher Al Bathari, member of the Board of Directors of the OCCI, said: “Our participation in this forum has given us an opportunity to meet with businessmen from different countries, meet them face to face and discuss the investment opportunities in the Sultanate and abroad. We benefited from our participation by identifying the latest updates and developments in the field of investment, adding that our presence as businessmen in these forums
will enhance our investment culture and open the horizon and perceptions about the global investment structure. He added that the conference talked about investing in the digital economy, the rapid rise in demand for this type of economy, and the increasing demand for technology applications, which works to provide goods and services electronically. Thus, contributed to transforming and changing the traditional economic performance tone in the business, finance and commerce sectors into the instant form.

Qais Bin SALEm Al Khalili, Chairman of Al Khalili Group, said: “The World Investment Forum 2018 is a great opportunity to exchange ideas, particularly with relevant to the objectives of sustainable economic development, and to translate these ideas into real solutions for a better future for all. As it includes a large group of world investors, leaders of countries and people with ideas and minds who have successful experiences in sustainable business and industry and have a strong impact on the economy and society. This forum also provides models of creative works that promote economic success and achieve sustainable aims.

Zakaria bin Said Al Ghassani, a member of the delegation, expressed his opinion that such world economic forums contribute to benefiting from the experiences of countries and leading models in the world of investment and the economy. Indeed, the participation of Oman was outstanding but it lacks coordination of the participation of a group of Omani sectors with detailed worksheets that show the incentives offered by the Government for each sector. He pointed out that the United Nations program is diverse, multi-pronged and comprehensive for all benefits of investment and investors and an opportunity to learn about many of men and women entrepreneurs and business and the parties involved in investment in the countries worldwide.

He added: We at OCCI Exhibitions and Conferences Committee will seek to attract one of the world economic conferences in the Sultanate for the important role of the conference industry in supporting the national economy.

Khaled bin Tawfiq bin Abdul Rasool, member of the delegation, said that the World Investment Forum is considered one of the outstanding conferences through which many axis are discussed, most importantly investment for sustainable development and the challenges of developing current and emerging investments. To boost world partnerships as well in order to upgrade the world economy. The Sultanate’s delegation participated successfully and effectively in this World Conference.

The Forum also spoke about the digital economy, which contributes to increasing the inclusion of the country with the global economy, increasing the opportunities of international trade and access to other markets easily. It contributes greatly to simplify decision-making to provide the required information and accessibility and using them in decision-making and economic policies. The conference also discussed the development of the digital economy in most developing countries, which remains a challenge due to the lack of the required effective Internet.
World Investment Trends

“The participation in the World Investment Forum was an opportunity for Omani investors to learn about the recent world trends in the field of investment,” said Amr bin Salim Al Siyabi, member of the delegation. He pointed out that the sessions of the forum that we attended reviewed a variety of subjects including investment in the emerging digital economy relating to the fourth industrial revolution. In addition to the blockchain technology and how to exploit it to improve various services. One session discussed the sustainability of family businesses and the key differences between them and other companies and a session about investment in the Middle East.

He added that the forum has had a good impact in urging governments and investors to direct their institutions towards achieving sustainable development objectives by setting performance indicators or enacting legislation aimed at serving the community and the surrounding environment, which serves the public interest.

Hassan Hashemani, member of the delegation, I was honored to participate in the Economic Investment Forum which is considered one of the most important conferences in the world where creating international investment policies with a prominent presence of political and commercial figures from around the world. The conference included several topics, the most important of which is the encryption and utilizing them in various sectors and investing in sustainable energy solutions. This conference offered an opportunity to exchange experiences and establish external relations.

In conclusion, Ali bin Maqbool Al-Lawati, member of the delegation, said: I would like to thank the management of the OCCI for organizing this delegation which represents the Sultanate in one of the most important international gatherings in the field of social and sustainable investment. It presents the latest international technology in various fields. He added that it is important for the private sector in the Sultanate of Oman to interact with these developments and adopt creative ideas and advanced technology to contribute to the sustainable development of this country.

Falah Bin Altaf Al Lawati: Our participation in the OCCI’s delegation to the World Investment Forum 2018 in Geneva is important for us as entrepreneurs and has a great role in enhancing the practical experience and the latest developments in the investment sector. As well as the search for investment opportunities with participants from around the world. The World Investment Forum is an important international economic event, which witnessed a global presence. Moreover, we were acquainted with the latest technologies and programs in the global investment sector.
Ahmed Al Hooti: Kenyan market is one of the most important markets in Africa, which witness a rapid economic growth.

Muscat, Oct 29 – Omani Products Exhibition (OPEX 2018) was inaugurated by Mohammed Adan, Cabinet Secretary for the Ministry of the East African Community and Regional Development, at Kenyan International Convention Center in Nairobi. The ceremony was attended by Dr Ali bin Masoud Al Sunaidy, Minister of Commerce and Industry, HE Saleh Bin Sulaiman al Harthi, Sultanate’s Ambassador to Kenya, HE Qais Bin Mohammed Al Yousef the head of OCCI, officials and businesspersons from Oman and Kenya.

More than 80 Omani companies and 200 participants of entrepreneurs from different economic institutions and SMEs,
in the presence of numerous Kenyan entrepreneurs and economists, took part in OPEX Kenya. Rashid Bin Amer Al Maslhi, OCCI Deputy Chairman for Administrative and Financial Affairs said: “OPEX is organized in cooperation with OCCI, The Public Authority for Investment Promotion & Export Development (Ithraa) and Public Establishment for Industrial Estates (PEIE) in the attendance of OCCI Board of Directors, to support the Omani products in the external markets. In accordance with The Sultanate continuous and magnificent efforts to support private sector institutions and to search for new and growing markets to propagate the Omani products, through establishing ventures with Kenyan markets and to open new marketing aspects.”

In an interview with, HE Saleh Bin Sulaiman al Harthi, Sultanate’s Ambassador to Kenya, said: “this is the first Omani Products Exhibition (OPEX) in Kenya. It is regarded an important exhibition in order to commence dealing with Kenyan companies and to present the Omani products. The Kenyan market is old and expanded. Beyond the Kenyan market are about 150 million closed countries such as Uganda, South Sudan, Congo and Rwanda, most of which are exported and imported through the port of Mombasa, so this terminal is major for closed markets. Nevertheless, this exhibition is just the beginning and requires a follow-up. The Omani traders must persist to invest in the Kenyan market to deliver the Omani products in Kenya. We in Oman embassy in the Republic of Kenya are doing all the official and governmental commands between the two countries in addition to presenting the economic activities and Omani products in the Sultanate”.

Ahmed Bin Abdulkarim Al Hooty, OCCI Board member and the Economic Committee Chairman, cleared that this exhibition is expected to increase the volume of trade cooperation between the two countries. As Omani exports to Kenya reaches approximately $50 million. He added that the Kenyan market is one of the fastest growing markets and Kenya has a population of 49 million, so there is a great potential for the Omani product to contribute to increasing trade volume between the two countries. Al Hooty as well spoke about the participation of various number of economic sectors such as, minerals, wood products, furniture, foodstuff, pharmaceutical and medical supplies, fertilisers, chemical, plastic and mineral products, perfumes, leather works, equipment and logistic services. As well as related governmental institutions and number of small and medium enterprises. OCCI seeks to facilitate the measures and to provide technical support for Omani investors and the exporters of Kenyan products to the Sultanate and vs through the cooperation agreement with the Kenyan Chamber.

Zahir Al Kaabi
Zahir Bin Mohammed Al Kaabi, OCCI Board of Directors member and chairman of OCCI Al Braimi Branch concerning the expected outcomes of OPEX said: The massive participation of private sector institutions and diversity will certainly bring many commercial gains, especially as the Kenyan market is one of the African markets which witnesses a rapid growth and economic stability. In addition to the fascinating natural and tourist resources in Kenya, which make it an attracting market for Omani investors. The most available opportunities in the Kenyan market are represented in Information technology, oil and gas, and human resources, as well as the establishment of a number of industrial activities and other business opportunities that will be available to Omani investors through bilateral meetings.

Ali Bin Hamdan Al Ajmi, OCCI Board Member, said that the visit of a number of members of the OCCI Board of Directors OPEX comes in accordance with the Chamber’s keenness to cooperate with other institutions in supporting these exhibitions. Al-Ajmi added that the participation of 200 Omani business owners and entrepreneurs contributes to the exchange of experiences between Omanis themselves, as well as enhancing the possibility for communication with the Kenyan side. Eng. Hamood Bin Salem Al Saadi, OCCI Board member and the Chairman of OCCI Al Batinah South Branch pointed that the importance of this exhibition lies in identifying closely the best methods to deliver Omani products to the Kenyan market and the nearby ones. He added that OPEX would certainly contribute to the support of the logistics sector and trade exchange between the two countries.

In an interview with Najm Mohammed Al Tmami, Ahmed bin majid private school owner said: “I have a number of investments in real estate’s sector, as a matter of fact I seek to propagate the Sultanate in Kenya through my participation in OPEX. I believe that Kenya market is promising for Omani investors, as Kenya possesses old and precious institutions in banks, customs, ports systems, and regulatory legislation. Nairobi is an investment center in East Africa and one of the three major capitals of Africa. Nairobi is a center for international organizations in various aspects. Mombasa port is an old port and is attached to the SGR Kenya, southern Sudan, Uganda, Rwanda, Congo and part of Tanzania and Ethiopia. However, at the same time there are some challenges that the Omani investor may face, which is competition from local manufacturers and traders who import from abroad where they have long experience in dealing with suppliers from other countries, especially India, China and Iran. I would like to point out that the current strategy of the Republic of Kenya focuses on four key sectors called the Big Four, which are industry, health and housing for Low Income and Food Security”.

Ahmed Al Kimiani from Khayrat Ard for minerals Specialized in the manufacture of fence, barbed wire, nails, galvanized panels and galvanized doors said: “We, as a small and medium enterprise, are participating for the second time in Omani products Exhibition (OPEX). We seek to transit the Omani industry through this exhibition to the African market and the rest of the world, especially as these markets are characterized as developing and active in the construction sector and infrastructure.”
While Zainab Al Sheidi of Al-Shumouk Plastic Products noted that there is great interest from Kenyan entrepreneurs in Omani products, especially since our traditional plastic products are close to the Kenyan culture, which links some of its regions with historic ties with the Sultanate.

Fahmi Al Hinai, member of the OPEX Committee, said: “In fact, the Kenyan market is a large and promising with a great future for Omani exports. The Kenyan market provides the opportunity for Oman’s exports to a number of surrounding countries with a population of more than 250 million in East Africa. We need more attention, as the volume of Omani imports and exports does not exceed US $ 65 million and our participation in this exhibition for the aim to reach trade volume of more than US $ 1 billion. This meeting is a first step towards reaching a large number of trade exchange between the two countries. We had numerous visits in Kenya, to ports and most important commercial zones in the country. The most important challenges facing the Omani trader are the customs, but the quality of the Omani product as well as the logistical aspect of shipping cargo between the Sultanate and Kenya can be invested. However, the Omani product is highly desirable in the Kenyan market and this is what we have seen from the Omani products exhibition and the meeting of Kenyan Entrepreneurs.

Memorandum of Understanding between OCCI and KCCI (MOU)

On the occasion, a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) was signed between OCCI and Kenya National Chamber of Commerce and Industry.

The agreement was signed by the Chairman of the Board of Directors of the OCCI, Qais Bin Mohammed Al Yousif and James Moor , Kenya Chamber of Commerce and Industry (KCCI)Deputy Chairman. The agreement aims at developing and enhancing cooperation and trade promotion, supporting foreign trade in both countries, encouraging business, establishing partnerships and expanding the horizons of trade and business relations between the two countries through organizing visits of trade delegations and participating in exhibitions. Exchange of economic, trade reports, and related data, additionally the agreement aims to provide the necessary facilities for the Omani and Kenyan entrepreneurs.
OCCI Al Batinah South Branch organized an honoRing ceremony for OCCI Award winners from SME and Student companies under the patronage of His Excellency Talal Bin Sulaiman Al Rahbi, Deputy Secretary General of the Supreme Council of Planning at the Millennium Hotel. To honor Small and medium six enterprises and six institutions in the class of student companies.

Al Saadi: The award reflects OCCI interest in increasing compete and renewable creation.

Al Badri: The award is based on scientific basis, equal and transparent competition.
Hamood Bin Salim AL Saadi, Chairman of OCCI Al Batinah South Branch, gave a speech on the commencing ceremony. He emphasized that the award is a certain result of the OCCI interest to increase competition spirit and renewable creation of the private sector institutions and the students companies in the Governorate, and for the sake to build a strong economy based on solid foundations with varied income resources to raise saving. He pointed out that the Award aims to encourage Small and Medium Enterprises (SME) and students companies to develop and innovate so that, to build a solid economic foundation to a great category of society. He as well, cleared that the Award was divided into two-separated axis. The axis of SME and the axis of Students Companies, with different conditions and three separated awards for each.

Whereas Dr. Ahmed Bin Humaid Al-Badri, Dean of the College of Education Al-Rustak, gave a speech saying that the existence of a diversified economy based on the presence of a large number of small and medium enterprises, which will be the motive in these economies. It is the future of the national economy, therefore, it is important to focus and support them. He also pointed out that the success of small and medium enterprises (SMEs) means there is an important locomotive for the Omani economy that will have reflections for the overall development of the Sultanate. The expansion of this scope motivates others to enter the world of entrepreneurship. It also creates a new employment philosophy. The Award is the outcome of the cooperative program between OCCI Al Batinah South Branch and the Faculty of Education Rustaq. Which aims to highlight the vital sectors and the development of the national economy and provide job opportunities for young Omani, He as well noted that the award is a vital and a pivotal role in supporting entrepreneurship in the student companies in different education establishments and high education. That is why the first edition of the award stimulates competition, quality and creation in presenting products. In this regard, Al-Badri affirmed that all stages of the award have passed on scientific basis and conditions of competition transparent and equal to all. He thanked the Evaluation and Arbitration Committee and the winners. Hamida Bin Hilal, the economic researcher in the Chamber, gave a presentation on the initiatives of the Oman Chamber of Commerce and Industry in South Batinah Governorate. During the ceremony, a video was presented for the stages of the evaluation.
process in the Student Companies Award. Other video review stages of the progress of the evaluation process for the award of small and medium enterprises.

Al-Atak Company for Design from Hind Bint Asaid primary school received the first OCCI Al Batinah South Award in the category of student companies. Tasnim Design and Production Company obtained the second Award from the Faculty of Education in Al-Rustaq. Whereas AlQarya puppets from the village school ranked third in the category of student companies. While the Sky Gym took the first place in the category of small and medium enterprises OCCI Award in South Batinah Governorate. Mahmoud Al Ebri Foundation (Mahmoud Stationery and inks) ranked the second place, while third went to Al Badri Foundation Logistics. Three Companies from each category were granted incentive awards.

The ceremony included a number of activities where Mohammed bin Hamoud Al Ebri, Director of the SMEs Department in the OCCI and a member of the Evaluation Committee gave a presentation explaining the details of the OCCI Award in South Batinah Governorate for small and medium enterprises (SMEs) and student companies. It remarkable that the selection of winners in the category of student companies is based on several criteria including the idea of the project represented by the vision and objectives and originality of the product and its relevance to the needs of the market. As
well as in the criteria of human resources and financial management. In addition to the strengths and competitive advantage of the project and future opportunities for success and continuity. The marketing plan, the economic and social revenues, confidence and seriousness of the projects’ owners and the continuity of the project. The winners were selected in the category of small and medium enterprises based on a number of points, the most important of which is the quality of the product and its relevance to the needs of the market. The company’s commitment to obtaining the approvals and licenses required to carry out the activity from the concerned parties, the marketing plan Social revenues and added taxes, communication responsibility, the implementation of the Omanisation policy, the added value of the local economy, the understanding of the market, competitiveness, and the methods of planning, marketing and modern accounting.

The arbitration Committee included participations of many academics, experts and members from the Board of Directors in Al Batinah South Branch. Such as, Dr. Anwar Al-Shiadi, Vice Dean for Academic Affairs, Faculty of Education, Al-Rustaq, Chairman of the arbitration Committee, Mohammed Al-Abri, Director of Small and Medium Enterprises, Amman Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Ahmed Al-Obaidani, Dr. Abdul Aziz Al-Sawafi Assistant Professor, Faculty of Education Rustaq, Foulath Siyabi member of the Board South Batinah Governorate Branch.
Al Batinah North Forum organization is originated from the efforts exerted to boost economic business in the governorates, to find benefit for tourism and investment sector in the Sultanate. This sector witnesses an increasing growth. The Forum’s was organized on coincidence with the Sultanate glorious 48th National Day celebrations. The events of the Forum lasted to December 17th 2018 along with wide public and private participations. The forum included many economic events and programmes which were carried on the entire six wilayat of the Governorate; Wilayat of Ibraa, Badiah, Al Qabil, Dima, Ataaein, Wadi bani Khaled and al Mudaibi.

The opening ceremony of the forum was held under the patronage of His Excellency Dr. Yahya bin Mahfouth Al-Manthary, the Prime Minister of the state. Attended by His Excellency Sabaa bin Hamdan Al-Saadi, Secretary General of the Supreme Committee for National Day Celebrations, Qais Bin Mohammed Al Yousef OCCI Chairman, Members of the Shura Council and the Municipal Council, a number of Wallis, governors and high ranked- people in the governorate, and men and women enterprises.

His Excellency Dr. Yahya bin Mahfouth Al-Manthary, President of the State Council, expressed his happiness at what he saw during the opening of Al Sharqia North Economic Forum, which reflects the economic characteristics of this governorate, where there are many elements such as mountains, valleys and deserts. He pointed out that the increasing numbers of tourists, from inside and outside the Sultanate for this governorate, requires more development to facilitate the accommodation of tourists.

His Excellency said on the opening of the Forum that the State Council participated in the preparation of studies on the strategy of Oman Tourism 2040, approved by officials in the tourism sector. Especially as there is permanent cooperation with the relevant authorities in this sector by the Council of State and Oman Council in general, stressing that the tourism sector in the Sultanate is a promising one, which supports the Omani economy.

Rashid bin Amer Al Maslhi, Deputy Chairman of OCCI for administrative and financial affairs, said: “The diversity of events at the A’ Sharqia North Economic Forum enriches tourism and economy in the governorate. They contributes to diversifying the economic base and supporting the production fields that characterize...
the wilayat of the governorate. Al Maslhi added that the Forum embodies the government tendency to promote and develop the partnership between the public and private sectors through the wide participation of various governmental and private organizations in the activities of the Forum. It also achieves the objectives of Oman Vision 2040 in the sector of tourism, which includes opening up to various tourist markets.

A vital role and economic mobility
Ali Bin Salem Al Hajri Chairman of OCCI A’sharqia North branch
In his opening speech: A’sharqia North Economic Forum embodies the exerted efforts and the glorious achievements that bless the home, citizens and expatriates in all governorates under the wise leadership of his Majesty Sultan Qaboos Bin Said the Glorious.

Al Hajri pointed that the Forum represents the massive economic role played by the governorate of A’Sharqia North. It highlights the most important economic and tourist destination. It as well identifies the sustainable investment incentives and opportunities. It seeks to achieve the targeted partnerships among the components of society public or private. The Forum is regarded an opportunity to identify the pivotal role played from the side of OCCI in A’Sharqia North Governorate to develop the Omani private sector and to be a main partner of sustainable development Al-Hajri said: “The forum highlights the tourism sector in the governorate and the vital and important sectors, especially with the existence of projects and strong infrastructure, related to the implementation of some development projects that have benefited the governorate. As well as the great progress in completing the work of the road network and its vital role in serving economic mobility. In addition to the activities and patterns of tourism, it has in various tourist sites. Therefore, the effects of the forum and its economic dimensions are great, including all areas of production. They will be directly used, and this will affect the economic growth as a revenue and financial source and a strong engine for the economy of the governorate. It will develop other sectors and provide them with commercial businesses and new activities, and opportunities for new investment projects to promote the tourism sector, and the wealth preservation of the authentic legacy, and the unique geographical and urban diversity.”

In his speech, Al Hajri asserts on the OCCI keenness to continue developing, supporting and enhancing the Forum to sustain economic growth and to contribute to propagate the governorate rich tourist destination, that the society, public and private institutions seek to succeed.

The Forum opening ceremony began with a musical operetta that varied between the folk arts and the student participations in the governorate. It included national programs, which embodies the Bedouin and urban life in A’Sharqia North Governorate. Mohammed Al Habsi, an expert on Omani tourism, praised the role of the Oman Chamber of Commerce and Industry in Sharqia North in organizing the Economic Forum where he said: in fact, such forums should have economic, social and cultural influences for its pioneering role in activating the tourism movement in the governorate. The attractions of many of the houses
of residence, tourist camps and hotel apartments. There are many complementary services, most tourist attractions lack.

Increasing purchasing power
Talal Bin Khalfan Al Shuaibi, Director of Tourism Department in North Sharqia Governorate, said that the forum is a strong addition to the tourism sector in North Sharqia Governorate and directly affects the economic sector through increasing the number of visitors and their attendance in order to follow up the activities held in different wilayat of the governorate. This increase the economic movement and the purchasing power in all sectors, and the percentage of hotel works became very high during the period of the forum. Ocarina businessman Artim the expert in information technology sector and agriculture said “A’sharqia North Economic Forum includes many important activities for local and foreign business owners. It facilitates the knowledge and study of the most important local products and industries, as well as fulfill the interests of the people of the governorate, and helps attract tourists and knowledge of the most important means of tourism investment’ ‘activities that enrich the tourist program and make him/her enjoy the events.

Interesting events
Khalid Al Mohsen, a poet, media and general supervisor on the evenings of Economic Forum said: The forum has become a milestone in the Arab forums and not only at Gulf level. It reflects the comprehensive view of diversity in the activities of the Forum, and there are other activities attracted the largest number of the public in order to create great mobility and excellence in the governorate. Which in turn attracts a large number of tourists and achieves economic development. Yousef Bin Ahmed Al Baloushi, Editor-in-Chief of Waghat newspaper, said: “The forum is considered one of the activities that the sons of the governorate and wilayat are fond of. This type of recipient motivates the economic side and tourism aspects in the governorates. We hope that this positive infection will spread to other governorates of the Sultanate.

National Products Exhibition
HE Dr. Yahya bin Mahfouth Al-Manthari, the President of the State Council, opened the exhibition accompanying the forum, which featured the various national products of the entrepreneurs in the governorate. The exhibition aims to highlight the various goods, products and services and to introduce visitors to the quality of Omani products in all fields such as traditional crafts and handicrafts, household and food. The exhibition has stimulated commercial movement, increased sales volume and created jobs for SMEs. It is an important marketing terminal to encourage young people to enter the labour market. Omani products are characterized by a variety of innovations. The products were marketed in attractive ways. It achieved many positives and revenues for SMEs.

Al wilayat Competition
Wilayat Bdiya wins the first place
The entire wilayat of A’sharqia North Governorate participated in A’sharqia North Economic Forum, where each wilaya was allocated a day highlighting its tourism, economic and heritage functions through an integrated presentation by the people of the six Wilayat. The performances included a folklore ensemble, a women’s ensemble, folk games, Al badia folk such as Atagrood and ataweeb. In addition, a heritage performance by al midan that high lights diverse features. The exhibition also includes the presentation of various
types of handicrafts, handicrafts and various collections of the state heritage, as well as the Omani Women’s Association’s presentation of customs and traditions inherited through generations.

In the conclusion of the events of the forum, the arbitration Committee announced wilayat Al-Qabil to win the Cup of Excellence in organizing and directing, while the Cup of Excellence in Crafts and professions was announced to wilayat Wadi Bani Khalid, and wilayat Admaa and Taei won the Cup of Excellence in Performance, Organization and Direction of Rizha Art. In the Wilayat Competition, The first place went to wilayat Bdiya, and wilayat Al-qabil got the second place. In the third place ranked Wilayat Al Mudhaibi . Ahmed bin Amer bin Mohammed Al-Maslhi, chairman of the committee and the supervisor of the Wilayat Competition in the Forum said that ,the participation of Al wilayat in this forum came to highlight the heritage of the arts And traditional crafts. Which are famous for every wilayah , popular games and agricultural village, as well as highlighting the role of Omani women’s Associations to conserve these customs and traditions and presenting them. He pointed out that a score has been set for each evaluation point for each component. An assessment has been made for the preparation, setting, organization and performance, highlighting the various areas of Al wilayat, the effectiveness of the young and women elements, the punctuality and the success of the idea of performance in highlighting the participation and coherence of its activities.

Heritage Village.. Products and Handicrafts
The Heritage Village in Bdiya Public Park hosted more than 32 corners in which a number of governmental and private parties participated. In addition, presenting the heritage professions distinguished by the production of all the governorates of North Sharqia such as handicrafts, and professions that attracted visitors to the village and ensured the acquisition of heritage products such as souvenirs, which profited the entrepreneurs, which increased the total of production. In addition, encourage the entrepreneur to exert more efforts, work hard, and produce distinct types of craft business.

In an interview with Fatima Al-Zakhriya , Head of the Omani Women’s Association in Wilayat Damma and Al-Tayyeen, she said: “The participation of the Association in the forum and specifically in the Heritage Village comes to highlight the most important products and industries that were prepared by Omani women. Their production is marked with quality and creativity. In addition to the Association, corner within the Forum and what it contains from programs, achievements Omani Women in Wilayat Damah and Al-Tayyeen.

“Tourism and Economy “Symposium
“The symposium, “Tourism and Economy”, held under the patronage of His Excellency Dr. Mohammed bin Saeed Al Hajri, Member of the Shura Council, representative of Wilayat Badia,discussed the methods to upgrade the Tourism Sector in the Sultanate in general and A’Sharqia North Governorate in particular . The Symposium as well discussed the opportunities and challenges confronting investment in this region. The first session of the symposium entitled “Tourism and Economic Diversification”, in wich Ahmed Bin Zahran Al Hashimi, Director of Planning and Studies Department at the Ministry of Tourism, presented a working paper titled “Oman Strategy for Tourism”. In which he pointed out to the most important developments in tourism sector indicators during the period (2010-2017). The direct added value of the sector amounted to RO 728.3 million in 2017, the contribution rate in GDP reached 2.6%, while the number of tourists reached 3.3 million, and 359 hotels with the number of rooms reached 19520 rooms, the number of beds 31774, and occupancy rate
Al-Sanani pointed out that the Authority is working hard to make the Sultanate the best destination for investment and trade in the world, and to promote the national economy by attracting and promoting the necessary investments to implement economic and social development plans, and to develop exports of Omani non-oil products to improve the trade balance of the Sultanate.

Tourism investment opportunities

Bader Al-Dhahli, an academic of the Oman College of Tourism, presented a working paper on tourism investment opportunities in North Sharqia Governorate in accordance with the outcomes of the National Tourism Strategy 2016-2040, explaining the economic dimension of tourism globally, tourism growth in the Sultanate, Second Dialogue Session.

Invest in Oman

Mohanna bin Ali Al-Sanani, Investment Promotion Officer at the General Authority for Investment Promotion and Export Development (Ithraa), presented a working paper titled “Invest in Oman”, which is the first working paper for the second session of the symposium entitled “Tourism and Investment Promotion”. He pointed that the Authority is working hard to make the Sultanate the best destination for investment and trade in the world, and to promote the national economy by attracting and promoting the necessary investments to implement economic and social development plans, and to develop exports of Omani non-oil products to improve the trade balance of the Sultanate.

Accompanying events

On the sidelines of the symposium, business meetings were held between tourism companies in the Sultanate and camp owners in the governorate and foreign companies. In addition, a documentary film about North Sharqia Governorate and an exhibition for local and Gulf touristic companies were held.

Various cultural activities

A’Sharqia North Economic Forum witnessed the implementation of a series of entertainment activities for the family and children. An evening event was held with Mohammed Al-Mukhini, which included many entertainment programs.
and competitions for children, as well as singing sessions with kids, poetry competitions for adults and traditional heritage sections. An evening of folk poetry was held with the poets of heritage and originality from some of the governorate wilayat as well as the discovery of talent and innovation for the students of the governorate schools, focusing on several cultural, artistic, literary and technical fields to encourage students to highlight and improve their hobbies.

Classic Cars Performances in Wilayat Al Qabil witnessed a great attendance. In addition to the evening of poetry held in Wilayat Al-Mudhabi, it was entitled “Nights of the Muadhibi and the Gulf Evening of Poetry and Singing with the Stars of the Gulf Singles” and the evening of Bouh Al-Qasim, which hosted some of the Gulf poets. The audience added an atmosphere of entertainment and presented the youth group Ashkhar folk arts some of the paragraphs that attracted visitors to the forum on the seventh day and reviewed the Omani arts and authentic interaction with the public.

**Equestrian skills**

Equestrian skills performance was held in Midan Zat Al Rakib in Wilayat Ibra. The event was held under the patronage of Mohammed Bin Issa Al Fayrouz, President of the International Federation of Pole Weddings where the Knights displayed their skills and some of the accompanying arts such as Hambal Al Khailand some folklore. Al-Fayrouz said: These activities attract members of the society from different Ages to participate in the performances and activities of vulnerable horses and camel. And accompanying programs of poetry, and the program of horse skills and picking up the pegs and have all the impact on tourism activation in the governorate and in the preservation of heritage and aspire to continue these forums and achieve an effective success.

Al Maryna competitions in Al Arabi courtyard in Wilayat Bdiya, contained seven sections. At the conclusion, the winners, supportive parties and sponsors were honoured under the patronage of His Excellency Sabaa Bin Hamdan Al-Saadi, Secretary General of the Supreme Committee for National Day Celebrations. Anwar Bin Rashid Al Hajri Chairman of the Committee of Hjn Al-Al Arda in the Wilayat of Bdiya: The activities of equestrian skills have played a major role in supporting camel owners from various governorates through the flourishing of the buying and selling of selected camel species that capture the interest and the admiration of camel owners and raisers.

**Sport activities**

The activities of the North Sharqia Economic Forum have created great economic mobility and commercial activity in the governorate markets, such as mountaineering and cave exploration. It Contained The Abu Habban cave in the village of Sout in Wilayat Al Damma and Taayeen. It also contains rock formations, branches, and amazing mazes inside this cave. As well as fire competition, which had great participations from the people of the governorate and outside, and the championship of the sixth football, which ended with the winning of the stars of Al Madhaibi team. In addition to and performances of the paragliding, which coincided with the presence of the champions of the world to the paragliding in the Sultanate and the Photography Contest where it was assigned to arbitration committee of professionals photographers. It concluded with announcing the winners holding the most beautiful daily images for forum.
OCCI Real Estate Committee discusses the cooperation with civil society organizations

Real Estate Committee held a meeting with representatives of Oman Society of Engineers, Oman Society of contractors and Oman Real estate Association (OCCI), and members of the committee presided by Hassan Bin Khamis al Ruqaishi. The committee discussed the methods of cooperation development between the committee and civil society organizations related to real estate sector. The meeting also reviewed the possibility of preparing a memorandum of understanding between the OCCI Real Estate Development and Contracting Committee and the Society of Contractors, as well as discussing the unification of contracting contracts and engineering consultations in order to organize the sector to serve the specialized institutions in the contracting and engineering consultation sector. The meeting also discussed the importance of cooperation between the Real Estate Development Committee, Oman Society of Engineers and Oman Society of contractors with OCCI in order to come up with recommendations and suggestions that serve the entrepreneurs and contribute in developing their enterprises. The meeting discussed the proposal of Oman Society of Contractors to classify construction companies using standards that measure the level and the efficiency of companies, in addition to the proposal to establish a project management organization to reduce cost and time and facilitate the process of completion.

OIRA workshop on Financial Inclusion for Women Entrepreneurs

The Sultanate, represented by the Oman Chamber of Commerce and Industry (OCCI), participated in an international workshop on the financial inclusion of the Indian Ocean Rim Association of Women (IORA). The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation of the United Arab Emirates hosted the workshop in Abu Dhabi, in collaboration with the General Secretariat of the Association of Indian Ocean States. In the presence of experts from the private sector, policy and decision makers, high-level government officials, representatives of the banking sector, financial service providers, regulatory bodies, consumers, civil society institutions and women entrepreneurs from 21 Member States of the Members of the Association.

Sharifa bint Musallam Al-Baramiya, member of the SME Committee of OCCI, participated with a worksheet on entrepreneurship and capital in women’s projects during the fourth panel discussion on how to integrate the private sector in efforts to promote women’s economic empowerment and contribute to economic and social development in IORA.

She assured the important role that various financial inclusion tools play especially those related to proactive and courageous investments to achieve sustainability and the effective growth of women-led projects. She reviewed the investment opportunities inherent in the technical sector particularly, the fourth industrial revolution, the available inclusion in the light of age technology. She reviewed also the direct investment to activate and maximize the role of the private sector in the process of financial integration, support and development.

IORA believes in the necessity of providing more opportunities for participation and women economic empowerment to fulfill the sustainable development, as stipulated in many of the final ministerial statements of the Association such as the economic statement for the “IORA” 2014 Which states that “the prosperity of the region can only comprehensively realized through investment in the empowerment of women.”

The workshop aimed to provide a platform for IORA Member States to discuss and create awareness about the challenges facing women developers and entrepreneurs. Particularly with regard to access to financial support, exchanging and sharing of practices for increasing financial inclusion, and improving understanding of the importance of financial inclusion. The main potentials of the seventh objective of the 17 sustainable development goals. Moreover to accelerate partnerships between Member States, financial institutions and other actors within IORA as, well as supporting and improving the business environment of SMEs owned by women in IORA.

“The role of women in the economies of the Indian Ocean countries is diverse, reflects the various cultural, social and economic structures and realities. The economic empowerment of women means enhancing women’s self-confidence and their ability to earn their living, managing their financial assets, building and achieving their financial security, increasing their influence on household matters or balancing their economic projects.” Said Dr. Novomeo Nukwi, Secretary-General of IORA. Workshops and dialogues

The workshops discussed the challenges faced by women entrepreneurs. The most important of which are access to capital, finance, technology and knowledge resources and make the utmost use of them. Statistics show that there are about 1.1 billion women, or one in three women excluded from the formal financial system.

The first session of the workshop was entitled “UAE experience in the field of financial integration support”, while the second session focused on the methods of IORA in Women’s Financial Empowerment and the Regional Perspective for Access to Finance to empower women and girls. In addition to discussing some of the major achievements and trends of the past few years. The third session focused on narrowing the financial integration gap in the Indian Ocean region, where workshop participants presented condition studies from the member countries and common business models on financial integration in the region. The fourth session focused on the financing of SMEs owned by women. The session focused on how to integrate the private sector into efforts to promote the economic empowerment of women and contribute to the economic and social development of the member countries of IORA.
OCCI organizes a seminar on agricultural insurance and animal wealth and fisheries next year

OCCI Finance and Insurance sector Committee held a meeting at the headquarters of the Chamber, presided by the chamber Chairman Murtada Bin Mohammed Al-Jamalani. The meeting reviewed the agenda of the seminar of agricultural insurance, animal wealth and fisheries (blue economy) which is scheduled to be held next year. A number of experts in the sector of insurance and food substances are attending the seminar. It will discuss successful Arab experiments in agricultural insurance. In addition to the procedures necessary to get the bank loan to finance the purchase of boats, fishing equipment. It will also discuss the insurance of agricultural crops using a unified document and its benefit in addition to the climate conditions, which caused damages and loss of agricultural and animal wealth in Dhofar Governorate. The seminar will review the fishing activity throughout the Sultanate and marine laws and customs. It will also discuss the agricultural insurance document and the procedure adopted in case of claim for losses compensation. The seminar will also include a discussion session and reviewing the experience of an investor who benefited from agricultural insurance. The meeting discussed the insurance policy on fishing boats approved by the Capital Market Authority. They also reviewed the most important terms, and the importance of securing the sector because of its positive influences on the Omani society. The meeting also discussed the OCCI meeting with the Capital Market Authority concerning the implementation of health insurance for private sector employees, expatriates residing in the Sultanate and visitors.

OCCI Education Committee discusses Child Law abiding schools initiative

OCCI Education committee presided by Ahmed Bin Said Al-Blushi the Head of the Committee, in the headquarters discussed many issues related to the committee activities and its role concerning the sector of education and the sector of private education in particular.

The meeting discussed the committee agenda during the coming period, which includes organizing various meeting with the institutions related to education including hosting the Secretary General of Education Council to discuss the national strategy of education and education sector in 2040 vision.

Maimuna Al-Sulimania, a member of the committee, gave a visual presentation about the child law-abiding schools. Which aim at committing to child law. She presented the most important terms of 2014-child law and the Royal Decree. This initiatives aims to motivate the committee human side and to activate Child Law within private schools and their upper administrations.

The committee as well adopted an initiative to qualify the cadres in private schools to emphasize the essentiality of Child Law and its positive aspects that cause the participation of the components of society in their responsibility to activate and apply the law, and to ensure the rights of child included in the Royal decree.
Real estate funds new destination for foreign investment in Oman

There is no doubt that approving investment in real estate funds is a good decision by all standards. Although it is a bit late, it remains an opportunity because the Omani market is one of the most prominent markets. It is still important to work on some decisions that obstacle acceleration and termination of the procedures and licenses. It should also be noted here that the decision to reduce the transfer fees to the real estate fund, which was reduced from 5% to 2.5% is a practical step implies the interest of the Ministry of Housing to move forward to activate real estate funds and support mechanism to activate them.

When the real estate funds start operating in the Sultanate, they will contribute to stimulating the development wheel in one way or another. Hence, allowing trading in real estate units in the money market to the public. It will facilitate the process of real estate investment for foreigners so that the foreigner can buy real estate without owning the property. It is worth noting that the advantages of real estate funds are that they are low cost compared to the rest of the investment funds as well as the possibility of investing in these funds locally and globally. The system also committees the fund to distribute 90% of the annual profits of the shareholders and 10% for the development of the fund either for the purchase of real estate units outside Local scope. The system requires that the purchase rate does not exceed 25% of the fund’s capital. The Ministry of Housing and the Ministry of Commerce and Industry, together with the Capital Market Authority and the Muscat Securities Market, supervise real estate funds.

Concerning real estate funds system, there is no doubt that the Arab and international systems of these funds should be utilized along with taking into consideration all the developments currently taking place on all levels. The real estate development should be an important part of activating the real estate funds. For example, building new projects costs far less than buying ready-made assets. This makes the fund able to own more real estate assets and better returns to benefit the shareholder. And undoubtedly, the urban movement and infrastructure projects contribute to the advancement of development and construction and create new job opportunities and it is in the interest of the business of real estate and real estate brokerage, commercial consultations and other businesses that belong to all companies, especially small and medium enterprises.