49th Glorious National Day:
Prosperous Present and Bright Future

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Raysut Cement Company
Strategic Partner for Growth

On the occasion of the 49 national day, and our beloved country OMAN enjoys security well fare, and blessing with grace of "Allah" the almighty and then with the great efforts, abnegation and sacrifices for the sake of Oman under the wise leadership of His Majesty Sultan Qaboos with great proud and pleasure, Raysut Cement Company congratulates His Majesty Sultan Qaboos wishing him long life, good health so that the coming generations can also enjoy his care, protection and kindness for years and years.
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During these days, the Sultanate celebrates its 49th National Day, in which our pledge and loyalty are renewed to His Majesty Sultan Qaboos bin Said who has laid the foundations and pillars of national unity. Through HM’s supreme wisdom, the comprehensive sustained development which has been witnessed by the country has affirmed the role of the private sector in achieving the objectives and plans and to be an essential element in the development march of Oman.

In a short period of time, the Sultanate has been able to achieve many achievements at all economic and social levels, in addition to the development of the relevant laws and legislations. Oman Chamber of Commerce and Industry (OCCI) is proud of the ability of the private sector to contribute to the achievement of development goals. We affirm the pursuit of the development of the triple partnerships based on the integration of roles and responsibilities with the government, the private sector and society in various comprehensive development programs and plans aimed at the advancement of man, economy and society in general. We also strive for development of international relations with various countries for economic cooperation, partnerships, utilisation of expertise and establishment of trade agreements for entrepreneurial sector and for promoting trade exchange and supplying global markets with Omani products.

On this glorious occasion, on behalf of OCCI Board of Directors, the Boards of Directors of OCCI Branches in the Governorates and the whole private sector, we extend congratulations to His Majesty Sultan Qaboos bin Said, appealing to Allah the Almighty to safeguard His Majesty, bless his life and grant him good health, wellbeing and long life, for the prosperity, growth and development of our beloved country.
Forty-nine years of construction and development march of this blessed country under the leadership of His Majesty Sultan Qaboos bin Said has witnessed a tangible development activity in various economic, industrial, commercial and social sectors. It is a march with a prosperous present and an honourable future. Every year, the 18th of November is deemed to be a glorious day not only for every Omani citizen, but also for everyone living on this good land. It is also a day of pride and gratitude to HM the Sultan, the builder of Oman’s blessed Renaissance.

In conjunction with the Sultanate’s celebrations of the 49th National Day, Al Ghorfa spoke to Omani business owners who expressed their happiness on this occasion and for the Sultanate’s progress in the economic, investment and other sectors, as Oman has become a destination for many people who praise the wisdom of its leader and commend the successive achievements and the security stability, resulting in the welfare of both Omani citizens and residents. In addition, the Sultanate has become the focus of attention of all countries of the world, which has contributed to the growth of the renaissance at all levels.

Radical Changes
Shaiban bin Amer Al Shaibani, a member of the Labour Market Regulatory Committee in the Chamber’s branch in North Al Sharqiyah Governarote, said: “The 18 November is a memorable glorious day for Oman and its people. Over the years, the Sultanate has witnessed drastic changes according to an integrated and comprehensive strategic vision in all fields, making all Omani enjoy a decent life, as well as the prevalence of stability, peace and prosperity everywhere for everyone living on this good land.” He also pointed to His Majesty’s wise vision that has made Oman proceed steadily towards the right path through deliberate steps achieving all the aspirations of Omani progress in various areas of living, and continue to implement the vision of Oman 2020 to achieve more happiness, prosperity and well-being for us in the coming days. On this great occasion of Oman’s 49th glorious National Day, it is our honour and great privilege to extend warmest congratulations to His Majesty Sultan Qaboos bin Said, and we pray to Allah the Almighty to grant him a life of happiness, good health and a long life, and to bless the Omani people with more progress, prosperity and safety.

Incentives and Facilities
Yahya bin Said Al Moselhi, Assistant Director of Projects and Maintenance Department at the General Directorate of Education in North Al Sharqiyah Governarote and a member of Exhibitions, Industry Conferences and Meetings Committee in the OCCI branch in North Al Sharqiyah Governarote, said: “The glorious days come in November during which we perceive the path of the Omani development, the important achievements carried out over the past years of the blessed renaissance march, the construction and development processes witnessed in all the governorates of the Sultanate and the enhancements of the fields of education, training, health, economy, human resources development as well as the provision of productive and remunerative employment opportunities for Omani youth in the private sector companies and enterprises. It also deepens economic diversification processes through the development of promising sectors such as manufacturing, logistics, transport, tourism and mining, because these are vital fields that have contributed to revenues increase and provided many incentives and facilities for investors as well as the successful stages of these
He added: “We appreciate the supreme orders in the field of the National Day, we see all people everywhere in Oman celebrating this good anniversary expressing with pride what has been achieved during 49 years of the blessed Renaissance march under the wise leadership of His Majesty Sultan Qaboos bin Said. All areas of human and material development, historical and contemporary, have progressed and Oman has become what its leader has wished for — an oasis of security, safety, construction and development — and its citizens are enjoying happiness and prosperity.

She added: “His Majesty has paid constant attention to construction and development all over Oman to provide permanent opportunities for the positive participation of Oman people in various fields.”

**Development and Belonging**

Zaema Bint Saif Al Salamiya, a businesswoman, said: “During the era of His Majesty Sultan Qaboos bin Said, the development wheel has progressed rapidly, achieving developmental and qualitative leaps in the different fields and at all levels, inspired by His Majesty’s vision implemented in the economic and social sectors. Despite the magnitude of what has been achieved during this short period of time at the age of countries and peoples, because all these have always been linked to the heritage of the country and its long tradition and derived more ability from its history and civilization to use the achievements of the age to serve the ultimate objectives. From this principle, we work hard to employ the elements of the Omani environment and the ancestral heritage in the manufacture of modern products of quality competing with the quality of international brands at the same field.”

**Economic Development**

Mohammed bin Hamad Al Azani, a businessman from Wilayat Al Buraimi, said: “Thanks to our beloved leader, His Majesty Sultan Qaboos bin Said, Oman development has contributed to the formation of the commercial and economic personality of this country. Since the start of the Renaissance era in 1970, there is unlimited support to the private sector and all sectors and pillars of the country have been built and developed according to a strategic vision that many of us may not have seen as it is seen today and is being achieved until Oman today has become a modern state moving forward towards further progress, civilisation and prosperity.”

Al Azani added: “When I started business in my father’s company, which was established in the 1970s in the fields of transportation, construction and building materials, I was very close to witnessing the persistence and perseverance that merchants had by their commitment to the country’s development. The contributions of this field in the Governorate of Oman, which is a solid foundation on which Oman is built, and HM has raised its structure to the highest ranks of glory, development, hope, security and safety. Indeed, the great achievements that have been carried out over the past decades in various fields have resulted in a growth of our beloved Oman flourishing year after year, and generation after generation.”

**Balanced Values**

Engineer Nalaa bint Salem Al Riyami, owner of the Al Dunesi United Enterprise, said: “It gives me great pleasure to write today expressing joy for the impact of success and achievements we have seen and touched in various social, economic and educational levels under the wise leadership of His Majesty the Sultan. With sincere love and loyalty, we renew our promise and fidelity to go ahead under His Majesty’s wise leadership to continue under great eternal glory that HM has established its pillars for us, and planned its path and goals, and put its balanced values. The march of the blessed Renaissance is a march of a great leader who fulfilled his promise, and despite the enormous challenges, HM sincerely sought to restore the long-standing prestige of which Oman has been known since ancient times. HM has laid the pillars of national unity as a solid foundation on which Oman is built, and HM has raised its structure to the highest ranks of glory, development, hope, security and safety. Indeed, the great achievements that have been carried out over the past decades in various fields have resulted in a growth of our beloved Oman flourishing year after year, and generation after generation.”

**Revitalising the Tourist Sector**

Ali bin Mohammed Al Dhoohouri, owner of Al Mabioa Al Dhoohouri Trading Establishment, said: “The most prominent feature of the Renaissance march is that it has combined the wisdom of the leadership with far-sighted strategic vision and the efforts and energies of the Omani people. Over the past decades, the Sultanate has made significant achievements in all fields without exception, from health to education through basic services, infrastructure and economic development, taking measures to maintain the efficiency and stability of the national economy, enhance local liquidity, and increase the contribution of non-oil sectors to GDP.”

He added: “We appreciate the supreme orders in the field of tourism sector in Musandam Governorate for providing exemptions from fees and taxes to any new investor who wishes to establish a tourist project in Musandam Governorate, as an exception to any regulations in force in this regard, stressing that these guidelines will support the efforts of activating the tourism sector in the Governorate.”

**Well-established Policy**

Salama bint Saif Al Sayibyi, owner of Dar Al Shahd Trading Centre, said: “In conjunction with the Sultanate’s celebrations of the 49th anniversary of the National Day, we see all people everywhere in Oman celebrating this good anniversary expressing with pride what has been achieved during 49 years of the blessed Renaissance march under the wise leadership of His Majesty Sultan Qaboos bin Said. All areas of human and material development, historical and contemporary, have progressed and Oman has become what its leader has wished for — an oasis of security, safety, construction and development — and its citizens are enjoying happiness and prosperity.

She added: “His Majesty has paid constant attention to construction and development all over Oman to provide permanent opportunities for the positive participation of Oman people in various fields.”

**Salama Al Siyabiya:** Positive opportunities for the participation of the Omani citizens in various fields.

**Zaema Al Salamiya:** We are working hard to employ the elements of the Omani environment to manufacture modern products that compete with international brands.

**Mohammed Al Azani:** Omani development has contributed to the formation of the commercial and economic personality of this country.

**Nayef Al Abri:** The private sector has significant contributions in supplying the Governorate with large economic projects.
in those years. Everyone sought to grow business according to the available potentials; and over the years I was also a witness to the growing efforts exerted by the government to improve the work environment and develop infrastructure, and working within the framework of a strategic partnership between the public and private sectors, and we are reaping the fruits today. We congratulate His Majesty the Sultan on the occasion of the National Day and pray to Allah the Almighty to grant him good health and well-being, and the Omani people further progress and prosperity."

**Pride**

Nayef bin Salim Al Abri, owner of Educational Consultations Centre, said: “On the occasion of the 49th glorious National Day, I extend my congratulations to His Majesty Sultan Qaboos bin Said. The achievements of the comprehensive development of all the facilities of life carried out on the ground of our beloved country during the auspicious era of His Majesty Sultan Qaboos bin Said over the past 49 years calls for pride and appreciation at the local and regional levels.

Al Abri added: “Like other Governorates of the Sultanate, Al Dhahirah has enjoyed developmental achievements that serve all segments of the society and contribute to the advancement of Omani people and raise the level of income for the citizen. Its three Wilayats, Ibr, Yanqul and Dhunk, have also gained the attention of the wise government of His Majesty Sultan Qaboos bin Said, as they have enjoyed educational, health and social services, as well as municipal and housing services. The private sector has also contributed significantly to the development of the Governorate’s infrastructure, and to providing employment opportunities for Omani youth in the three Wilayats through large economic projects.”
Sandan: Oman’s First Integrated Light Industrial Park

Within the framework of the efforts of Oman Chamber of Commerce and Industry to support commercial and industrial projects in the private sector, a delegation from the Chamber visited the city of Sandan after the project has become fully operational. The delegation was headed by HE Qais bin Mohammed Al Yousef, Chairman of OCCI Board of Directors, with the participation of the members of OCCI and its branches in all governorates of the Sultanate, and business owners.

HE Qais bin Mohammed Al Yousuf said: “Accompanied by Board members and business owners, I was honoured and delighted to visit the city of Sandan, the first integrated light industrial park in the Sultanate. I have been following Sandan project since it was just an idea, and today I have been delighted to see the project as a reality on the ground opening its doors to serve the private sector. We toured the city and visited the world of cars and also the world of construction and saw the area of housing and offices, and it is really an integrated area that can support the private sector, especially entrepreneurs.

which stimulates the companies to investment in the city. Sandan is characterised by its easily reachable location, and its proximity to vital areas, and it provides a number of integrated services and management, it is really a promising city. We have completed the construction work and we could rent a number of stores even before the completion of construction work, and the leasing occupancy rate is good. Through this project we hope that the city will be an integrated market for automobiles and building materials so that both the investor and the consumer can find what they want.

Dr. Ahmed Bin Abdul-Karim Al Hooti, member of the Board of Directors of OCCI, said: “In fact, the city of Sandan is an integrated city having all the elements that make trade easy in the construction, automotive and other sectors. Indeed, a great effort was exerted in the implementation of the city and it deserves to be supported by both business owners and society.”

Ahmed bin Yaqoub Al Obaidani, a member of the Board of Directors of OCCI Branch in South Al Batinah Governorate, said. “We call on all investors, entrepreneurs and owners of small and medium enterprises to invest in the city of Sandan, as it includes integrated industrial services.”

Ahmed bin Sulaiman Al Kindi, Chairman of Sandan Board of Directors, said: “We are thankful for this kind visit by His Excellency Qais bin Mohammed Al Yousuf, Chairman of Oman Chamber of Commerce and Industry, in the presence of the members of the Board of Directors of OCCI and its branches in various governorates of the Sultanate, as well as a number of business owners. The city provides a variety of services to stimulate the business environment and support small and medium enterprises even large ones.”

Sandan city is considered an important gathering point for consumers in the automotive and construction sectors,
Laila Bint Nasser Al Kharousiya, owner of Sohar Modern Gate Trading Co., expressed her admiration of the city saying: “Visiting Sandan light industrial City has enabled us to get acquainted with the details of this great project and the most important investment opportunities available in it. This city is a great example of integrated industrial projects with a working team that provides all services, in addition to the fact that the city has been excellently designed to provide investment opportunities for business owners of different levels. Through our review of the leasing system, I found that the system of rent is applied gradually and, in a way, suitable to the possibilities and capabilities of the owners of small and medium enterprises. I think that the city is a golden opportunity for innovative entrepreneurs.”

Farhan Al Othmani, from Ibn Al Othmani International Enterprises, is one of the tenants in the city of Sandan and he said: “We are honoured by the visit of OCCI delegation to our workshop in the city of Sandan. We have chosen the city of Sandan because it is a full-service industrial city, and it has a strategic location near Barka and Muscat and close to the Express Highway leading to the Port of Sohar. The city is distinguished by its distinct organisation and perfect design. In addition, Sandan development LLC provides us with many services and assistance, whether regulatory or exemption from the amount of rent in the initial period, and even in the subsequent period the commercial prices is suitable. The company also helps us in finishing government transactions related to the establishment of the project, in addition to providing accommodation for workers next to the workshop, which helps to organise work.”
TEN YEARS OF US-OMAN FTA
By: Ibrahim bin Said Al Julandani

The US Embassy in Oman and Oman Chamber of Commerce and Industry (OCCI) have recently celebrated the tenth anniversary of the US-Oman Free Trade Agreement (FTA), which was signed in January 2009 with the aim of increasing trade and joint investment between the two countries and opening doors for national products to enter the markets of the two countries.

The ceremony was inaugurated by a welcoming speech given by HE Qais bin Mohammed Al Yousuf, Chairman of OCCI Board of Directors, in which he welcomed the Ambassador and business owners from both sides. He pointed out that the Free Trade Agreement between the Sultanate and the United States reflects the historical and political relations spanning more than 200 years since the Omani Ambassador Ahmed bin Al Nu'man Al Kaabi’s trip to the United States in 1841.

He added: The Agreement has contributed to the coverage of a wide range of commercial goods and services, and entrepreneurs who have had successful experiences benefited from FTA between the two countries.

The ceremony was attended by HE Qais bin Mohammed Al Yousuf, Chairman of OCCI Board of Directors, HE Mark J. Severs, US Ambassador to the Sultanate, Vice Chairman of the Chamber for Economic Affairs and Branches, some of the members of the Chamber’s Board of Directors, a number of Omani and American business owners, as well as Omani owners of companies and enterprises, and enhanced intellectual property rights, as well as opening the doors for Omani trade by offering many advantages for sale in the US duty-free markets, and providing opportunities for future partnership with US companies, and highlighting Oman as a trusted business partner.

He stressed that the implementation of the terms of this Agreement has undoubtedly contributed to encourage investment and trade between the two countries in general and between the private sectors of both countries in particular, through the removal of custom barriers, and facilitating the processes and procedures for the flow of industrial goods and products in full, which have reflected positively on the rates of trade exchange between the two countries. Statistical data show that despite the slowdown during the oil price crisis, the trade exchange between the two countries has recently started to recover, as the total trade exchange between the two countries reached about $ 3.7 billion in 2018, as a result of the growth of imports of the Sultanate at a positive rate of 52.8% in 2018 as well as the growth of exports at a positive rate of 89.2% for the same period. These are good indicators that reflect the positive effects of this Agreement on the trade exchange between the two countries.

On his part, HE Mark J. Severs, the US Ambassador to the Sultanate, said: The US Embassy in the Sultanate seeks to promote trade exchange between the United States and the Sultanate by utilizing the facilities and incentives represented by the Agreement. We also seek through
such programs to inform the business community of the two countries of the economic importance of the Agreement and how to benefit from it in increasing the volume of trade exchanges between the two countries.

He added that since its signing 10 years ago, the Agreement has effectively contributed to raising the rates of trade between the two countries significantly, and it has also contributed to bringing US companies closer to Omani companies and to the existence of real partnerships between the two sides.

The event also included the presentation of some successful experiences from the Omani institutions that benefited from the FTA between the Sultanate and the United States of America. An entrepreneur said that during his study in the United States he met a business owner in the field of hospitality and talked to him about the possibility to transfer the experiences of this project to a similar one in the Sultanate according to commercial franchise system. After the Agreement between the two parties, the Omani entrepreneur decided to open his project and take advantage of the facilities provided by FTA. The project was inaugurated and has now become one of the successful projects that have several branches in the Sultanate, and there is a study of the idea of expanding the project to some of the GCC countries. He indicated that he now wants to convey his experience to Omani entrepreneurs to benefit from his commercial franchise and open their own businesses taking advantage of the knowledge he has acquired.

This celebration on the occasion of the completion of the tenth year confirms the desire of the two sides to enhance economic ties to be more and more effective, and enhance the awareness of the private sector in both countries of the importance of the agreement to benefit from it in increasing the rates of trade exchange between the two countries.

The Chamber intends to send a trade delegation to the United States during the 2020 to enhance trade relations between the two countries and discuss the possibility of establishing new joint ventures in the sectors targeted by the Sultanate through its Vision 2040, and increasing the rates of trade exchange, transfer of knowledge and technology and transfer of concession projects, as well as opening new markets for Omani private sector companies and enterprises.
OCCI Trade Delegation Visits China

By: Mohammed bin Salem Kalbani

With the participation of 34 small and medium enterprises from the Governorates of Al Dhahira and Al Dakhliya, Oman Chamber of Commerce and Industry (OCCI) branches in Al Dhahirah and Al Dakhliyah Governorates, delegated a trade delegation to the People’s Republic of China to visit and take part in the International Trade Fair (Canton) in the city of Guangzhou, China, during the period from 14-22 October 2019. The delegation was headed by Saif bin Said Al Badi, member of the Board of Directors of OCCI, the head of Al Ghorfa branch in Al Dhahirah Governorate.

The delegation visited all the pavilions and corridors of the international trade fair in Guangzhou, China. It included dozens of pavilions and sections for all companies in China, especially industrial companies, sanitaryware companies, electronics industry of various kinds, electrical appliances companies and other companies that manufacture various needs and tools needed by people in their daily life.

Objectives of the Trade Delegation
Saif bin Said Al Badi, head of the delegation, said: “The visit comes within the framework of interest in the private sector in general, and small and medium enterprises in particular, in addition to providing an opportunity for business owners from these institutions to see Chinese industries in various economic sectors to encourage them to benefit from the export and import process between the Sultanate and China, and thus promote trade exchange between the two countries. In fact, the visits provided by the Chamber to Omani business owners to a number of countries in the world is a service provided by the Chamber to traders and owners of small and medium enterprises in order to create ideas for executable business projects in the Sultanate, contribute to the employment of Omani youth, and increase trade exchange between the Sultanate and the world. The visit will also encourage participants to find import agencies and distribute products to the local market.

Bilateral Meetings
Al Badi added: “The visit to Canton International Fair was an opportunity to get acquainted with many economic activities and projects and to see the investment opportunities through meeting with a number of officials in the economic sector as well as conducting bilateral and group interviews. The visit was an opportunity to offer invitations for investing in the Sultanate, especially nowadays everyone praises the promising investment environment in Oman which is currently witnessing a diversity of sources of income and encouraging investors from different countries to invest in the different governorates of the Sultanate.”

Visiting Huawei Company
The delegation also visited Huawei Company, one of the largest companies in the world, where the delegation was briefed on the latest technology used in communication, the 5G networks and the achievements Huawei made in a few years to become competitive for global positions in innovation and technology which undoubtedly will invade the world soon and will be a great addition to the
whole world. The trade delegation visited the company’s old premises as well as its modern headquarters which was designed with the latest technologies, where a presentation was made on all stages of manufacturing process, the use of modern technologies, robots and logistics, which contribute to the rapid progress of this company.

**Views of the Participants**

Engineer Hamad bin Said Al Rubahi, Deputy Head of the Delegation, said: “This visit was an opportunity for owners of small and medium enterprises to get acquainted with the Fair and new products and technologies that suit the needs of the local market.”

Mohammed bin Humaid Al Shamli said: “I participated in that delegation in order to see the expertise and experiences offered by the companies participated in the Fair, especially in the field of industries related to construction, and we have made initial understandings to conduct business deals in the near future.”

Hosam bin Naser Al Ismaeli said: “Through that participation, we were able to visit many companies and discuss ways of holding commercial partnerships with them. I would like to thank OCCI for the excellent coordination of the Omani delegation’s visit to that Fair.”

Abdul Aziz bin Hamdan Al Kalbani said: “Our participation in that Fair was an opportunity to benefit from the diverse and innovative products needed by the local market. I also thank the Chamber and the organisers of the delegation’s visit.”

Warm felicitations & heartfelt greetings to
His Majesty Sultan Qaboos Bin Said
and the people of Oman on the joyous occasion of the 49th National Day of Oman!
Good Response to Omani Products Exhibition in Sinaw

By: Ibtisam bint Salem Al-Saadi

Oman Chamber of Commerce and Industry (OCCI) branch in North Al Sharqiyah Governorate, represented by Exhibitions, Industry Conferences and Meetings Committee, and Businesswomen Committee, organised National Products Exhibition in Niabat Sinaw, Wilayat Al Mudhaibi. It was for opening new horizons for Omani products through marketing Omani products and services and introducing the community to the national industries and finding promotional outlets for them. It was prompted by the high quality of the products that has delivered them to the international markets in addition to their role in creating job opportunities for the Omani youth who contributed to the development of these Omani products, and to the expansion and increase of their production lines.

Cooperation and Integration

The opening ceremony was sponsored by Sheikh Mahmoud bin Sulaiman Al Ma’amari, Al Mudhaibi Deputy Wali, in the presence of Ali bin Salim Al Hajri, Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Chamber’s branch in North Al Sharqiyah Governorate, and representatives from government institutions and business owners. Al Hajri explained the efforts of the Chamber’s branch in North Al Sharqiyah Governorate to promote national products and open the way for them to expand the scope of their business and services and increase their sales volume.

Manufacturing Capabilities

Al Hajri praised the manufacturing capabilities of companies and factories operating in North Al Sharqiyah Governorate and the level they reached locally, regionally and globally, requesting the business owners participating in the exhibition to find more prospects for cooperation and integration between their companies or enterprises and their counterparts from the countries of the world, as well as striving to raise the rates of trade exchange with them in various fields of manufacturing.

Supporting Omani Producers

In his speech during the opening ceremony, Nasser bin Saif Al Rashdi, representative of Sinaw Hospital, said that cooperation between government and private institutions has a prominent role in supporting the march of progress witnessed by our dear country under the auspicious of His Majesty Sultan Qaboos bin Said. Omani products exhibition reflects the existing partnership between the public and private sectors and support to the Omani producers as well as...
visitors of the exhibition, namely: exporters, importers and suppliers of raw materials. We hope that the organisation of such exhibitions continues. This exhibition, which is being held today at Sinaw hospital yard near Al Khamis market, is witnessing a large number of visitors and its results will benefit Omani companies to expand their product range.

**Diversity of Exhibits**

The products of companies and enterprises ranged from food products such as Omani candy, dairy, poultry, plastic, metal, aluminium and paper products, some building materials, and traditional handicrafts such as palm fronds, woods, cotton fabric, garden decorations, home decorations, clothes, traditional Omani attire, perfumes, natural cosmetics, furniture and household items.

**High Quality and Exploitation of Available Resources**

Al Mor bin Humaid Al Rawahi said: “I am participating in the exhibition with a variety of traditional crafts that I manufacture in the field of palm fronds, and I have the tools necessary to manufacture them, and I managed to market and promote them in the exhibition.” Zakiyah Bint Humaid Al Fariya explained that Omani dates are characterised by their good quality, and through my project I pack the product at the highest levels, and I also produce sweets using dates and I add some new touches and ideas that attract customers. Iman Bint Rashed Al Atoubiya, a specialist in the production of chocolate cold drinks, said that her project offers fresh drinks with delicious recipes that she prepares at home, and her products have managed to succeed because they are very popular in the community.

**Efficiency and Effectiveness**

Salama Bint Jam’ Al Hajar, the owner of Bediya Trading Company project, explained that her project is specialised in sewing and embroidery of women’s clothes and displaying traditional clothes after adding some ornaments to them, her models are unique in their colour and shapes. Sabha bint Musalam Al Amriya, specialised in sewing and selling of burqas, said: I have managed to market my products at the Omani Products Exhibition in Niyabat Sinaw. I sew various shapes of burqas of different sizes and add some threads and colours to them to suit the women’s taste and adornment.
Seminar on Corporate Legal Responsibility

By: Hilal Al Naqbi

The branch of Oman Chamber of Commerce and Industry (OCCI) in Al Buraimi Governorate, represented by Legislation and Laws Committee, in cooperation with Al Buraimi University College, organised a seminar entitled “Corporate Legal Responsibility” in the presence of Zahir bin Mohammed Al Kaabi, Chairman of the Branch’s Board of Directors in Al Buraimi, and the members of the Board of Directors, and officials of government departments and business owners.

The seminar focused on two main axes: the legal responsibility of the individual companies and the legal responsibility of public companies. In the first working paper, Dr. Ali bin Salim Al Badi, professor of Commercial Law at Al Buraimi University College, reviewed the concept of commercial companies, the legal forms of companies that fall under these two types, and their forms, and the differences between individual companies and public companies, in addition to identifying the legal forms of companies that fall under these two types.

In the second working paper, Dr. Jamal Mabrouk, professor of Commercial Law at Al Buraimi University College, reviewed the concept of commercial companies and their forms, and the differences between individual companies and public companies, in addition to identifying the legal forms of companies that fall under these two types.

The seminar included a number of interventions and discussions by the attendants, which had a role in enriching the seminar.

In conclusion, the speakers were honoured and awarded by Zahir bin Mohammed Al Kaabi, Chairman of the branch’s Board of Directors, and Kamel bin Sulaiman Al Khayami, Chairman of Legislation and Laws Committee.

By: Rabeea bint Saeed Al Harthiya

OCCI has recently received a trade delegation from South Africa’s Mpumalanga Province, headed by Refilwe Mtsweni, Premier of the Province. They were received by HE Qais bin Mohammed Al Yousef, Chairman of OCCI Board of Directors, in the presence of Omani business owners and their visiting counterparts.

The meeting discussed ways of enhancing bilateral cooperation between the two friendly countries in the economic, investment and trade fields, using ways for developing them, exchanging expertise and experiences on various economic sectors contributing to the growth of the private sector in the two countries, in addition to strengthening trade relations, establishing trade partnerships, and providing facilities for businessmen to encourage them to set up their own projects in both countries.

HE Qais bin Mohammed Al Yousef pointed out that the statistics of cooperation, partnership and building relations between the business sectors in the Sultanate and South Africa indicate that the total imports from South Africa to the Sultanate amounted to more than RO 7 million during 2017, while Omani exports during the same year amounted to nearly RO 139 million. He stressed the importance of progress in the arrangement at the level of trade exchanges, and the establishment of joint investments, and the exchange of expertise and modern technologies in various fields.

Al Yousef said: “As being the official representative of the private sector, the Chamber seeks to achieve the vision and aspirations of Oman 2040, by working intensively to create diverse partnerships and investments that support the national economy, and allow to take advantage of the expertise and available capabilities of companies in various countries of the world, especially in priority sectors on which the government is currently focusing to achieve economic diversification, namely: manufacturing, tourism, transport, logistics, mining and fisheries, and we look forward to working with South African companies in this regard.”

HE Refilwe Mtsweni Tsipane, the Premier of Mpumalanga, South Africa, said: “The Sultanate and South Africa have friendly bilateral relations, and the Sultanate enjoys stability and peace, as well as distinctive tourist attractions and features. The Sultanate enjoys a general investment climate characterised by peace, stability, development and rapid economic growth. As for Mpumalanga, it is characterised by commercial and agricultural activities, and is an active area for import and export in the field of food security”.

HE Manabili Chougoli, Republic of South Africa Ambassador to the Sultanate, gave a welcoming speech to the visiting trade delegation, praising bilateral relations in various fields.

Faisal Al Hinai, Head of Investment Promotion Department, The Public Authority for Investment Promotion and Export Development (Ithraa), spoke about the facilities offered to business owners from outside the Sultanate, in addition to reviewing many of the investment elements and opportunities in the Sultanate, pointing out that the Sultanate is interested in attracting foreign investors, and it is keen to establish cooperative trade relations with various countries of the world.
Oman Chamber of Commerce and Industry (OCCI), represented by the Labour Market Regulatory Committee, and Transport and Logistics Committee, organised a seminar on logistics projects and business growth opportunities in the logistics sector under the patronage of HE Dr. Ahmed bin Mohammed Al Futaisi, Minister of Transport and Communications, at the headquarters of OCCI.

The seminar aimed at identifying investment opportunities and future projects in the transport and logistics sector, which is considered one of the promising sectors that Oman's Vision 2040 focuses on. The seminar also aimed at identifying the challenges facing this sector and finding appropriate solutions to these challenges in order to enhance its role in increasing its contribution rates in the national economy.

The seminar was inaugurated by Mohammed bin Hassan Al Ansi, Chairman of the OCCI Labour Market Regulatory Committee, who indicated that the seminar aimed at introducing the efforts exerted to enhance the sector's contribution to the national economy and to raise the sector's national workforce employment rate.

Al Ansi added: “The logistics sector is of great importance as it is one of the sectors which the Sultanate's Vision 2040 focuses on, and it is one of the sectors that keep pace with the economic growth witnessed by the Sultanate. In the last period, the sector has also managed to achieve positive results in regard to infrastructure, services, business, competitiveness indices and added value driven by ambitious plans and strategies.”

He also added: “In order to achieve the desired goals, we have to focus on the challenges facing the sector, and companies and enterprises working in it, especially Omani companies and enterprises, because everyone knows that we have local companies having competencies and experiences in projects implementation, and these institutions have positive returns in the short and long terms.”

He stressed that despite what has been achieved, the logistics sector faces some challenges, like other sectors, especially at the level of local companies operating in the logistics sector, due to the acquisition of foreign companies of large projects and the award of tenders in the logistics business outside the Sultanate, which negatively affects local companies.

He hoped that the competent authorities identify the logistics projects that can be awarded within the Sultanate to provide fair competition between local institutions and international companies, as there are projects that Omani companies and enterprises can compete for, such as shipping and transport of equipment, machinery and various goods from the ports of the Sultanate to the sites within the Sultanate. As for the transport and shipment of goods and equipment from different countries to the ports of the Sultanate, local and international enterprises and companies existing in the Sultanate can compete for them. This is applicable in many countries for the development of the local private sector.

Through these solutions, we aim to give Omani companies the necessary support to grow, develop and compete to provide high quality services and job opportunities for young Omanis.

HE Eng. Mohammed bin Salem Al Busaidi, Chairman of Itemad Initiative team, presented a visual presentation about the program, explaining that the aim during the first phase is to qualify 500 citizens who work in major companies in the private sector, registered in excellent, first and international classes, and having more than 500 employees, in addition to focusing on a number of promising sectors led by the sectors of tourism, industry, transport and logistics, construction, wholesale and retail trade, fisheries, mining and energy, with opening the way for companies operating in other areas. He added, 500 employees were trained at the first phase, and we aspire to reach greater number and get the participation of more companies.

HE reviewed the criteria and conditions that must be met by the applicant to ensure that he can benefit from the intensive training that he will receive. He must be Omani holding at least the general diploma certificate and a minimum of six years' experience, or a higher diploma.
with four years of experience, or bachelor and above with two years of experience, with proficiency in English as it will be the language of the training course, in addition to passing many tests in the application stage, to ensure fair selection and to achieve real competencies that can benefit from training, and leave a greater impact in their workplace.

He added: “Itimad” program researches and benefits from new researches in the field of leadership and management and utilises the best training practices approved through the training partners of the program. “Itimad” is implemented in partnership with “Takatuf Oman”, a local leading company in planning and implementing training and leadership programs at the highest levels.

Simon Karam presented a working paper on the initiative to enhance the attractiveness of the labour market, pointing out that these initiatives, in general, aim at improving the work environment and increasing the attractiveness of work in the private sector, and this initiative within the “Tanfeedh program” aims to attract Omani talents through a study of successful sectors in attracting qualified Omani youth, and assessing the performance of companies by measuring the business environment and the criteria for obtaining good establishments.

These include the employment of women, the presence of trade unions, the employment of people with special needs, the training of students on the job, the plan to replace the expat workforce, and health safety. Points have been set for each of these criteria for obtaining a green card or Al Mojeedah card.

He added: “Upon reaching a total of 60 points, the company can apply for a green card or Al Mojeedah card. We have more than 256 companies that have achieved the required grades and conditions, and therefore they must be rewarded, including outstanding transactions for these companies to encourage them to continue achieving these results.”

Economic Model Transformation

Dr. Yousef bin Hamad Al Balushi presented a paper on Oman Vision 2040 and the economic model transformation in which he indicated that foreign investment and strategic partnerships are an inevitable matter which must exist, and that we should seek to attract foreign investment and expand the market.

He added: The electronic transformation in trade is no longer an option but it is a must, and an inevitable matter. Vision Oman 2040 provides a suitable ground for the transition to e-commerce and there are renewed in the laws, electronic platform and a will emanating from the young Omani themselves.

Efficient Logistics System and Business Opportunities

Al Khattab bin Salim Al Maani, CEO of Oman Logistics Centre, presented a paper on the efficiency of the logistics system and business opportunities, in which he referred to the National Logistics Strategy 2040, the objectives of the main strategy including the attraction of investments and marketing the Sultanate’s position as a global logistics hub, as well as making cross-border trade more rapid and cheaper, faster growth of job opportunities provided by the logistics sector, and the use of the latest logistics technology.

He added: The strategy has focused on partnership with the private sector, efficiency and competitiveness, empowering human cadres to have upper positions in the sector, as well as promoting entrepreneurship. On the role of the logistics sector in enhancing entrepreneurship and providing business opportunities, Al Maani reviewed some successful experiences in entrepreneurship projects and the number of jobs provided by each project, including Buraq 24 project, an electronic application which helps to provide shipping services and transport of goods from one location to another, as well as the provision of drinking water and gas. It contributed to the creation of more than 16 jobs; another project named “Bascom”, an application that also serves as a link between university students, colleges and bus drivers through a flexible application and multiple advantages for all users; and another project, an electronic platform named “Logistic intelligence” which organises and provides cargo transportation and connects truck drivers and customers.
Businesswomen Committee, at Oman Chamber of Commerce and Industry (OCCI), organised a training workshop on new trends in the marketing sector entitled “Modern Marketing Skills”.

It was presented by Hasher Al Mantheri, founder and CEO of Al Alama Marketing Establishment, in the presence of the members of Al Ghorfa Businesswomen Committee, in addition to the attendance of more than 70 entrepreneurs. The workshop was part of the “We perform” initiative.

Eng. Bahiya Al Shuaibiya, Chairperson of OCCI Businesswomen Committee, said: “The committee was keen to organise this training workshop because of the importance of marketing and its modern skills in the field of the current business sector, in addition to the need of businesswomen for such workshops that contribute to the growth and development of their projects, and push them to the positive competition that will create generation aware of the importance of marketing and keep abreast of developments in this field, both locally and internationally.”

Al Shuaibiya explained that through this workshop, the committee aims to build and enhance the capabilities and skills of the businesswomen category to be able to manage their companies and develop their business to the fullest. The workshop opened the scope for business owners to participate and attend to achieve greater benefit. The Committee will be keen to hold such workshops in the coming period, all of which come under the “We perform” initiative.

By: Rabiya Said Al Harthia

The workshop focused on the new trends in the marketing sector and reviewed a number of applications and examples of new technologies and methods of marketing upon which large companies in the world have been relying.

Hasher Al Mantheri, Founder and CEO of Al Alama Marketing, pointed out that marketing is the administrative process through which the product is found, priced, distributed and promoted. Through the marketing mix, the needs of the client can be identified and met in a profitable manner. As to the development of marketing, he pointed out that marketing is driven by production, customer-based, then human-centred, up to digital marketing in the era of social networks.

Al Mantheri discussed the transformation methods in the digital economy, and how the masses and customers have become powerful in influencing the work and performance of the companies. The customer has become involved in the process of designing the product and the way through which it is produced. He also talked about the large number of advertisements made by companies and institutions on social networks and the digital world, which make a customer often confused and unable to make the purchase decision. In return, people have created the so-called “social shields” through which customers ask questions to their colleagues, followers, and peers on social media to find out their views about a brand before buying it, in order to protect themselves from the falsity of certain brands, since social networking users form small communities.

Al Mantheri showed the most influential segments of the digital age, namely: young people, women, and online citizens. Young people are obsessed with trying new things, and women are often the makers of purchase decision, in addition to confidence in their choices and their loyalty to brands. As for internet citizens, they live online more than in real life, and internet is their first choice for search and marketing, and they have the ability to adapt new situations.
We call upon Omani women everywhere, in the villages and the cities, in both urban and Bedu communities, in the plains and mountains, to seriously roll up their sleeves and contribute to the process of economic and social development. Everyone, according to her capabilities, experience, skills and position in the society. The country needs all hands to continue its march of progress, development, stability and prosperity.

(From the speech of His Majesty on the occasion of the opening of the second term of Majlis Ashura on 26 December 1994)

The seventeenth of October each year is the Omani Women’s Day, which is an auspicious day for every Omani woman, since Omani women have been appreciated by His Majesty Sultan Qaboos bin Said for their effective role in building the nation and pushing the wheel of advancement hand-in-hand with their brothers, the men. The allocation of a day for Omani women confirms their pioneer and leading role.

Omani women have had great care and attention, in addition to opportunities in many fields, such as education, work and participation in the process of national construction, and this participation is rooted in the historical and cultural heritage of the Omani society, which during its historical periods witnessed the presence of Omani women in all fields.

Omani women have accomplished many achievements in various economic, political and social aspects, and held a number of high positions in the Sultanate. During this year, women had a Royal honour from HM the Sultan through the appointment of HE Engineer Azza bint Sulaiman Al Ismailia as Minister of Technology and Communications, and Dr. Suad Bint Mohammed Al Lawatiya as Minister of Arts Affairs, which is considered a proud of women’s current position and the unlimited support they find and distinguish them from others.

Omani women have made many contributions that have made them an essential, vital and effective factor and a key partner in the development of the private sector. The Chamber meets with some businesswomen to talk about the role of Omani women and the Royal esteem that they have received from His Majesty through the allocation of October 17 each year as a special day for them.

Strong Resource

Eng. Anoud bint Lafi Al Ameriya, from Wilayat Masirah, said: “October 17 is an annual station for crowning Omani women and measuring the progress they achieved for their country in the fields of civilization and science and their effective contribution in various economic, social and cultural fields. Omani woman is the strong resource that builds generations and she is ambitious and aware of seeking to promote the nation and its development projects, inspired by the speeches of His Majesty Sultan Qaboos bin Said in knowing her role and position. This has been facilitated to her by the systems, laws and legislation that have guaranteed her rights and showed her duties.

Al Ameriya pointed out that the Omani women have proven achievements in several national programs and have been keen to interact and keep abreast of developments at the local and regional levels, and to support in policy-
making in the sectors of health, education and economy, and she has achieved outstanding ranks and bright future that reflect their ambition and future.

**Enhancement of Abilities**

Khasiba Bint Salem Al Ameriya, from Wilayat Al Mudhaibi, said: 17 October is an initiative by His Majesty the Sultan on the importance of the role played by Omani women and an appreciation for their presence at various levels and their occupation of many leadership positions. Al Ameriya indicated to the early existence of women in the enterprises and companies of the private sector, and their keenness to enter into experiences in the fields of work, and adopt methods that have contributed to the enhancement and development of their abilities, which enabled them to occupy the highest technical and supervisory positions.

**Renewal of Promise**

Asma Bint Mohammed Al Saqriya, Vice-President of the Omani Women’s Association in Wilayat Al Qabil, said: Omani women have proven themselves through a history full of achievements that have contributed to the renaissance of the society, and achieved integration among its civic institutions. They have also been able to deal with the changes and developments efficiently and ably. They have participated in taking the decisions that serve them in particular and the society in general and invested their capabilities in serving their surroundings. So, this day is a tribute to the Omani women, a call to renew promise and remain sincere in building and serving their country, enhance their knowledge and expand their recognition to raise the level of awareness and represent the Sultanate in regional and international forums.
In conjunction with the Sultanate’s celebrations of Omani Women’s Day, the OCCI Businesswomen Committee held a meeting, headed by Eng. Bahia Bint Hilal Al Shuaibiyah, the Chairperson of the Committee, with Omani businesswomen in the Governorate of Muscat. Eng. Bahia Bint Hilal Al Shuaibiyah, Chairperson of the Committee, welcomed the businesswomen, and said: “The organisation of this meeting comes in belief in the importance of the role of Omani women in the private sector, because today Omani woman has become an important part in the national development process with the participation of her brother, the man, in various fields of work. The meeting came to shed light on the contributions of Omani women in serving their society and enhancing their role, position and future aspirations, which was graciously honoured by His Majesty Sultan Qaboos bin Said. During the meeting, many businesswomen reviewed their stories in the field of entrepreneurship, challenges and mechanisms that have been followed to overcome them, and the success stories and achievements achieved by them in the past period. The meeting was an opportunity to enhance the spirit of cooperation between businesswomen.

The Chamber meets with Omani Businesswomen

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VISION
To develop 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 also its active tool in taking decisions of interest for the sector. It seeks to develop the sector through the available tools and programs for enhancing economic growth in the Sultanate.
Small Enterprises

Interview with Sumaya Al Yaqubia

WINDOW FOR SUCCESS

Interviewed by: Mohammed Al-Kalbani

In the framework of the interest in women entrepreneurs by Oman Chamber of Commerce and Industry (OCCI) Branch in Al Dhaifah Governorate, we highlight in this issue Taj Al Fakher Al Masi Co., which works in the sale, import and export of drinking water.

Sumaya bint Salim bin Mubarak Al Yaqubiya, owner of Taj Al Fakher Al Masi Co., said: “I founded the project in 2018 and it works in the field of importing, exporting and selling bottled and carbonated water in wholesale price and I manage my project by myself.”

Elements of Success

When we asked her about the requirements that must be met to establish a successful project, Sumaya said: “Every project needs four basic elements, namely capital, experience, patience, and direct management. When these elements exist, the project succeeds. Social relationships and customer satisfaction are helping factors in building any commercial enterprise.”

Competitors of the Project

Sumaya Al Yaqubia added: “I faced many challenges in this project, the most important of them are the great number of competitors in the field of selling drinking water, whether produced locally or imported from abroad, the extent to which customers accept the product because of the many options in the market, and the lack of special equipment of the institution, which we solved by renting some vehicles and equipment from business owners. I have also conducted training courses for the work team so that we can provide excellent service to customers.”

Conferences and Exhibitions

About her participations, she said: I participated in the exhibition “from Qatar”, which was held at Oman Convention and Exhibition Centre, and in Oman Quality and Excellence Conference, and the 8th Gulf Conference on Ideal Health.

Success Ladder

Sumaya concluded her interview with a message addressed to all young people who are about to set up their business projects: “Entrepreneurship is like a big ladder that needs careful planning and patience to achieve success. Perseverance and patience in facing challenges and avoiding hurry or rush in decision-making also has a major role in achieving success. To be productive in your life, make sure that you make your own world and create opportunities for others. Let the start be by you.”

General Manager
Sumaya Al Yaqubia

Interviewed by: Mohammed Al-Kalbani
Interview with Raid Al Shehhi
MUSANDAM ON A GIANT LEAP

Musandam Governorate is characterised by a tourist nature which distinguishes it from others, its beaches are characterised by natural treasures and picturesque seafronts, and its beach extends to the Strait of Hormuz whose scenery is picturesque and attractive to tourists. Musandam Governorate includes four Wilayats: Khasab, Bukha, Dibba and Madha. The city of Khasab is a centre to the Governorate.

The Governorate is also witnessing an economic activity which contributes to the diversification of sources of income. In this "Al Ghorfa" issue, Oman Chamber of Commerce and Industry (OCCI) highlights the Governorate of Musandam and meets with Raid bin Mohammed Al Shehhi, member of the Board of Directors of OCCI, Chairman of the Chamber's branch in Musandam Governorate, to talk about the economy of the Governorate and its tourist and investment attractions and potentials.

Can you tell us about the economic importance of Musandam Governorate for national income enhancement and its contribution to the diversification of sources of income?

The Governorate has great economic importance due to its distinguished strategic location, its several elements of attraction that qualify it to further contribute to the enhancement of national income and to the diversification of the sources of income through promising economic sectors. It is worth mentioning that the government has announced a comprehensive strategy for the development of the Governorate until 2040, which depends on many vital sectors that represent a great addition to the national economy, including the tourism sector. As we know, the Governorate has a unique and diverse attractive tourist elements, and can occupy an advanced position on the map of regional tourism. Consequently, many tourist projects are being implemented and will contribute to the attraction of different types of tourism increasing the share of the Governorate in the tourism market. There is also a tendency to establish a large industrial zone in the Governorate that will attract local and international investments, and several factories and industries will be established in it. In this context, it is important to grant this zone the necessary facilities and incentives that enable it to compete, develop and attract investors and important project owners. In addition, the private sector in the Governorate should be interested in investing and engage in trade and investment partnerships with investors from inside and outside the Sultanate.

What is the significance of the instructions of HM Sultan Qaboos bin Said - may Allah the Almighty protect him - to stimulate tourist investments in Musandam Governorate through customs and tax exemptions for these projects, and how can the results of these instructions be directed towards enhancement of the contribution of the tourist sector to the national income?

The instructions of His Majesty Sultan Qaboos bin Said - may Allah the Almighty protect him - to stimulate tourist investments in Musandam Governorate through customs and tax exemptions for these projects, will play an important role in enhancing the economic feasibility of these investments, which in turn will result in increasing the Governorate’s attractiveness to tourists in quantity and quality, and this will have a great impact on the increase of purchasing power in the Governorate and thus achieving growth in other economic sectors in the Governorate. Moreover, the entry of these investments, which will vary between hotels of various degrees, facilities and services, and the activities classified as tourist activities of various kinds, will be qualitative addition to the standard of living in the Governorate, which will reflect positively on the availability of services to citizens and residents and will contribute to the assessment of the Governorate as a place attractive to the competencies required by various projects. These projects will also contribute to the creation of job opportunities, small and medium projects, and local added value for the people of the Governorate.

What is the role of the Chamber’s branch in Musandam in developing and enhancing the contribution of private sector institutions to sustainable development?

OCCI branch in Musandam Governorate plays a leading role in preparing the business environment in the Governorate, empowering business owners in their own projects, overcoming the various challenges facing the
their abilities. Moreover, the work plan seeks to provide revenues of the small and medium enterprises and to build the projects and government bodies for finding business and potentials, in addition to the continuous follow-up and solutions to its challenges and developing its capabilities of the branch’s affiliates as well as finding appropriate solutions to its challenges and developing its capabilities and potentials, in addition to the continuous follow-up and communication with major companies and those executing the projects and government bodies for finding business contracts for the affiliates of the branch to enhance the revenues of the small and medium enterprises and to build their abilities. Moreover, the work plan seeks to provide marketing climate and environment for products and services of private sector institutions in the Governorate, in addition to direct communication with the affiliates of the branch through continuous and specialised meetings for various sectors through the specialised committees in the branch. During these meetings the performance of the sector and the latest developments are discussed, and the views and suggestions of the branch’s affiliates are taken into consideration, in addition to considering the challenges of their various commercial activities to reach solutions for the development of the performance of the private sector in the Governorate.

The branch of the Chamber in Musandam Governorate provides its affiliates with various free additional services which aim at enhancing their capabilities and developing their businesses and contributing to the establishment of new companies and projects that benefit the private sector in the Governorate, by contracting with companies and enterprises specialised in these fields in the Sultanate, they are:

(Providing legal services and consultations through Musandam Chamber Legal Clinic, administrative and financial services, preparing feasibility studies and establishing projects, training and qualifying services for business owners and job seekers from the people of the Governorate to establish and develop their own projects, and spreading the culture of entrepreneurship.)

What are the objectives of the economic programs and initiatives launched by the Board of Directors of the Chamber’s branch in Musandam? What are the achieved results?

OCGI branch in Musandam Governorate has adopted a new approach for the purpose of developing and enhancing the private sector institutions in the Governorate, in a way to serve the Omani private sector in general and contribute to increasing its contribution to the national economy. In this framework, the branch has launched many quality courses and services specialised in many fields based on the needs of institutions, and providing all kinds of support that serve the aspirations of affiliates, including the provision of quality and specialised services such as legal services, an initiative to provide legal services to the affiliates of OCGI branch in Musandam within the framework of the “Musandam Chamber Legal Clinic” initiative implemented by the branch with the office of Khalifa Al Hinai Advocates & Legal Consultants.

This initiative comes within the framework of the awareness of the branch’s Board of Directors of the importance of legal work and the desire to have companies legally capable in terms of management and contracts of high quality, reviewed and drafted in a way that can make these companies stand on their feet strongly through their internal and external dealings.

The branch has also organised specialised development courses which target entrepreneurs and job seekers and continue throughout the year in order to reach all targeted categories in the Governorate in accordance with their work and projects, since these courses focus on many of the basic concepts needed by entrepreneurs, including entrepreneurship, designing marketing plans, and conclusion of contracts and procurement.

The branch also organised an informative program on administrative and financial services and free consultations for the owners of small and medium projects affiliated to the branch of the Chamber in Musandam Governorate, which was implemented by Amwal Company. The program presented some solutions aimed to strengthen cooperation between the branch of the chamber and the company for providing technical support, capacity-building and development of private institutions in the Governorate. The program presented some solutions to minimize societal problems, and included a number of workshops in the field of accounting, marketing and operations management, in addition to consultative sessions after each workshop. The company also provided a number of accounting and feasibility studies services.

Nevertheless, the private sector in the Governorate faces various challenges, including failure from different entities to observe some laws and regulations in the private sector, as they do not take into account the working environment of companies and institutions in the Governorate, as well as the size of revenues of these institutions and companies and the small size of the labour market, which form a burden on companies and institutions in the application of those laws and regulations, as well as increasing the burden and cost during the importation of materials and goods from neighbouring countries as well as customs duties and the costs of procedures to clear transactions during the entry of goods and services through the sea port, in addition to the absence of ferry trips from Muscat to Musandam Governorate, the absence of a direct maritime transportation to transport goods and equipment to and from the Governorate, and the fees imposed by the various authorities which form a burden on the development of the institutions because of their low revenues and the small scope of their business. So, there is a need to enhance the number of tourists and visitors to the Governorate and to support the tourist sector through increasing the number of flights and ferries from and to the Governorate, which will also play a significant role in supporting projects and other sectors in the Governorate.
The branch also provided a package of administrative, financial and accounting consultancy services free of charge, and others for discounted fees, for the affiliates of the branch, and implemented by Amwal, in order to build the institutional capacity of the affiliates and empower them in the administrative and financial aspects through practical workshops in the fields of accountancy, marketing and operations management, in addition to consultative sessions after each workshop.

The branch of the Chamber in Musandam Governorate also seeks to create, prepare and develop the business environment in the Governorate through programs and initiatives offered by cooperation and coordination with the relevant institutions. There is no doubt that the organisation of this type of free training courses provides an opportunity for youth and owners of projects to benefit in many aspects of regulatory, legislative and principles of entrepreneurship and of the exchange of experiences between them and the participants. We also seek by all means and capabilities to create a strong private sector that can contribute to the community development in the Governorate.

Small and medium enterprises and job seekers from all Wilayats of Musandam Governorate participated in those courses. Through engaging them in such courses, the Chamber hopes to help them acquire knowledge and experience in the field of project management and its organisation, and encouraging them to engage in entrepreneurial projects and adopt special projects and other fields that contribute to their qualification and training in various fields of work.

Can you tell us about investment and business opportunities in Musandam?

There are investment opportunities in the promising sectors in the Sultanate including the sectors of tourism, fisheries, agricultural wealth, import and export, construction, health, contracting and building materials, services, light industry and retail trade.

As Musandam Governorate is of a special nature, the available opportunities in it must be dealt with in non-traditional ways that should be suitable for the environment of the Governorate and the optimal exploitation of its economic potentials in all its Wilayats and maximise the benefits from the disparity between the environment of each Wilayat.

Also, to enhance investment, a long-term investment map should be prepared and be capable of moving investment to greater stages, enhance the role of promising economic sectors in the Governorate, and can meet future requirements, in addition to considering the projects in an integrated manner among the Wilayats of the Governorate and maximising their usefulness and can contribute to enhance the capabilities of private sector companies and enterprises and enhance the income of individual and productive families.

49th National Day On the occasion of the
Oman Chamber of Commerce and Industry and its branches boards of directors as well as the executive body express utmost greetings to

His Majesty Sultan Qaboos bin Said

They appeal to Allah to grant H.M the Sultan long live to achieve further progress and prosperity for Oman. They stress that OCCI will play its key role in the service and development of the Omani private sector to become an active partner in the sustainable economic development
OMAN-KOREA BUSINESS FORUM

By: Rabia Sadi Al Marthia

OCCI has recently organized the Oman-Korea Business Forum at Oman Sheraton Hotel in Muscat. The visiting delegation was received by HE Qais bin Mohammed Al Yousef, Chairman of OCCI Board of Directors. The Korean delegation was headed by HE Jun-dong Kim, Executive Vice President of the Korean Chamber of Commerce and Industry (KCCI). The meeting was attended by a number of Highnesses, Excellencies, officials and business owners from the two friendly countries.

The Forum, in which more than 35 Korean companies working in different fields took part, aimed at developing and strengthening trade and investment relations between the two friendly countries, developing and promoting the business sector, introducing business owners to the opportunities of investment and trade exchange in both sides, and discussing the possibility of establishing strategic partnerships to increase investment and business activities between the two countries.

HE Qais bin Mohammed Al Yousef said: “This visit confirms the common desire of the Sultanate and Korea to enhance the level of partnership and cooperation in various economic and investment fields. During the overall renaissance led by His Majesty Sultan Qaboos, the Sultanate has achieved a lot in all economic and social levels. According to preliminary data, the Sultanate’s gross domestic product (GDP) increased to around RO 30.5 billion by the end of 2018, the highest level since the decline in oil prices in 2014. Thus, the GDP of the Sultanate increased by 12% compared with the year 2017, according to the National Centre for Statistics and Information.

Al Yousef explained that the Sultanate has pursued a policy of economic openness in accordance with the rule of free competition by encouraging the private sector and providing facilities in order to play a key role. It has provided many services which support investment such as world-class infrastructure, simplifying procedures for establishing businesses, and providing many incentives attractive for local and global investment, and of course this has made the Sultanate an attractive destination for investment.

In terms of cooperation, partnership and building relations between the business sectors in the Sultanate and Korea, Al Yousef said: “The available statistics indicate that the total imports from Korea to the Sultanate amounted to RO 225 million during 2017, while the Omanis exported the same year amounted to RO 783 million. The volume of Korean investments registered in the Sultanate until 2016 amounted to more than RO 374 million, while the Korean contribution amounted to more than RO 17 million by 2016, by about five per cent, with the contribution of 55 investment companies.

Al Yousef added: “Our presence today in this Forum reflects the common desire to establish and develop business and investment projects and exchange of experiences in the fields and sectors of interest in both friendly countries. We in the Omani private sector are aware of the capabilities, expertise and advanced technologies available to the economy in Korea, especially in the sectors of industry and mining as well as the agricultural and food security sectors, and all are fields and sectors of priority in the development plans of the Sultanate. We are also well aware that cooperation with the private sector in Korea in these and other fields has many great opportunities for success and will have positive results for our national economies.”

HE Jun-dong Kim, Executive Vice Chairman of Korea Chamber of Commerce & Industry, said: “The Republic of Korea is the third trade partner of the Sultanate, as Korea participates in the establishment of vital strategic projects in infrastructure and energy in the Sultanate. Promoting economic cooperation between the two countries at all levels and investing in
common opportunities is beneficial to the domestic and global economic growth.” The CEO of KCCI invited Omani business owners to visit the Korean capital, Seoul, to set up the Oman-Korea Trade Forum, as well as holding bilateral trade meetings.

HE Chang Kyu Kim, Ambassador of the Republic of Korea to the Sultanate, said, in his speech that the two countries have strategic relations for enhancing their trade relations which has led to the achievement of many successful projects during the past period and contributed to the development of the relations, and the continuation of friendly relations between the two friendly countries is the tool for the success of trade relations.

On the other hand, Jalal Abdul Karim Al Lawati, Director of Marketing and Investment Promotion at Duqm Special Economic Zone Authority, pointed out that the Duqm area includes many important economic projects that contribute to the development of sources of income and a sustainable economy, in addition to providing job opportunities for Omani youth. He also indicated that Omani-Korean relations have been close and strong for many years, and Korean contributions from the beginning of economic projects in Duqm zone are well known to everyone, and they are continued till now, such as the projects of the Dry Dock and Duqm Refinery. Al Lawati also urged Korean companies participating in the Forum to get acquainted with Duqm Zone projects and seek achievement of partnerships to contribute to the future development of Duqm.

Changwong Om, Director General of the Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Energy of the Republic of Korea, pointed out that there are ancient traces of Omani frankincense in Buddhist temples, which reflects the ancient exchange between the two countries. Trade cooperation can be enhanced through the establishment of smart cities and smart farms, and Korea has similar projects in neighboring countries. Korea can also be a strategic partner in information technology through advanced technology infrastructure, as well as cooperation in the sectors of health, education and human resources.

Work Papers

The Forum discussed enriching worksheets on trade and investment opportunities. The first paper, entitled “Policy and Plan of Moorea Smart City”, was presented by Hangu Lin from the Korean Ministry of Land, Infrastructure and Transport, in which he indicated that Korea is one of the countries that has an interest in the application of smart cities system, and it implemented a number of large industrial complexes and new cities. In addition, a number of Korean houses operate according to the advanced smart city system. Thus, interest in this field has come as a top priority in the policies of the city of Moorea.

Faisal Al Hinai, Head of Investment Promotion Department at the Public Authority for Investment Promotion and Export Development (Ithraa), presented a working paper about the Sultanate’s potentials and elements which qualify it to occupy a prominent position among the advanced economies in the region and in the whole world. He indicated to the role of the government and the private sector in providing facilities and incentives to encourage investment and attract foreign investments. He also talked about the most important investment opportunities in the sectors of tourism, fisheries, transport, logistics, mining, and manufacturing industries.

Sanjian C.O from Bosco Research Institute talked about ways of diversifying economic cooperation between the Sultanate and Korea, whereas the Sultanate is one of the countries that seek to diversify the economic and sources of income, because the Sultanate enjoys a strategic location attractive to foreign investors. He also reviewed some data that illustrated the volume of trade exchange between the two friendly countries.

Jalal Abdul Karim Al Lawati, Director of Marketing and Investment Promotion at the Special Economic Zone Authority in Duqm, presented a working paper entitled “Oman’s Gate to the World”, reviewing the advantages of Duqm zone, which covers an area of 2,000 sq. km, and is the largest zone in the Middle East and North Africa. The zone aims at attracting global markets because Duqm represents a strategic point contributing significantly to attracting foreign markets and investors, indicating that Duqm project is an industrial, tourist, logistic, educational and commercial project contributing to the development of the entire area under the name of Duqm Special Economic Zone. He also reviewed the most important projects in the zone, including Duqm Port, Duqm Airport, and Duqm Refinery, which will produce 230,000 barrels per day, indicating that the Refinery is at the stage of construction and nearly 40% of the Project has been completed. Korean companies have made significant contributions to the construction and development of this project. The working paper also reviewed the facilities provided by the zone to foreign investors. Al Lawati also pointed out that the zone is currently working on establishing a fishing port, which is deemed to be the largest fishing port in the Sultanate.

Sangwoo Kim reviewed the major cooperation projects between the Sultanate and Korea and the successful cases, as Korea is a sustainable partner in the Sultanate as a supplier of facilities related to projects, and many economic projects have been implemented. Korea has completed 451 economic projects since 1993.

The Forum concluded with bilateral meetings between Omani business owners and their Korean counterparts.
The Omani-Sri Lankan trade meeting has recently been held with the participation of representatives from Oman Chamber of Commerce and Industry (OCCI) and the Sri Lankan trade delegation.

The meeting was attended by Ali bin Hamdan Al Ajmi, and Eng. Reda Bin Juma Al Saleh, members of OCCI Board of Directors, Omani business owners and entrepreneurs. The meeting was organised by the Sri Lankan Embassy in the Sultanate at Al Falaj Hotel in Muscat.

HE Omar Libi Amir Ajwad, the Ambassador of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka to the Sultanate, spoke on the trade relations between the Sultanate and Sri Lanka. He pointed out that the Sri Lankan Embassy organised the meeting to enhance bilateral trade relations. He also reviewed the most important opportunities available for trade exchange across the Indian Ocean, indicating to the importance of the depth of political and economic relations between the two countries.

Ali Hamdan Al Ajmi, member of OCCI Board of Directors, said: “We are delighted to meet the Sri Lankan trade delegation today. The importance of the Sri Lankan market lies in being promising by providing a number of products and raw materials such as construction materials, rubber products, plastic products, confectionery, dairy, biscuits, candy, tea, coffee and others.”

During the event, bilateral meetings were held between business owners from Oman and Sri Lanka.


The Omani delegation was headed by Eng. Hussain bin Hathith Al Bathani, Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Chamber’s branch in Dhofar Governorate, with the participation of Omani companies concerned with the sectors and topics discussed during the sessions of the Forum.

The Forum discussed a number of trade and development issues and topics, and focused on how trade and the trading system adapt to a changing world, especially as trade is increasingly witnessing several changes in technology, production methods and employment patterns, as well as demographic transfers and climate changes. The Forum also discussed services and future boundaries of trade, the aspirations of the generation of the global trading system, the next phase of the WTO and the strengthening of the trading system.

In conjunction with the events of the Forum, the Chamber organised a number of meetings with UNCTAD officials regarding the programs of SMEs, entrepreneurship and technical cooperation. The Chamber also held a meeting with the Swiss-Arab Chamber officials, a meeting with the delegation of the US National Foreign Trade Council (NFTC) and paid a visit to the International Trade Centre in Geneva.
Oman Chamber of Commerce & Industry

FGCC Chambers Discuss Rules of Procedure

By: Nasser bin Juma Al-Harthy

Oman Chamber of Commerce & Industry

FGCC Chambers Discuss Rules of Procedure

Amani Bu Khamseen

Dr. Al Fadil Al Hinai

This plan was based on the Federation’s work in the past period and from it emerged a strategic plan and an annual operation plan which aim to prepare a new map for the Federation.
Economic theories and speeches supporting them vary according to social, political and economic conditions of people. At times of welfare, calls increase for a free market economy based on the state’s non-intervention in economic activities and letting the market adjust to supply and demand, liberalisation of markets and prices and supporting individuals’ ownerships of markets and capital. But in case of the occurrence of an economic crisis or an increase in jobs crisis, disparity between social classes and gap between the rich and the poor widens. Here the voices calling for market socialism will rise, and the discourse of the Marxism will emerge as well as the emergence of all what supports direct or indirect government intervention in the regulation of the market.

We find that we are closer to the model of the command economy, which helps the government to have legislative tools that contribute to the regulation of the market business. But in fact, the economy depends not only on the theory followed in the economy, but on the desired objectives and practical applications in the controlled economy as well as the extent of the impact of external factors represented by transnational corporations coming from neoliberal systems, as well as the internal factors in the nature of public sector interventions in the private sector and whether they are regulatory interventions that serve the market and investment of the available resources or they contribute to bureaucracy and sizing the market. These questions can also be applied to the role of government companies in the private sector, and to the role of the private sector in bridging the job gap.

From these points of view, as oil prices fall, the government has adopted a number of steps such as the National Program for Enhancing Economic Diversification (Tanfeedh), which aims to link the strategies of the vital economic sectors, which are represented by manufacturing industries, logistics, mining, tourism and fisheries, to promote diversification of national income sources and to achieve the objectives of the Ninth Five-Year Development Plan (2016-2020). Also, one of the most prominent objectives of Tanfeedh program with regard to the private sector is to determine the proportion of non-governmental capital investments, so as not to be less than 80% to finance the initiatives of the main sectors of the program. To achieve this goal, there should be a suitable area for both business owners and foreign investors to compete freely in the market in accordance with supply and demand theory so that the trader can gain more confidence in entering the market without competition from the public sector, and the role of the sector is focused on organising the work of vital main economies so that the private sector plays the role desired from it, and benefits from the Royal Decrees and the recently issued laws, namely Foreign Capital Investment Law, Privatization Law, Public-Private Partnership Law, and Bankruptcy law, which have been promulgated to achieve important objectives as described by HE Qais Al Yousef, Chairman of OCCI for enhancing business environment, attracting investment and private sector development. Such laws give the investor greater confidence in pumping his investments into the Omani market as long as he feels that there is a legislative environment that guarantees his rights and ownership of his investment projects. Therefore, in the period of the current Board of Directors, the OCCI initiated the establishment of Foreign Affiliates Committee, chaired by Mr. Raid Al Shehhi, a member of the Chamber’s Board of Directors, which aims to engage foreign investors in the activities of the Chamber as a representative of the private sector.