

T.C.
DIŐIŐLERİ BAKANLIĐI
Genel ve İkili Ekonomik İŐler Genel M¼d¼r YardımcılıĐı

Sayı : B.06.0.İEGY.0.0-025.50 -2010/455286
Konu : The BIG Show - Builders
International Gathering

20 Ağustos 2010

DIŐ TİCARET M¼STEŐARLIĐINA
(AnlaŐmalar Genel M¼d¼rl¼Đ¼)

Muskat B¼y¼kelçiliĐimizden alınan bir yazıda, Oman'da yaŐanmakta olan altyapı ve kalkınma projelerini kapsayan yoĐun inŐaat sekt¼r¼ faaliyetleri doĐrultusunda her yıl Muskat'ta d¼zenlenmekte olan "Interiors and Buildex" Yapı Fuarı'nın bu yıl 15-17 Mart 2010 tarihleri arasında gerçekteŐirildiĐi, geçtiĐimiz yıllarda olduĐu gibi T¼rk firmalarının bu yıl da fuara kalabalık bir grup halinde katılım saĐladıkları ve fuarda ¼lkemizin 18 firmayla temsil edildiĐi bildirilmektedir.

Muskat B¼y¼kelçiliĐimize Oman Expo Fuar Merkezi tarafından g¼nderilen yazıda, Interiors&Buildex 2010'un, 25'in ¼zerinde ¼lkeden yaklaŐık 240 firmanın katılımıyla b¼y¼k baŐarı saĐladıĐı bildirilerek, fuara iliŐkin ¼rneĐi ekli deĐerlendirme sunulmaktadır.

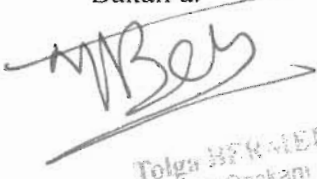
Yazıda devamla, 2011 yılı fuarının "The BIG Show-Builders International Gathering" adı altında 21-23 Mart 2011 tarihlerinde Oman Uluslararası Sergi Merkezi'nde d¼zenlenmesinin kararlaŐtırıldıĐı belirtilerek, inŐaat ve dekorasyon alanında faaliyet g¼steren firmalarımız için Oman ve OrtadoĐu pazarına y¼nelik uygun bir tanıtım olanaĐı saĐlayacak etkinliĐin broŐ¼r¼n¼n ve tanıtım CD'sinin ilgili kuruluŐlarımıza iletilmesi rica edilmektedir.

Yazıda son olarak, "The BIG Show 2011"e katılım konusunda "abdullah@omanexpo.com" e-posta adresinden veya (00 968 95140107) numaralı telefonda Proje M¼d¼r¼ Abdullah Beg ile irtibat kurulabileceĐi bildirilmektedir.

"The BIG Show 2011"e iliŐkin olarak yukarıda sunulan bilgilerin ve takdim kılınmakta olan broŐ¼r ve CD'nin Sanayi ve Ticaret BakanlıĐımızın yanısıra TOBB, İTO ve diĐer ilgili kuruluŐlarımıza iletilerek, fuara katılım konusunda istekli olabilecek firmalarımıza duyurulmasının saĐlanmasını m¼saadelerine saygılarımla arz ederim.

Ek: Tk.
1 Adet CD

24.08.2010 41842

Bakan a.

Tolga BEKMEK
Dere BaŐkanı
İEGY-İ



2010 POST-SHOW REPORT



7th International Exhibition of
Building Materials, Construction Equipment
and Interior Furnishings

15-17 March 2010
Oman International Exhibition Centre
Muscat, Sultanate of Oman

Organiser:



OMANEXPO™
Global Business Platform



INTERIORS & BUILDEX 2010: ANOTHER RECORD-BREAKING EVENT

The 7th edition of **Interiors & Buildex** was the most successful so far, with the participation of a record number of exhibitors from over 20 countries. The three-day exhibition also attracted the largest number of industry professionals, confirming its reputation as one of the biggest events for the building and construction industry in the region.

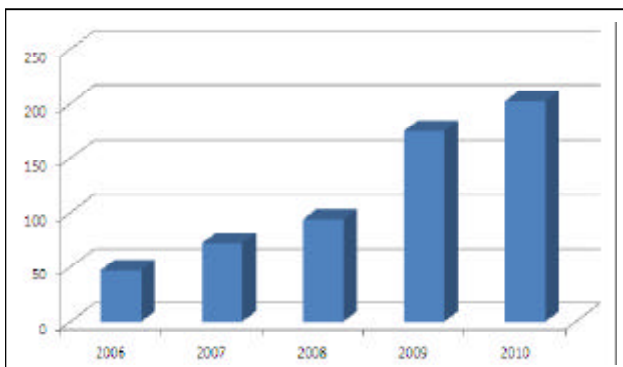
Name of Event	: Interiors & Buildex 2010	Event Type	: Trade Event
Tagline	: 7th International Exhibition of Building Materials, Construction Equipment & Interior Furnishings	Website	: www.interiorsbuildex.com
Event Dates	: 15-17 March 2010	Total Exhibitors	: 202 companies
Venue	: Oman Int'l Exhibition Centre Muscat, Sultanate of Oman	Foreign Firms	: 132 companies
Exhibition Timings	: 10:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m. 4:30 p.m. - 9:00 p.m.	Countries Involved	: over 20 countries
Inaugurated by	: H.E. Eng. Ahmed Sulaiman Saleh Al-Maimani, Undersecretary of the Ministry of Commerce & Industry for Administrative & Financial Affairs and Regions Affairs	Total Visitors	: 7,583 industry professionals
		Gross Exhibit Area	: 12,000 square metres
		No. of Sponsors	: 28 organisations
		Launching Year	: 2003
		Organiser	: OMANEXPO

Exhibition Profile

Interiors & Buildex 2010 showcased a wide range of products and equipment for all types of construction activities as well interior design projects. Specifically, among those displayed in the exhibition were the following:

- ◆ air conditioning systems
- ◆ bathroom fittings
- ◆ beds and mattresses
- ◆ building materials
- ◆ cabinets and joinery
- ◆ ceramics and tiles
- ◆ cement products
- ◆ construction equipment
- ◆ curtains and beddings
- ◆ decorative panels
- ◆ doors and shutters
- ◆ earthmoving equipment
- ◆ electric heating systems
- ◆ electrical supplies
- ◆ fiberglass products
- ◆ fire prevention products
- ◆ flooring materials
- ◆ heat control films
- ◆ heavy equipment
- ◆ home décor & furnishings
- ◆ kitchen equipment and modules
- ◆ lighting fixtures
- ◆ marble and stone products
- ◆ maintenance supplies
- ◆ paint products
- ◆ pipes and plumbing fixtures
- ◆ PVC building materials
- ◆ refrigeration equipment
- ◆ rock drilling tools
- ◆ roofing materials
- ◆ sanitary wares
- ◆ scaffolding equipment
- ◆ security systems
- ◆ sofas and furniture
- ◆ steel and metal products
- ◆ wall panels and partitions
- ◆ windows and doors
- ◆ wood products
- ◆ and many other products!

Rapid Growth in Number of Interiors & Buildex Exhibitors



The continued growth of **Interiors & Buildex** exhibitors over the years reflects the increasing interest in Oman as an attractive market for all requirements of the building and construction industry. This is a direct result of the implementation of multimillion-dollar projects in many parts of the sultanate.

Countries Represented in Interiors & Buildex 2010

The exhibition registered a marked increase in the number of international participants, spearheaded by the national pavilions of Turkey, the United Arab Emirates, Italy, Egypt, Sri Lanka, and the UK.

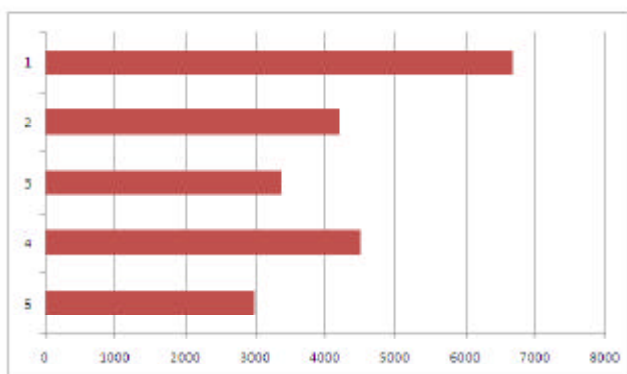
Belgium	Lebanon
Canada	Malaysia
China	Oman
Egypt	Pakistan
Germany	Poland
India	Saudi Arabia
Italy	Sri Lanka
Jordan	Turkey
Korea	UAE
Kuwait	UK

Visitor Profile

Interiors & Buildex 2010 brought together the biggest gathering of professionals in Oman's vibrant building and construction industry. The event offered an excellent networking opportunity with the presence of the following:

- ◆ architects
- ◆ contractors
- ◆ consultants
- ◆ property developers
- ◆ engineers
- ◆ end-users/buyers
- ◆ importers/distributors
- ◆ homeowners
- ◆ interior designers
- ◆ manufacturers
- ◆ project managers
- ◆ property owners
- ◆ purchasing managers
- ◆ real-estate agents
- ◆ retailers and suppliers
- ◆ surveyors

Main Purpose of Visit



1. To gather information on new products 6694
2. To meet potential suppliers/business partners 4216
3. To make a purchase or place orders 3374
4. To interact with industry professionals 4520
5. To explore potential representation/partnership 2983

Visitors by Product Interest

Air Conditioning and Refrigeration	-	78%
Bathroom and Kitchen Products	-	82%
Ceramics and Stone Products	-	71%
Concrete and Steel Products	-	80%
Doors, Windows and Walls	-	65%
Heavy Equipment & Construction Vehicles	-	55%
Interior Design Products & Services	-	62%
Electrical and Electronic Products	-	64%
Paints, Hardware and Tools	-	56%

Visitor Promotion Strategies

To effectively attract a maximum number of visitors to the event, **Interiors & Buildex 2010** was aggressively promoted using the following strategies:

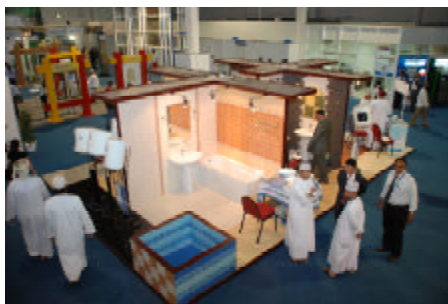


- ◆ advertisements in both English and Arabic newspapers
- ◆ advertisements and editorial coverage in various industry publications
- ◆ regular press releases in newspapers, magazines and regional websites
- ◆ e-mail and fax campaigns directly targeting industry professionals in Oman and in the whole GCC
- ◆ SMS broadcasts to inform as many people as possible about the event
- ◆ flyers and triads to further raise public awareness on the event
- ◆ radio announcements and direct mailing campaigns

EVENT SPONSORS

<p>Platinum Sponsor</p>	<p>Supporting Organisations</p>	<p>Official Hotel</p>	<p>Official Magazine</p>
<p>Gold Sponsors</p>	<p>Visitor Badge Sponsor</p>	<p>Official Logistics Partner</p>	<p>International Official Magazine</p>
<p>Silver Sponsors</p>	<p>Floor Plan Sponsor</p>	<p>Official Media Company</p>	<p>Media Partners</p>
		<p>Official Radio Station</p>	

PHOTO GALLERY



"Thank you once again for successfully and professionally organizing Interiors & Buildex, which has now become Alomi's most important exhibition in the GCC. It cannot be missed by anyone who is serious about doing business in the GCC and Oman in particular."

Albert Douglas
CEO, Alomi Real Wood Floors



NEXT SHOW

The BIG Show (Builders International Gathering)

8th International Exhibition of Building Materials,
Construction Equipment and Interior Furnishings

21-23 March 2011
Oman International Exhibition Centre
Muscat, Sultanate of Oman

For more information, please contact:

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Tel. +971-4-2587774 Fax +971-4-2587776
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Important Event Information

Event Name	:	The BIG Show
Tagline	:	8th International Exhibition of Building Materials, Construction Equipment and Interior Furnishings
Show Dates & Venue	:	21-23 March 2011 Oman International Exhibition Centre Muscat, Sultanate of Oman
Event Type	:	Trade Event
Recognition	:	UFI Approved Event
Frequency	:	Annual
Exhibition Hours	:	11:00 am – 8:00 pm
Website	:	www.thebigshow-oman.com
Main Sponsor	:	Supported By: Oman Chamber of Commerce & Industry (OCCI)
Exhibition Highlights	:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The biggest event in Oman for the building and construction industry and one of the largest industry events in the Middle East region;• Annually attracts the participation of a record number of local and international companies from a growing number of countries worldwide;• Showcasing the widest range of products, equipment and professionals services for the building and construction industry;• The largest gathering in Oman of professionals in the building and construction industry as the exhibition prominently features their project requirements;
Exhibit Profile	:	The BIG Show 2011 will showcase a comprehensive range of products, equipment and services that would effectively serve

the growing requirements of the vibrant building and construction industry in the region. Among those to be displayed prominently are the following:

- Air Conditioning & Refrigeration
- Bathroom and Bedroom Products
- Building Materials and Systems
- Ceramics and Tiles
- Concrete and Cement Products
- Construction Supplies and Equipment
- Doors, Windows and Walls
- Electrical & Electronic Equipment
- Flooring and Roofing Materials
- Furniture and Furnishings
- Heavy Equipment & Construction Vehicles
- Interior Design Products and Services
- Kitchen Modules and Products
- Lighting Fixtures and Accessories
- Marble and Other Stone Products
- Paints, Hardware and Tools
- Sanitary Wares and Fittings
- Steel and Other Metal Products
- Wood and Timber Products
- Plus Many Other Products!

Visitor Profile : all professionals in the building and construction industry

- architects
- interior designers
- contractors
- manufacturers
- consultants
- project managers
- property developers
- property owners
- engineers
- purchasing managers
- end-users/buyers
- real-estate agents
- importers/distributors
- retailers and suppliers
- homeowners
- site managers

The Venue : Established in 1985, the Oman International Exhibition Centre (OIEC) is the ideal venue for major trade fairs and exhibitions in the Sultanate of Oman. It offers 12,000 square meters of indoor exhibition space and it has enough parking space for over 2,500 vehicles. It is conveniently located near Muscat International Airport and is just a short ride away from the city centre of Muscat.

Organiser : Established in 1986, Omanexpo is the pioneer exhibition management company in Oman and the leading organizer of professional trade shows in the sultanate. The company is a member of UFI-The Global Association of the Exhibition Industry and the International Association of Exhibitions and Events (IAEE). In addition to **The BIG Show**, Omanexpo's portfolio of major trade exhibitions includes the Motor Show, Food & Hotel Oman, Women Expo, MedHealth & Wellness, Weight Loss and Cosmetology Show, and OGWA-The

Region's Leading Oil & Gas Exhibition and Conference. For more information, visit www.omanexpo.com.

For more information, please contact:



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*8th International Exhibition of Building Materials,
Construction Equipment and Interior Furnishings*

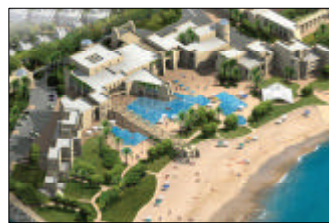
21-23 March 2011
Oman International Exhibition Centre
Muscat, Sultanate of Oman

MARKET REPORT

NOVEMBER 2008 - JUNE 2010



The Wave, Muscat



The Blue City



Muscat Hills



Barr Al Jissah Resort & Spa

Compiled by:



OMANEXPO®

Global Business Platform

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Table of Contents

Major Development Projects in Oman	05
---	----

Complete News on Oman's Building & Construction Industry

Al Mazyounah Free Zone has bright investment prospects: developer	07
Royal orders to build causeway linking Masirah with mainland	07
Strabag Oman wins Sohar Airport contract	08
31 firms seek to pre-qualify for National Railway project management contract	08
Sohar Port phase II work tendered	09
MSE, Voltas join forces to tap Oman's construction sector	10
The Wave says 60pc work on waterways done	10
New projects signal tourism boom	11
Muriya to showcase sample Jebel Sifah apartments soon	11
Mega tourism projects in Dhofar	12
New roads to give Dhofar a facelift	12
National Museum to be set up	13
Deals for infrastructure and utilities projects in Muscat	14
Infrastructure gets RO1b	14
Oman-German JV set to announce entry into real estate sector	15
Oman-Antwerp Port pact set to develop Duqm Port into mega-hub	15
Multi-level interchange at Wadi Adai	16
RO 47.8m infrastructure projects	17
Khimji's Bait Al Ahlam launches Bagno Design showroom	18
Tourism, real estate sectors on cusp of sweeping growth	18
Construction of jumbo runway at Muscat airport right on target	19
Glorei signs agreement to build Maktabi 2 in Wattayah	20
Pacts for development inked	20
MoU inked for environmental tourist resort in Mirbat	21
Zubair Corp. plans hotel, residential complex	22
Oman realty sector to hit RO1.57b	22
Oman Cement's new clinker project to come on line in Q2	23
Galfar wins RO 40.5 million Ras Al Hadd Airport contract	23
Muriya sales event to showcase Jebel Sifah and Salalah Beach properties	24
Qurum Commercial District development plan unveiled	24
Plan for greenfield airport in Musandam makes headway	25
Sohar airport phase 1 construction on track	26
Ruwi Master Plan's first four-star hotel complex to be ready by 2011	26
A great landmark in the making	27
UK companies eye Muscat, Salalah airport expansion projects	28
Slew of projects in BEC pipeline	28
Al Madina Real Estate signs pact for Poggenpohl Kitchens	29
1.18-billion-rial real estate transactions in 2009	29

GCC construction sector likely to see boom	30
Finance ministry okays deals worth 27.7m rials	30
Vibrant new city in Duqm on anvil	31
New projects worth RO 87.5 million	31
Deal signed for Salalah Beach Resort project	32
Construction of 3 recharge dams underway in Sharqiyah	32
16pc increase in budget for infrastructure development	33
Oman construction sector to hit RO1.6b	34
Pacts inked for 500 houses	35
Strong demand for office space in Oman	35
Project Majlis Oman on track	36
HM orders RO249m projects	36
Barr Al Jissah residences near completion	37
Dar Al Zain sells out all villas in Phase I	37
Construction of Batinah coastal road project to commence shortly	38
Zain Property launches RO 17m Seeb villa project	38
Indo-Italian JV wins contract to build deepwater bulk jetty in Sohar	39
\$100 million Ras al Hadd Airport contract set to be awarded in Q4	40
Construction of new Rotana hotel well under way in Salalah	41
Bidders line up for Duqm Airport infrastructure contract	41
Bids invited for Sohar Airport airfield infrastructure contract	42
Construction of Muscat Expressway gains momentum	43
Naseem A'Sabaa project 'will bring in more investments'	44
Freezone Sohar Phase 1 development flagged off	44
Pacts worth RO47m inked for projects	45
First private Omani tourism complex project announced	46
Cement demand grows as construction sector thrives	46
Muriya golf projects work underway	47
RO30m spent on airport expansion, says CEO	48
Muriya ties up with German contractor Lupp	48
Sohar Industrial Estate embarks on Phase 7 expansion	49
22 pacts on developing ports, airports signed	50
Thirteen firms eye retendered Shinas Port consultancy study	51
BankMuscat, NBO, Towell Piramal form new real estate company	52
Pacts for infrastructure development inked	52
Major road project to enhance Buraimi Governorate's infrastructure development	53
High growth potential for district cooling in Sultanate	54
Al Madina A'Zarqa explores hospital venture	54
Al Ansari in JV with Proscap for landscaping business	55
New Towell Building Materials store	56
Al Madina A'Zarqa's inks three deals with Anantara Hotels	56
Al Madina launches new project	57
Oriental Ready-Mix launches operations	57
Work on new Sohar Airport starts soon	58
Oman's cement sector outperforms GCC trends	59
Oman Cement to produce Pozzolana	59

Airport expansion work to start soon:Turkish-Greek venture	60
RO450m awarded for Muscat, Salalah airports	60
Tenders worth RO598m awarded	61
Majid Al Futtaim Group announces Sohar City Centre project	61
Muriya Home Design Showroom to open soon	62
Agreement signed for RO27-million Shaden Al Hail project	62
Al Madina A'Zarqa appoints golf course designer	63
\$750m steel plant to begin production in 2010	63
Construction of Al Madina A'Zarqa ongoing at full clip	64
Muriya ties up with Gulf Property World	65
Firms line up for work at Oman airports	65
The Wave bucks trend, to expand construction workforce	66
Construction of Qaryat Qurum project making good progress	66
Abraj Zumurud launches residential project	67
75-kilometre Batinah Expressway project flagged off	67
Mega infrastructure projects to sustain economy through '09	68
Construction award for Muscat airport development likely by mid-year	69
'Oman construction unaffected by crisis'	70
Muriya's projects on schedule	71
Phase 1 of Mirbat Beach project nearing completion	71
Mega-projects to fuel domestic cement demand in 2009	72
Al Habib celebrates 30 years of real estate success	73
Global financial crisis will not hit Salam-Yetti Project: Sama CEO	74
Agreement to develop resort in Duqum signed	75
Blue City ties up with Anantara Hotels & Resorts	75
AQPL unveils premium luxury township Qaryat Qurum	76
Work on \$325m Sohar aluminium rolling mill to start next year	76
Muriya brings leading international hotel brands to Oman	77
Bank Sohar to finance new Radisson SAS at Sohar	78

*Asian Beach
Games Venue*



*Al Madina A'Zarqa
or the Blue City*



*The Wave,
Muscat*

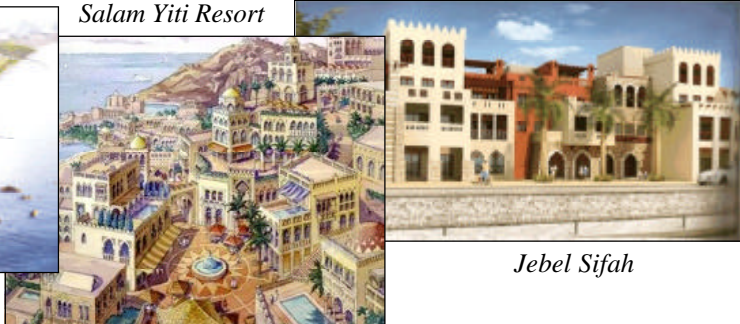
Major Development Projects in Oman

Name of Project	Owner/Developer	Cost (in million \$)	Status
Al Amerat and Quriyat highway upgrade	Muscat Municipality	180	Execution
Al Batinah Expressway	Ministry of Transport & Comm.	250	Design
Al Inshirah Boutique Hotel in Muscat	Oman Tourism Dev't Co. (OTDC)	50	Study
Al Madina A'Zarqa (Blue City) - Phase 1	Al Sawadi Investment & Tourism	1900	Execution
Al Musanaah air base expansion	Ministry of Defence	70	Execution
BarAl Jissah Residential Complex & Market	Zubair Corporation	50	Execution
Barka Resort	Alargan Int'l Real Estate Co.	1,100	Planned
Buraimi University College Building	Buraimi University College	31-100	Design
Concert Theatre Muscat Project	Ministry of Palace Affairs	250	Execution
Crowne Plaze Duqm Resort	OTDC	300	Bidding
Dar Al Zain - Phase I	Zain Property Development	44	Execution
Dubai Resort & Spa - Shinas Omani Resort	Sama Dubai	1900	Design
Salam Yiti Resort - marine works package	Sama Dubai	50	Bidding
Duqm Beach Hotel	OTDC	300	Design
Duqm Port - marine works	Ministry of National Economy	490	Execution
Duqm Port - ship repair yard and dry dock	Ministry of National Economy	660	Execution
Eco-Resort at Ras Al-Hadd	Ministry of Tourism	300	Design
Extension of Palace at Nizwa	Ministry of Royal Court Affairs	31-100	Execution
Green Acres in Muscat	Radiance International	500	Planned
Hasik-Shuwaymiyah Highway	MOTC	178	Execution
Hayoot Beach Hotel Resort - Phase 1	Ministry of Tourism	60	Bidding
Hotels Development in Muscat - Hotel 1	OTDC	650	Study
Hotels Development in Muscat - Hotel 2	OTDC	650	Study
Hotels Development in Muscat - Hotel 3	OTDC	650	Study
Hotels Development in Muscat - Hotel 4	OTDC	650	Study
InterContinental Muscat hotel expansion	OTDC	800	Design
International Maritime College Oman	Ministry of Manpower	31-100	Bidding



Al Madina A'Zarqa or the Blue City

Salam Yiti Resort



Jebel Sifah

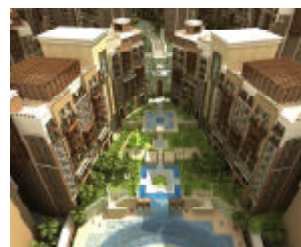
Name of Project	Owner/Developer	Cost (in million \$)	Status
Jabal Al Akhdar Hotel	OTDC	150	Planned
Khasab Family Resort in Musandam	Majan Gulf Properties	780	Design
Majan Logistic City in Sohar	Majan Gulf Properties	200	Design
Mirbat Beach Project	Dhofar Tourism Company	30000	Execution
Muscat Hills - golf course - villas	Ministry of Tourism	110	Execution
Muscat Southern Expressway	MOTC	350	Execution
Naseem A'Sabaa	Amouage Hotels & BRDB	2,500	Planned
New Sohar Airport - passenger terminal	MOTC	300	Bidding
Omagine Project	Alfa International Holdings Corp.	1500	Execution
Oman Convention and Exhibition Centre	OTDC	500	Planned
Omantel Headquarters	Omantel	31-100	Bidding
Port Sultan Qaboos expansion in Muscat	Port Services Corporation	400	Study
Qaryat Qurum Luxury Township	Al Qurum Properties LLC	1000	Execution
Residential Township in Sohar	Saud Bahwan Group	120	Execution
Salalah Complex	United Real Estate Company	63	Design
Salalah Crowne Plaza redevelopment	Ministry of Tourism	31-100	Design
Salalah domestic roads	MOTC	167	Execution
Salalah Port expansion - dredging/reclamation	MOTC	200	Execution
Salalah-Thumrait Road Dualisation Project	MOTC	130	Execution
Seeb Airport / Salalah Airport Development	MOTC	600	Bidding
Sohar Airport	MOTC	251-500	Design
Sohar Aluminium Smelter - residential units	Sohar Aluminium Company	200	Execution
Sohar Buraimi Road Expansion	MOTC	114	Execution
Sohar Health City	World Health Organisation	300	Planned
Sohar Port and Industrial Area - Phase 3	MOTC	243	Execution
Sohar residential and commercial project	Majan Gulf Properties	172	Execution
Southern Expressway road project	Muscat Municipality	342	Execution
The Wave, Muscat - infrastructure	The Wave, Muscat	100	Execution
The Wave - Phase 1- villas and townhouses	The Wave, Muscat	160	Execution
The Wave - Phase 1- marina	The Wave, Muscat	100	Execution
The Wave, Muscat - Phase 2	The Wave, Muscat	1000	Design
The Wave - Phase 2 - Fairmont Hotel	The Wave, Muscat	300	Planned
The Wave - Phase 2 - Kempinski Hotel	The Wave, Muscat	300	Planned
Tilal Al Khuwair - mixed use development	Al Madina Real Estate	1000	Execution



Tilal Al Khuwair



The Wave, Muscat



Qaryat Qurum

Al Mazyounah Free Zone has bright investment prospects: developer

Source: *Oman Observer* - June 22, 2010

Investor interest in the newly-launched Al Mazyounah Free Zone remains strong, according to Kuwait's Golden Hala Company, which has been awarded the Omani government's mandate to develop and lease the facility straddling the Sultanate's border with Yemen in Dhofar Governorate.

Golden Hala has set up an office in Dhofar to field queries from prospective investors, as well as process firm investment offers.

"We have been receiving a lot of enquiries from around the Gulf and Middle East region, as well as Oman and Yemen. People have been contacting us for specific information on investment opportunities, facilities available at the free zone, and incentives offered to investors. We are encouraged by this vigorous response," the representative told the Observer.

In April, Golden Hala signed an agreement with the Omani government for the development of infrastructure at Al Mazyounah Free Zone.

The company has pledged to invest an estimated RO 680 million over the

next five years in providing all necessary facilities at the free zone.

As developer and landlord, Golden Hala will invest in a road network, office and administrative buildings, power and water utilities, drainage services, car parks, clinics, restaurants, warehouses and showrooms, commercial centres, and other amenities.

"At present, we are focusing on developing the infrastructure for the first phase of the three-million-square-metre free zone area.

Work on this phase is due for completion within six months," the representative said.

Golden Hala sees significant potential for investment in the trade and storage of such goods as vehicles, automotive spares, fruits and vegetables, livestock, fresh and frozen meat, machinery and equipment, and other merchandise.

There are also opportunities for investment in light industries, woodworking and carpentry plants, foodstuff processing units, readymade garments manufacturing, plastics conversion, and maintenance workshops of all kinds. Investment pros-

pects in the services sectors relate to transport and distribution services, warehousing and logistics, catering, and documentation services, among other areas.

Golden Hala has already begun an intensive marketing campaign targeting the Gulf and Middle East countries, the executive explained. "We recently took part in an exhibition in Abu Dhabi, which elicited many enquiries. Soon, we will have a show in Syria, followed by a presence in China in September. Of course, Kuwait and Qatar, besides Dubai, will be covered as well. The response has been very encouraging thus far."

Golden Hala is part of the well-diversified Jawaharat al Fanar (JF) Group, a prominent Kuwait based business house with interests in the development and management of tourism, real estate, industrial and commercial projects.

Significantly, Al Mazyounah Free Zone is the third free zone scheme to be established in the Sultanate, after the Salalah Free Zone in Dhofar Governorate, and Freezone Sohar on the Batinah coast.

Royal orders to build causeway linking Masirah with mainland

Source: *Oman Observer* - June 22, 2010

His Majesty Sultan Qaboos has issued Royal orders to conduct a study to construct a causeway linking the island of Masirah with the mainland.

The Royal directives were announced here yesterday by Ahmed bin Abdunabi Macki, Minister of National Economy (MONE) and

Deputy Chairman of the Financial Affairs and Energy Resources Council.

In a statement to Oman News Agency (ONA), Macki said that His Majesty the Sultan has entrusted the Ministry of National Economy with the task of preparing the required study and selecting the best

international house of expertise in preparing such studies and engineering designs according to which the suitable path of the causeway will be selected. Macki pointed out that the Ministry of National Economy will do its best to implement the orders of His Majesty the Sultan as soon as possible. — Oman News Agency (ONA)

Strabag Oman wins Sohar Airport contract

Source: *Oman Observer* - June 15, 2010

Well-known construction firm Strabag Oman has been awarded a contract to execute the airfield infrastructure package of the Sohar Airport project at a cost of RO 27.6 million.

The contract represents a key phase in the development of a greenfield airport at Sohar, which along with plans for a major expressway and rail network, will underpin the port's city's eventual transformation into a major industrial and economic hub on the Batinah coast.

Strabag led a field of eight bidders in securing the keen-contested contract. Also in the fray were Gamuda-Berhad (Qatar Branch), Galfar, CCC, the joint venture of Alarko Contracting and Lagan, L&T Oman, Desertline Projects, and the joint venture of Hanjin Heavy Industries and Yooshin Engineering.

Significantly, Strabag is also undertaking the first phase package of the

Sohar Airport project, which it was awarded in May last year. The contract, valued at RO 37.5 million, covers site preparation works and the construction of access roads and car park facilities, among other amenities.

The second phase package, awarded recently by the Tender Board, entails the construction of airfield infrastructure, including a 4,000-metre-long runway with turning loops at the ends. In addition, a full length parallel taxiway with high speed exits will be provided, along with terminal building and cargo aprons. Navigation aids, and fuel and fire fighting systems will be installed as well.

In the third phase, which is likely to be tendered out later this year, the selected contractor will build a passenger terminal building designed for a capacity of around 500,000 passengers initially, as well as around 100,000 tonnes of air cargo

per year. Also included in this package is an integrated air traffic control tower, and buildings for catering, and air rescue and fire fighting services.

As with all new airport projects, the Ministry of Transport and Communications is overseeing the development of a new airport at Sohar. The facility is coming up at a site located a short distance from Falaj al Qabail roundabout, and about 10 kilometers from the downtown centre of Sohar City. Its relative proximity to the major commercial, industrial and economic centres of Sohar, notably the Port of Sohar, Sohar Special Economic Zone and the industrial estate, is seen as advantageous.

When operational in 2013, the domestic airport will also serve as an alternative to Muscat Int'l Airport in the event of any contingency. The facility will also support the growth of cargo, courier and passenger traffic across north Oman.

31 firms seek to pre-qualify for National Railway project management contract

Source: *Oman Observer* - June 15, 2010

Thirty-one international and local firms have registered their intent to bid for a contract to provide project management consultancy services linked to the development of a National Railway system in the Sultanate.

Yesterday was the deadline for the submission of offers to prequalify for the prestigious tender. The successful bidder stands to win a seven-year contract as Project Manager of the multi-billion dollar scheme, with the likelihood of a more substantive role in the future development of the project. Underscoring the robust interna-

tional interest in the project, several leading firms are in the fray for the project management contract. The line-up includes Bechtel, Worley Parsons Oman, Vissing, Parsons, Mott MacDonald, Systra, Parsons Brinckerhoff, Arup Gulf, EGIS Rail, Korea Rail, PW&P, Sering International, Poyry Infra, and China No 4 Metallurgical, among others. They are among more than 100 firms that collected prequalification documents when the competitive process began on April 13.

Significantly, the majority of the bidding parties are also vying for a contract to provide design and su-

pervision consultancy services for the railway network.

A May 31 deadline for companies to register their interest in the contract attracted a total of 33 prequalification offers.

The Project Manager's main brief is to oversee the day-to-day management of the railway project under the direct supervision of the Supreme Committee for Town Planning (SCTP), the government body tasked with implementing the ambitious scheme.

The selected bidder will be respon-

sible for supervising the different project phases and systemic issues related to the planning and engineering of the railway system, and well as the design, construction and commissioning of the network. The Oman National Railway Network will be developed in four distinct packages. The first package covers a 280km length from Muscat to the Port of Sohar.

A 150km branch line extending from Sohar to Al Ain will be laid in yet another package. In the third phase, the Muscat-Sohar line is proposed to be extended to Khatmat Malaha on Oman's border with the UAE. Finally, in the fourth phase, the network will be extended 520km from Muscat to the Port of Duqm via Bid Bid, Sinaw and Mahawt.

A key part of the Project Manager's brief is to conceive and develop a suitable structure for a Railway

Organisation for Oman.

In addition, the consultant will draw up a strategy for the operation and maintenance of the rail system, either by developing an organisation to undertake this responsibility or through the award of a concession or contract.

Besides, the procurement and commissioning of all rolling stock and machinery for the rail project will be overseen by the project manager. In choosing a suitable project manager, authorities will weigh a bidder's experience in, among other things, the design of the complete panoply of railway infrastructure related to both freight and high-speed electric passenger trains.

Due consideration will also be accorded to the bidding party's experience in managing rail projects, as

well as large-scale schemes in the Middle East.

Oman's National Railway network will comprise a double track, standard-gauge (1,435mm) system with provision made for the introduction of high-speed trains, with speeds of up to 350 kilometres per hour (kph), in the future.

Initially, however, passenger trains will be operated at speeds of 200 kph, while freight trains will run at speeds ranging from 80 to 120 kph. The trains will run on electrical power, supplied through overhead electrical infrastructure that will be built along the length of the network.

A contract for project management consultancy services is expected to be awarded by the first quarter of next year.

Sohar Port phase II work tendered

Source: *Oman Observer* - June 15, 2010

The Tender Board yesterday awarded projects worth RO 60,497,118 at its 17th meeting of the year 2010 held under the chairmanship of Shaikh Nasser bin Mohammed al Hashar, Adviser at the Diwan of the Royal Court and Deputy Chairman of the Tender Board.

The projects included the construction of Sohar Port (phase II) in Al Batinah Region (RO 27,604,855); construction of 132/33 kv power plant in the Wilayat of Qurayat and the installation of electricity lines in Muscat Governorate (RO 10,600,868; operation and maintenance of ferry boats (RO 5,121,589); provision of support services for management of the subscribers services, billing and money collection system for Oman Telecommunication Company (RO 1,393,200); supply of computers and accessories for the Ministry of Education schools for 2010/2011

(RO 1,245,450); supply of consultancy services for the implementation of the 3G network for Oman Telecommunications Company (RO 907,464); design and implementation of Um al Jamamil and Qatitrah road in the Wilayat of Liwa in Al Batinah Region (RO 828,176); construction of Abdullah bin Anas School for Basic Education (8 classrooms) in Al Ghaizeen in the Wilayat of Al Khaborah in Al Batinah Region (RO 769,960); construction of vet lab in Sa'al in the Wilayat of Bidbid in the Al Dakhiliyah Region (RO 649,433); additional works for the construction of the Ministry of Education building on Airport Heights in the Wilayat of Bowshar (RO 643,041).

The projects included leasing a building for the Secretariat-General for Town Planning (RO 480,000 per year); provision of maintenance services for SUN and DELL equipment used in billing and management of

Internet service for Oman Telecommunications Company (RO 456,227); additional works for the operation and maintenance of intake and offtake of cooling water in Sohar Industrial Port area (RO 258,072); design and construction of Hail Al Hareem/Ghubrah Al Tam road and Al Wabriya road in the Wilayat of Dema and Tayyin in the Al Sharqiah Region (RO 242,000); additional works for the provision of consultancy services for the design and supervision on the water distribution network in the Wilayat of Samayil (RO 162,400); additional works for the design and supervision on the implementation of additional tanks project in Al Wadi al Kabir, Al Qurum and the associated works (RO 214,043); additional works for the provision of consultancy services for the feasibility study, preparing the detailed design for protection dams in Wadi Samayil and raising the level of Wadi Al Khoudh dam from recharge

dam to protection dam (RO 144,520); additional works for the provision of consultancy services for the design and supervision for the rehabilitation of bridges and supportive walls (RO 109,980).

The board also approved the pur-

chase of excess power from Sohar Aluminum by RO 12 for each mega watt/hour and by RO 5 during the test periods.

The board also opened bids for a number of projects including one for managing the implementation of the

railway project in the Sultanate. The board also approved variation orders on the ongoing projects, discussed topics related to projects referred by ministries and different government departments and took appropriate decisions in their regard. — ONA

MSE, Voltas join forces to tap Oman's construction sector

Source: *Oman Observer* - June 15, 2010

Mustafa Sultan Enterprises yesterday announced their joint venture with India's Voltas Ltd, a leading air-conditioning and engineering services company listed in the Mumbai Stock Exchange, of a joint venture aiming the Sultanate's fast growing building and construction sector.

Named Voltas Oman LLC, the new company will be targeting the execution of electro mechanical projects in the Sultanate in the areas of Mechanical, Electrical and Public Health (MEP).

"It gives us pleasure in announcing

Voltas Oman, our joint venture with Voltas that sees the union of two leading corporate entities who are leaders in their respective markets", Akber Mustafa Sultan, Managing Director, Mustafa Sultan Enterprises said.

"Both of us share the same business values and are committed to delivering excellence in project management, design, engineering, safety, quality, and business efficiency to clients through the new JV", he told the media.

"We are formally entering the Oman market to be a long-term player in

providing turnkey solutions and world-class products and services. These will cater to the growing opportunities in electro-mechanical construction arising from the many prestigious building and infrastructural projects in the country", Shaukat Ali Mir, Executive Vice-President and COO, International Operations Business Group, Voltas Ltd, said.

Minoo Saher, Group CEO, MSE, Chandra Dhar Pant, Regional Director for MENA region 2, Voltas, Dilip Sharma, Manager, Voltas Oman LLC were also present at the media briefing.

The Wave says 60pc work on waterways done

Source: *Oman Observer* - June 2, 2010

The Wave, Muscat has announced that more than 60 per cent of construction on its internal waterways is nearing completion and progressing.

This is in line with the residential occupations in the initial construction sector, and this phase is expected to be complete by end of 2010. The waterways, which weave across five km of the residential sectors in a curve fashion with widths up to 30 metres, have bridges connecting the waterfront properties throughout the development and are already home for fish and other

sea life.

As a prime architectural feature that blends with unique marina views, the waterways are an exquisite lifestyle component for residents and visitors to live and relax by the water, bringing together the multitude of features available at The Wave, Muscat.

The waterways are envisaged to enhance a genuine sense of community in line with the development's core objectives to form a truly integrated, harmonious and environmentally sustainable community.

With construction of the seawater pump stations progressing, the master planner's objective is to complete the internal waterways in several phases with the first sections near the main residential entrance already in place.

The Wave, Muscat has also taken proactive steps in its efforts to conserve the environment by preventing harmful algae and red tide growth, through utilising the latest circulation and water monitoring technology to guarantee that the water is changed every 72 hours to keep it cool, clean and clear.

New projects signal tourism boom

Source: *Oman Observer* - June 1, 2010

A four-star hotel coming up in Al Khuwair is among the many properties currently under way in Oman which signal the country's booming tourism business. S A Salman Rizvi, general manager of an upcoming property named 'The Platinum' in Al Khuwair, said: "Our new four-star hotel, set to open soon, is yet another sign of Oman's booming tourism sector."

Even as the construction is nearing completion, The Platinum is receiving a very good response from prospective customers "largely because tourism is booming in the Sultanate."

The Sultanate's tourism sector continues to flourish in the face of international economic meltdown, Salman added.

Experts say other projects currently under way are a 5-star hotel in Al Buraimi, Jabal Saifa Resort, Salalah Beach Resort, The Sport City at Al Musannah, Hayout Resort in Khasab, Haraf Resort in Khasab, a tourist camp in Nakhal, a tourist restaurant in Darsait, and the newly opened four-star Butterfly Hotel Suites in Sohar, to name only a few.

Around nine new hotels are coming up in the Batinah Region in view of the booming tourism business. Some of the projects in the pipeline include Al Aiga Hotel in the Wilayat of Sur, Firaq Hotel and Restaurant in Wilayat of Nizwa, a Convention and Exhibition Centre in Bausher, an Eco-tourism Resort in Ras Al Hadd, Abu al Nakheel Resort in Barka, in addition to many other projects in different parts of the country.

European and regional Arab tourists have appreciated the fusion of rich Islamic heritage and ultra modern luxuries in The Platinum, which is only 10 km from the Muscat International Airport and is mere five minutes drive to the magnificent Sultan Qaboos Grand Mosque, government ministries, embassies and commercial business district.

Unlike most hotels, The Platinum boasts of separate facilities for men and women such as gymnasiums, swimming pool, steam bath and jacuzzi, all situated on the roof top overlooking the city.

The Platinum has 85 rooms and suites, esthetically designed, spacious and luxuriously furnished to delight the discerning taste of GCC, Asian and European tourists.

Muriya to showcase sample Jebel Sifah apartments soon

Source: *Times of Oman* - May 22, 2010

Jebel Sifah, the integrated tourism complex being developed by the Muriya Tourism Development, has started to take shape, providing a glimpse of what the destination will look like.

Spread over an area of 6.2 million square metres and surrounded by turquoise waters and the Hajjar mountain range, the destination offers a choice of the view you would want to enjoy.

Construction work is in progress at different stages in all the 18 apartment blocks, while finishing work is nearing completion on five blocks.

A mock-up apartment is being completed, with the interiors done up, to

give a realistic insight on design and space. The mock-up apartment will be open for public in a couple of days.

The 63 villas, part of the initial release will be designed in eight different styles of which 41 are nearing completion. In the first quarter of 2011, phase I customers will start receiving the handover of their villas and apartments.

Bahaa Kareem, marketing director of Muriya Tourism Development said, "all the apartments and over 70 per cent of the villas have been sold out. The owners are 70 per cent Omanis and the remaining 30 per cent constitute expatriates mainly from France, Germany and Swit-

zerland."

With the construction work in full swing, Muriya will soon announce the release of new units and schemes. Selective hotel-managed new apartments and villas will offer a unique rent back guarantee programme and will be operated by top brand hotels, a first of its kind associated with freehold properties in Oman. The new villas to be released will have new convenient sizes. An on-site sales office will be set up soon, to further enhance the service to the customers, including site visits.

Muriya has also set up a home design department, and are providing owners furniture packages, interior

finishing, audio-visual packages, landscaping and upgrade options.

The roads leading to Sifah will be widened for safe access to the destination. The internal roads within the project have already been laid out, providing clear access to the properties and the marina. Final re-vestment for internal roads will be finished by beginning of next year.

The central hub of 'Jebel Sifah' is the marina that will be bustling with an array of activities surrounded by lively restaurants, cafes and apartment blocks with narrow, shaded, cobbled roads when completed. Even so, a lot of thought and attention has gone into the planning to ensure that the feel and look of the place remains open and uncluttered, at the same time aesthetically pleasing.

The marina was flooded in November 2009 and will be soon ready for

berthing boats. High quality weather-resistant pontoons have been put in place that will provide space for up to 150 boats.

A promenade will weave through the lively marina town that will also accommodate a marina boutique hotel having 55 rooms. Nearing completion, the marina hotel will open in the first quarter of 2011 and will be managed by Muriya Hotel Division.

Muriya has secured a portfolio of the most reputable and prestigious hospitality brands for Jebel Sifah that include Four Seasons Hotels and Resorts, Banyan Tree Hotels and Resorts and Angsana Resorts and Spas, Missoni Hotel and the fourth hotel will be operated by a famous French hotel company.

In partnership with the iconic fashion house of the same name, Hotel Missoni will be stylish, intimate,

contemporary and eclectic in design.

The property with 250-room keys will be designed by Michael Graves and Rosita Missoni will oversee the interiors. Construction for the Missoni Hotel is scheduled to start in 2010.

Muriya was established in 2006 when Egypt's Orascom Hotels and Development (with 70 per cent stake) and Omani government-owned Omran (with 30 per cent stake) formed a joint venture.

Since then, Muriya has announced four projects across the beautiful locales of Oman. Work is ongoing on two projects that are integrated tourism complexes (ITCs) offering freehold properties — 'Jebel Sifah' and 'Salalah Beach'. In addition, Muriya will also be developing a city complex in Muscat and a boutique hotel on 'As Sodah Island'.

Mega tourism projects in Dhofar

Source: *Oman Observer* - May 19, 2010

A number of mega tourism projects are under way in the Governorate of Dhofar. These include the Shatti Salalah Resort (first phase) which is undertaken by Muriya Tourism Development Company. The resort comprises of three hotels, a marina, golf course, a shopping mall, villas and hotel apartments. Muriya Tourism Development Company is also implementing Jazirat As'Sowdah Resort in Al Halaniyat Islands which includes a specialised environmental tourism resort comprising of a total of 32 hotel units.

The tourism shopping mall, 'World of Salalah', is being constructed by Kuwait's Real Estate Consolidated company. It includes a tourism complex which consists of restaurants, a world-class central market Carrefour, cinemas, snooker and bowling halls,

amusement e-games and hotel apartments. This was announced in a statement to Oman News Agency here yesterday by Khalid bin Musalam al Rowas, Director-General of Tourism in Dhofar.

With regard to other future projects, Al Rowas said that the Consolidated Real Estate Company of Kuwait is currently studying the construction of an integrated tourism resort in Niyabat al Shuwaimiyah. Oman International Development and Investment Company is currently studying the construction of a tourism resort in Aftailquot district, he said. A number of projects are still under review, including construction of an environmental resort in the Wilayat of Mirbat.

An MoU was signed between Wahat al Yasmin Trading and Con-

tracting and Alila International Hotels, in addition to other projects which include development of Al Mughsayl district and 'Al Fazayih District', he explained. It's worth noting that the Tourism Ministry has implemented a number of projects in the Dhofar Governorate which included 'Al Morouj Theatre' that accommodates about 6,000 spectators, the 'Youth Housing' project in Sahalnawt district in Salalah, developing 'Al Murnaif Cave' in Al Maghsayl, building a café for visitors, paving the 12-km-long 'Taiq Cave-Jabal Samhan road, besides undertaking the development of some tourism attractions (first phase) such as the viewing site at Iteen Cave, Hamrair Pass, Jarziz and Sahanawt springs.

The ministry has also financed a number of projects in the Dhofar

Governorate, such as, the 8-km-long Iteen dual carriageway under the supervision of the Office of the Minister of State and Governor of Dhofar, in addition to construction of 15 water closets (WCs) at different tour-

ism sites, being undertaken by Dhofar Municipality. In conjunction with Dhofar Municipality, the ministry has also contributed towards lighting of Al Mughsail beach, financing some 26-km-long roads at

springs and wadis, such as, Wadi Darbat, Wadi Athum, Tubruq and Jarziz Springs and Wadi Sha'boun under the supervision of the Regional Municipalities and Water Resources Ministry.

New roads to give Dhofar a facelift

Source: *Times of Oman* - May 12, 2010

Work of the 75-km Salalah-Thumrait dual carriageway is expected to be completed in February 2011, said Eng. Abubakr bin Salim Al Dheeb, director-general of road and land transport in the Governorate of Dhofar, yesterday.

"The RO47.75 million project includes construction of five terrestrial tunnels for passage of vehicles at the main crossings, 11 tunnels for animal passage whereas another tunnel is for pedestrians. The project also includes construction of a roundabout at Marmul road crossing besides a 10km service road," he said.

"Work also includes improving, paving and lighting the dual carriageway at Al Yasmin 1 hill. The 7.5-metre wide road starts at Northern

Thumrait and ends at Hamrair Pass.

"It has a 2.5-metre wide exterior shoulder and a 1.5-metre wide interior shoulder in addition to the lighting of the dual carriageway, relevant traffic safety facilities, road side fencing and water discharge facilities," Al Dheeb added.

The government attaches great importance to transport and road projects which link various parts of the Sultanate. Roads construction, levelling, paving and lighting are ongoing in various parts of the Sultanate, he said.

Al Dheeb also spoke about the 85km Hasik-Al Shuwaimiyah road currently under construction, which he said, starts from the niyabat of Hasik in the wilayat of Sadah and

ends in the niyabat of Al Shuwaimiyah in the wilayat of Shaleem and Al Halaniyat Islands. The RO77 million project is expected to be completed in March 2011.

"Paving the 14km Tiwi Attair-Hasheer road in the wilayat of Mirbat is also underway. The RO7.5 million project will include construction of a 6 metre cross section and asphalted shoulders. The road will be opened before the start of Khareef season this year. The mountainous roads are important in terms of serving citizens and easing traffic," he said.

He also referred to the rehabilitation of Arjut-Sarfait road which links the wilayat of Dhalkut to Salalah. The works include rehabilitation of 20km of the road at a cost of RO23 million.

National Museum to be set up

Source: *Oman Observer* - May 2, 2010

The Ministry of Finance has approved four agreements and one variation order for development projects worth RO 19,925,000.

The agreements approved include the setting up of a National Museum in Hillat al Niaam in Muscat Governorate to the tune of RO 11,950,000, the designing and construction of internal roads and car parks in the Wilayat of Saham (RO 3,550,000), the purchasing of a residence for the chairman of the Omani mission in Vienna (RO 2,436,000)

and the construction of 24 housing units in the Wilayat of Al Sinainah (RO 617,000).

The ministry also approved variation order No 4 for Al Duqm Port project at a cost of RO 756,000. The National Museum is no ordinary cultural undertaking. It's a national monument deserving of a place alongside some of the great 'cultural jewels' of Muscat currently either under construction or on the anvil. Notable among these 'gems' is the magnificent Royal Opera House

at Qurum, the imposing Majlis Oman building at Al Bustan, and the proposed Oman Convention and Exhibition Centre at Airport Heights.

Construction work on the imposing edifice of the National Museum is set to begin on a site located within a stone's throw from an equally splendid landmark -- Al Alam Palace in Old Muscat. Leading construction firm Carillion Alawi LLC was awarded a contract to build the facility at a signing ceremony held at the Ministry last month.

Deals for infrastructure and utilities projects in Muscat

Source: *Oman Observer* - April 27, 2010

As part of the government's initiatives undertaken to complete infrastructure and utilities in Muscat Governorate, Sayyid Ali bin Hamoud al Busaidy, Minister of the Diwan of the Royal Court, signed a number of service agreements worth RO 87.8m agreements yesterday. The first agreement with Omani Consolidated Contractors (OCC) includes a design for implement the third lane of the road from Al Mawaleh crossing to Seeb Palace roundabout. The agreement represents the first phase of the project.

The second agreement was signed with Desert Line Projects for the implementation of the second phase of the roads from Seeb Palace roundabout to Bait al Baraka roundabout. The two stages of the projects include adding a third lane on both directions of the road, diverting four Irish crossings to bridges for wadis, construction of culverts at wadis crossing, concrete protector at the middle island, of a bridge on the public road connected to the road leading to Wadi Al Arash road and two pedestrian bridges; the first one to link Al Hail North to Al Hail South and the second one links Maabela North to Maabela South.

The cost of the two agreements

stands at RO 45,595,708. The third agreements with Larsen & Toubro (Oman) LLC, worth RO 6,716,990, includes construction works for the Ghala-Al Ansab dual carriageway project (second phase). It involves the construction of an interchange and side roads connected to it with two roundabouts.

Deals signed for implementation of infrastructure projects, utilities From page on the sides of the crossroads to provide access and exists from Al Ansab (third and fourth) and Ghala village from Ghala-Ansab dual-carriage road, as well as the construction of a flyover on wadi Al Ansab (100 square metres), completing the dual-carriageway (3.3-km-long) and the construction of a roundabout to link the road with Al Ansab (second phase).

The fourth agreement, worth RO 18,675,084, signed with Federici Strling Batco, provides for the construction of a multi-level interchange and Wadi Adai roundabout. The agreement includes converting the roundabout to a crossroads and the construction of two new bridges. The first one to ensure smooth traffic for vehicles coming from Wadi Adai towards Qurum. The second bridge is parallel to the current flyover to ensure free and

smooth traffic for vehicles coming from Ruwi to Wadi Adai without the need to pass the cross roads.

The project aims to solve the problem of traffic jams on Wadi Adai roundabout and its side roads, thereby increasing road safety. The fifth agreement, worth RO 754,092, signed with Oman United Engineering Services, includes measures to connect the quarters and residential lay-outs in Maabela South to a road network (16-km long), construction of box and tube culverts for rain water discharge, side protector and Irish crossing.

The sixth agreement, worth RO 1,286,620, signed with Khalid bin Ahmed al Shanfari & Sons, includes the maintenance of roads at Ghala Industrial Estate (13-km long) by placing a new base layer, in addition to a new asphalt layer together with one metre-wide asphalt road shoulders. The seventh agreement, worth RO 14,817,440, signed with Larsen & Toubro (Oman) LLC provides for the construction of the third phase of the Oman Botanic and Trees Garden of the Diwan of the Royal Court to complete the infrastructure and services, as well as the electromechanical services. The total cost of the aforesaid projects stood at RO 87,845,894.

Infrastructure gets RO1b

Source: *Times of Oman* - April 26, 2010

The government plans to spend RO1 billion on infrastructure projects this year as the Sultanate's economy is expected to grow six per cent this year, Minister of National Economy and deputy chairman of the Financial Affairs and Energy Resources Council, Ahmed bin Adulnabi Macki said yesterday.

The effect of the global financial cri-

sis has had a limited effect on non-Opec oil exporter's economy, which grew 3.7 per cent while other economies declined, he said.

Macki, who was recently awarded an honorary doctorate in economics from Seoul National University of Technology in South Korea, was speaking at the Oman Economic Forum's second edition. Later, he

was also honoured with a lifetime achievement award at the forum's award ceremony as a recognition of his leadership and achievements in the development of Oman's economy, the forum organisers said in a statement.

"Our national economy's resilience to the crisis has everything to do with the fact that Oman boasts an

economic community that supports diversification and one which encourages local and international investment,” Macki said.

The first day of the two-day forum

also stressed on the government’s five-year economic plan to transform industries with minimal public sector involvement, thereby enabling the private sector to move forward.

The government is developing a number of sectors such as manufacturing, tourism and an eight per cent growth in the tourism sector is an encouraging sign, he said.

Oman-German JV set to announce entry into real estate sector

Source: *Oman Observer* - April 25, 2010

Baader Hotels & Resorts, a company backed by leading German investment bank Baader Bank, is set to shortly announce its arrival in the Sultanate with the planned launch of a new upscale residential housing development in Muscat. Baader Hotels & Resorts has been created in association with local Omani business partners to develop real estate and integrated tourism projects in Oman.

The newly formed company is jointly owned by Uto Baader, Chairman of Baader Bank and Siegfried Lingel, owner of German Merkur Bank headquartered in Munich as well as Silver Circle Overseas LLC, the company’s local partner. Lingel is also the Consul General of Mozambique in Germany whilst Uto Baader also assumes the position of Vice-Chairman of the Board of Directors of Gulf Baader Capital Market SAOC, part of a listed investment company here in Oman.

All parties bring to the region a wealth of expertise and experience in the development of successful real

estate developments in primary locations across Europe. Baader Hotels & Resorts Deputy Chairman, Baader said: “We are delighted to be launching our new company in Oman at what is a very exciting time for the Real Estate sector with excellent prospects and opportunities for both residential developments and integrated tourism projects.

Our project is unique and strongly supports the objectives set by Oman’s leadership to provide decent housing to its citizens.” “Oman offers some of the best opportunities in the GCC at this time and we are looking forward to announcing our first major development within the next few weeks — a residential development here in Muscat.” “Our company has very strong financial foundations with the backing and support of Baader Bank, one of Europe’s most successful and largest stock broking banks that has operated for over 25 years”

Their entry into the Omani real estate market comes following advice from Savills Oman advising inves-

tors to purchase property in Oman now before it is too late. Baader Hotels & Resorts was established following the initiative of Uto Baader, Chairman and founder of Baader Bank Munich and was specifically created to develop tourism products and locations in Oman. Baader Bank Aktiengesellschaft is among the leading German investment banks, and is headquartered in Munich with a net worth of \$235 million.

The Bank was established in 1983, employs more than 350 people and is a member of seven German stock exchanges. It is also a member of Paris, Zurich, Amsterdam and Vienna stock exchanges as well as Virt-X, the trading platform for leading European companies in London and Eurex, the derivatives exchange in Germany. Baader Bank Aktiengesellschaft also recently became a member of the London Stock Exchange. Baader Bank has extensive experience of investing in some of the most high profile projects worldwide and will draw on this strength to develop a number of high end projects from around the world.

Oman-Antwerp Port pact set to develop Duqm Port into mega-hub

Source: *Oman Observer* - April 25, 2010

Oman’s success in snagging one of the world’s biggest ports as a partner in the management of Duqm port is a major shot in the arm

for the government’s efforts to develop a world-scale industrial and maritime hub on the Wusta coast, industry experts say. Belgium’s Port

of Antwerp, Europe’s second-largest port, signed the partnership agreement with Oman’s government last month, providing for the estab-

lishment of a joint venture company to manage the Port of Duqm.

The JV is a 50:50 partnership of the Government of the Sultanate of Oman and Consortium Antwerp Port (CAP) of Belgium. The latter itself is a partnership of Antwerp Port Consultancy, which is a 100 per cent subsidiary of the Port of Antwerp, and Rent-a-Port, a specialised Belgian-based port services consultant and investor. Rent-a-Port specialises in, among other things, the engineering and finance of new ports, strategic advice on layout and operations, management of ports and industrial estates, organisation of marine freight of bulk materials, assisting in processing and transshipment of minerals in port areas, and maintenance of shipping channels.

The company is credited with supporting the development of major ports and shore-based engineering facilities in a number of countries around the world. But it is the presence of the Port of Antwerp on the JV that augurs well for Duqm's development into a mega-hub for industry, petrochemicals and ship repairs, experts say. Ranked as the seventh largest in the world and the second largest in Europe after

Rotterdam, the Port of Antwerp handled a colossal 158 million tonnes of trade during 2009.

The complex handles in excess of 15,000 ocean-going vessels and over 64,000 inland crafts every year. Wholly owned by the Belgian City of Antwerp, the multipurpose port is engaged in cargo handling, logistics, and industrial zone development. More than 140,000 people make a living directly or indirectly from the Port of Antwerp. According to experts, the newly established management company will serve as Port Authority for Duqm, similar to the landlord model embraced by the government for the management of the Port of Sohar. The new management company's mandate is to coordinate, manage and grow the business of Duqm Port.

A consortium of contractors is already developing the marine infrastructure for Duqm Port. Separately, contractors are also busy at work on a ship repair yard within the facility, due to come on stream by the year-end. Total investment in Duqm port, which is due to be operational by 2012, is projected at \$1.8 billion. As port authority, the management company will also oversee an industrial zone adjoining the port. A

Singaporean firm has been commissioned by the government to master-plan a major industrial area and free zone covering a total area of around 24,000 hectares.

A preliminary study has already identified the potential for a number of economic and commercial activities, notably heavy industry, oil refining, petrochemical processing, mineral, small and medium scale manufacturing, logistics, warehousing, fisheries, and so on. As part of its brief, the Singaporean consultant is also studying Duqm's suitability for a wide range of industrial and commercial investments based on the Wusta region's abundant natural resources, notably oil and gas, minerals & fisheries, among others.

Separately, the state-owned energy investment vehicle Oman Oil Company and Abu Dhabi's International Petroleum Investment Company (IPIC) are jointly evaluating the feasibility of developing a refinery and petrochemical complex at Duqm. Furthermore, given its relative proximity to the East African and south Asian markets, notably the Indian subcontinent. Duqm Port is also seen as ideally positioned to serve as a transshipment hub, experts add.

Multi-level interchange at Wadi Adai

Source: *Oman Observer* - April 24, 2010

Construction work on the Sultanate's first multi-level interchange has commenced at Wadi Adai in Muscat Governorate. The project, an undertaking of Muscat Municipality, promises to introduce a new level of sophistication to the city's road infrastructure, reminiscent of the multi-bridge interchanges found in major world cities.

Well-known contractor Federici Stirling Batco LLC has been awarded the contract to build the interchange at Wadi Adai at a cost of RO 18.6 million. The project is unique in that it will also incorporate

a steel road bridge — a structure that will be constructed at specialist steel fabrication facilities in Italy and shipped to Muscat for erection at site, said Salvatore Simonetti, CEO of Federici Stirling Batco.

Speaking to the Observer, Simonetti praised Muscat Municipality's Roads Department, headed by Abdullah al Saadi, for its innovative choice of design and construction technology that would allow for the smooth execution of the project at one of the busiest traffic junctions in the city. The Wadi Adai junction serves as the city's principal gate-

way into the wilayats of Al Amerat and Qurayat beyond. City-bound traffic originating from the Al Amerat and Qurayat ends, typically extends for several kilometres during peak hours, underscoring the challenges for the contractor in building the interchange while ensuring that traffic flows are unimpeded.

The centrepiece of the interchange project is a new steel bridge that will soar above the existing flyover at the Wadi Adai junction, creating a first-ever three-level road network at the junction. The steel bridge will be

built on concrete pillars that at their highest point will rise to 19 metres above ground level. From the Al Amerat side, the new steel bridge will start from a point abutting the mosque close to the Wadi Adai junction. Soaring above the flyover, it goes around the hillock located on the other side of the junction and connects with the existing Ruwi-Qurum carriageway.

Also as part of the interchange project, a second bridge will be built taking traffic from the Ruwi side over the flyover and into the Al Amerat carriageway in a seamless flow that will significantly ameliorate congestion at this busy junction. According to Simonetti, the second bridge, which unlike the first will be built entirely from concrete, will also skirt the same hillock before it climbs above the existing flyover to merge with the steel bridge. The existing roundabout will also be signalised.

In all, two kilometres of dual-lane bridge structures and access ramps will be built as part of the Wadi Adai Interchange project, says

Simonetti. Special weathering steel, also known as 'Corten Steel', will be used in the fabrication of the girders for the steel bridge. Corten steel represents a group of steel alloys which were developed to obviate the need for painting, and form a stable rust-like appearance if exposed to the weather.

Around 3,000 tonnes of Corten steel will be used in the manufacture of the girders at a special facility in Italy, says Simonetti. The girders will be shipped to Muscat via Port Sultan Qaboos in around 12 consignments for assembly at site. Italian specialists will also be on hand to oversee the construction of a blacktop, consisting of a layer of concrete and asphalt, on top of the steel bridge.

"The incorporation of a steel bridge into the interchange project will significantly reduce construction time, as well as make possible the implementation of the project notwithstanding the heavy traffic flow," says Simonetti. "Because it can be fabricated elsewhere and brought to site for erection, the steel bridge compo-

nent will minimise impacts to flowing traffic."

Federici Stirling Batco has already begun mobilising equipment and construction personnel for the interchange project. Project Manager Ziad Souaiby, a civil engineer from Lebanon, is heading the project team. Also on hand is a team of steel specialists, led by Giulio Lorenzi, General Manager of Verona-based SCL Construction. Parsons International, the design consultants for the project, are represented by its Chief Resident Engineer, Juan Carlos Peralta.

The project is due to completion within two years. For Federici Stirling Batco, an Italian-Lebanese joint venture, the Wadi Interchange project represents another prestigious road contract under its belt. The company is currently carrying out a number of road rehabilitation projects at Qurum and Qurayat on behalf of Muscat Municipality. In the Governorate of Buraimi, the contractor is executing a major dualisation project for the Ministry of Transport and Communications.

RO 47.8m infrastructure projects

Source: *Oman Observer* - April 21, 2010

The Ministry of Finance has approved 16 agreements worth RO 47.8 million for the implementation of more development projects supervised by the government. The agreements included the restoration of the Birkat al Moze-Saiq-Jabal Akhdar road to the tune of RO 11.46 million; the design and construction of internal roads in the Wilayats of Khasab and Bukha in Musandam Governorate (RO 6.18 million); the design and construction of internal roads in the Wilayat of Al Suwaiq in the Al Batinah Northern region (RO 4.19 million); the design and construction of internal roads in the Wilayat of Mahadha in the Governorate of Al Buraimi (RO 3.48 m).

Also included are designing and

construction of internal roads in the Wilayat of Ibri in Al Dhahirah region (RO 3.38 million); the designing and construction of internal roads in the Wilayat of Al Awabi in the Al Batinah region (RO 2.84 million); the designing and construction of internal roads in the Wilayat of Al Musanaa in the Southern Batinah region (RO 2.5 million); the designing and paving of internal roads in the Wilayat of Barka (RO 2.28 million).

The projects included the designing and construction of internal roads in the wilayats of Diba and Mad'ha in the Musandam Governorate (RO 1.99 million); the designing and construction of internal roads in the Wilayat of Wadi al Maawil in the

Southern Batinah region (RO 1.97 million); the desinging and construction of internal roads in the Wilayat of Shinas in the Northern Al Batinah region (RO 1.87 million); the designing and construction of internal roads in the Wilayat of Liwa (RO 1.66 million); the construction of Wadi Al Hayool school in the Wilayat of Mah'da (RO 1.04 million); the development of the entrance of the Wilayat of Ibri in the Al Dhahirah region (RO 848,000); supply of laboratory materials and blood transfusion services (RO 811,000); and supply of medicines for Royal Hospital (RO 739,000). The ministry also approved Change Order No 4 for the construction of Al Saada Sports Complex in Salalah at a cost of RO 502,000.

Khimji's Bait Al Ahlam launches Bagno Design showroom

Source: *Oman Observer* - April 21, 2010

The 6th Bait Al Ahlam outlet in the Sultanate was opened at Al Ghubra on Monday by Italian Ambassador Cesare Capitani. This new outlet will feature a very comprehensive range of creative bathroom solutions under the Bagno Design concept from Italy.

Bagno in Italian means 'Bathroom'. Bagno Design is a new concept for medium and high end bathroom solutions; it brings together an array of products from different manufacturers from across Europe, providing customers with a unique opportunity to choose the best of designs and products from top class sanitary-ware manufacturers. Bagno Design is a name synonymous with luxury bathrooms and tiles around the Middle East and Asia regions.

Bait Al Ahlam Bagno Design showroom at Al Ghubra will showcase leading designer brands in Tiles, Sanitaryware, Accessories, Luxurious Mirrors, Jacuzzis, and Steam Rooms etc from leading brands such as Apape, Apaiser, Bertocci, Art Cream, Bossini, Bonqio, Bati, GSI, Effegibi, Bugnatese, Geberit, Fantini, Galassaia, Nicolazzi, Hoesch Design, Vado, Reginox, Simex, Sanit Zucchetti, Wagner Ewar, and Stone forest.

Hritik Khimji, Director, Khimji Ramdas, said: "The new Bagno Design showroom is in line with KR Infra Group's strategy to provide high-end bathroom solutions to its discerning customers. Our customers will now get to use the best in bathroom fittings and accessories to experience a new level of luxury."

One of the main attractions of the showroom is the Dream Light showerhead from Bossini. This Showerhead reflects the beneficial effects of seven colours on the body and mind. Colours have always been part of our world and are a vital force and source of energy. The Chromo-therapy stimulates the body and the mind and helps to restore natural balance.

Vado has introduced a new stylish showerhead appropriately named as 'Sculpture' comprising of six flexible tentacles. Sculpture allows the consumer to bend, twist and shape the form into any position. The showerhead is distinctive in design and structure providing a fresh slant to bathroom design.

Tourism, real estate sectors on cusp of sweeping growth

Source: *Oman Tribune* - April 19, 2010

The Sultanate's growing popularity as the region's leading tourism destination, together with the country's improved mortgage market, is a clear indication that this is the best time to invest in real estate, according to a study.

Property developers and real estate agents in the Sultanate saw renewed confidence in the sales market in the first quarter of the year, mainly due to the major role banks have played through their improved mortgage facilities, says a study conducted by real estate agency Savills Oman.

Oman has emerged as the region's leading tourism attraction with the development of its integrated tourism complexes such as Barr-Al Jissah residences, Muscat Hills Golf

& Country Club and The Wave, Muscat. While these projects were not totally unscathed by the global economic downturn of 2008 they have fared better than their regional counterparts.

The report says it is an excellent time to buy real estate in the sultanate. "There is no doubt in my mind that now is an opportune time to buy real estate in Oman. If investors wait longer they will almost certainly miss the boat," says Chris Steel, Managing Partner, Savills Oman. "With projects such as the expansion of Muscat International Airport, the emerging Royal Opera House, Shura Council's Houses of Parliament building, and several existing new tourist developments due to come on line, now is without a

doubt a unique time for investors to maximise their returns."

Steel said property values have remained firm and the promise of ownership for all nationalities has been delivered. The Wave Muscat has already handed over the first phases of their development including the first apartment block Almeria South, and this month Muscat Hills & Country Club saw the handover of the first of its villas to excited owners.

Most major banks in Oman are providing mortgage facilities to nationals and expatriates. HSBC, Bank Muscat and National Bank of Oman have continued to be active lenders, most recently joined by Standard Chartered Bank.

Such favourable trading conditions are bound to attract new entrants to the market and a major new real estate and tourism development operator is expected to announce details of its entry into the market and its first major development in the Muscat area within the next few weeks, says the report.

As other countries within the region struggle to recover from the effects of 2008, Oman is forging ahead with increased government and private

investments in areas such as private equity, integrated tourism developments, infrastructure and real estate.

“Savills Oman has seen a surge of interest from international investment organisations over the past few months wanting to penetrate Oman’s real estate market. This interest is supported by the developments Oman currently has underway to diversify into new markets now and in the future, and investors are keen to capitalise on the benefits

these projects will bring to the country and the region,” says Steel.

He says property market is very excited about the imminent arrival of new players in the Omani market and it is looking forward to using local expertise to assist with new developments. Savills Oman said it intends to leverage the knowledge and expertise of its senior management team to develop tourism related real estate products in the Sultanate of Oman.

Construction of jumbo runway at Muscat airport right on target

Source: *Oman Tribune* - April 15, 2010

The construction of the 4,000-metre runway and other infrastructure works of Muscat International Airport expansion project are on target, according to a top executive of Turkey-based TAV Construction.

When fully operational, the 60-metre-wide runway, will be able to handle Airbus A380, the largest passenger aircraft in the world, the president of Turkey-based TAV Construction and group chief executive officer Dr Eng. M. Sani Sener told *Oman Tribune* in an interview.

He disclosed that the 450m-rial main contract-1, comprising the civil works of the project, would be completed in April 2012.

“This is the first project of TAV Construction in the Sultanate. The main contract-1, which was awarded to joint venture partners TAV Construction and Greece-based Consolidated Contractors Company (CCC), comprises infrastructure development, a new runway and construction of utility buildings,” he said.

Sener said: “We will complete the project as per schedule. Around 600 staff, including 300 engineers are working hard to complete the

project. There are around 1,200 pieces of construction equipment on site,” he said.

He praised the progress of the Sultanate in various fields. He said that Oman was witnessing rapid growth. Several Turkish companies, who have embarked on ventures in the Sultanate, are full of praise for the growth in infrastructure and other sectors of economy, he said. Sener said that TAV Construction wanted to be part of the growth of Oman.

“We are the lowest bidders of the main contract-2 of the airport and have also bid for main contract-3,” he said.

TAV would also be looking to bid for the proposed smaller airports in the Sultanate, he said. Sener lauded the tendering process in the Sultanate and added that it was very transparent.

The Sultanate’s airport expansion plan and the launch of flights to new destinations are keeping pace with the developments, he said. The airport could easily become an alternative destination to Dubai in the near future, Sener said.

He said: “TAV Construction has rap-

idly become Turkey’s undisputed leader in airport construction sector. Our aim is to become the leading brand in airport construction in the region.”

TAV Construction is operating 10 international airports globally. It is currently executing contracts worth \$8.3 billion in the Mena region, including the terminal building at Doha airport and Tripoli international airport,” he said.

According to ENR (Engineering News Record) 2009 survey, TAV Construction is ranked third in the world in airport construction.

Using the high-tech innovations in the industry, TAV is able to complete projects in record time, simultaneously maintaining the highest standards of quality and superiority in its work, he said.

The first phase of an ambitious plan to expand and modernise Muscat International Airport, which is expected to be completed by 2014, will have the capacity to handle 12 million passengers annually. Other expansions planned in three subsequent phases will boost the airport’s capacity to 48 million passengers by 2050.

Glorei signs agreement to build Maktabi 2 in Wattayah

Source: *Times of Oman* - March 31, 2010

Global Omani Development & Investment Co. (Glorei) has signed an agreement to build 'Maktabi 2' project in Wattayah. The project consists of developing 22,000sqm of office spaces, exhibition halls and other facilities and supporting services, for a total cost of \$25 million.

The project will take around 18 months and will contribute in the economic development of the country, focusing on commercial, residential, and tourism complexes. The contract was signed by Sheikh Mohammed Oufit Al Shanfari, chairman of Glorei, together with Fuad Abdullah Al Kindi, CEO of Ibn Khaldoon and Al Madaein Engineering Consultancy and Syam Sunder, CEO of Larsen & Turbo, the two companies implementing the project.

Mohammed Abu Baker Al Ghassani,

the CEO of Glorei, said: "The Maktabi 2 project represents one of the leading projects equipped with the latest technology making it a unique smart office in Oman. The company seeks to use local products and materials in all its projects in order to reduce cost, ensure quality and reduce carbon emission. We aim to compensate our environment against the carbon emission from our offices by several initiatives calling for environment protection by using eco-friendly materials. The project selection process is based on the locations that are consistent with the principle of sustainable development, saving water and energy and preserving the atmosphere."

Prior to investment, Glorei evaluates the market with a clear vision intending to find successful investments that fulfil the economic and investment market conditions. Al

Ghassani said, "The current economic situation looks good following the international financial crisis that had a strong impact on several economic sectors."

He commended the government for advertising various projects according to plans thus reducing the impact, and as oil prices have regained its record levels all these elements encourage investment.

On another note, Glorei also inaugurated its business centre (Maktabi 1) in Al Khuwair in the presence of the company's board of directors. The project consists of large office spaces and provides safe and comfortable working environment for the companies entering the market or expanding its business in Muscat or in the Sultanate in general, or international companies requiring offices for a short or limited period.

Pacts for development inked

Source: *Times of Oman* - March 30, 2010

As part of the government's endeavours to develop the infrastructure that serves the national economy, 23 agreements worth RO103.37 million on roads, aviation and sea lands projects at various regions of the Sultanate were signed at the Ministry of Transport and Communications yesterday.

The agreements were signed on behalf of the Government of the Sultanate of Oman by Dr Khamis bin Mubarak Al Alawi, minister of transport and communications and general managers of the implementing companies.

In the area of civil aviation developmental projects, the first agreement worth RO40.5 million which was signed with Galfar Engineering and

Contracting Company related to construction of Ras Al Hadd Airport in the Al Sharqiyah Region (second package).

The second agreement worth RO2.83 million was signed with Ibn Khaldon & Al Mada'yin Engineering Consultancy Bureau is related to consultation services for supervising the construction of Duqm Airport.

The third agreement worth RO2.12 million was signed with Al Ahliyah Insurance Company related to third party coverage of Muscat International and Salalah Airports.

The fourth agreement, worth RO442,190 which was signed with the National Air Transportation

Company related to re-designing and planning air routes over Oman's skies. The fifth agreement worth RO174,221 which was signed with Inco & Triads Oman International Engineering Consultancy in association with GOP related to rendering consultation services for the study of Musandam Regional Airport locations.

In the area of road and land transportation development projects, the first agreement worth RO19.92 million was signed with the National United Engineering and Contracting Company and related to construction of the 31.5km long Yanqul-Fida-Dhank road in the Dhahirah Region.

The second agreement worth RO11.46 million was signed with

Galfar Engineering and Contracting Company relating to improvement of the 32.5km long Barkat Al Mowz-Saiq road (Jabal Al Akhdhar road).

The third agreement worth RO5.45 million signed with Desert Line Projects Co. related to paving the 89km long Sowqrah-Sharbathat-Shaleem-Marmul road (remaining works).

The fourth agreement worth RO2.80 million signed with Khalid bin Ahmed & Sons related to the designing and constructing the 30km long internal roads at Hayal and Majzi in the wilayat of Ibri in Al Dhahirah Region.

The fifth agreement worth RO1.86 million was signed with Arab Projects and Transport Company related to the designing and constructing the 11km long internal roads in the wilayat of Dima W'Atta'iyeen (Wadi Dima road) in

the Sharqiyah region. The sixth agreement worth RO824,950 signed with the National Engineering Services of Pakistan (NES Pak) and Partners related to providing consultation services for designing and rehabilitation of Izki-Farq and Marfa' Falaj Daris-Al Ghafat roads.

The seventh agreement worth RO758,750 signed with Parsons International related to providing consultation services for the designing and supervising the construction of Yanqul-Fida-Dhank road.

The eighth agreement worth RO566,590 signed with the National Engineering Bureau in conjunction with EuroStads related to providing consultation services for the designing and supervising the construction of Wadi Al Amirat-Dima W'Ata'yeen road.

The ninth agreement worth RO312.300 signed with National En-

gineering Services of Pakistan (NES Pak) and Partners related to providing consultation services for supervising the dual carriage road from A'Zaroub to Al Buraimi Hospital roundabout.

The tenth agreement worth RO305,000 signed with Koy & Partners related to providing consultation services for the designing and supervising the construction of Diba-Lima-Khasab road (second phase). Agreement 11th worth RO216,550 signed with Renardet SA and Partners Consulting Engineers LLC related to providing consultation services for the designing and supervising the construction of Haima-A'Sahmah road (Al Wusta Region).

Agreement 12th worth RO189,200 signed with Driver Consult Co. related to providing quantity survey services for the construction of Wadi Bani Kharous road.

MoU inked for environmental tourist resort in Mirbat

Source: *Oman Tribune* - March 17, 2010

Al Yasmin Oasis Trading and Contracting and Alila International signed an MoU on Tuesday for the operation of an environment tourist resort in the Wilayat of Mirbat in Dhofar Governorate on Tuesday.

The MoU was signed by Alila International CEO Mark Adilson and Al Yasmin Oasis chairman Mohammed Bin Aqil Ba Omar.

Mohammed Bin Aqil Ba Omar said the project comprises a comprehensive environment tourist resort at Khaisah Aqian in the Wilayat of Mirbat. The project, which will be set up over 400,000sqmt area, includes hotel rooms, villas, chalets, marine park, diving club, health club, restaurant, crafts market and cultural village. The project, which will cost around 30 million rials, will

be completed in 36 months.

He added that the project would generate a number of job opportunities in the field of environmental tourism and would have positive outcome on the craftsmen and fishermen in the local communities and on the tourism and food suppliers as well.

The plans for this project were done in collaboration with leading experts and consultants in this field. The project takes into consideration the needs of visitors for such project. A tourism environmental open area that overlooks the sea has been selected to meet the needs of the different categories of visitors.

Mohammed Ba Omar said the project would contribute to the many efforts undertaken by differ-

ent authorities with the tourism ministry at the foremost to make the Sultanate an international tourist hub.

He added that the project, when completed would enhance the accommodation capacity in the Sultanate in general and the governorate in particular.

On his turn, Mark Adilson expressed his happiness for signing the MoU and praised the eco-diversity of the Sultanate. He also said the company would operate two other resorts in the Sultanate, namely Al Jabel Al Akhdhar Resort and Musandam Resort.

The company operates more than 20 resorts in India, Vietnam, China, Indonesia, Laos, Thailand, the Maldives and Malaysia.

Zubair Corp. plans hotel, residential complex

Source: *Times of Oman* - March 15, 2010

Diversified business group Zubair Corporation plans to build a new budget hotel in Muscat in addition to a retail-cum-residential complex, a top official said.

“We are looking into it,” director of tourism, Ziyad Al Zubair said. The group would, however, would not go ahead immediately due to the general slowdown in the real estate market in Oman but would start working on the projects once the market improves, he said. “It will be on mass scale and really depends on timing”.

The proposed hotel would target the value-conscious business traveller as well as leisure tourists and the group may even look at using the 'Traders Hotels' brand of the Shangri-La Hotels and Resorts, the Hong Kong-based luxury hotel group, Zubair said.

Traders Hotels branded properties are located in major business centres in Asia and the Middle East.

Zubair Corporation already has a management contract with the Shangri-La Hotels and Resorts for its Barr Al Jissah Resort & Spa, a luxury resort with 680 rooms spread over 124 acres by the sea in Muscat.

Zubair is looking at more than 20 per cent growth in its guest arrivals at its Barr Al Jissah property in 2010, Arbind K Shrestha, general manager of the resort said. The three-hotel resort had about 80,000 guest arrivals in 2009 as compared to 100,000 during the previous year as the global financial crisis affected the tourism industry globally, he added.

Leisure travellers account for about four-fifth of the total number of guests from more than 50 countries across the world while business

travellers make up the rest in the three-and-a-half year old property, Shrestha said.

The property, by virtue of being part of the Shangri-La network of 65 hotels worldwide, benefits from the 1.5 million member strong loyalty program of Shangri-La Hotels and enjoys an average guest return ratio of 30 per cent, the officials said. The city of Muscat has more than 1,600 hotel rooms in the luxury category and the current economic scenario would not allow the hotels to raise their average room rent in order to boost revenues, Zubair added.

The Barr Al Jissah Resort & Spa employs 1,075 employees from 40 countries and plans to hire more and take the level of native Omani employees up to 50 per cent of its total staff strength from the present 32 per cent, Zubair said.

Oman realty sector to hit RO1.57b

Source: *Times of Oman* - March 2, 2010

The construction industry in Oman is expected to grow by 2.7 per cent to reach RO1.57 billion by 2013 as the government would continue to spend on infrastructure projects aiming for diversifying the economy, Global Investment House (Global) said in its latest GCC Real Estate Sector Report.

The Omani economy is expected to grow by three per cent in real terms in 2010 benefiting from high crude oil prices and ongoing government spending, it said. Besides, economic performance is expected to get bolstered by higher tourist arrivals and increased foreign direct investment, thereby benefiting all the sectors of the economy including real estate and construction, the report said.

With respect to residential units,

Global held a stable view on the segment due to favourable demographics. Oman would require around 20,000-25,000 new units over the next few years to keep up with its growing population in which about 43 per cent are less than 14 years of age, it said.

The Kuwait-based firm also held a similar view on the office space segment in the Sultanate for the short term as it expected a flattening demand in 2010 with a marginal tendency to pick up towards the end of the year depending on actual economic performance.

However, on a longer term, it might witness a correction with the delivery of 200,000 square metres of office space in Muscat by 2012. “Matching such supply with in-

creased demand will be linked to economic performance,” Global noted in the report.

Although Global held a stable view for the residential and office space segment in Oman, it held a negative view for the hospitality segment in the country as the global economy were yet to recover from the recessionary pressures completely.

On the demand side, it foresaw a decline in tourist arrivals in Oman in the medium term through 2011 as more than two-fifth of Oman’s tourist count is from US, UK and other developed economies.

Meanwhile, on the supply side, it warned of an oversupply situation as the major projects in Muscat are expected to add about 5,500 rooms.

Oman Cement's new clinker project to come on line in Q2

Source: *Oman Observer* - February 28, 2010

Oman Cement aims to bring a new clinker manufacturing plant into operation in the second quarter of this year. The project, involving an investment of 62.7 million Omani rials, will boost the company's clinker production capacity by 4,000 tons per day. Last week, the company announced a 93.2 per cent jump in profit before tax of 27.363 million Omani rials during fiscal 2009, against earnings of 14.109 million Omani rials a year earlier.

Qahtan bin Yarub al Busaidy, Chairman of the Board of Directors, attributed to increased earnings to higher price realisations during 2009, as well as lower procurement costs of imported clinker, discon-

tinuation of cement imports, and increased investment income. Cement production during 2009 rose 3.6 per cent to 2.075 million metric tons, as against output of 2.003 million tons in 2008. The company produced 1.161 million tons of clinker during the year, as against 1.182 million tons produced in 2008.

Clinker imports however slumped 28.8 per cent to 656,887 tons last year, from 922,343 tons in 2008. Cement sales during 2009 increased slightly to 2.178 million tons in 2009 from 2.153 million tons a year earlier. In value terms, 2009 sales yielded revenues of 68.284 million Omani rials, which was 7.5 per cent higher than earnings of 63.522 million

Omani rials in 2008. "This increase is due to the increase in the volume of sales and improvements in the average selling price of cement, as compared to the average selling price during the year 2008," he stated.

Strong domestic demand for cement allowed prices to remain stable throughout 2009. But increasing cement supplies at low prices from neighbouring countries threatens to put prices under strain, said Al Busaidy. Commenting on the outlook for this year, the Chairman stated: "The demand for cement in Oman for the year 2010 as part the report of a study done for the company indicated a marginal decline over the 2009 level.

Galfar wins RO 40.5 million Ras Al Hadd Airport contract

Source: *Oman Observer* - February 25, 2010

Leading Omani engineering and contracting firm Galfar said yesterday that it has won a contract to implement the key Phase 2 package of the Ras Al Hadd Airport project at a cost of RO 40.5 million.

In a notification to the Capital Market Authority, Galfar CEO Dr Hans Erlings said the company has received a letter from the Ministry of Transport and Communications confirming the award of the prestigious contract.

Construction work on the green-field airport in the Sharqiyah region is well under way. Desert Line Projects, a local Omani contractor, is close to completing work on the first phase of the airport project, involving the construction of access roads and the provision of communications and power facilities.

As part of the Phase II airside infrastructure package, Galfar's brief covers the construction of a four-kilometre-long runway, taxiway and apron, as well as the provision of fuel hydrant facilities and navigation aids, among other facilities. The international-class runway will enable even the largest civilian aircraft in operation today, notably the Boeing 747 and Airbus A380, to use the facility.

In addition, Galfar will undertake the levelling of areas earmarked for the construction of the terminal and other buildings covered in Phase III of the airport development.

The Phase III package, which will be tendered out next year, covers the construction of a 20,000 square metre passenger terminal building designed to accommodate up to two

gated aircraft ranging from regional jets to the Boeing 747. Also included in this package are the construction of an Air Traffic Control (ATC) tower, and the provision of boarding bridges, baggage handling and security systems and fire-fighting facilities.

A two-year time frame has been stipulated by the Ministry for the completion of Phase 2 of the airport project.

Separately, Galfar also announced the award of a contract for the construction of a new Accident and Emergency Department coupled with a Burns Department at the Khoula Hospital in Muscat Governorate. The project, part of the Phase 8 expansion of the referral hospital, is valued at 9.979 million Omani rials.

Muriya sales event to showcase Jebel Sifah and Salalah Beach properties

Source: *Oman Observer* - February 14, 2010

Muriya, Oman's leading premium property brand, is hosting a four-day sales event spotlighting investment opportunities linked to its prestigious Jebel Sifah and Salalah Beach developments. During the event, set to take place at the developer's Muscat Sales Centre in Al Sarooj between February 15 and 18, 2010, Muriya will also unveil a package of exclusive offers and attractive payment terms — applicable for a limited period only.

During the promotion, interested buyers can explore a remarkable range of purchase options of Muriya's extensive choice of villas and apartments, which are available now at unmatched prices. Investors can also take advantage of a diverse selection of payment methods that can extend up to seven years. Moreover, any villa or apartment purchased during the four-day promotion will come fully furnished upon

delivery, courtesy of Muriya.

“The upcoming event is yet another demonstration of our commitment to offering investment opportunities at great value, within our Jebel Sifah and Salalah Beach properties. We are going the extra mile in making it possible for prospective investors and homebuyers to own a piece of real estate in some of the most desirable locations in Oman. By taking advantage of our unbeatable pricing and payment terms, potential investors — Omanis and expatriates alike — can now fulfil their dreams of owning homes in truly world-class communities here in the Sultanate,” said Niazi Mostafa, Vice-President of Real Estate, Muriya.

Located 45 km from Muscat, Jebel Sifah is spread over an area of 6.2 million square metres of the beachfront. On completion, it will rank among the most sought-after

properties in Oman, offering residents outstanding luxury and an unmatched lifestyle. The development features luxurious residences including villas and apartments, an estimated 200-berth Inland Marina and a Marina town, two boutique marina hotels, four international 5-star hotels, retail shops, cafes and restaurants.

Salalah Beach on the other hand is located in the uniquely distinctive Dhofar region in the southern part of the country. Set on an area of 15.6 million square metres with 8.2 kilometres of beachfront, the development will eventually be home to high-end villas and apartments, two world-class 18-hole PGA Golf courses, an estimated 200-berth Inland Marina with a Marina Town and five top international hotel brands among which are Club Med, Rotana and Movenpick Hotels & Resorts.

Qurum Commercial District development plan unveiled

Source: *Oman Observer* - February 6, 2010

Muscat Municipality recently completed the technical designs and specifications for the development of the Qurum Commercial District, and parts of the wadi crossing the district. The project aims to turn the area and make it a landmark attracting tourists and businesses with its varied features combining the pleasure of shopping and family entertainment within a modern, comfortable and lovely environment. The Qurum Commercial District (“QCD”) is an important tourist and business destination for the locals, residents and visitors considering the large number of shops, malls and commercial complexes offering

varied and various goods and services.

Municipality, in co-operation with an international consultancy firms, is considering suitable options to develop the area from its current state into a comprehensive commercial and entertainment destination in the heart of Muscat. The project is now revealed while the municipality is busy completing the draining system to safely discharge the flood waters from the main street and internal service roads leading into Qurum, and ensure easy and interrupted traffic flow in all weather conditions.

The project includes various elements, including a public plaza in the middle of the commercial district. The plaza will have pathways for pedestrians, large network of pedestrian crossings and one main pedestrian bridge connecting between Al Oreimi and CCC malls across the wadi. The project also includes maintenance and repair for both sides of the wadi, complete with resting areas, coffee shops and other amenities suitable for all the family members.

The project also includes a specially designed lighting system which will play a significant role in highlight-

ing the development process, and will attract pedestrians and visitors. The lights are designed on the shape of trees covering the bridge giving the impression of walking under the landscaped area.

The parking lots will be redesigned to be consistent with the recom-

mended comprehensive development. The parking areas will be restricted to certain corners and will be designed to accommodate larger numbers of cars and will have access from the flyovers currently under construction, in addition to access from Sultan Qaboos Street and Muscat Expressway, together with

the required public utilities and services.

The project includes numerous significant elements, including promenades and bicycle lanes, green islands in the wadi to regenerate the vegetation and open spaces lined with palm trees.

Plan for greenfield airport in Musandam makes headway

Source: *Oman Observer* - February 2, 2010

Spanish aviation specialist GOP Oficina de Proyectos SA has been awarded a contract to prepare a master plan for a new greenfield airport in Musandam Governorate. The consultancy study marks a key first step in the proposed development of an international-class gateway that has the potential to catalyse tourism, economic and infrastructure development in this strategically important enclave.

Madrid-based GOP Oficina de Proyectos led a field of nearly 10 international and local engineering consultancy firms that bid for the prestigious contract. The bidding line-up included leading names in airport design and development, notably Pell Frishmann, ADPi Architects, Favaro & Milan Ingegneria, Dorsch Consult, and Dornier Consulting. Also competing for the consultancy study were W S Atkins International, Renardet, National Engineering Office, and Associated Consulting Services.

The Ministry of Transport and Communications, which is overseeing all airport projects in the Sultanate, plans to fast-track the development of the proposed airport venture with a view to accelerating the pace of socio-economic development and infrastructure modernisation in Musandam. The governorate is seen as a potentially attractive candidate for investment in, among other areas, tourism and energy.

The need for a new, green-field facility in Musandam has been prompted by a recognition that any upgrade of the existing airport at Khasab is inherently constrained by significant geographical and topographical limitations, among other factors. Built in the mid-seventies, Khasab Airport has only one 2,500-metre-long runway which, according to officials, is not ideally suited for modern jets of the kind that are operated by Oman Air and other international carriers. Moreover, it lies in the midst of mountains, making any expansion a virtual impossibility.

As part of its brief, GOP Oficina de Proyectos will select a suitable location for the new airport from among five potential sites identified by the Ministry. In recommending its choice, the consultant will be required to take into account airspace requirements, natural and man-made obstructions if any, environmental impacts, access to utilities, proximity to airport users, potential for future expansion, and cost factors.

Envisaged is an international-class facility with runways capable of handling aircraft as large as the Airbus A380 or Boeing 747. The length and width of the runways and taxiways will be designed to the relevant standards prescribed by the International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO).

Also envisioned in the master plan

is a modern terminal designed for a capacity of 250,000 passengers per annum. Gate positions, aircraft parking space requirements, terminal design concepts, service buildings, fire and rescue equipment buildings and navigational aids, among other aspects, will all be studied by the consultant. In addition, the consultant will be required to develop short and long-term projections of aeronautical demand to help determine the ultimate design size and features of the airport.

The proposed airport venture will be the latest addition to the Governorate's rapidly expanding communications infrastructure. In recent years, significant allocations have been made towards the strengthening of Musandam's road network. Maritime links between the Governorate, abutting the strategic Strait of Hormuz, and the rest of Oman are also being enhanced, most notably through the introduction of high speed passenger ferry services, which presently connect Khasab and Muscat.

New commercial ports, complete with marinas for yachts and jetties for high speed ferries, are also proposed at Dibba and Lima in the Governorate. The planned developments, along with ongoing and new investments in luxury hotels and resorts, will also drive up tourist inflows into this stunningly beautiful region of Oman, say officials.

Sohar airport phase 1 construction on track

Source: *Times of Oman* - January 31, 2010

About 30 per cent of phase-1 stage of Sohar airport has been completed and work on as per schedule, said Stefan Altiebler, general manager, Strabag Oman LLC, the development contractor for the Sohar airport project.

Talking to Times of Oman, Stefan said four million cubic metres of the area had been cleared and that laying of concrete culverts is currently on. The work which started in September would be completed in 14 months, he said.

The mass grading works necessary to prepare the site for constructing runway, taxiway, runway exits, aprons and buildings are included in

phase-1, which has an RO37.5 million budget. Eight million cubic meters of undulating terrain — about 10km from Sohar city — will have to be suitably levelled.

Strabag has also been entrusted with building access roads, water protection works, fencing, electrical works and other utility infrastructure such as a potable water network, irrigation, fire fighting and storm draining systems. The airport will be built in three phases. Phase-1 includes preparation of the site, phase-2 infrastructure, and phase-3 construction of the facilities.

Bids for work in phase-2 have already been received and the Minis-

try of Transport and Communication, the client which issued the tender, will finalise the party it intends to recruit.

Phase-2 includes work on infrastructure (roads, electricity and water networks, runway, taxiway, fire fighting systems, and lighting), while phase-3 includes construction of facilities (passenger and cargo terminals, and catering facility).

The consortium of Hamza Associates, Robert and Company and Burgess & Niple was awarded the 47-month PMC contract covering pre-design study, detailed design, and tendering and construction supervision, officials said.

Ruwi Master Plan's first four-star hotel complex to be ready by 2011

Source: *Oman Observer* - January 31, 2010

The first project of the Master Plan for 'Beautiful Ruwi' — a four-star hotel-cum shopping mall — launched recently is all set to be ready by 2011. The RO 6 million West Gate Palace Hotel project, currently under way, is in line with His Majesty the Sultan's vision for a 'Beautiful Ruwi', announced in Royal Decree 05/2010, which envisages the removal of old buildings and re-planning of the City of Ruwi. This was announced yesterday at a press conference addressed by Sulaiman al Salhi, Chairman, Gulf International Investment Co. (GIC).

His other partners, including K K Hussain, Director, and Mohammed Ashraf, General Manager, were also present on the occasion. Ashraf, Managing Director, GIC, said, "the architectural view of the West Gate Palace Hotel will change the present view and skyline of the 'Ruwi High Street, near KM Trading, replacing

the earlier landmark, the erstwhile Papoo Market". Hussain said the hotel features 140 rooms, including 6 suites and 134 rooms, 3 theme restaurants, a 24-hour coffee shop (lounge), 3 conference halls with advanced facilities, swimming pool, and a health club.

The ground and mezzanine floors offer 80 shops (50 per cent of them are designed for 'gold shops', 30 per cent exclusively for ladies and kids items and the other 20 per cent for electronics and other general products. The property envisages parking facilities for over 140 cars. The shopping section is scheduled to be up and running by July 2011, while the hotel will be ready by December 2011. In response to a question by Oman Observer, Husaain said in addition to the three million rials from the promoters, GIC has taken a loan of three millions rials from Oman Development Bank for

the project.

The construction of the project is being carried out Kehlman Trading and Contracting LLC, who had successfully completed several major projects including the KM Trading. JLP Associates of J L Lawrence Paul, who will become a partner of GIC by July this year, would manage the hotel. The company, which has plans for 40 per cent Omnisation, said as per the Omani Labour Law those who will be sent abroad for training will have to work for the hotel for a minimum of four years. Hussain said the Gulf International Investment has also planned three hotel projects for Ghubra, Seeb and Salalah, in addition to three projects in India.

Hussain said Ruwi, the commercial and main business district of the Sultanate, is all set to witness the replacement of narrow streets with

old buildings, some of them built in early 1970s, with a brand new look as the master place progresses. As

the first project of the Ruwi Master Plan, the West Gate Hotel Place in the heart of Ruwi will help advance

the vision for a new beautiful Ruwi with a modern business environment and infrastructure.

A great landmark in the making

Source: *Oman Observer* - January 26, 2010

Construction of the 57-kilometre Muscat Expressway is gaining momentum so as to commission it in a short span of time. Comprising a series of 12 grade-separated interchanges, this Expressway will connect Al Qurum round about with Naseem round about via Al Khuwair, Al Ghubra, Al Athaiba with the Muscat International Airport and Al Mawaleh.

This ambitious project is expected to be an alternative road to the Sultan Qaboos Street which has already reached its maximum daily traffic capacity. The Project team, including the Muscat Municipality as the Engineer, Parsons as the Design and Construction Supervision Consultant, Majan Engineering Consultants as the Quantity Survey Consultant and Galfar as the Construction Contractor, has established the necessary links with other agencies to ensure timely resolution of the critical issues and prompt implementation of the project.

Initially budgeted at RO 132 million and known as Southern Highway, this state-of-the-art six-lane expressway is expected to reduce travel time considerably and save much of the time spent on commuting. "The world over, development is a continuous process and a gradual advancement when it comes to construction of infrastructure", Khalil bin Abdullah al Balushi, Director, Information Directorate at the Information and External Relations, Muscat Municipality told the Observer. "The vital veins being roads that can easily connect the city with various other parts of the adjacent places enabling easy and fast flow of traffic", Khalil said.

These hastening and giant strides

towards development in Oman may have been a challenge to the officials of Muscat Municipality. The diverse topography with rocky mountains and narrow and restricted area between the sea and the mountain from the east being the main challenges. "To face up these challenges, the municipality officials decided to implement a number of strategic roads that can withstand any challenge thrown by the fast development that will take place in the country", Khalil said.

In 2004, the process started with research and studies for a number of quality engineering projects in the capital consistent with the successful development process and to be well-equipped to face the challenges of the phases of developments anticipated in the future. And that very thought saw the birth of 'Muscat Expressway' that kicked off in 2005.

The numerous benefits of this project vary from providing an alternative to the Sultan Qaboos Street to offering a perfect connection between all the parts of Muscat and neighbourhoods and an easy movement between residential, commercial and industrial districts and other utilities. This project is also expected to create an open horizon for the various parts of the city to communicate despite the natural obstacles and mountainous areas around Muscat.

Being constructed according to the highest international standards of highways, this dream project will provide plenty of room for the traffic flow from all over the country to Muscat. The expressway, with its dual carriageway with three lanes in each direction, will contain all the traffic from the access roads flowing

towards Muscat.

Yet another strategic significance of this highway is that it will be able to connect to Muscat's three accesses. The first from the west towards Al Batinah road through Al Naseem R/A, the second from the south to the road coming from Dakhiliyah and Sharqiyah connecting to Rusail road, and the third access will be the Bausher-Al Amerat road. After the strenuous construction activities through the rugged mountainous area between Bausher and Al Amerat, now, the arduous work is going on at the 6th Interchange.

The project consists of five phases and it is progressing at a commendable pace. The engineering design for the Expressway is made according to the highest international standards prescribed by experts who are closely working with the constructors. The project is designed to extend almost parallel to the Sultan Qaboos Street from the south, extending over 55 kilometres from the Qurum R/A which will be transformed in four-ways crossroad up to Naseem R/A in addition to 28 kilometres of access roads to and from the Sultan Qaboos Street.

Other engineering features include dual carriageway of three lanes on each direction and 12 high intersections in order to reduce the number of access roads as much as possible together with the special installations to protect the road across several deep valleys. Muscat Municipality has been implementing these projects based on comprehensive study on the traffic inputs carried out throughout the capital city along with expected changes.

The studies resulted in a package of

road projects consistent with the latest traffic standards to achieve the best traffic flow and to provide

the best solution to the snarls that take considerable time on the roads. And besides, all these projects will

be supporting each other in order to perform its anticipated roles in nation building.

UK companies eye Muscat, Salalah airport expansion projects

Source: *Oman Tribune* - January 26, 2010

The British Aviation Group (BAG), the leading representative body for UK aviation and airport development companies, is in talks with the Sultanate's government to take part in the 2-billion-rial expansion plan of the country's two international gateways in Muscat and Salalah.

AVG chairman Alan Lamond told *Oman Tribune*: "Oman and the Middle East are regions of great potential for future growth. It is encouraging that UK suppliers have received such a high level of interest from Omani administration. The upgradation schemes at Muscat and Salalah are opportunities for us to demonstrate our expertise."

Lamond, who is in town leading a British trade and investment mission, is confident the group is equipped to supply the technical know-how and management expertise for mega aviation ventures. "We have an impressive track record in airport financing, masterplanning, designing, equipment supply and operations. Many lessons have

been learnt and we are pleased to share our experience across the spectrum of airport development globally."

The Sultanate's airport expansion plan, which also includes a string of new domestic airports, will demand a total investment of over 3 billion rials. It will be completed in a phased manner and is expected to trigger tourism and socio-economic boom.

When operational by early 2013, the modernised Muscat International Airport will boast a new runway, several taxiways and aprons, and a state-of-the-art terminal with a capacity to handle 12 million passengers annually.

Further expansions planned in subsequent phases will ultimately increase the airport capacity to 48 million passengers by 2050. Salalah International Airport will be modernised to cater to the city's rapid growth as a tourism destination and major transshipment hub and free zone.

The companies on the British trade mission which took part in the talks and site visits include Aerospace Resources, Airport Design Consult, Aeronautical and General Instruments and Ultra Electronics.

One of the major challenges in building airports in Oman is providing drainage. Lamond, along with other BAG members, have conducted detailed site inspections to tackle these problems and identified suitable areas for participation.

The BAG, which is facing stiff competition from French and European consortiums to win contracts, says their decision to focus more on the region will bring in results.

"We have decided to divert our attention to this region. The aviation sector is showing a steady growth in the Middle East and airport expansion ventures are in full stream," says Lamond.

The mission will also visit Saudi Arabia, where they will hold talks on Jeddah airport expansion plan.

Slew of projects in BEC pipeline

Source: *Oman Tribune* - January 26, 2010

Bahwan Engineering Company (BEC) is undertaking a slew of nation-building projects in 2010, including developing the electro-mechanical infrastructure project at the new Muscat International Airport, one of the largest projects and the new psychiatric hospital in Al Amerat.

"The infrastructure project compris-

ing a 34,000-tonne central cooling plant, 40MVA standby power generation equipment, three 132/11kV substations, 70 11kV/415 V secondary substations, 350km of cabling and 24km of chilled water piping and services for 22 ancillary utility buildings which are being set up by BEC at the airport is the largest to date in the Sultanate," BEC managing director SK Virmani said.

"We have excelled for 33 years continuously and are proud that we are a part of the nation's developmental projects. The projects undertaken include power plants at various locations, LNG plants at Qalhat, hospitals all over the Sultanate, sea water intake project and fertiliser plant in Sohar, Sharqiyah desalination plant (IWP) in Sur, a number of PDO projects, including Saih Rawl deple-

tion compression project and Marmul polymer flooding project and the extension project of Oman Refinery plant in Mina Al Fahal," he said.

BEC's success can be attributed to the vision and leadership of Virmani, who has built a resilient organization capable of sustaining itself. Today, BEC's footprints can be seen in a large number of infrastructure

projects such as LNG plants, power plants, hospitals and oil and gas projects where it has built a reputation for excellence and world-class standards.

Al Madina Real Estate signs pact for Poggenpohl Kitchens

Source: *Oman Observer* - January 26, 2010

Al Madina Real Estate and Quality Furnitures have signed a contract for Poggenpohl Kitchens to be installed in the new Al Tilal mega Complex at Ghubra Roundabout.

Al Madina Real Estate pursues its resolve to give their customers and tenants the highest quality apartment by installing premium modular kitchen manufactured by Poggenpohl, Germany, in the 359 well-appointed apartments at the Tilal Complex. Poggenpohl's high standards and superior finish will go a long way in enhancing and adding to evolved state of living in the mixed development at Al Khuwair and is one of the reasons why Quality Furnitures brought Poggenpohl to Oman.

Kitchens and bathrooms are the key selling or renting features in residences, so with the installation of kitchens from the most recognisable and eco-friendly kitchen manufacturer, (Poggenpohl only use water based lacquers, paints and stains and only use sustainable forests for their wood), Al Madina not only focuses on maintaining high quality, but also makes it easier for potential buyers and tenants to choose the Tilal Complex over other residential buildings in Oman and protecting the planet at the same time.

"The complex will also have the largest shopping mall in Oman with shops, restaurants and a food court. In addition, there are plans for a luxury hotel to be added to the complex," a press release issued yester-

day said. All Omani Property Developers have to upgrade their properties to a higher standard to encourage buyers and tenants and Al Madina Real Estate is showing the way by upgrading their complex with the help of Quality Furnitures and Poggenpohl.

Quality Furnitures is fully equipped to design, supply and install kitchens from individual villas to large estates or complexes using the latest design software. Al Madina Real Estate SAOG caters to versatile clientele and has shown it is not only the celebrities and ultra rich who can have a Poggenpohl kitchen but by adding a Poggenpohl kitchen in the Tilal Complex they are providing the finest of kitchens to every one of their customers.

1.18-billion-rial real estate transactions in 2009

Source: *Oman Tribune* - January 25, 2010

The total value of the real estate transactions in the Sultanate in 2009 amounted to 1.188 billion rials with a fall of 52.6 per cent compared to 2.5 billion rials in 2008.

According to Abdullah Bin Salim Al Mukhini, Secretary of Property Registration at the Ministry of Housing, the total fees collected at the secretariat and property registration departments at housing departments and directorates in the wilayats and regions of the Sultanate in 2009 was

25 million rials with a fall of 56.4 per cent compared to 59 million rials in 2008.

Al Mukhini said of the 224,078 realty transactions registered across the Sultanate last year, 50,001 were in Muscat governorate, 11,608 in Dhofar governorate, 64,532 in Al Batinah region, 39,275 in Al Sharqiyah region, 26,891 in Al Dakhiliyah region, 21,364 in Al Dhahirah region, 6,194 in Buraimi governorate, 3,168 in Musandam governorate and 1,045

in Al Wusta region.

The total number of title deeds issued in 2009 was 137,562 with a decrease of 17.7 per cent compared to 167,155 title deeds issued in 2008. A total of 67,683 new title deeds were issued in 2008 with a fall of 38.1 per cent compared to 109 new title deeds issued in 2008.

The number of title deeds issued to the citizens of other GCC countries was 3,295 with a decrease of 14.2 per

cent compared to 3,841 title deeds issued to them in 2008. Al Mukhini also said 47,688 sales contracts worth over 415 million rials were signed in 2009. The total fees collected from such contracts

amounted to 12 million rials with a fall of 64.1 per cent compared to 34 million riyals collected in 2008.

As many as 950 exchange contracts were signed in 2009 with an increase

of 18.2 per cent compared to 804 signed in 2008. The total fees collected from these amounted to 46,000 rials with an increase of 7.5 per cent increase compared to 43,000 rials collected in 2008.

GCC construction sector likely to see boom

Source: *Oman Tribune* - January 21, 2010

The construction sector in the GCC is on course to achieve high growth this year following a rebound in the construction and real estate sector.

According to a recent report, this follows the global economic recovery beginning to gain a foothold in major industrialised countries.

The report says GCC countries are seeing stability in various economic sectors and activities which will play a major role in attracting investments and foreign funds.

The construction sector in the GCC states suffered big financial losses in the global crisis which led to most of the GCC countries delaying major

projects in 2009, which are estimated to be worth \$2.5 trillion in 3,519 projects.

According to the report, the Sultanate will be one of the most favoured investment destinations among GCC countries as it has certain elements in the construction and real estate sectors which will contribute to attracting domestic and foreign investments.

The report comes on the back of the Sultanate's preparation to implement its 8th five-year Plan, which is expected to meet the economic and investment aspirations, particularly in industrial investment, trade, tourism, ports, roads and other investment programmes keeping in view the vi-

sion for the Omani economy in 2020.

The government has set apart nearly 7 billion rials to strengthen productive sectors in its current budget with additional funds for development of strategic and service projects, including tourism and real estate.

The economic development confirms the demand for real estate will grow, which is also a key factor that will enhance the construction industry in Oman in the near future.

It is estimated that the Gulf region could spend nearly \$600 billion on infrastructure projects and construction sector thanks to the rise of oil prices.

Finance ministry okays deals worth 27.7m rials

Source: *Oman Tribune* - January 18, 2010

The Ministry of Finance on Sunday approved 13 agreements worth 27.7 million rials as part of the development projects being implemented by the Sultanate's government.

The ministry approved an agreement worth 11.91 million rials to provide food services for SQU students for three years. The second agreement worth 3.6 million was signed for constructing housing units at the hospital residential area in the Wilayat of Sur.

A cavalry track 'Al Rahba' will be built in the Wilayat of Barka at a cost of 2.24 million rials. Another

deal worth 1.72 million rials for the design, supply and installation of IT system for the dry dock project in the Wilayat of A'Duqm in the Al Wusta region will be implemented in 11 months.

The agreements approved include a 1.64-million-rial deal for the supply of medicines for the Ministry of Health, the construction of 37 housing units in Madirah village at Mahout in the Al Wusta region at a cost of 1.19 million rials and supply of vaccines for the Ministry of Health at a cost of 1.06 million rials.

Thirty housing units will come up in Al Jawiyah village in the Wilayat of

Mahout in Al Wusta region at a cost of 905,000 rials. Another 20 housing units will be built in Sarab village of the same wilayat at a cost of 725,000 rials.

Eighteen housing units will come up in Hafr village in the Wilayat of Bahla in the Al Dakhiliyah region at a cost of 720,000 rials. The Wilayat of Bahla will also gain with the construction of public utilities at cost of 612,000 rials.

Other agreements include, hiring staff for the colleges of technology at a cost of 551,000 rials and supply of vehicles for the Interior Ministry at a cost of 528,000 rials.

Vibrant new city in Duqm on anvil

Source: *Oman Observer* - January 16, 2010

Authorities overseeing the development of a world-scale port and industrial hub at Duqm on the Wusta coast, are laying the groundwork for the establishment of a model city that promises to be the pride of Oman's urban landscape in the future. Boasting international-class amenities and all the trappings of a modern urban setting, the proposed City of Duqm will be an integral part of the 'Duqm Development', a multi-billion rial initiative that will transform this remote corner of the Sultanate into an industrial powerhouse.

Other key elements of the ambitious Duqm Development initiative include a port and dry dock complex, free trade zone, industrial area, tourism zone, airport, and the country's first coal-fired independent power and water project — all of which are in various stages of design and development. The task of drawing up the urban design master plan of the proposed Duqm City will be assigned to an experienced consultant in a competitive international tender floated by the government recently. The successful bidder will advise the Supreme Committee for Town Planning (SCTP), which is overseeing the overall master-planning of the Duqm Development, in the urban design of Duqm City.

A number of well-known local and international consulting firms have

signalled interest in the contract. Bidders looking to participate in the tender include Ramboll, Dar al Handasah, KEO International Consultants, Khatib & Alami, Arcop Middle East, Parsons, Jurong, Integrated Consulting, Oman Arab Consulting, Meinhardt Consulting, Mott MacDonald, and Miles Engineering. Bids close on March 3, 2010. Envisaged at Duqm is a vibrant city designed on an innovative and sustainable socio-industrial model.

The city will be home to potentially tens of thousands of people employed by a number of mega industries, utilities and infrastructure projects due to come on stream at Duqm in the coming years. Opportunities in tourism, commercial activities, real estate, and support services like health, education, recreation and entertainment, will contribute to an influx of business investors, professionals and workers, as well as their families.

In master-planning the urban design of the city, the selected consultant will take into account, among other things, urban growth patterns and development densities, traffic and transport patterns and provisions, projected population and demographic growth, and provision of public amenities. Other issues to be addressed by the master plan include projected employment opportunities linked to the various industries planned at Duqm, provision of

community support services like health and education, provision of public parks and recreation areas, and the provision of water resource, wastewater and energy resource management.

Additionally, the Duqm urban master plan will establish the broad distribution and zoning of various residential typologies, industrial activities and major educational facilities. Furthermore, it will also identify the broad distribution of commercial facilities, sport and recreational facilities, cultural and entertainment facilities, and amenities such as hospitals and places of worship. A detailed transportation, road network, infrastructure and utilities plan will also be incorporated in the scheme.

To ensure the effective implementation of the master plan, the consultant will formulate detailed development control & urban design guidelines. These guidelines will serve as references for landowners, developers, architects and engineers engaged in any development within the city. Development guidelines and parameters will be designed to allow flexibility for innovative designs, while reflecting Oman's distinctive heritage and culture. Also as part of its brief, the consultant will prepare infrastructure plans for the city and tourism zone, which together form the core areas of the urban design master plan study.

New projects worth RO 87.5 million

Source: *Oman Observer* - January 12, 2010

The Tender Board has awarded projects worth 87.52 million rials. The projects awarded during the council's first meeting of the year here yesterday include: Providing teaching staff for technology colleges of the Ministry of Manpower (14.5 million rials — all other

figures in rial); additional works for the construction of the Hasik-Al Shuwaimiyah highway in Dhofar Governorate (13.99 million); civil works on Soqrah-Sharbatat-Shaleem-Marmoul road in Dhofar Governorate (5.45 million); adding new power generation units at

Khasab Power Plant in Musandam Governorate (2.99 million); construction of a power transformer station at the Royal Hospital (2 million); construction of power transformer station at Bausher Heights in Muscat Governorate (1.9 million); designing and construction of internal

roads in the Wilayat of Dima W'attayeen (Wadi Dima road) in the Al Sharqiyah region (1.85 million); construction of power transformer station at Al Zahia area in the Wilayat of Muttrah, Muscat Governorate (1.67 million); construction of power transformer station at the Airport Heights No 3 in Muscat Governorate (1.66 million); construction of power transformer station at Al Ansab area in Muscat Governorate (1.63 million); engineering works, supplies and construction of five

projects at Sohar Refinery (1.57 million); construction of a fertilizer factory in the Wilayat of Al Amerat in Muscat Governorate (1.57 million); additional works for Nizwa-Jibreen dual carriageway (1.44 million); additional works for the technical setup and supply of equipment for the radio transmission station in Al Buraimi Governorate (1.35 million); additional works for the improvement of Aqabat Wadi Saa on Hafeet al Zaroub road in Al Buraimi Governorate (1.18 million); construction of

power transformer station at Al Khoudh Area No 3 in Muscat Governorate (1.13 million); construction of electricity network and two sub stations in Khadra and Al Lakib in the Wilayat of Al Jazir in the Al Wusta region (836,836); additional works for the construction of main power transformer station and distribution network at the Wilayat of Duqm in the Al Wusta Region (785,020); providing the security guard services for SQU and SQUH (759,120).

Deal signed for Salalah Beach Resort project

Source: *Oman Observer* - January 8, 2010

The Salalah Beach Resort is one of integrated tourism projects that will develop tourism sector in the Sultanate by providing 320 hotel rooms and other facilities designed to attract a big number of tourists, said Tourism Minister Dr Rajha bint Abdulameer.

The project, whose implementation began two years ago, also offers employment opportunities for Omani job seekers. The project includes luxurious apartments and villas for free taking possession, world golf grounds, five hotels (five-star), two hotels, yacht anchorage for 200 boats, recreational areas, shops, restaurants and cafes.

An agreement was signed at the Chedi Muscat Hotel yesterday for the management of the Salalah Beach Resort between Muriya Tourism Development and the French Club Med company.

Dr Rajha said that the Salalah Resort implementation started two years ago and that it has a great tourism and real estate potentials. She explained that construction work in the project is progressing as planned. Dr Rajha added in a statement to journalists that signing an agreement with Club Med company comes after signing two similar agreements with world groups such as Rotana and Movenpick to manage two hotels within the Salalah Beach Resort. She pointed out that the project will attract tourists and investors throughout the year.

Samih Sawiris, Chairman of Muriya Tourism Development, said: "The beauty of Salalah has been attracting international tourists for many years and the addition of Club Med to the Salalah Beach Development will add a new level of world class accommodation resort. Muriya

Tourism Development aims to harness Oman's tourism potential with developments that harmonise natural beauty and human comfort and luxury".

Henri Giscard d'Estaing, Chairman and Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of Club Med said, "This exquisite project on the Salalah Coast will be the first Club Med resort on the Arabian Peninsula, the only part of the world where Club Med was not yet operating. It will be one of the most beautiful and achieved flagships of the new Club Med, which aim at being the worldwide specialist of all inclusive, multicultural, friendly and upscale holidays. The project includes luxurious apartments and villas for free taking possession, world golf courses, five hotels (five-star), two hotels, yacht anchorage for 200 boats, recreational areas, shops, restaurants and cafes."

Construction of 3 recharge dams underway in Sharqiyah

Source: *Oman Tribune* - January 8, 2010

The Ministry of Regional Municipalities and Water Resources is constructing a number of dams in different regions of the Sultanate in

order to prevent overflowing of wadis and make maximum utilisation of rain water for irrigation and other purposes.

The ministry is constructing recharge dams at Wadi Nam, Wadi Al Rasah and Wadi Al Uqaidah in the Wilayat of Al Qabil in Sharqiyah re-

gion at a cost of 6,156,250 rials.

Eng. Saleh Bin Hamad Al Harthy, director of dams department at the ministry, said that the construction of recharge dams was aimed at making maximum utility of rain water that are lost in the desert.

He said that the construction of underground reservoirs in Naba, Bateen and Al Manjar villages in the Wilayat of Al Qabil, and other villages in the lower region of the dam, would increase the water level of wells and aflaj in these villages. The dam will also provide protection to farms and property, located behind the dams through the retention of floodwaters. In addition to this, dams play major role in attracting tourists to the wilayat, especially

during the rainy season, he said.

He said that the three dams would be constructed with sand, stones and gravel filters. To protect the dams from natural calamities, large stones and pebble layer will be used in front and rear side of the dam in order to protect it from flooding and rainfall. Each dam will have a control tower to discharge water through a pipeline in addition to the scale to measure the water level, he said.

On the components of Wadi Nam dam, he said that it would be constructed with sand, stones and gravel filters. In order to protect the dam from natural calamities, large stones will be used at the front and rear side. The length of the dam will be 333 metres with a maximum

height of six metres. It will have a storage capacity of 0.722 million cubic metres of water, he said.

The Wadi Al Rasah dam will be constructed with sand and gravel filters. Large stones will also be used to protect the dam. The length of the dam will be 1,097 metres with a maximum height of five metres. It will have a storage capacity of around 0.775 million cubic metres of water. It will also have the discharge valve, he said.

Al Harthy said that Wadi Al Uqaidah would also be constructed on the same pattern. Total length of the dam would be 1,229 metres with a maximum height of 5.5 metres. It will have a storage capacity of around 0.435 million cubic metres, he added.

16pc increase in budget for infrastructure development

Source: *Oman Tribune* - January 3, 2010

The infrastructure development will get 16 per cent increase in the Sultanate's budget for 2010.

Giving details of the budget, HE Ahmed Bin Abdulnabi Macki, Minister of National Economy and Deputy Chairman of Financial Affairs and Energy Resources Council, said that more emphasis would be laid on improving the existing roads, seaports and airports as well as allocating additional funds for new infrastructural projects.

The minister said that the allocation for infrastructure development would be 950 million rials.

These allocations are set to cover the spending on continuing as well as on new development projects listed in the Seventh Five Year Plan (2006-2010) in various sectors, he said.

Macki said around 30 million rials has been allocated to cover the op-

erational expenses of new projects intended to be operated by some ministries during 2010. These projects are expected create around 4,000 job opportunities.

This is in addition to the economic growth resulting from operating such projects, in terms of increasing the private investment and the social development in the regions that host those projects.

He said that additional approbations for the road sector (1,777 million rials), including additional projects previously mentioned in our statements of previous years and the additional road projects of 2009 worth 724 million rials. They include implementation of the first phase (Barka-Wudam Al Sahil) road and the second phase (Sohar port-Khatma Malaha) of Al Batinah coastal road spending 274 million rials, projects in wilayats in response to the Royal Directives of the 2009 Royal Tour spending 195 million rials for paving

1,256-km road.

Construction of roads and bridges of the first, second and third phases in Quriyat spending 37 million rials, construction of roads according to the masterplan at Al Duqm at a cost of 43 million rials, Al Zroob-roundabout (Al Buraimi) double-carriage road (17km) - with studies and supervision spending at 23 million rials.

The construction of Arjuut-Ashkhareet-Srfiet (Dhofar Governorate) by spending 23 million rials, the dual-carriageway ring road from Arzat-roundabout to Rissaut -32km spending 20 million rials are also part of the plan.

There are additional approbations for port sector which costs 1,025 million rials for construction, development and expanding of Al Duqm Port (Al Wusta region) with an additional 788 million rials, including port expanding, marine works, con-

struction of the dry-dock and superstructure with consultancy services and supervision, he said.

Additional approbations for the housing sector amounting to 406 million rials for construction of 2,200 houses for the project-hit of coastal road in Al Batinah.

Macki said that there were additional approbations of 882 million rials for the airports sector. An amount of 450 million rials was approved in the previous budget for the first phase of the civil works at Muscat international airport which include the runway, roads, pathways, yard and the supporting services.

The budget has also earmarked an amount of 63 million rials for levelling, setting up and construction of drainage canals to reclaim the Muscat International Airport soil. An

amount of 121 million rials has been allocated for the implementation of the projects of the first package concerning the construction of four regional airports with consultancy studies for designing and supervision in Sohar, Al Duqm, Ras Al Hadd and Adam.

There are separate additional approbations for town planning and municipalities services sector. An amount of 120 million rials has been allocated for the proposed compensation as first phase for the owners of the properties affected by the Al Batinah coastal road.

For the removal of residues, pumping water pools and opening the main and internal roads affected by the exceptional climatic conditions in Muscat, 15 million rials also been allocated.

An amount of eight million rials has

been allocated to construct around 9,406 lighting poles and developing internal roads as per the 2009 Royal Tour projects. Five million rials will be spent on the construction of a fence around the Oryx protectorate and administrative control centres.

Ten million rials will be spent for reconstruction of parks and afforestation affected by the climatic conditions in Muscat. Nine million rials have been allocated for completion of the first phase of Khasab sewerage project and 21 million rials for lighting and developing internal roads in a number of wilayats.

To support Al Hafa area (Salalah) project, 11 million rials has been earmarked. As per the budgetary allocation, 53 million rials will be spent on construction of dual-carriage roads, internal roads and bridges at Dhofar Governorate to facilitate smooth traffic.

Oman construction sector to hit R01.6b

Source: *Times of Oman* - December 8, 2009

The Sultanate's construction industry is expected to hit R01.57 billion by 2013 — a 2.7 per cent annual growth, and demand is likely to remain high, according to a report by Business Monitor International (BMI), a Middle East-based research company.

The report also estimates that the construction industry in Oman will account for 5.2 per cent of the gross domestic product (GDP) in 2009, which represents real growth of 2.67 per cent year-on-year. A review of the current trends reveal that technology is a crucial factor in the development of buildings, infrastructure and transportation facilities amid the growing clamour of sustainability.

Industry experts feel the Sultanate's major projects will fuel activities in the construction arena as new office space, commercial projects, more

hotels and infrastructure will be the result of the Oman 2020 plan.

Additionally, Oman's specific market requirements and changing demographics will attract further investment in real estate development. Oman currently has a population base of between 2.5 and three million and it is growing at two per cent per annum.

With a rapidly expanding population and demand for infrastructure projects, OMNIX International, a regional technology service provider and integrator is eyeing the growing demand for more cost-effective and resource-efficient buildings and infrastructure in the Sultanate.

"Amidst the current economic climate, firms in Oman need interoperable and flexible technology tools for building information modeling (BIM) that can help them

deliver projects more quickly and cost-effectively," said Jayant Deshpande, Director, OMNIX International LLC.

"The 2010 versions of our software bridges communication between extended design and construction teams. These tools will help our customers more efficiently and productively solve their design and construction challenges".

The updated software in Autodesk's BIM portfolio includes 2010 versions of popular products including Revit Architecture, Revit Structure, as well as Revit MEP.

Designed to help increase industry adoption of the BIM process, products under Autodesk's 2010 portfolio is focused on helping project teams across disciplines to innovate, analyse energy performance and increase productivity.

Pacts inked for 500 houses

Source: *Times of Oman* - November 24, 2009

Sheikh Saif bin Mohammed Al Shabibi, housing minister, yesterday signed in the wilayat of Nizwa 30 agreements to construct 500 housing units in a number of wilayats of the Sultanate at a cost of more than RO18.5 million. The agreements come within the framework of the social housing program for low income families, an initiative adopted by the government in a bid to improve the standards of living of the Omani families and assisting them to have social instability by availing them proper housing.

The agreements included the construction of 155 housing units in the Al Sharqiyah region, 236 in the Al Wusta region, 79 in the Al Dakhi-

liyah region, 24 in Muscat governorate and six in the Al Batinah region.

The agreements include the construction of 155 housing units worth RO6,024,910 in a number of wilayats of the Al Sharqiyah region. They include the construction of 62 housing units in the wilayat of Sur at a cost of RO3,601,427, six housing units in Belad Sur at a cost of RO141,470, six housing units in the wilayat of Sur (first stage) at a cost of RO196,133, seven housing units at the wilayat of Sur at a cost of RO117,746, seven housing units at the wilayat of Sur (second stage) at a cost of RO195,818, five housing units at the wilayat of Ja'alan at a cost of RO155,451, four housing

units at Belad Sur in the wilayat of Sur at a cost of RO117,873, four housing units in Belad Sur at the same wilayat at a cost of RO126,971.

The agreements also included seven housing units in Al Khaba village (first stage) in Dima Wa Al Tayyeen at a cost of RO.164,893, eight housing units in Khaba village (second stage) at a cost of RO177,622, seven housing units in the wilayat of Sur (third stage) at a cost of RO225,435, four housing units in Dima wa Al Tayyeen at a cost of RO173,250, five housing units in the wilayat of Ja'alan (second stage) at a cost of RO119,704, and five housing units in the wilayat of Sur at a cost of RO116,632.

Strong demand for office space in Oman

Source: *Times of Oman* - November 22, 2009

The total value of construction projects for the commercial sector in the GCC between 2009 and 2010 is \$34 billion and around two per cent of this spend, totalling over \$710 million, will be within Oman, a latest research report said.

The study carried out by leading independent research company, Ventures Middle East on behalf of dmg world media, said, "Out of a total of 142,916 plots distributed at the beginning of 2008 in Oman, 4,102 plots or 2.9 per cent were used for commercial purposes. Additionally approximately 3.9 per cent of the plots existed as residential-cum-commercial use properties."

The research estimated that the majority of the office supply and demand in Oman is concentrated around the capital Muscat. "New office projects between 2009 and 2010 are estimated to be worth \$710 million, with interior design contracting (IDC) and fit-out expendi-

ture totalling \$85 million," the study stated.

"Despite the economic recession, Oman remains an attractive location for companies to locate to, and this is borne out by the fact that office space continues to grow within the country. In addition to the significant value of the commercial projects to the construction sector, there is massive potential for interior designers and office suppliers," Sinead Bridgett, The Office Exhibition event director said speaking about the research.

"The Office exhibition brings the office sector from across the globe into Dubai, and provides the ideal opportunity for companies from Oman to showcase their products and ensure they are part of this still growing sector," Bridgett added. New office projects are set to double between 2009 and 2010 within the GCC, according to new research commissioned by dmg

world media, organisers of The Office Exhibition.

Looking elsewhere in the GCC, in the UAE, the new office space in 2009 and 2010 is worth \$22 billion, with estimated fit-out and IDC spend at \$2.7 billion. In KSA, office space of around eight million square metre is expected to grow between 20-30 per cent by 2012. The total value of new projects is estimated at \$4.8 billion, with fit-out and IDC at \$577 million.

In Qatar, Doha's office market has experienced significant growth, with the value of total commercial office projects expected to be completed between 2009 and 2010 at \$3.1 billion, and IDC and fit-out estimated at \$374 million.

Office stock in the Kingdom of Bahrain is estimated at 500,000 square metres, and research suggests there is demand for an additional 80,000 square metres.

Project Majlis Oman on track

Source: *Times of Oman* - November 10, 2009

You are most likely to see giant mechanical arms of construction cranes rising into the air on your left side as you approach the Al Bustan roundabout from Wadi Al Kabir side. The site is the location of Majlis Oman project for which foundation work is currently under progress.

“After completion, it will be Oman’s iconic landmark built. The Majlis Oman will provide a unique perspective on the events that will shape the country’s future,” said Engineer Khalid Mohammed Al Balushi, project director of the Majlis Oman.

Armed with bachelor’s degree in civil engineering and post-graduate in construction management from

the United States, Khalid is leaving no stone unturned to see that the project is right on track.

The Majlis Oman project, epitomizing the optimism of His Majesty Sultan Qaboos bin Said, will house the Majlis Oman, Majlis Al Shura, Majlis A’Dawla, together with VIP areas, an information centre, library, offices and a host of other amenities.

Says Engineer Khalid, “The overall style of the splendid edifice will incorporate a harmonious blend of modern and traditional architectural elements. It is meant to combine historical and cultural influences with cutting edge technology to achieve a high-tech building which will project Oman to the world.”

The project is being built in two phases and has four main components. The imposing central building, the Majlis Oman, with a clock-tower, will house the Parliament Assembly hall, State Council and Majlis Shura halls and facilities to receive VIPs and senior officials.

The Council of Oman (Majlis Oman) is made up of member of the State Council (Majlis A’Dawla) and Consultation/Shura Council (Majlis Al Shura) as stipulated in Article 58 of the Basic Law of the State. It assists the government in drawing up the general policies of the state. The council meets at the request of His Majesty, to study and discuss matters raised by him, taking all its decisions by a majority vote.

HM orders RO249m projects

Source: *Times of Oman* - November 7, 2009

His Majesty Sultan Qaboos bin Said has issued Royal Orders on establishment of a number of development and service projects for roads, supply of electricity, water, health and housing in Al Batinah and Al Dahirah and governorates of Al Buraimi and Musandam, worth RO249.248 million.

His Majesty has also issued directives to ministers accompanying him on his royal tour to meet with walis of wilayats to identify needs and requirements of the citizens, and the services and projects required, an official source said.

HM’s orders stipulated execution of 702km of road, installation of 5,900 electricity poles and construction of 500 residential units in Al Batinah and Musandam, establishment of a hospital in Saham, a health centre in Sohar and another in Al Suwaiq, construction of souqs, slaughterhouses and transfer of overhead power line into ground ones, the source said.

The source said key projects included construction of the road of Wadi Halti in Sohar, the Wadi Shafan road in Saham and construction of roads in the mountainous areas of Al Khamirah, Safi and Sahi in Al Rustaq and construction of a bridge to link the banks of Wadi Bani Kharous in Al Awabi.

The projects also include development of a roundabout in Al Suwaiq and Al Khaboura and construction of Al Khabt road, in addition to the Khasab/Al Khalidiyah road in the wilayat of Khasab, the source said.

In the Al Dahirah region and the governorate of Al Buraimi, the Royal Orders stipulated construction of 591km road, installation of 3,506 electricity poles and installation of water supply network in Al Dahirah region and construction of 306 residential units. This is in addition to construction of dual road of Al Salif/Maskan, Al Hajr/Bilad Al Shahoum road, Asuad Al Gharbiyah road at Hamrat Al Daroa and construction

of internal roads in Maqnatay, Al Hayal and Majzi; as also asphaltting of the roads of Al Saninah/Al Fateh, Al Saninah/Al Rayhanah and Dhank/Al Khabit.

HM’s orders also covered expansion of the 45km road of Yanqul/Al Dariz and asphaltting of 34km of Al Mari/Qamirah and the 12km road of Hail Al Khanabsha/Humaira.

HM’s Royal Orders also stipulated installation of water network in Ibri Heights, Hila, Al Nahda 2, Al Ainain, Al Rabiyyah, Al Sabikhi, and Kawas, from Saih Al Masarat to Al Saninah and construction of water reservoir at Hail Al Khanabsha in the wilayat of Yanqul.

The source added that during the Royal Tour of His Majesty the Sultan, Omantel was carrying out construction of G3 Mobile Phone Stations in 135 villages of Al Batinah and Al Dahirah regions and the governorates of Al Buraimi and Musandam and has completed 39 stations.

Barr Al Jissah residences near completion

Source: *Times of Oman* - October 25, 2009

It seems the realty sector have finally started responding to the positive hues in the local market. Barr Al Jissah luxury residential development yesterday announced the near completion of its Phase II — comprising three compounds with 71 units including 15 villas and 56 townhouses.

“In today’s real estate market global investors and buyers look for credibility of the project, political and economic stability, friendliness of the local population and uniqueness of the environment,” said Jose Lora, chief executive officer, Juthoor Real Estate at a press conference hosted by Zubair Corporation and Juthoor.

Owners of the property are a mix of Omanis, expatriate Arabs, European and North American investors.

“The completion of the phase is an important landmark, but other addi-

tions including a retail concept in the heart of the resort will help ensure that Barr Al Jissah is a truly integrated tourism complex,” said Ziyad Al Zubair of the Zubair Corp.

Talking about the occupancy Lora said, out of 71 units, two properties are left to be sold. “High networth individuals still believe in real estate despite the downturn. In most cases 25 per cent of their investment portfolio constitutes real estate. Especially in the current market they look for value deals,” he added.

Barr Al Jissah Residence is one of the few real estate projects in Oman that has been open to international investors like the Wave and the Blue City, which also offer freehold property ownership.

At the event it was also announced that Juthoor Real Estate, who were appointed as the strategic construc-

tion and real estate consultant for the residential project have now also been appointed by the Zubair Corp. to manage Al Mazaar Souq at the Shangri-La resort complex.

Al Mazaar Souq property comprises 51 retail shops, two international restaurants, an amphitheatre with an open-air arena and a major game area. The project is part of Mohammed Al Zubair’s vision, for a fully integrated world-class leisure, residential and tourism project at Barr Al Jissah. Al Mazaar Souq shopping destination will showcase the Sultanate’s heritage, art and culture.

Lora added that it was a sign of the quality of the project and the confidence that the Zubair Corp. has in the robustness of the Omani and regional economy that had led to the ongoing development and implementation of new additional stages of the Barr Al Jissah development.

Dar Al Zain sells out all villas in Phase I

Source: *Times of Oman* - October 19, 2009

Dar Al Zain, the debut development project launched by Zain Property Development recently, exceeded all sales expectations with all the 36 five-bedroom villas in Phase I of the project being sold out. These villas are expected to be completed by June next year.

Sales have now begun for Phase II of the project, which comprises 43 residential units of single, twin, three and four bedroom villas. Future phases will be announced in the coming months.

Commenting on the success of the development, Mish’al Mohammed Abdullah Moosa, managing director of Zain Property Development, said: “The extraordinary turnout and interest that has accompanied the launch of our Dar Al Zain project highlights the importance of our vi-

sion to provide high-quality, affordable residential units for families in the Sultanate. The recent launch of Phase I villas provided us an opportunity to show visitors and potential buyers not only the quality of the finished villas, but also the quality of the on-going implementation and finishing stages of the project.”

“At Zain, we remain very committed to our target customers and throughout every stage of the project’s design and construction we have taken steps to ensure that the homes remain suitable and affordable for these families. We feel that we have identified a gap in the market for affordable homes in which families can reside without having to settle on the high standard of living to which they are entitled,” he added.

Zain Property Development is a family business established in 2008. Dar Al Zain is the debut development from the developer and covers a 62,000 square metre site in Al Seeb. The RO17-million project’s ultimate aim to cater to Omani families is evident from every aspect of the development. From the practical yet idyllic project location, conveniently situated just 15 minutes from Muscat International Airport, and yet only a two-minute drive from the picturesque Seeb beach to the extensive facilities planned to complement the site, the developer’s preoccupation with all things for family is clearly apparent.

The project requires a booking deposit of only RO5,000, followed by gradual bi-monthly instalments of 10 per cent.

Construction of Batinah coastal road project to commence shortly

Source: *Oman Observer* - October 13, 2009

Construction work on the Batinah Coastal Road, one of the biggest road initiatives currently being implemented by Oman's Government, will kick off shortly following the selection of contractors to execute the key first phase of the project.

India's Nagarjuna Construction Company (NCC) has been awarded Section 2 of the first phase at a cost of RO 149 million. Earlier, Turkey's Makyol was selected to execute Section 1 at a cost of RO 125.286 million. Both companies were selected in an international competitive tender that attracted bidding interest from a large number of major local and international contractors.

The Supreme Committee for Town Planning is overseeing the implementation of the 241 kilometre-long road, part of an ambitious initiative to improve road communications along the Batinah coast as well as open up large coastal swathes to economic, tourism and commercial investment. The all-weather, four-lane dual carriageway runs for the most part, parallel to the Gulf of Oman coast from Naseem Garden to Khatmat Malaha on the Sultanate's border with the UAE.

First out to tender was Phase 1, which will be implemented in two sections. The first section covers a 59.5 kilometre length from Naseem

roundabout to Sayyid Said bin Sultan Naval Base at Wudam al Sahel in the Wilayat of Musannah. As part of its RO 125.286 million contract, Makyol will also construct 85 kilometres of service roads and 15 kilometres of link roads. Underlining the size of the project, Makyol will also build one interchange and seven roundabouts at various points along the main carriageway, in addition to nine roundabouts on the service roads.

Section 2, which has been awarded to Nagarjuna Construction Company, covers a 65.7 kilometre length from Majees roundabout in Sohar to Khatmat Malaha in Wilayat Shinas. A number of service roads, link roads, interchanges, roundabouts and wadi bridges are also included in the company's RO 149 million contract. The remainder roughly 115-kilometre stretch of the Batinah coastal road will be tendered out in the Phase 2 development of the project.

Ahead of the construction of the carriageway, the government has already commenced the process of rehabilitating those displaced in modern residential zones complete with civil and social amenities. Saudi Arabia's Al Rajhi Development Company has been awarded a contract to build 2,200 housing units at a cost of RO 148 million in the first phase of the rehabilitation

programme. Construction of the homes will be undertaken in phases over a three-year timeframe to allow for the smooth and seamless relocation of the affected communities to their new residences.

Importantly, the coastal road project will also lead to the transformation of the Batinah waterfront and its hinterland. In addition to the residential zones, a series of traditional souqs will be developed in all the wilayats through which the coastal road crosses. These souqs, featuring sections for trade in fish, vegetables, animal auctions and other related activities, will be tourist and architectural landmarks in their own right.

When completed, the road project is also expected to contribute enormously to economic growth and infrastructure development along the length of the populous Batinah coast. It will provide new impetus to the region's agricultural and fisheries potential. Furthermore, the project will open up pristine swathes of beachfront to tourism and other economic opportunities, as well as bring development to small coastal towns and communities. Opportunities for investment in restaurants, lodgings, groceries, and other commercial establishments will mushroom in the wake of the road project, thereby supporting local employment and income generation.

Zain Property launches RO 17m Seeb villa project

Source: *Oman Observer* - October 7, 2009

Dar Al Zain, an affordable, family orientated villa and townhouse development, measuring some

62,000 square metres, at Seeb was launched in an unveiling ceremony of the show villa yesterday. Last

night's launch showcased Phase I of the development whose name 'Dar Al Zain' appropriately trans-

lates as “House of Beauty”, including the completed show-villa.

The project will be completed in four separate phases; Phase I will consist of 36, 5 bedroom twin villas and will be ready as early as June 2010. Phase II will deliver 46 homes of a variety of town-house and villa styles, including 3, 4 and 5 bedroom properties. Phase III will consist of 18 luxury individual villas and Phase IV will see a mixture of 84, 3 and 4 bedroom homes. The project is planned to be completed in its entirety by the fourth quarter of 2012.

Founded in January 2008, Zain Property Development is an Omani family business, and their debut development was designed to reflect these qualities on every level. “Dar

Al Zain was designed and constructed around the requirements of the Omani community; more specifically, Omani middle income families looking for a safe, clean and comfortable community in which to live,” said Mishal Moosa, MD of Zain Property Development.

The RO 17 million project’s ultimate aim; to cater for Omani families, is evident in almost every aspect of the development. From the practical yet idyllic project location, conveniently situated just 15 minutes from Muscat International Airport, and yet only a two-minute drive from the picturesque beach of Seeb; to the extensive facilities planned to compliment the site, the developer’s pre-occupation with all things family is clearly apparent.

Dar Al Zain will be a secure, gated development, giving peace of mind to resident families, and will feature a variety of carefully planned facilities such as a child-care day centre, a fully equipped gymnasium and pool, beautifully maintained gardens and an array of retail and food outlets carefully considered to compliment family life.

Moosa elaborated “Our goal is to make life easier for these families by providing them with affordable homes. Our properties reflect the character of the Omani community; our villas, for example, are built according to traditional Omani architectural style and yet also display the same quality of design and construction as more expensive, ‘luxury’ Developers”.

Indo-Italian JV wins contract to build deepwater bulk jetty in Sohar

Source: *Oman Observer* - September 29, 2009

The joint venture of Italy-based international engineering contractor Saipem and leading Indian infrastructure firm AFCONS, has been awarded a contract to design and construct a deepwater bulk jetty at the Port of Sohar. The total investment in the project, which also includes a dredging component to be undertaken by Van Oord of The Netherlands, amounts to RO 95 million.

Agreements for both the construction and dredging components of the project, as well as the credit facilities, were inked here yesterday at a ceremony held at the Grand Hyatt Muscat, and attended by high-ranking government officials, senior executives of the Port of Sohar, heads of banks funding the project, and contractors’ representatives.

Maqbool bin Ali Sultan, Minister of Commerce and Industry and Chairman of the Port of Sohar, signed the

agreements together with Jan Meijer, CEO of Sohar Industrial Port Company (SIPC). The investment will help create a major deepwater jetty at the Port of Sohar to support the bulk shipping needs of Brazilian mining conglomerate Vale, which is currently building a huge iron ore pelletising and distribution centre at the industrial port. With the addition of this 1,380 metre long and 25 metre deep jetty, the Port of Sohar will join a select handful of ports in the world with the capability to receive Very Large Ore Carriers of 400,000 DWT.

Speaking at the signing ceremony, Maqbool bin Ali said the project was a testament to the Port of Sohar’s robust investment appeal notwithstanding the global economic downturn. “Despite the still slow recovery of world markets from the financial crisis, this project demonstrates the confidence of the various investors and financiers in the

viability of the project and its financial stability over the long term. It also demonstrates confidence in the stability of Oman’s financial system,” he said.

The jetty project, he said, will be executed by a special purpose project company set up as a subsidiary to Sohar International Development Company (SIDC), which is a 50:50 joint venture of the shareholders of SIPC, namely the Government of Oman and the Port of Rotterdam.

SIDC was set up last year as a sister company of SIPC to invest in port-related infrastructure projects, development of Freezone Sohar, and other commercial viable and bankable projects, he added.

Significantly, the deepwater jetty project will be financed through an 80:20 debt-equity ratio and on a project finance basis without government guarantees or subsidies.

Providing the finance for the project is a consortium of six local banks — BankMuscat, National Bank of Oman, BankDhofar, Bank Sohar, Ahli Bank and Oman Arab Bank, as well as the State Bank of India (SBI). Signing the credit facilities agreement on behalf of BankMuscat, Abdulrazak Ali Issa, Chief Executive Officer, remarked that the transaction was the first of its kind in more than a year to achieve financial closure on a project finance basis. The

successful closure of this transaction, which was substantially oversubscribed, attested to the robustness of the project and would serve as a benchmark for future financing deals of this nature, he noted. Van Oord, which has many major dredging projects to its credit including previous work done at the Port of Sohar, will increase the depth of the existing approach channel from 18.5 metres to a depth of 23 metres. A new harbour basin will

also be created with a berthing pocket of 25 metres in front of the jetty. For their part, Saipem and AFCONS have set up a 50:50 joint venture to execute the construction of the jetty. Saipem will focus on the design and management of the project. The facility is set to come on stream in the first quarter of 2011 at around the same time that Vale's 1.4 billion iron ore pelletising and distribution plant will be operational.

\$100 million Ras al Hadd Airport contract set to be awarded in Q4

Source: *Oman Observer* - September 7, 2009

A contract for the execution of a key phase of the greenfield airport project in Ras Al Hadd in the Sharqiyah region is expected to be awarded in the fourth quarter of this year. Six firms are in the race for the Phase II package of the Ras Al Hadd Airport development contract estimated to cost around \$100 million.

The bidding line-up comprises of the joint venture of Alsim Alarko Sanayi Tesisleri Ve Ticaret AS and Nagarjuna Construction Company (NCC), Galfar Engineering and Contracting, Strabag Oman, Desertline Projects, Hanjin Heavy Industries and Larsen & Toubro (Oman). Technical and commercial bids, which were opened in July, are currently under evaluation.

Ras Al Hadd is one of six locations identified by the government for the establishment of regional airports as drivers of economic, commercial and tourism development in the different regions of the Sultanate. Greenfield domestic airports are also under various stages of design and development in Sohar, Duqm and Adam, while smaller gateways are also envisaged in Haima and Shaleem. Earlier this week, the Ministry of Transport and Communications, which is overseeing the development of the regional airports, as well

as the multibillion expansion of the Muscat and Salalah international airports, unveiled plans for a new domestic airport in Musandam Governorate. The move underscores the Omani government's continued emphasis on the modernisation of the country's airport infrastructure and the aviation sector in general. Judging by the pace at which it is being implemented Ras Al Hadd Airport is set to come on stream well ahead of the other domestic airport projects currently under development. Desert Line Projects, a local Omani contractor, is close to completing work on the first phase of the airport project, involving the construction of access roads and the provision of communications and power facilities.

The contractor is also preparing the site for the two main packages of the airport project — the Phase II Airside Infrastructure package, and the Phase III Terminal Building package. The Phase II package, which is the subject of the current tender, covers the construction of a four-kilometre-long runway, taxiway and apron, as well as the provision of fuel hydrant facilities and navigation aids, among other facilities. Envisaged in the third phase is the construction of a 20,000 square metre passenger terminal building

designed to accommodate up to two gated aircraft ranging from regional jets to the Boeing 747. Also included in this package are the construction of an Air Traffic Control (ATC) tower, and the provision of boarding bridges, baggage handling and security systems and fire-fighting facilities.

In keeping with the Sharqiyah region's enormous tourism significance, Ras Al Hadd Airport will be built to Code F standards of the International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO) making it suitable to handle some of the largest civilian aircraft in operation today. Besides catering to local and regional traffic, the airport is expected to catalyse the inflow of international tourists and nature lovers attracted by the Sharqiyah region's famed turtle sanctuary, the Rimal al Sharqiyah Sands, and other unique natural and historical attractions. Canada-based airport development specialist Pryde Schropp McComb Inc (PSMI), in association with Gulf Engineering Consultants of Oman, are leading a team of airport engineers, architects, planners and specialty consultants in the development of the project, which is estimated to cost \$250 million. The facility is slated to be operational during 2012.

Construction of new Rotana hotel well under way in Salalah

Source: *Oman Observer* - August 30, 2009

Foundation work on the sea-facing Rotana hotel within the Salalah Beach project under development by Muriya Tourism Development Company, is under way. 'Salalah Beach' project is set to include some of the most exclusive five star hotels amid its stunning beachfront scenery. Oman will experience the hospitality of some of the worldwide renowned brands for the first time such as Rotana, Movenpick Resort & Spa Salalah and Club Méditerranée. The Rotana Hotel in Salalah Beach is designed by well known architect, Rami El Dahan from the prominent El Dahan & Farid Engineering Consultants.

The company has over 29 years of experience working in architecture with emphasis on the use of locally available construction materials. They have successfully accomplished numerous projects in large

and small scale residential, hospitality, commercial and religious projects as well as rehabilitation and restoration projects. Construction work on the Rotana is proceeding with 3,683 m³ already excavated and more than 300m³ concrete for the foundations. The total land area is 263,000 square metres square with 520 metres of beach length. The project includes a main building and nine hotel clusters complemented with swimming pools, sports facilities with lagoon views and a beach restaurant. Scheduled to be completed by 2011, the hotel will incorporate 396 room keys and 47 real estate units.

"Salalah is a destination that has been attracting tourists from around the world. The international brands we are bringing in 'Salalah Beach' will play a fundamental role in harnessing the country's tourism po-

tential. Rotana at 'Salalah Beach' will be a signature hotel property for Rotana brand as well as Muriya, and will complement our beachfront hotels," stated Cyril Piaia, CEO of Muriya.

Rotana is one of the leading hotel management companies within the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region, and has a portfolio of 68 properties across 26 cities delivering the best of Arabian hospitality. Founded in 1992, the Rotana Group offers a unique understanding of the culture and communities of the Middle East.

This is combined with the expertise of a team contributing over 35 years of international experience in the service industry. In a short span of time, it has grown to be one of the leading hotel management companies in MENA.

Bidders line up for Duqm Airport infrastructure contract

Source: *Oman Observer* - August 24, 2009

In the latest of a succession of airport-related contracts tendered out by the government in recent months, the Ministry of Transport and Communications has invited bids for a key phase of the Duqm International Airport project in the Wusta region. International and local construction firms have been lining up to bid for the Airfield Infrastructure Package of the Duqm airport project since it was tendered out late last week.

Consolidated Contractors Company (CCC), Strabag Oman LLC, Erenport ?n?aat Sanayi ve Ticaret Anonim, Larsen & Toubro (Oman) LLC, Hanjin Heavy Industries & Con-

struction, Desert Line Projects, and Galfar Engineering & Contracting LLC are among the companies that have so far signalled their interest in bidding for the contract. The green-field airport project is central to the government's goal of developing Duqm into a major industrial and economic hub anchored by a world-scale port and dry dock complex.

Designed for a capacity of 500,000 passengers per year, the international-size airport is not only key to supporting inward investment into this area, but it also promises to open up large tracts of this remote, yet idyllic coastal stretch, to tourism. A local contractor, Desert Line

Projects, has already commenced work on the first phase of the airport project, which is coming up on a roughly 2,700-hectare site not far from a proposed industrial hub. Under a contract valued at RO 27.253 million, Desert Line Projects is developing access roads and utilities necessary to serve the airport during the operational phase.

The Airfield Infrastructure package, currently under tender, covers the construction of a 4,020-metre-long runway designed and built to Code F standards of the International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO). A pair of taxiways linking the runway and aircraft parking apron will

also be constructed, along with a passenger aircraft apron.

The selected contractor will also install airfield ground lighting and ground based navigation and meteorological aids, among other facilities. A fuel farm and apron fuel hydrant system may be added to the scope of the contract during the tendering phase. In the third and final phase of the airport project, likely to be tendered out sometime next year, the passenger terminal

building will be constructed, along with buildings for the cargo terminal, control tower, catering facilities, fire station, staff housing, and other landside support facilities.

The ministry has retained the services of Parsons International Limited to provide Programme Management and Consultancy Services for the Duqm Airport project, which is slated to be operational in 2012. Significantly, the tender for the Duqm project comes close on the heels of

a similar tender issued by the ministry for the airfield infrastructure package of Sohar Airport.

Like Duqm, Sohar will also feature a 500,000 passengers-per-year capacity terminal, 4-km runway and other facilities to enable it to handle some of the largest aircraft presently in operation worldwide. Four other domestic airports are under various stages of design and construction at Ras al Hadd, Adam, Haima and Shaleem.

Bids invited for Sohar Airport airfield infrastructure contract

Source: *Oman Observer* - August 19, 2009

Development of a green-field airport at Sohar is set to make further headway with the government on Monday inviting bids for the key airfield infrastructure package of the project. According to officials, the airfield infrastructure contract is the second of three packages that constitute the overall scope of the Sohar Airport project. As part of this phase, the selected contractor will build a 4,000-metre runway with turning loops at the ends, in addition to a full-length taxiway with high speed exits.

With a width of 75 metres, the runway will be designed to handle some of the largest aircraft in operation today, including the Superjumbo A380. Other works envisaged in this package are airside roads, power and water networks, fuel fire fighting systems, and navigation aids. The Ministry of Transport and Communications is overseeing the implementation of Sohar Airport, which is designed to handle 500,000 passengers and 100,000 tonnes of air cargo per year. It will also serve as an emergency alternative to Muscat International Airport.

When operational by the year 2012, the airport will further anchor Sohar's position as an industrial and

economic hub of the Batinah region. The facility will serve as a new gateway for domestic and international traffic into a region that has already attracted billions of dollars in mega industries set up within a world-scale industrial port. Several billions more are expected to be ploughed into an ambitious free zone in the making, as well as a raft of major tourism and real estate initiatives planned in Sohar and the wider Batinah region.

Importantly, the airport will also add to the development of a truly multimodal transport network in Sohar encompassing air, rail and road communications. A proposed expressway and rail network running the length of the Batinah region will provide high-speed transport links between Sohar and the rest of the country. Work on the airport project is already under way at a site just off Falaj al Qabail roundabout, about 10 kilometres north-west of downtown Sohar city. The well-known construction firm Strabag Oman has commenced work on the first phase of the project, covering site preparation works, and construction of access roads, among other services.

The airport terminal will be built in

the third phase. It will feature a passenger terminal building integrated with an air traffic control tower, cargo building, catering facility, air rescue and fire fighting building, and facilities for ground service and airfield maintenance equipment. Egypt-based engineering consultancy group Hamza Associates is the design consultant for the Sohar Airport project. Hamza Associates is supported by US based engineering, architecture and planning specialists Robert & Company and Burgess & Niple in the design of the facility.

France's ADPi has been appointed project manager to supervise Sohar Airport, among other domestic airports currently under development elsewhere around the Sultanate. Sohar Airport is being executed in tandem with a host of green-field airport developments around the Sultanate, as well as the expansion of the Muscat and Salalah international airports. In June, Dr Khamis bin Mubarak al Alawi, Minister of Transport and Communications, signed airport and aviation development contracts valued at a total of nearly RO 580 million. The lion's share was earmarked for contracts linked to the modernisation of the Muscat and Salalah airports.

Construction of Muscat Expressway gains momentum

Source: *Oman Observer* - August 9, 2009

Close on the heels of adding yet another momentous landmark to the Sultanate, construction of the 57-kilometre-long, Muscat Expressway is presently fast gaining momentum.

Comprising a series of 12-grade separated interchanges, this expressway will connect Al Qurum Roundabout with Al Naseem Roundabout via Al Khuwair, Al Ghubra, Al Athaiba, Airport, etc and is expected to be an alternative road to the Sultan Qaboos Street which has already reached its maximum daily traffic capacity.

Initially budgeted at RO 132 million and known as Southern Expressway, this state-of-the-art six-lane expressway is expected to reduce travel time considerably and save much of the time spent on commuting. Design of this highly strategic road is carried out by Parsons while Galfar is taking care of the construction side.

"The world over, development is a continuous process and a gradual advancement when it comes to construction of infrastructure", Khalil bin Abdullah al Balushy, Director, Information Directorate at the Information and External Relations, Muscat Municipality told the Observer.

"The vital veins being roads that can easily connect the city with various other parts of the adjacent places enabling easy and fast flow of traffic", Khalil said.

These giant strides towards development in Oman may have been a challenge to the officials of Muscat Municipality. The diverse topography with rocky mountains and narrow and restricted area between the sea and the mountain from the east being the main challenges.

"To face up these challenges, the municipality officials decided to implement a number of strategic roads that can withstand any challenge thrown by the fast development that will take place in the country", Khalil explained.

In 2004, the process started with research and studies for a number of quality engineering projects in the capital consistent with the successful development process and to be well-equipped to face the challenges of the phases of developments anticipated in the future. And that very thought saw the birth of 'Muscat Expressway' that kicked off in 2005.

The numerous benefits of this project vary from providing an alternative to the Sultan Qaboos Street to offering a perfect connection between all the parts of Muscat and neighbourhoods and an easy movement between residential, commercial and industrial districts and other utilities. This project is also expected to create an open horizon for the various parts of the city to communicate despite the natural obstacles and mountainous areas around Muscat.

Being constructed according to the highest international standards of highways, this dream project will provide plenty of room for the traffic flow from all over the country to Muscat. The expressway, with its dual carriageway with three lanes in each direction, will contain all the traffic from the access roads flowing towards Muscat.

Yet another strategic significance of this highway is that it will be able to connect to Muscat's three accesses. The first from the west towards Al Batinah road through Al Naseem Roundabout, the second from the south to the road coming from

Dhakhiliya and Sharqiyah connecting to Rusail road, and the third access will be the Bausher-Al Amerat road. After the strenuous construction activities through the rugged mountainous area between Bausher and Al Amerat, now, the arduous work is going on at the 6th Interchange.

The project consists of five phases and it is progressing at a commendable pace. The engineering design for the expressway is made according to the highest international standards prescribed by noted engineers who are closely working with the constructors. The project is designed to extend almost parallel to the Sultan Qaboos Street from the south, extending over 55 kilometres from the Qurum Roundabout which will be transformed into four-ways crossroad up to Al Naseem Roundabout in addition to 28 kilometres of access roads to and from the Sultan Qaboos Street.

Other engineering features include dual carriageway of three lanes on each direction and 12 high intersections in order to reduce the number of access roads as much as possible together with the special installations to protect the road across several deep valleys. Muscat Municipality is implementing these projects based on comprehensive study on the traffic inputs carried out throughout the capital city along with expected changes.

The studies resulted in a package of road projects consistent with the latest traffic standards to achieve the best traffic flow and to provide the best solution to the snarls that take considerable time on the roads. And besides, all these projects will be supporting each other in order to perform its anticipated roles in nation building.

Naseem A'Sabaa project 'will bring in more investments'

Source: *Oman Tribune* - August 3, 2009

Naseem A'Sabaa, an Integrated Tourism Complex (ITC) project in Muscat, costing over \$ 1.5 billion, will create more employment opportunities and bring in more investment to the Sultanate, said the project developers.

Oman-based Amouage Hotels and Resorts and Malaysia-based Bandar Raya Developments Berhad (BRDB), one of the leading developers, which signed a joint venture recently to build the ITC project, said that Naseem A'Sabaa, which will be a landmark project, would pave the way for new investment opportunities.

Radiance International, a company specialised in investment procurement, master planning, tourism development projects and real estate development projects played a major role in bringing the Omani and Malaysian companies on a common platform for the joint venture. Moreover, it also created the initial conceptual master plan for Naseem A'Sabaa.

The beachfront ITC project, which will be built on 400,000 square metre land, hardly 10 minutes from the Muscat International Airport neighbouring The Wave project, will

have residential villas, condominiums, two five-star hotels, a marina, marina apartments and commercial blocks.

"The Naseem A'Sabaa project is targeted at Omanis, GCC and other nationals," Dato Jagan Sabapathy, Chief Executive Officer, BRDB, said. The project, which will be completed in five years, will be of immense economic significance to the Sultanate," he said.

"Naseem A'Sabaa will have two hotels, a five star and a seven star, with around 600-650 rooms," His Highness Sayyid Khalifa Bin Taimur Al Said, Chairman of Radiance International told *Oman Tribune* on the sidelines of a press conference to announce the signing of the joint venture.

The joint venture was signed after two years of negotiations. Amouage Hotels and Resorts is the first private Omani company to set up an ITC project, he said.

"The project will pave the way for enhancing business relations between Oman and Malaysia," he said. "Naseem A'Sabaa will have a marina to serve the residents of the gated community. It will also have a shop-

ping centre, office and commercial blocks," he said.

The ITC project will offer 100 per cent freehold property rights to all buyers, including expatriates and foreign nationals, he said.

"The project will generate sales of around \$2.5 billion," Mohammed Al Khaldi, Chairman of Amouage Hotels and Resorts said. Amouage's vision is to develop an ITC project, which will be an asset for the Sultanate, he said.

BRDB is primarily involved in the development and management of prime residential and commercial properties in Malaysia. The company, which is one of the established property development companies in Malaysia, was listed on the Kuala Lumpur Stock Exchange in 1968.

BRDB is best known for its property development projects in Bangsar, Kuala Lumpur's popular and affluent suburb, including the Sri Penaga apartments, the luxury Bangsar Hill bungalows and so on. BRDB is also expanding its presence globally having embarked on a 325-acre high-end mixed use development in Lahore, Pakistan.

Freezone Sohar Phase 1 development flagged off

Source: *Oman Observer* - August 2, 2009

The first phase development of Freezone Sohar, an ambitious initiative with the potential to transform the Batinah region into Oman's industrial and economic powerhouse, has been formally kicked off by its promoters. The project is being developed by Sohar Freezone LLC, a newly established joint ven-

ture of Sohar Industrial Port Company (SIPC) and SKIL Infrastructure Limited of India. SIPC, which is a 50-50 joint venture of the Government of Oman and the Port of Rotterdam, manages the industrial port at Sohar.

Mumbai-based SKIL is India's leading infrastructure and development

company well known as a pioneer in conceptualising and developing special economic zones (SEZs). Besides developing the first private port in India, SKIL has also built one of the world's largest shipyards. Sohar Freezone LLC, which was awarded a concession by the government to develop, operate and

manage the 4,500-hectare free zone adjacent to the industrial port, has now unveiled a plan for the first phase implementation of the project. At the weekend, the company invited international and local consultants, with the requisite expertise, to prequalify for the detailed design and engineering contract for Phase 1 of the freezone project.

According to officials, Freezone Sohar is proposed to be executed in five phases. Envisaged in the first phase, covering an area of 500 hectares, are a number of downstream industrial and petrochemical ventures, warehousing and logistics services, and so-called 'soft' investments, such as educational, medical and other service-related amenities. A master-plan drawn up for Phase 1 of the SEZ project envisions investments organised into the following clusters: Trading & Logistics (121 hectares), Light Manufacturing (68 hectares), Petrochemicals (26 hectares), Aluminium activities (18 hectares), Iron and Steel (100 hectares), Cement grinding (7 hectares), and Education & Services (20 hectares).

Priority will be given to investments

that add value, such as those that source their feedstock and raw material needs from the metal and petrochemical industries operating at the port. Investments in logistics and 'soft services', such as educational and healthcare institutions, as well as social and leisure facilities including shops, restaurants and tourist amenities, will be given due consideration as well. A great deal of emphasis will also be accorded to investments that promote research and development. The selected consultant will be required to further develop and detail the broad master-plan already drawn up for Phase 1.

Also as part of its brief, the consultant will undertake a geotechnical survey of the site, and prepare a comprehensive design for the road networks, drainage systems and utility corridors, among other services. Sohar Freezone LLC has set August 17, 2009 as the deadline for the submission of expressions of interest in this regard. With an area covering 4,500 hectares, which is more than twice the size of the huge successful industrial port next door, Freezone Sohar has the potential to become a powerful driver of eco-

nomic growth and employment generation throughout the populous Batinah. Potential investor interest in the venture is said to be very promising.

Investors will enjoy a host of competitive advantages by virtue of the free zone's strategic geographic location outside the Strait of Hormuz, and its access to world-class logistics. Equally advantageous is the Zone's proximity to the major markets of the Gulf, Middle East and the Indian sub-continent. Plans for an international airport and a new rail system at Sohar will further enhance the project's investment appeal. Significantly, the free zone authority has already drawn up a regulatory regime and a range of business incentives to attract local and international investment into the project.

This includes a policy of no minimum capital requirements, 100 per cent foreign ownership, free repatriation of capital and profits, relaxed corporate tax holiday, competitive land lease tariffs, and duty exemptions on imports and exports (with only 5 per cent duty on sales to the Omani market).

Pacts worth RO47m inked for projects

Source: *Times of Oman* - July 31, 2009

Fifteen agreements to implement a number of projects in the municipalities and water resources sector, at a total cost of RO47,023,013, were signed by Abdullah bin Salim Al Rowas, minister of regional municipalities and water resources, in his office at the ministry yesterday.

The projects in the municipalities sector include designing and paving of a number of internal roads involving a total length of 41.8km. These include roads in Sharjat Fatma Shaqarqa'a, Hillat Al Sidafi, Hillat Al Qaham and Tiwi Said in the wilayat of Wadi bani Khalid, involving 2.5km, 3km and 4.5km, respectively.

Internal roads in the wilayat of Al Mudhaibi, involving a total length of 27.7km, will also be paved. Another project aims at designing and constructing Rahab-Al Tiwi road in the wilayat of Liwa at a length of 4.10km.

The projects also include expansion of the treated water pipeline from the wastewater station in the wilayat of Saham to the main road (second phase), development and beautification of the business district at Al Bidayah in the wilayat of Al Suwaiq. They also include expansion of the treated water pipeline from the wastewater station in the wilayat of

Saham to the main road (first phase), construction of a public park in the wilayat of Al Rustaq, construction of the wastewater station in the wilayat of Liwa and the wastewater network (second phase) in the wilayat of Saham.

The agreements related to water projects include construction of a dam to protect the populated areas from flood havoc at Al Amerat Heights in Muscat governorate. In addition to Al Amerat, the project will also protect Al Qurm trading area from major floods like the unusual weather condition that hit the Sultanate in June 2007.

First private Omani tourism complex project announced

Source: *Oman Observer* - July 29, 2009

A Malaysian real estate developer and an Omani landowner have signed a joint venture to build an integrated Tourism Complex (ITC) called Naseem A'Sabaa.

Officials of the two companies, namely Bandar Raya Developments Berhad (BRDB), Malaysia, and Amouage Hotels and Resorts LLC, said the Naseem A'Sabaa would be built on a 400,000 square metre area in Al Athaiba. This is way above the smallest size (200,000 square metres) allowed for an ITC project in Oman.

Muhammad al Khaldi, Chairman, Amouage Hotels and Resorts, said the project is expected to generate

sales worth \$2.5 billion and will be up and running in the next five years. The joint venture has been concluded following almost two years of negotiations. Naseem A'Sabaa is a beachfront ITC project hardly 10 minutes from the airport neighbouring The Wave project. It will have residential villas, condominiums, two five-star hotels, a marina, marina apartments and commercial blocks.

The Naseem A'Sabaa project will be designed to target Omanis, Gulf nationals and a select group of Europeans, Dato Jagan Sabapathy, Chief Executive Officer, BRDB, told the *Observer* in response to a question.

Sabapathy said the project is of great economic significance to Oman as it will go a long way in creating new economic opportunities. Preliminary planning for the project has just begun.

Dato Muhammad Zamri, Ambassador of Malaysia, underlined the project's importance, saying it is set to be a unique one and quite different from the existing ITC projects in the Sultanate. Radiance International LLC, an investment procurement and real estate projects company, played a key role in bringing the Omani and Malaysian sides on a common platform for concluding the joint venture.

Cement demand grows as construction sector thrives

Source: *Oman Observer* - July 28, 2009

Cement sales by the Sultanate's two principal cement manufacturers grew by significant margins during the first half of this year, underscoring the construction sector's pivotal role in sustaining the economy through the current global downturn. Half yearly financial results released by Oman Cement Company and Raysut Cement Company in recent days show increases averaging 17.5 per cent in cement sales during the first half of this year, compared to figures for the corresponding period last year.

"It has been business as usual — where cement sales are concerned — this past six months," an industry executive commented to the *Observer*. "Demand has been growing by 10-12 per cent, with all segments of the building construction sector continuing to perform well. In particular, ongoing infrastructure projects of the government have

helped maintain the momentum of cement consumption."

Oman Cement and Raysut Cement account for almost all of the Sultanate's domestic cement requirements, although small quantities of bagged cement are imported by road from the United Arab Emirates (UAE) or via Oman's commercial ports.

Releasing its financial results for the half year ended June 30, 2009, Oman Cement announced a 17.35 per cent increase in cement sales, which jumped to 1.133 million metric tonnes during this period from 0.9966 million metric tonnes during the same period last year. This year's volumes also included 89,794 metric tonnes of cement that was imported to meet the domestic demand. The growth in cement sales boosted revenues by 32.1 per cent to RO 35.549 million during the first

half of this year, from RO 26.902 million during the same period last year.

Net profit after tax jumped a hefty 46 per cent to RO 11.178 million this year, as against RO 7.642 million during the corresponding period last year. "The demand for cement in Oman continues to remain at a high level. This situation is expected to continue in the near future. In order to meet the demand for cement, the company is continuing to procure clinker to produce additional cement. The average price of imported clinker is expected to be lower in 2009 as against the 2008 prices," Qahtan bin Yarub al Busaidy, Chairman of Oman Cement stated.

To meet the demand growth, Oman Cement imported 242,696 tonnes of clinker to supplement its own production of 602,220 tonnes during the first half of 2009. Total cement

produced rose seven per cent to 1,028,808 tonnes this year, as against 961,563 tonnes during the first half of 2008. Raysut Cement too posted similarly upbeat sales results for the first half of 2009. Domestic cement sales climbed 18.3 per cent to reach 1.581 million metric tonnes. Exports during this period amounted to 352,654 tonnes, taking the company's total deliveries of cement to 1.581 million tonnes this year, as against 1.395 million tonnes during the corresponding period of 2008.

While clinker production fell slightly on account of kiln maintenance shutdowns, cement production was lower by 30.6 per cent to 1.026 million tonnes this year because of planned maintenance and rehabilitation works on some of the plant's cement grinding cements. The shortfall was made good through imports amounting to 724,368 tonnes of cement.

"Going forward, despite the negative factors affecting the economy,

we expect that the measures taken by the Sultanate to inject more liquidity through the banking system will ease the impact of the crisis and achieve sustained economic development over the whole year. We therefore project demand for cement to continue growing albeit at a slower rate of 6-8 per cent for the financial year, and Raysut Cement will continue its efforts to meet the demand of the market," Mohammed bin Alawi Ali Muqaibal, Chairman of Raysut Cement stated.

Muriya golf projects work underway

Source: *Oman Observer* - July 19, 2009

Muriya Tourism Development appointed Richard McGlynn as Golf Project Manager for its ITC projects 'Salalah Beach' and 'Jebel Sifah'. PGA Course 1 and Resort Course 2 at 'Salalah Beach' have been designed to maximise the playability of the courses while 'Jebel Sifah' has been designed to exploit the natural surroundings.

A native of Ireland with over 15 years experience in golf course construction and management, McGlynn is the holder of a Masters of Science Degree in Sports Surface Technology from Cranfield University, England. He brings with him a wealth of experience gained while working on numerous projects in the UK, Switzerland, Dubai, Russia and India. He believes that sustainable planning, construction and maintenance methods are key to the success of the projects.

Construction work has begun on both Salalah and Sifah sites with bulk earth works underway. International shapers are on site beginning to recreate the architects' designs on the ground. Deep bore wells and desalination plants have been installed to provide the required water for irrigation purposes.

The four-hectare turf nursery for the propagation of the golf courses'

grass has been constructed and will be planted in the coming months with the latest varieties of turf grass for ocean neighbouring courses for which import permits have been obtained in the Sultanate. Contracts are currently being composed for the supply of irrigation materials and a professional team of experienced installation engineers assembled.

The detailed case studies being researched to determine the best method of providing the required growing medium for supreme turf establishment are also close to completion. "These projects are sure to bring sustainable year-round tourism to Sifah and to Salalah," said McGlynn. "The high-profile golf courses are designed and will be maintained to international standards suitable for PGA events and are sure to raise global awareness of Oman as a quality golf destination."

A constant year-round flow of tourism will also enable these localities to grow by creating job opportunities for the local people and supporting industries. Both the courses at 'Salalah Beach' are being designed by Karl Litten & Jeffery Myers of Litten Myers Golf Course Architects, North Carolina. Litten has designed courses in the US, Japan, England and Australia to name

a few, and has been designing courses since the early 80s — many of which host PGA championships.

In the Middle East, he is credited for courses such as Riffa in Bahrain, the original Creek and renowned Emirates in Dubai. Litten Myers will bring to 'Salalah Beach' the trusted technique of merging golf and real estate development to produce courses that blend into the beautiful surroundings.

In 'Salalah Beach', the seafront tees and greens running from a links environment on the championship course are designed for the long hitters and the tour professionals. On the other hand, generous fairways amongst the rocky arid surroundings under the mountains of the resort course are designed with the relaxed golfer in mind.

'Jebel Sifah' golf course is designed by the Swiss architect Peter Harradine of Dubai. Harradine is a third generation golf course architect well known throughout Europe and the Middle East for producing the ultimate course for the surroundings. Harradine Golf boasts PGA Tour courses such as Abu Dhabi "National", Doha Golf Club in the Middle East to Bad Ragaz and Losone in Switzerland and Gut Hausern in Germany.

RO30m spent on airport expansion, says CEO

Source: *Oman Tribune* - July 18, 2009

George Billow, Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of Oman Airport Management Company, said that the company, since its establishment in 2002, spent RO30 million for expansion, development and improvement of existing airports in the Sultanate.

In a statement he said that the company had implemented a number of projects at the Muscat International Airport which include expansion of the departure building, expansion of the parks opposite to it and expansion of the arrival terminal. He said that the aim of these expansions was to meet the demands of growing number of passengers and flights.

Work is under way at the multi-phased expansion work of the departure terminal at a cost of RO3 million. The company is currently undertaking a study on the expansion of the car parks and increasing the number of shops, utilities and ser-

vices at the airport, he said. The CEO said: "The Sultanate attaches great importance to the air transportation sector as it is the air bridge which links the Sultanate to the rest of the world. The company now promotes the existing opportunities and facilities at Muscat airport and Salalah airport to attract more air carriers and freight companies to operate flights and tourist flights to the two airports."

The Oman Airport Management company in association with the tourism sector is promoting tourism in the Sultanate in general and the Muscat city in particular. This will have a positive impact on Omani economy.

He said that the air traffic statistics point out that Muscat and Salalah airports are witnessing a growth in air traffic despite the global economic recession. "There is an increase in the number of flights operated by the air carrier especially dur-

ing the tourism seasons," he said.

Replying to a question on the deadline for completing the new Muscat airport, he said that the airport would be ready by 2012 and will cater to 12 million passengers a year. The airport will be provided with all amenities such as the tubes which directly connect the airport to the flights.

He also said that work has already begun at a number of regional airports such as (Sohar, Duqm, Ras Al Had and Adam). They will be ready for use by 2012, he said.

George Billow also said that the capacity of the existing Muscat airport, after completing the expansion, will reach 6 million passengers and will handle 490 departure flights a week. He said that after completing the new airport, the present building would be used as offices for the trade companies or offices that support the new airport and air carriers.

Muriya ties up with German contractor Lupp

Source: *Times of Oman* - July 12, 2009

Muriya Tourism Development Company has tied-up with Germany based Lupp Group to form Lupp Middle East LLC. The recently established joint firm will execute the turnkey construction of 18 marina apartment blocks and a marina boutique hotel in Muriya's 'Jebel Sifah' project.

"Lupp Middle East has provided us with an opportunity to bring German quality and expertise in construction for the first time to this region. We draw strength from the parent company's 99 years of proficiency in the field of turnkey construction

and engineering, employing innovative techniques to deliver high quality at every stage of production," said Robert Smith, managing director, Lupp Middle East LLC.

"Our joint venture with Lupp will help fulfil our commitments towards the Government of Oman in terms of hotel development. By bringing the best of modern techniques of construction into the project, Muriya and Lupp aim to achieve their targets on time. We are however also willing to consider any other external contractors as long as they deliver in the required timeframe and

adhere to our quality standards with related modern techniques for our turnkey projects," emphasised Cyril Piaia, CEO of Muriya.

Based in Shatti Al Qurum, Lupp Middle East has a staff of approximately 40 members that include German expat management, engineers, supervisors and Omani administration.

It currently employs 250 skilled labour and foremen at the Jebel Sifah construction site, and the number is expected to increase to over 500 within the next two to three

months.

The construction company is presently simultaneously executing the construction work on seven blocks and the boutique hotel, i.e. 50 per cent of the total work is now in construction in 'Jebel Sifah'. The work on further apartment blocks will also begin shortly.

Located 45km from Muscat, 'Jebel Sifah' is set on a land of 6.2 million

square metres. In addition to four five-star internationally acclaimed hotels, it will also incorporate boutique marina hotels, a world-class 18-hole PGA Golf Course, 200-berth marina and marina town, restaurants and cafes, retail shops and freehold luxury properties.

Muriya was established in 2006 when Egypt's Orascom Hotels & Development (with 70 per cent stake) and Omani government

owned Omran (with 30 per cent stake) came together in a joint venture. Since then, Muriya has announced four ambitious projects across beautiful locales of Oman. Two of the ongoing projects are integrated tourism complexes (ITCs) offering freehold properties — 'Jebel Sifah' and 'Salalah Beach'. In addition, Muriya also has extensive plans to develop 'City Walk' in Muscat and a Boutique Hotel on 'Al Sodah Island'.

Sohar Industrial Estate embarks on Phase 7 expansion

Source: *Oman Observer* - July 11, 2009

Sohar Industrial Estate (SIE) is preparing to launch its biggest expansion to date in a reflection of the Sohar's strong appeal as a magnet for industrial and commercial investment. The Phase 7 expansion will add around 780 hectares to Sohar's burgeoning industrial estate, which is by far the fastest growing among the six industrial parks administered around the Sultanate by the Public Establishment for Industrial Estates (PEIE). The upgrade will allow for SIE to cater to the robust demand for leased industrial plots in this growing economic hub. PEIE has appointed the well-known Omani engineering consultancy firm, National Engineering Office (NEO), to undertake the detailed design and construction supervision of SIE's Phase 7 expansion project.

As part of its brief, NEO will design the entire land infrastructure for new industries, including the road network, and corridors for the requisite utilities, including gas supply lines, potable water and sewage pipes, power supply and telecom cables, among other services. Phase 7 will be developed on a site located just beyond the corridor for the proposed Batinah Expressway as it runs via Sohar from Barka to Shinas.

Already, a number of plots within the Phase 7 zone have been allocated to investors looking to set up small and medium-size plants involving the manufacture of steel products, electrical goods, building materials and ready-mix cement.

Applications for leased plots at Sohar have also been received from manufacturers of construction materials and wood products, as well as shipping and logistics firms looking to set up warehouses and stores in the industrial port city. SIE currently hosts around 70 projects which are engaged in the manufacture of various products, such as marble, food-stuff, detergents, leather, furniture, toothpaste, beverages, ice cream, resins, glass and steel bars. At least 40 other projects are under various stages of construction, while a further roughly 60 ventures are on the anvil. The giant smelter of Sohar Aluminium, which began operations at full capacity earlier this year, is the biggest of SIE's tenants. Total industrial investments in SIE gross around \$1.25 billion.

The industrial park's location, midway between Muscat and Dubai, combined with its modern infrastructure facilities and communication links, makes it an attractive des-

ination for investment, say officials. The Phase 7 expansion comes close on the heels of the development of SIE's sixth phase, which houses a Metals Park earmarked exclusively for downstream aluminium units which depend on hot metal from the Sohar Aluminium smelter next door. Covering an area of 1.72 million square metres, Phase 6 already hosts a number of downstream aluminium ventures, at least one of which is already operational.

Others are in various stages of design and development. Also envisaged is a Plastics Park catering to industries downstream to the petrochemical projects currently operating or under development at the nearby Port of Sohar. National Engineering Office (NEO), which is handling the design of the Phase 7 expansion project, has undertaken a number of similar design contracts for PEIE in the development of its industrial parks. The company was involved in the design of some phases of the Rusayl Industrial Estate, as well as the complete master plan and design of the Nizwa Industrial Estate. A contract for the land infrastructure development of Phase 7 of Sohar Industrial Estate is expected to be awarded before the end of this year.

22 pacts on developing ports, airports signed

Source: *Times of Oman* - July 1, 2009

The Sultanate's government yesterday signed 22 development agreements for ports and civil aviation sectors at a total cost of RO87,793,229 as part of its efforts to develop the infrastructure and activate its role in serving the national economy.

The agreements were signed on behalf of the Sultanate's government by Dr Khamis bin Mubarak Al Alawi, transport and communications minister while the chief executive officers (CEO) signed for the local and international companies.

The agreements, related to ports and marine affairs sectors, included a number of development projects.

The first agreement includes the design, manufacture, supply, installation and inspection of 14 winches for the dry dock in the Wilayat of A'Duqum in the Al Wusta region, at a total cost of RO24,200,000 with Shanghai Zhenhua Port Machinery Company of China.

The second agreement includes the design, supply and installation of two gates for the dry dock in the Wilayat of A'Duqum in the Al Wusta region at a total cost of RO7,674,421 with Top Great Engineering & Marine Pte Ltd Company.

The third agreement is for provision of consultancy services for the design, supervision and operation management study for the new port and dry dock construction project in the Wilayat of A'Duqum in the Al Wusta region, at a total cost of RO7,001,850 with Haskoning UK in collaboration with Khatib & Alami company.

The fourth agreement includes the supply of lifting and heavy transportation equipment for the dry dock in the Wilayat of A'Duqum in the Al Wusta region at a total cost

of RO5,318,535 with Bahwan Projects and Telecoms. The fifth agreement with LG Electric includes the design, manufacture, supply and installation of the pumping system project in the Wilayat of A'Duqum in the Al Wusta region, at a total cost of RO4,886,037.

The sixth agreement with Dai Hong Electric company includes the design, manufacture, supply, installation and inspection of power generator project in the Wilayat of A'Duqum in the Al Wusta region, at a total cost of RO4,504,450.

The seventh agreement with Bioksan Engineering includes the drawing, manufacture, supply, installation and inspection of the environmental utilities of the dry dock in the Wilayat of A'Duqum at a total cost of RO3,257,100.

The eighth agreement with Hankook Industry Discovery Machinery company includes the design, manufacture, supply, installation and inspection of the lifts of the workshops at the dry dock in A'Duqum at a cost of RO2,739,600.

The ninth agreement with the Korean Daewoo Shipbuilding & Marine Engineering includes the provision of consultancy services for the supervision of the implementation of the upstream works project for the dry dock in A'Duqum port at a total cost of RO1,415,057.

The 10th agreement with Bahwan Projects company includes the design, manufacture, installation and inspection of the iron cutting utilities at the dry dock in the Wilayat of A'Duqum at a cost of RO1,241,870.

The 11th agreement with Samsung includes the drawing, manufacture, supply, installation and inspection of the air compressor at the dry dock in the Wilayat of A'Duqum at a

cost of RO1,211,402. The 12th agreement with Hanshang company includes the drawing, manufacture, supply, installation, inspection and refining of the paint materials of the dry dock in A'Duqum at a total cost of RO519,040.

The 13th agreement with Mohsin Haider Darwish company includes the design, manufacture, installation and inspection of the gas storing utilities for the dry dock in the Wilayat of A'Duqum at a cost of RO433,850.

The 14th agreement with Al Sarooj Construction company is related to the civil works for the ferry boat port at Shinas Port, at a cost of RO8,084,123.

The 15th agreement with Al Sarooj Construction company includes the civil works for the ferry boat port at Khasab Port, at a cost of RO1,284,633.

The 16th agreement with United Arab Marine Workshop company includes the construction of docks and floating bridges for the ferry boat port and utilities in Muscat, Khasab and Shinas at a total cost of RO5,852,415.

The 17th agreement with WS Atkins International & Company is related to the development works at Sultan Qaboos Port at a total cost of RO902,500.

The 18th agreement with Barsons International & Partners company includes the consultancy services for the design and supervision of the infrastructure related to the construction of temporary bridges at Sohar Industrial Estate roundabout at a total cost of RO276,804.

The 19th agreement with Fujro Middle East and Partners includes the site inspection works for liquid

berth methanol Salalah project at Salalah Port, at a cost of RO171,350.

In the civil aviation sector, the first agreement with Ghafari Associates company includes the consultancy services for the design and supervision of airplane shelters at Muscat International and Salalah airports, at a total cost of RO4,093,688.

The second agreement with Ghafari Associates includes consultancy services for the design and supervision of the construction of cargo terminal at Muscat International and Salalah airports, at a total cost of RO1,458,305.

The third agreement with Al Hatmi Engineering Consultancy is related

to the design and supervision of the catering building at Muscat International and Salalah airports, at a total cost of RO1,266,150.

Said bin Hamdoon Al Harthy, undersecretary for ports and marine affairs at the ministry and a number of officials from the ministry attended the signing ceremony.

Thirteen firms eye retendered Shinas Port consultancy study

Source: *Oman Observer* - June 28, 2009

Thirteen consultancy firms are in the race for a key government contract to study the potential for establishing a commercial port at Shinas, on the Sultanate's northern Batinah coast. Interest in the contract has been strong despite the government's decision to re-invite competitive bids for the tender earlier this year, after scrapping an earlier tender floated last year. Fresh bids were opened last week with 13 local, regional and international firms having submitted firm offers. The new bidding line-up comprises Cowi & Partners, WS Atkins International, Jurong International, Typsa Consulting, Khatib & Alami, Korea Port Engineering Corp, Arup Gulf Limited, Consulting Engineering Services, Dar al Handasah, Modern Engineering Consultants, Pacer Consultants, Hanscomb & Co, and Sering International. A commercial gateway at Shinas is in line with the government's longstanding objective of establishing suitable maritime infrastructure to support socio-economic growth at key areas along the Sultanate's coast.

Located close to Oman's border with the UAE, Shinas is seen as well-positioned to exploit its strategic location in a region that has witnessed unprecedented economic growth. It not only abuts international sea routes linking the Upper Gulf, Northern Oman and other In-

dian Ocean hubs, but its relative proximity to the commercial and industrial growth centres of Dubai, Abu Dhabi and Sohar can be suitably leveraged to attract maritime traffic and economic investment.

Equally promising is Shinas' appeal as an idyllic tourist destination, with a modern harbour expected to bolster the town's ability to attract small cruise ships, yachts and other passenger ships. Shinas has already been identified as a potential magnet for tourism-related investments. Its white-sand beaches overlooking the expanse of the Gulf of Oman make attractive settings for upscale integrated tourism and residential developments. Moreover, the high-speed ferries, which are popular with tourists, also halt at Shinas as they ply between Muscat and Khasab in Muscat Governorate.

A new port is also expected to provide a huge boost to the town's lucrative fisheries activities, leading to potential investments in a fleet of modern fishing vessels, and even fish processing plants. A significant chunk of Shinas' fish output is currently exported to markets in the UAE. The port is proposed to be developed at the site of an existing jetty at Shinas, which primarily serves the town's fishing community as well as the local trade in foodstuff and essentials. The Minis-

try of Transport and Communications, which is overseeing the development of the project, has deemed the current facility inadequate to meet the area's growth needs.

Based on the consultant's recommendations, authorities will decide whether to upgrade the existing facility or alternatively set up a Greenfield port at a new site. The selected consultant will undertake a comprehensive study covering the planning, technical, financial and economic aspects of establishing a commercial port at Shinas. Furthermore, the firm will design and master-plan the development of the proposed Shinas facility, as well as advise the government on its operation and management when it is eventually up and running.

Also as part of the study, the consultant will assess opportunities for commercial and infrastructure investment in and around the proposed Shinas port. Based on traffic and demand forecasts, the study will identify requirements for land within or around Shinas Port for the establishment of warehouse and storage facilities, industries, commercial activities such as banks, logistics and tour services, as well as a Free Trade Zone or Special Economic Zone. A contract award is expected during the next quarter.

BankMuscat, NBO, Towell Piramal form new real estate company

Source: *Oman Observer* - June 28, 2009

BankMuscat, National Bank of Oman (NBO) and Towell Piramal have joined hands to form a new real estate company, Oman Urban Development Company LLC (OUDC). OUDC aims to bring about a paradigm shift in the Oman real estate industry by providing bespoke solutions ranging from budget to luxury accommodation, warehousing and industrial complexes, mass accommodation, themed and mixed use developments. The signing of the shareholders agreement was held recently at Bait Towell in Al Athaiba.

The event was attended by Hussain Jawad, Chairman, W J Towell Group, Abdul Razak Ali Issa, CEO, BankMuscat, David Murray Sims, CEO, National Bank of Oman and

Khushru Jijina, MD Piramal Sunteck, India and other officials.

“This tie up is the first of its kind in Oman and we are very proud as a group to be involved in this venture,” said Hussain Jawad, Chairman, W J Towell Group.

Ivor Braganza, CEO of W J Towell Property & Construction, described W J Towell as a pioneer in real estate development in Oman, having delivered quality projects through strong backward integration by partnering architects, sourcing companies and the furniture leasing business. This legacy will bring a unique perspective to OUDC enabling the company to reach greater heights in the coming years, he stressed.

The new company will be managed by Towell Piramal Sunteck Co LLC, which is a joint venture between W J Towell and Piramal Sunteck, a real estate development company from India.

“It is our first time in the region and this partnership looks very promising and would reach great heights and transform the real estate industry in the Sultanate,” said Khushru Jijina of Piramal Sunteck.

The Company is looking to enter into different segments of the industry, encompassing warehousing, commercial development, mass residential projects, tourism related projects and even affordable housing. The company plans to launch its first project shortly.

Pacts for infrastructure development inked

Source: *Times of Oman* - June 27, 2009

Dr Khamis bin Mubarak Al Alawi, minister of transport and communications, yesterday signed 17 agreements worth RO84,838,847. The agreements came as part of the government’s effort in developing the infrastructure and activating its role in serving the national economy.

The first agreement signed with Desert Line Projects Company, worth RO22,960,000, is for constructing the 20km-long Arjout-Sarfait road in Dhofar governorate.

The second agreement with D Sterling Patco, worth RO22,850,842, is for constructing the 17km-long dual carriageway from Al Zaroub roundabout to Al Buraimi Hospital roundabout as well as its electrification works.

The works include a main ring

flyover and two ring bridges to serve the layouts on both sides of the road. It also includes four tunnels, in addition to about a 27-km-long service road.

The third agreement with Al Raseed Trading and Contracting Company, worth RO7,456,653, relates to the construction of the 27-km-long Hajaf-Jahnin-Asir road in Dhofar governorate, as well as six-km-long internal roads.

The fourth agreement with Parsons International Company, worth RO7,336,750, is for providing consultancy service in the design and supervision of the construction of the 180-km-long Southern Al Batinah Express Road, the first and second parts, in addition to the 220-km-long road linking the current road.

The fifth agreement with Botic, in

collaboration with Ice Engineering Company, worth RO2,558,525, relates to designing and supervision of the third part of the 95-km-long Southern Al Batinah Express Road, in addition to about 40-km-long linking roads.

The sixth agreement with Ali and Partners for Trading and Contracting, worth RO6,969,719, is for constructing the 18.6-km-long Al Turath district road in Ghubrat Nizwa in the Al Dakhiliyah region.

The seventh agreement with Khalid bin Ahmed and Sons Company, worth RO4,940,000, relates to designing and implementation of a number of internal roads, about 25.985km-long, from Allihban to Kahnat in the wilayat of Ibri.

The eighth agreement with Khalid bin Ahmed and Sons Company,

worth RO3,232,289, is for renovating the bridges and support walls on Bidbid-Sur Road.

The ninth agreement with Khalid bin Ahmed and Sons Company, worth RO2,596,766, is for renovating the 2.78km-long Wadi Saa on Hafeet-Alzaroub road in Al Buraimi governorate.

The 10th agreement with Driver Consult, worth RO1,297,488, is for providing consultancy services in the construction of Hasik-Al Shuwaimiyah road in Dhofar governorate.

The 11th agreement with Modern Engineering Consultancy, in collaboration with Stop Consultancy, India, worth RO778,863,000, relates to consultancy services for the designing and supervision of the construction of Khasab-Wadi Moh-

Bukha road project and renovating Khasab Bukha coastal road in Musandam governorate.

The 12th agreement with Pakistani National Company for Engineering Services and Partners, worth RO600,850, is for providing consultancy services in the supervision of the third stage of renovation of the Nizwa-Thumrait road project.

The 13th agreement with Parsons International and Company, worth RO501,000, is for consultancy services in the supervision and repair of the damaged Aseelah-Ras Al Hadd road.

The 14th agreement, with Pakistani National Company for Engineering Services, worth RO209,601, is for providing consultancy services in the supervision of repair on Wadi Al Tayyeen road in the Al Sharqiyah

region.

The 15th agreement with Renardet SA and Partners Consulting Engineers LLC, worth RO205,000, relates to consultancy services in the designing of the road from Shaqat Shokab in the wilayat of Baidyah to Qahid village overlooking the Arabian Sea.

The 16th agreement with Pakistani National Company for Engineering Services and Partner Company, worth RO175,000, relates to providing consultancy services in the designing of Al Buraimi Safwan Al Rawdah road.

The 17th agreement with Desert Caravan Company, worth RO169,499, is for reinforcing the roads with concrete and making humps in Northern Al Sharqiyah region.

Major road project to enhance Buraimi Governorate's infrastructure development

Source: *Oman Observer* - June 27, 2009

The Ministry of Transport and Communications has awarded a contract for the dualisation of a key carriageway in Buraimi, further reinforcing the infrastructure development of one of Oman's newest governorates.

Federici Stirling BATCO LLC will undertake the dualisation and upgrade of a 17.5-kilometre stretch of the governorate's main carriageway from Zurub roundabout to the Buraimi Hospital roundabout at a cost of RO 22.850 million.

The carriageway serves as the Sultanate's principal gateway into the United Arab Emirates on its northwestern border, and is an increasingly important overland route for commercial, tourist and cross-border traffic between Oman and the UAE. Importantly, with the dualisation of this key stretch, the

entire highway extending from Sohar all the way to Oman's border with the UAE at Buraimi will have been dualised to international highway construction standards. Another contractor is close to completing the dualisation of the 82-kilometre Sohar-Buraimi highway at a cost of nearly RO 44 million.

With a total of 18 bridges and two pedestrian underpasses, the dualised Sohar-Buraimi carriageway will allow for smooth traffic flows, particularly heavy vehicles, between the industrial port of Sohar and the UAE, via Buraimi-Al Ain. Federici Stirling BATCO, which is already executing a number of prestigious road projects in Muscat Governorates, led a field of several leading local and international companies that bid for the Buraimi road project. The bidding line-up included Consolidated Contractors Co, Desert

Line Projects, Strabag Oman, Larsen & Toubro (Oman), STFA, Oman Gulf Co, Turkerler Construction, Khalid bin Ahmed & Sons, Copri Construction, National United Engineering, ASAS Civil Construction, and Sarooj Construction.

In addition to dualising the stretch between the Zurub and Buraimi Hospital roundabouts, the contract also calls for the complete overhaul of the carriageway, says Salvatore Simonetti, CEO of Federici Stirling BATCO. "This road will be upgraded to international standards, complete with two partial cloverleaf bridges, four underpasses, New Jersey barriers, and modern street-lighting. We are mobilising a team of road construction specialists, backed by experienced workers, to ensure it is built to the client's satisfaction within the stipulated timeframe."

High growth potential for district cooling in Sultanate

Source: *Times of Oman* - June 23, 2009

Increasing power demand, rising energy costs and infrastructure projects are fuelling the growth of the district cooling market in Oman. The efforts by the GCC governments to avoid a power crisis and move towards sustainability have made district cooling a viable and popular option in the Middle East.

Tuk-Keun Yang, executive vice president of K S Industry, a Korean trading company, sees huge potential for district cooling in Oman. Yang, on his first business visit to Oman a few weeks ago, met prospective business partners for setting up district cooling systems (DCS) in the Sultanate.

“The region’s extreme climate and increasing construction projects have created a market for combined power plants and district cooling,” he said.

There are abundant opportunities due to low penetration levels. “Saudi and UAE have made advancements, but Oman is still at a

nascent stage.”

K S Industry is involved in power plants and oil and gas business. In the GCC it caters to clients from the non-steel plant sector. “We have just started business relations with Oman and are in talks with a few prospective clients,” said Yang. In the medium or long term the company plans to set up a manufacturing unit in the country with 10 per cent Omanisation at the site. “We will execute the project with our Korean district cooling company and local companies joint venture model,” said Yang. The company plans to serve Qatar, UAE and Jordan, which is big market for district cooling.

District cooling is fast emerging as the most practical cooling solution in the Middle East. Governments are adopting it as a cheaper and greener alternative to air conditioning.

“This solution can not only mitigate the power crisis in the GCC countries but also help reduce carbon footprints through increased energy

efficiency and lower CO2 emissions,” said a recent report from Frost & Sullivan.

The report also finds that the market had revenues of \$580.0 million in 2008 and estimates this to reach \$2 billion in 2013 at a compound annual growth rate of 28 per cent. With greater involvement of the government, the market is expected to become more organised, populated, and competitive.

District cooling is a cost effective and eco friendly method. It is about two to three times cost effective compared with the traditional system. The cost of setting up a system is about \$200-300 million. “More emphasis should be given to the economics of district cooling for an end user. Only monetary benefits can give a high growth than environmental benefits,” said the report. A district cooling system distributes thermal energy in the form of chilled water from a central unit to multiple buildings through a network of underground pipes.

Al Madina A’Zarqa explores hospital venture

Source: *Oman Observer* - June 22, 2009

Prof Dr Elke Jager, head of an oncology clinic in Germany, visited the office and project site of Al Madina A’Zarqa recently. The visit aims to open the doors of Oman to the German health specialists. Al Madina A’Zarqa and the Ministry of Health are working hand in hand to bring the best medical facilities to Oman.

“My visit to Oman made it clear that facilities are desired and needed in the field of medical oncology, cancer immunotherapy and palliative care medicine. I am very impressed with the plans that Al Madina A’Zarqa

has in place regarding the healthcare industry with the goal to become a medical destination specialising in areas that will enhance the options for up-to-date and individualised diagnostics and treatments for cancer patients in Middle East,” said Professor Jager.

In parallel, discussions are underway for the establishment of the first healthcare unit in Al Madina A’Zarqa with focus on cancer prevention and treatment. Al Madina A’Zarqa has organised, with the largest oncology clinic in Germany, a seminar on new strategies of can-

cer therapy and prevention that took place at Sultan Qaboos University with the participation of high-level dignitaries from the medical research sector. Medical tourism will increase the number of visitors from the region and abroad to the new city and Oman.

“It gives us great pleasure to welcome representatives like Prof Jager to Oman and to Al Madina A’Zarqa. These international affiliations will allow us to open our doors to more opportunities to give the best service, facilities and amenities to both our residents and to Oman as a

whole,” said Richard P Russell, Managing Director and CEO, Blue City Company 1.

“Medical oncology is only one of the many specialisations that we have planned for in Al Madina A’Zarqa. Further, Medicine and Healthcare is one of the six drivers

guiding us in our mission and vision in creating this whole new city and the other drivers include Sports and Wellness, Tourism, Entertainment, Education and Trade.

It is our goal to equip the city with state of the art medical facilities, always keeping in mind the well being

of our residents, Oman nationals and the neighbouring countries.” Medicine and healthcare cluster in the new city will be pertinent to the city’s integrated sectors and will support the strategy of the MoH to provide high international standards of patient care; both for Oman and neighbouring countries.

Al Ansari in JV with Proscap for landscaping business

Source: *Oman Observer* - June 15, 2009

Al Ansari Trading Enterprise LLC entered into a joint venture with UAE-based Proscap LLC. Proscap is one of the leading landscaping companies in the region and the new company under the joint venture has been named Proscap Al Ansari LLC. The joint venture agreement was signed recently by Ahmad Abdul Rahlim Anoochi, Chairman, Proscap LLC and Mohammed Ali Juma, Chairman, Al Ansari at a function held in Muscat. The new venture will enable both the partners to foray into new avenues of the landscaping business.

“Proscap Al Ansari will serve the growing landscaping market of the Sultanate with high quality projects and services. The new company will leverage on the extensive industry experience of Proscap LLC, along with the strong footing of the Al Ansari group,” said Ahmad. Announcing the launch of the new company at a press conference here, Proscap chairman said: “The joint venture is a new opportunity for Proscap to expand its service into the developing economy of Oman.

This is our expression of confidence in the Middle East economy. It will also consolidate our status as a leading regional player in the landscaping industry. The new venture will meet the industry’s requirements in Oman. Our partnership with an esteemed business con-

glomerate in Oman will help us expand Proscap’s reach beyond the region.”

Commenting on the timing of the launch of a new company Ahmad said: “Recession or no recession, expansion in Oman had always been in our mind and there is no denying the fact that Omani economy is doing well even in the time of global financial crisis.” Statistics show a steady growth in the landscaping industry of the region, despite global setbacks in the property sector. It is concluded that this is a result of the regional governments’ initiatives for ‘greener surroundings’. It has also been observed that a few global players have already forayed into the Middle East’s landscaping industry recently.

In a statement Mohammed Ali Juma said: “We, as a leading business conglomerate in the Sultanate, have identified an immense scope of landscaping opportunities in the country. The new joint venture is launched to tap the potential landscape and golf course market in Oman and become the market leader in Oman’s landscaping industry.”

Kiran Asher, Managing Director of Al Ansari Group of Companies assured that the joint venture means more greenery in the Sultanate. “Oman is different from other GCC countries in terms of landscaping and greenery. Oman has potential

and we have the expertise. With this joint venture we are looking forward to making Oman’s landscape more beautiful and green.”

Yusuf Nalwalla, Al Ansari’s Joint Managing Director said: “Landscaping is generally misunderstood with greenery only. Under the hard landscaping we have many projects to build swimming pools and sports fields. We are also equipped to develop golf course and irrigation system.” “Al Ansari has entered into this joint venture with very specific strategic intentions. It is felt that Oman is poised for growth in tourism and other infrastructural development. Currently, there is a vacuum for high quality landscape companies that can cater to innovative hard landscape, golf courses and soft landscaping for large areas, under one roof, using modern techniques and good engineering practices.”

Earlier, Sayed Muhammed Rizwi, Executive Director of Al Ansari said, “The new venture will enable both the industry experts to foray into new avenues of landscaping business in the Sultanate. Our study confirms that landscaping business in the Middle East and Oman in particular has shown steady growth despite of global slowdown.” Through our new venture we hope to develop more greenery and make our surroundings more beautiful, he said.

New Towell Building Materials store

Source: *Times of Oman* - June 13, 2009

Towell Building Materials, one of the leading suppliers of building materials in Oman, opened a new store, bringing together all the best building materials and some of the world's biggest names under one roof. The tastefully done showroom showcases a wide range of high quality luxury building material. The top management of Towell Group was present on the occasion.

Located in Wadi Kabir, this store is based on a one-stop-shop concept, where from bathroom fittings to ironmongery and switches are all available at the same place. Stepping away from stores which are dedicated to one single kind of material, Towell Building Materials is looking to make choosing the perfect fit easier for everyone be it a contractor, consultant, builder or customer. Diverse product categories give the

option of mixing, matching and creative experimentation which is what the company is striving to promote.

All the big brands like Twyford, Roman Dietsche, Grohe, Lockwood (Assa Abloy), Ceramica Alcora, Apavisa Porcelanico, Sffeco, Franke, and ABB are here, with their assurance of world class quality and choice.

The biggest range will be seen in the bathroom products, a fast growing and ever dynamic category. From shower enclosures, accessories and hand dryers to sinks and wiring accessories, it will open up a whole new world of choices and concepts which will suit all budgets and cater to different ideas. Design sensibilities of cosmopolitan, authentic or contemporary are easily found, with possibilities that can be

mixed and matched, you will be sure to find and make possible the design you dream of.

Apavisa collections are noble and versatile with excellent technical characteristic (high bending resistance, full body porcelain, water absorption and zero maintenance. Lockwood this iconic brand provides a wide range of locking solutions to residential housing, commercial building and industrial application markets. ABB section serves customers with energy efficient and reliable products to improve customers' productivity, including drives, motors and generators, low voltage products, instrumentation and analytical and power electronics. The division also has fire equipment and systems (SFFECO), which is considered the pioneers in their field and operates on a global level.

Al Madina A'Zarqa's inks three deals with Anantara Hotels

Source: *Times of Oman* - May 27, 2009

Blue City Company 1 (BCC1), the company in charge of the delivery of phase one of Al Madina A'Zarqa, strengthened its hotel relationship with Anantara Hotels, Resorts & Spas, part of the Minor Hotel Group, one of Asia's leading hotel owners and operators. BCC1 and Minor Hotel Group inked three agreements following the MoU signing last year.

Recognised as one of the leaders in luxury hospitality, Anantara has signed a technical services and pre-opening assistance agreement, a licenses and royalty agreement and a management agreement with BCC1.

Under these agreements, Anantara will be operating and managing the first beachfront hotel in Phase 1 of

Al Madina A'Zarqa, under the name Anantara Al Madina A'Zarqa Resort & Spa, Oman.

"We are very pleased to have an even stronger relationship with Al Madina A'Zarqa. It is always our goal to bring colourful, indigenous experiences to our guests with the highest quality of services and facilities, and partnering with BCC1 will ensure that we realise this goal," commented Michel van der Hoeven, senior vice-president — development, Minor Hotel Group.

Anantara Al Madina A'Zarqa Resort & Spa is the first of the 20 hotels to be constructed in Al Madina A'Zarqa. Consisting of 122 keys, the resort will aim to bring the influences of Omani culture and heritage

into a stunning new setting. The five-star Anantara Spa will be in operation in the resort with a fusion of locally inspired and Asian influenced services and treatments.

Supported by world-class dining options, the beach-front resort will provide a unique blend of ambiance and exclusivity.

"At Al Madina A'Zarqa, comfortable living is always our priority for our residents and visitors. As such, having Anantara in the new city proves our commitment to giving our investors the best.

The new city will be a top destination in Oman and it is supporting the diversification of the Oman economy from fossil fuel to tour-

ism,” said Roger Kacou, vice-president for Hotel and Leisure, Blue City Company 1.

Anantara Hotels, Resorts & Spas is a collection of five-star luxury and boutique resorts and spas, providing an immersion into the culture, history and unique natural settings of its locations. Anantara has received many accolades for its grow-

ing portfolio of luxury resorts, stretching from Thailand, to Bali, the Maldives and the UAE, including two new resorts named in both the Condé Nast UK and US ‘Hot Lists’ for 2009.

Tagged as the New City of Oman, Al Madina A’Zarqa is a 32 km² development a 60-minute drive from Muscat. It runs along 16km of coastline

and it will have 20 hotels with more than 4,000 keys in total. On completion, the city will be home to over 200,000 residents including 10,000 students. Al Madina A’Zarqa offers all facilities and amenities one would want and need in a thriving metropolis. Construction of Anantara Al Madina A’Zarqa Resort & Spa is well underway and is expected for completion by the end of 2010.

Al Madina launches new project

Source: *Times of Oman* - May 28, 2009

Al Madina Real Estate Co., endeavours through its different projects, to add significant achievements in urban development sector, in harmony with the requirements of tourism, entertainment and services. It seeks to provide a housing environment with privacy and luxury.

After the significant success of Tilal Al Khuwair project, Al Madina Real Estate is launching the Shadin Al Hail project for Shadin Development Co. The colourful nature of Oman has inspired the designers to think of Shadin Project which is a symbol of genuine beauty, as it means the small gazelle. The project provides a

housing oasis with wonderful design, serenity, water, and nature’s colours.

The project occupies an area of 20,000sqm parallel to Sultan Qaboos Street, at the centre of Al Hail and near Muscat International Airport. It consists of shopping area, hotel apartment, entertainment facilities and health club, as well as the luxurious housing units. The building area of the project is about 110sqm with eight floors. The project cost is expected to reach RO30 million.

The project will be executed in three phases and is expected to be completed in 2012.

The recession in the building market has been beneficial for cutting down the units’ prices and offer innovative solutions through an easy payment plan. The advance sum starts from as low as 10 per cent and the payment period extends to five years. Cash payments will guarantee the buyer, a discount of 20 per cent.

The second option guarantees a discount of 15 per cent. Such options are formulated to encourage the young investors who are looking for owning suitable housing units. The developers of this project are committed to high quality and implementing the international standards, as well as the moral values.

Oriental Ready-Mix launches operations

Source: *Oman Observer* - May 25, 2009

The Oriental Group’s newest offshoot, Oriental Ready-Mix Company LLC, has commenced production of ready mix concrete using a high quality mixing unit manufactured by Liebherr. The German-made plant’s 4cbm pan mixer with double agitator, along with the company’s fleet of transit mixer trucks enables the rapid delivery of high quality concrete to customer sites. Special pumps are deployed to pump the concrete to different heights.

The plant has also been provided with a water chiller and ice plant

system that provides the mixers with iced water. In addition, it is equipped with a water recycling system to minimise water consumption. Associated companies of the Oriental Group are: Oriental International Company; Oriental Crusher Company LLC; Oriental Building Material Industries LLC; Oriental Kerbstones Industries LLC; and Oriental Insulated Blocks Company LLC.

Over the last 34 years, the Oriental Group has grown into a well-diversified building and construction mate-

rials manufacturer and supplier. Its product range includes sand, aggregate, different types of blocks (solid and hollow), pavers, kerbs and ready-mix concrete — products that have contributed to the construction of highways, bridges, roads, government and utility buildings, residential homes and other civil infrastructure. The Group was also granted the prestigious ISO-9001-2000 certification, reflecting its commitment to maintaining quality standards.

Further in recognition of its contri-

bution to various government, private and societal programmes and initiatives, the Group has been honoured with a number of awards, prizes, medals and certificates —

both from government and private bodies. It has also received citations for its commitment to environmental safety. The top management of Oriental Group of Companies com-

prises Eng Mohammed Awadh Ali al Ajmi, Chairman; Eng Ali Mohammed Awadh al Ajmi, Vice Chairman; and Eng Khaldoun Faisal al Hussayni, General Manager.

Work on new Sohar Airport starts soon

Source: *Oman Observer* - May 23, 2009

Construction work on a new airport at Sohar will commence shortly following the award of a key contract for the first phase development of this prestigious infrastructure project.

Strabag Oman LLC, a well-known civil construction firm, has been selected by the government to undertake the Phase 1 civil works package of the airport project at a cost of RO 37.5 million. This contract will pave the way for the phased implementation of airfield infrastructure facilities and a passenger terminal suitably designed and equipped to reflect Sohar's growing importance as an international-class industrial and economic hub.

Significantly, the new airport will serve both Sohar and the wider Batinah region, which in recent years has attracted industrial, commercial and infrastructure investment in excess of \$15 billion. Besides creating a new gateway for passenger, cargo and courier traffic in northern Oman, the Sohar Airport will also serve as a domestic and emergency alternative to Muscat International Airport. Together with plans for a railway line and a new superhighway, the new airport will add to a modern multimodal communications network that will fuel further economic growth in the Batinah region.

Sohar Airport will come up on a sprawling site just off Falaj al Qabail roundabout, about 10 kilometres northwest of downtown Sohar city. Its relative proximity to the major commercial, industrial and economic centres of Sohar, notably the Port of

Sohar, Sohar Special Economic Zone and the industrial estate, is seen as particularly advantageous. Many of the features of the new Sohar airport project attest to its international-class design. The entire complex will be designed to IATA Class-A standards, as well as the recommendations and standards of the International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO). Development of the facility is envisaged in three distinct contract packages.

The first package, since awarded to Strabag Oman, covers site preparation works and the construction of access roads, among other services. The second package, currently under tender, involves the construction of airside facilities, including the runway, taxiway, fuel and fire fighting systems, and navigation aids. The passenger and cargo terminal, as well as associated buildings, will be constructed as part of the third package of works. With a runway four kilometers long complete with turning loops at the ends, the airport will be equipped to accommodate and support aircraft as large as the Airbus A380 Superjumbo, which is the world's biggest passenger aircraft.

A full-length parallel taxiway with high speed exits is also planned, along with a terminal building apron and cargo apron. The state-of-the-art terminal buildings will be designed for a capacity of around 500,000 passengers initially, as well as around 100,000 tonnes of air cargo per year. A key component of Strabag Oman's contract is to carry out mass grading works necessary to prepare the site for the construc-

tion of the runway, taxiway, runway exits, aprons and buildings. A staggering 8 million cubic metres of earthwork will have to be undertaken in an effort to suitably level the undulating terrain that covers the project area.

In addition, the contractor will also build several kilometres of access roads, security fencing, electrical works, and other utility infrastructure such as potable water network, irrigation network, fire fighting network and storm draining system, among other facilities. A 14-month timeframe has been stipulated for the completion of this first phase package. Egypt-based engineering consultancy group Hamza Associates is the design consultant for the Sohar Airport project. Hamza Associates is supported by US based engineering, architecture and planning specialists Robert & Company and Burgess and Niple in the design of the facility.

Significantly, the Sohar project is one of six regional airports being implemented by the Ministry of Transport and Communications (MoTC) as part of an ambitious effort to scale up Oman's aviation infrastructure. Regional airports are under various stages of design and development at Ras al Hadd, Duqm, Adam, Haima and Shaleem. Development of these domestic airports is envisaged in conjunction with multi-billion-dollar plans for the modernisation and expansion of the Muscat and Salalah international airports, the first phase of which was tendered out recently to a Greek-Turkish joint venture at a cost of RO 450 million.

Oman's cement sector outperforms GCC trends

Source: *Oman Observer* - May 20, 2009

The GCC cement sector, after witnessing a catastrophic downturn in 4Q 2008, ended the first quarter of 2009 on a positive note, according to the Kuwait-based think-tank Global Investment House.

Net income for the 1Q-2009 ended with a profit of \$351 million as compared to a loss of \$42 million in the 4Q-2008. However on a y-o-y comparison the first quarter profits were down 43 per cent. The q-o-q rise was because of improved performance by the equity markets and revival of confidence in the building and construction markets. But the tables have turned, and as expected, profits are emerging despite the economic slowdown, Global said.

On a q-o-q basis, Oman emerged out to be the best performer at 356 per cent followed by Qatar at 73 per cent and Saudi Arabia at 39 per cent. While the UAE emerged out of heavy losses and ended the first quarter with a profit, Kuwait has been the only country witnessing a decline in profit mainly due to the continued decline in their equity markets. On a y-o-y basis, Qatar witnessed the least drop in profits at 11 per cent followed by Saudi Arabia and Oman at 19 per cent and 21 per cent respectively. The UAE witnessed a decline in profits by 73 per cent while Kuwait reported a 147 per

cent drop.

On an individual level during q-o-q basis, the star performer was Raysut Cement which witnessed a profit growth of 706 per cent followed by Tabuk Cement and Sharjah Cement whose profit rose by 278 per cent and 179 per cent respectively. The company which witnessed the biggest decline was Gulf Cement at 94 per cent followed by Arkan Building Materials and Umm Al Qaiwain Cement Company at 80 per cent and 79 per cent respectively. On a y-o-y basis, Kuwait Portland Cement recorded an impressive performance with a profit growth of 474 per cent followed by RAK Cement and Union Cement at 187 per cent and 94 per cent respectively.

Decliners were led by Arkan Building Material, Hilal Cement and Kuwait Cement Co. at 630 per cent, 205 per cent and 157 per cent respectively. With the correction in the equity and real estate markets continuing and liquidity constraints increasing, project announcements which rose to as \$2.68 trillion in April 2009 declined to \$2.2 trillion in May 2009. A significant decline in the projects announcement came from the UAE whose total size went down to \$960 billion from \$1.32 trillion in April 2009. Oman witnessed the second largest decline in project

announcements to \$96 billion from \$110 billion.

Although it is being heard that the work on different projects in Saudi Arabia and Qatar is going on at a brisk pace, the overall project announcements in these countries went down by 9 per cent and 4 per cent to \$586 billion and \$209 billion respectively. On the conservative basis of demand forecast, if 50 per cent of these projects amounting to \$1.1 trillion move forward and if 40 per cent of them account for building and construction related projects, then the sector is expected to witness a cement demand of close to 90mtpa on an average during 2009-15.

“As per our discussions with various companies and other industry sources, the sector will be expanding its capacity to 92mtpa by 2009 and 112mtpa by 2011. Hence the sector would be facing a surplus of cement in the coming years if the projects implementation does not increase,” Global said. “We believe that the construction activity has revived in most of the countries within the GCC as we witnessed in the month of March that Saudi Arabia reported a monthly deficit in the demand and supply and was able to shrug off some of its previously piled up inventories.

Oman Cement to produce Pozzolana

Source: *Oman Tribune* - May 14, 2009

Oman Cement will begin production of Pozzolana, a new variety of cement, next week.

The company is targeting production of 20,000 tonnes of Pozzolana in the first stage of production this year, at 1,000 tonnes a week. Capacity will be increased later in accordance with demand.

The launch of the new cement gains importance with the boom in the Sultanate's construction sector. The new cement, which will be sold for RO1.7 a bag, is considered to be among the best cement products in the world.

Modern pozzolanic cements are a mix of natural or industrial pozzolans

and Portland cement. In addition to underwater use, the high alkalinity of Pozzolana makes it especially resistant to corrosion from sulfates, and its lower porosity also makes it more resistant to water absorption.

Oman Cement produces 7,000 bags of cement daily, catering to the needs of the construction sector.

Airport expansion work to start soon: Turkish-Greek venture

Source: *Times of Oman* - May 13, 2009

TAV-CCC, a consortium of TAV Construction, a leading Turkish construction company, and Athens-based Consolidated Contractors Co (CCC), has won an RO450 million (\$1.17 billion) contract of the Muscat International Airport expansion project.

Once the project is complete, the airport will have a brand new terminal building, 32 air bridges, two runways, a new cargo terminal and 6,000 parking spaces. The contract will take about 32 months to complete. The airport, formerly known as Seeb International, currently handles 4.5 million passengers a year. The first phase of the expansion project will allow for 12 million passengers and 200,000 tonnes of consignments a year. The new terminal building will have a net floor

area of 240,000 square metres. "We have won the contract as a joint venture with TAV (Turkey)," said Zahi Saba, a senior CCC official here, yesterday. "The contract should be announced by the Omani authorities concerned within the next few weeks and work should start thereafter," he said.

Bahwan Engineering Company has won a sub-contract from this venture to the tune of RO90 million, he added.

TAV Construction is a company, which specialises in the construction of airports, passenger terminals besides structures and buildings requiring high degree of engineering. It has undertaken several projects in the region. Other firms prequalified for the contract included France's

Vinci, India's Larsen & Toubro and local firm Galfar Engineering Co.

The project will result in Muscat International Airport becoming one of the world's most ultra modern airports. Expansion works are planned in four stages ultimately boosting its capacity to 48 million passengers by 2050. It is one of the largest infrastructure projects to be undertaken by the government in terms of value and size.

The number of arrival and departure passengers through Muscat International Airport, excluding transfer and transit passengers, has increased by 9 per cent by the end of February 2009 to 537,240 passengers compared to 493,268 passengers during the same period of the year 2008.

RO450m awarded for Muscat, Salalah airports

Source: *Oman Tribune* - May 12, 2009

The Tender Board has awarded RO450 million for the civil works for the first phase of Muscat International Airport and Salalah Airport development.

The first phase of the Muscat International Airport project will begin soon, which shall see innovations in a number of areas such as hotels, restaurants, departure halls, waiting halls and vehicles to take travellers from and to the flights.

The new airport will have a brand new terminal building, 32 air bridges, two runways, a new cargo terminal, parking spaces for 6,000 vehicles and much more. New roads, parking places, a new administrative building for Royal Navy are also part of the first phase of the expansion.

It also includes a new building with

advanced facilities which can accommodate 12 million travellers annually. With the completion of the remaining phases of the project, the airport can accommodate 48 million passengers, HE Sheikh Mohammed Bin Sakhr Al Amri, Undersecretary for Civil Aviation Affairs at the Ministry of Transport and Communication, said.

The new terminal building will have a net floor area of 240,000sq.m. The existing runway will be upgraded and supplemented with a new runway. It will be able to take the world's largest passenger plane, the Airbus 380.

The building is relatively large for an airport with that capacity because the intention is to provide a high standard of comfort in the terminal. In addition, Muscat is going

to be a big transit airport, and extra space is needed to guide the many transit passengers through the terminal with ease.

The project, reports say, includes some 70 buildings apart from the terminal, including a 90-metre-high control tower and an Air Traffic Management Centre.

As for the Salalah International Airport, he said, the new building with advanced facilities to come up in the first phase of expansion can accommodate two million travellers annually. With the completion of the remaining phases, the airport can accommodate 10 million passengers annually.

The government also plans to construct airports in Sohar, Duqum, Raas Al Hadd, Adam & other places.

Tenders worth R0598m awarded

Source: *Times of Oman* - May 12, 2009

The Tender Board yesterday held its fifth meeting of the year, and the following tenders worth R0597,985,575 were awarded by the board:

Civil works for the Muscat International Airport (first phase of the Muscat International Airport and Salalah airport development) R0450,000,000.

Construction of roads as part of the Al Duqum master plan (R040,501,516); construction of Sohar airport in the Al Batinah region (first phase) R037,544,193.

Sweeping and transporting the soil and reclaiming land for the Muscat International Airport (as part of Muscat International and Salalah airports development project) R018,250,000. Improvement and reinforcement of Muscat International Airport soil (as part of Muscat International and Salalah airports development project) R015,960,000.

Construction of court complex building in Muscat R012,407,729. Additional works for the construction of water discharge channels for wadis and paving of side roads of Muscat International Airport R010,471,274.

Civic works for the express ferries harbour at Mina Shinas R08,084,123. Civic works for the express ferries harbour at Khasab R01,284,632.

Paving of internal roads at Tawi Said area in the wilayat of Wadi Bani Bu Khalid R0550,000; preparatory works for the construction of national museum R0391,131.

The Tender Board also discussed tender no. 288/2008 regarding the construction of Al Duqum water supply network, tender No. 49/2009 to render consultancy and supervisory services for the rehabilitation of Izki/Farq and Marfa'/Falaj Daris/Al Ghafat road.

The board also discussed tender no. 58/2009 to design and supervise consultancy services for the construction of the Muscat International and Salalah airports catering building, tender no. 82/2009 regarding consultancy and supervisory services for the construction of Al Duqum airport.

The board further discussed tender no. 92/2009 for the construction of metallurgical laboratory at the Ghala Industrial Estate.

It also had discussion on tender no. 93/2009 for the construction of 13 housing units and public utilities in the village of Saih Al Abyad in the wilayat of Buhla in the Dakhiliyah region, tender no. 94/2009 for the renovation of concrete facilities of Oman Oil Refinery (phase 9 and the anti-fire surface no.1). The board also approved issuance of a number of orders regarding the ongoing projects.

Majid Al Futtaim Group announces Sohar City Centre project

Source: *Oman Observer* - April 28, 2009

Majid Al Futtaim Group, the leading retail and leisure pioneer in the Greater Middle East, has announced its third City Centre project in Oman. The mixed-use community of shops, entertainment and hotels will be located in the Sultanate's second largest city, Sohar, and is due to open its doors in the last quarter of 2011.

Sohar City Centre joins the Group's very successful Muscat City Centre and the recently opened Qurum City Centre shopping malls in the capital. Sohar City Centre will feature a new Magic Planet for family fun and entertainment, great shopping, with over a hundred stores, a food court with tastes from around the world

and even two hotels — Ibis and Novotel. The City Centre will also introduce Carrefour, the world's second largest retailer, to Sohar. Sohar City Centre will face the main UAE to Muscat highway, just 500 metres from the main Sallan roundabout leading to the residential and commercial areas of the city and the port of Sohar.

Shahram Shamsaee, Senior Vice-President, Shopping Malls at Majid Al Futtaim Properties, says that the new City Centre will introduce a unique retail experience for Sohar residents and visitors from the neighbouring districts. "Oman has seen real growth in the past few years and Sohar has risen in popu-

larity as well as population. The timing for the City Centre is perfect," he said. "The Sohar Industrial Port is the fastest growing industrial hub in the region and it's attracting a large number of investors.

This new development is part of our overall strategy and plan to expand our very successful City Centre franchise in the region. Our shopping malls are designed for customers needs; we approach every detail of our projects with the consumer in mind." The Centre is being designed by architects Broadway Malyan and Atkins and will feature a contemporary design embellished with local Omani characteristics to create a quality and welcoming ambience.

Muriya Home Design Showroom to open soon

Source: *Oman Observer* - April 19, 2009

Muriya Tourism Development Company has announced the upcoming opening of 'Muriya Home Design Showroom' on April 20, keeping with the commitment to provide 'Jebel Sifah' and 'Salalah Beach' clients with the highest level of after sales service. The new showroom which will be located in the Shatti Al Qurum area, close to the company's head office, will give customers an opportunity to view the high quality of selected home finishing options and wide range of available upgrading options.

A vast selection of upgrades for interior, exterior and landscaping designs are available with materials sourced from Germany, Italy, France, Spain and various other countries. The main focus is to provide customers with personalised options

thereby creating the ideal home based on each client's unique preferences. The department will also have contacts with numerous Interior design experts who are familiar with the latest trends across the world, and are available to assist in this field if required.

Customers can benefit from the in-house design team who are able to advise on exclusive landscaping options including swimming pools, barbeque areas, outdoor showers, paving...etc. The department is additionally equipped to provide landscape maintenance if requested. "Muriya will not compromise on quality. We have sourced renowned international brands for home finishing providing customers with the best quality. Customers are becoming more aware of quality brands

and their expectations will be exceeded when clients receive their quality homes from Muriya," said Sherine Metry, After Sales Engineering Manager.

With final touches being made to the upcoming showroom, Muriya customers can expect an offering from the best selection of home furnishings for their prime properties. Established in March 2006, Muriya Tourism Development Company is a joint venture between Egypt's renowned Orascom Hotels and Development with a stake of 70 per cent and 30 per cent with the Omani government, represented by Omran. Muriya is a leading developer investing in four major projects, namely Salalah Beach, Jebel Sifah, 'City Walk' in Muscat and a Boutique Hotel on 'Al Sodah Island'.

Agreement signed for RO27-million Shaden Al Hail project

Source: *Oman Tribune* - April 18, 2009

Shaden Development Company and Adhi Oman Construction Company on Thursday signed an agreement for the construction of the newly launched Shaden Al Hail, a mixed use development project in Al Hail.

The agreement was signed by Shaden Development Company Chairman Eng. Khamis Bin Mubarak Al Kiyumi and Adhi Oman Company Chairman Bambang Subetr at Muscat InterContinental Hotel.

The RO27-million Shaden Hail development project, which is sched-

uled for completion in 2011, will include luxury residential units, retail outlets and serviced apartments.

The project is one of Al Madina Real Estate Company's residential and commercial developments and is located at Al Hail, north of Muscat International Airport, adjacent to the Sultan Qaboos Highway. Shaden Al Hail is within close proximity of major developments such as the The Wave Muscat, Muscat City Center and Markaz Al Bahja.

Al Kiyumi said the target segments for the residential units are the high-

end customers. And the price of the residential unit will begin from RO40,000.

Eng. Abdul Rahman Barham, CEO, Al Madina Real Estate Company, said the project will have around 450 residential units constructed in three-phases. Construction will commence shortly, he said.

Adhi Oman Contracting Company is an affiliate of Indonesia Adhi Kariya International and is already the main contractor for Tilal Complex, one of the largest mixed-use developments in the Sultanate.

Al Madina A'Zarqa appoints golf course designer

Source: *Oman Observer* - April 14, 2009

Blue City Company 1 (BCC1), the real estate development company tasked to deliver Phase 1 of Al Madina A'Zarqa, has announced the appointment of world renowned Thomson Perrett & Lobb to design the initial golf course to be constructed at the project.

As part of Phase 1, BCC1 will develop an 18-hole PGA standard course consisting of two par threes, two par fives and five par fours per nine. Adjacent to the course will be a gated golf community, a club house, restaurants and other ancillary amenities to compliment the varied styles of high quality residences and hotels to be constructed. The balanced development will be situated in a natural environment of expansive views and extensive open space.

Richard Russell, Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer of BCC1, said: "We wish to create dream course for the golfers of all skill levels and we are very pleased to be working with such a prestigious and globally recognised name like Thomson Perrett & Lobb. Thomson Perrett & Lobb's course design expertise will ensure a world-class signature course that supports the vision of both Al Madina A'Zarqa and Oman in creating a leading international tourism destination." "At Al Madina A'Zarqa we are building a new city; to ultimately become an integral component of the continued visionary economic development of the Sultanate of Oman," Russell added.

Thomson Perrett & Lobb will capitalise on the unique location of the course, sitting as it does adjacent to the Indian Ocean and the Al Khor, in the design. The surrounding properties and hotels will have spectacular views from their elevated location overlooking the golf course.

Founded by Peter Thomson, a five-time winner of the British Open and Chairman of Thomson Perrett & Lobb, this golf architectural company is firmly established as one of the world's leading course designers, Thomson Perrett & Lobb has designed golf courses extensively throughout Australia, Europe, Middle East and Asia. The company designed the Open Course at Moonah Links - Home of the 2003 Australia Open, Carya Golf Club in Turkey and Marriott Momi Bay in Fiji. They are currently working on projects in Egypt, Turkey and the UAE.

"Al Madina A'Zarqa is the most exciting and unique development in Oman, if not the Middle East. We are extremely impressed by the potential of the golf course for the city, Oman and the Gulf. It is very appealing to be able to play a part in the development of this pioneering project, we can assure you, this golf course will become the focus of attention to the international golfers of all levels who knows what he is looking for," said Tim Lobb, Principal, Thomson Perrett & Lobb. In future phases the world class course will be expanded to include an additional 18-hole course, a state-of-the-

art Golf Academy and equestrian facilities, all of which will be welcome additions to Al Madina A'Zarqa's unique leisure offerings.

Al Madina A'Zarqa will radically expand the tourism facilities in the Sultanate of Oman and the City will become a world destination centering its economic development on trade, sports and wellness, medicine and healthcare, education, entertainment and tourism and hospitality. The City will generate large scale employment opportunities for Omani nationals, promote freehold property ownership for nationals and expatriates alike and serve as a hub for leisure activities in the Sultanate. Thomson Perrett & Lobb's, golf course architects, origins date back to 1965 when Peter Thomson, formed the founding design practice based in Melbourne, Australia.

Since then, the company has expanded and opened a further office in Beijing and, in 2004, Tim Lobb joined Peter Thomson and Ross Perrett to head up TPL in London, giving the business a truly global reach. Together, Thomson Perrett & Lobb have more than 75 years' experience in creating internationally recognised, integrated golfing facilities in more than 30 countries worldwide. The principals are actively involved in the business and the team includes vibrant professionals with qualifications in golf architecture, architecture, landscape architecture, engineering and CAD. Current projects are in UAE, Oman, Egypt, UK and Turkey.

\$750m steel plant to begin production in 2010

Source: *Times of Oman* - April 12, 2009

Work on Shadid Iron and Steel Company's \$750-million steel plant at Sohar Industrial Port is more

than 90 per cent complete, according to the company's financial director Ali Bin Rashid Al Shihi.

Al Shihi told Oman Tribune on Saturday that the magnetic iron production unit with a production ca-

capacity of 1.5 million tonnes will begin production in the first quarter of 2010, while the iron production unit with a capacity of 1.1 million tonnes will begin production in 2011.

Built over an area of 1,185,000sqm, SIS is the Sultanate's first integrated steel plant.

The project is conceived in three phases. Phase-I comprises setting up facilities for production of 1.5 million tonnes of Hot Direct Reduced Iron (HDRI).

The facility, which has a production

capacity of 1.1 million tonnes of steel billets, will be installed in Phase-II.

Conversion of billets into seamless tube, sections and bars will be carried out in Phase-III.

Al Shihi said iron ore would be supplied to the domestic market as well as exported.

A group of Their Excellencies, businessmen, officials and residents in the wilayats of Sohar and Liwi recently visited the project site, which is one of the most important invest-

ment projects in Sohar industrial port region.

The area will be expanded further for doubling the production capacity, Al Shihi said.

He said construction of units had been delayed by almost a year due to the global financial crisis but the delay in commencing operations had been due to external reasons.

However, it has now turned into an advantage for the company, considering the decline in global iron and steel prices, he added.

Construction of Al Madina A'Zarqa ongoing at full clip

Source: *Oman Observer* - April 6, 2009

AECO Development LLC, the construction company responsible for delivering the first phase of Al Madina A'Zarqa, announced that work on site is in full building construction stage and is firmly on schedule for delivery of its initial elements in 2010. "Al Madina A'Zarqa's first phase site is experiencing intense activity at this phase of construction," said Tamer Perk, AECO's Project Manager. "Following the completion of earthworks and infrastructure components, work is progressing at full speed on the building construction.

A total of 9,000 people, including staff and workers, will be eventually onsite during the peak of construction, making sure that we meet the schedule. To date, more than four million man-hours without Lost Time Injury (LTI) have been recorded. These milestones prove that AECO is committed to strictly observing safety rules and preventing accidents."

These milestones clearly reveal that

work is going on at a hectic pace. Currently 1200 workers are already working multiple shifts at the site and that the project is on track to delivery in the fourth quarter of 2010 Anantara Resort & Spa and Al Na'man community; the first hotel and first apartments of Phase 1 of Al Madina A'Zarqa. According to Tassos Naoum, Deputy Project Manager, AECO Development LLC, "These achievements are important milestones for us as it is our commitment to maintain high standards of safety during construction. We have already reached on the second floors of construction and we are very committed to on time completion.

At the same time we continue with ground levelling works at the other sections of Phase 1, on which very soon we will also start building construction." Richard Russell, Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer of Blue City Company 1 said, "The health, safety and welfare of our workforce is of paramount importance to us and we are delighted

to be working with a world-class contractor who shares our values in this regard. The construction of our new city is progressing quickly and we are privileged to support the government's vision to provide a catalyst for the diversification of the country's economy from the fossil fuel sector." In fact, many benefits to the local economy have already started to be realised.

Phase one of Al Madina A'Zarqa is a 2.2 square kilometre development comprising over 5,500 residences (apartments and villas), three five-star hotels, a standard 18-hole golf course, shopping and entertainment centres along with other public amenities and infrastructure. Al Madina A'Zarqa will offer all the facilities and amenities associated with a thriving city. AECO Development LLC, the design and construction partners for Al Madina A'Zarqa are a company owned by ENKA, the renowned Turkish contractor, and Elliniki Technodomiki, the leader in Greek construction and concessions sector.

Muriya ties up with Gulf Property World

Source: *Times of Oman* - April 4, 2009

Muriya Tourism Development Company has tied up with Gulf Property World, one of Oman's leading real estate agents to highlight Muriya's destinations 'Jebel Sifah' and 'Salalah Beach' which offer luxury freehold properties, world-class facilities and amenities in appealing locales of Oman.

Gulf Property World (GPW) specialise in sales, lettings, marketing and management of quality properties in Oman and has grown in a short span of time since it opened its first branch in Jawharat Al Shatti- Shatti Al Qurum, in 2007. GPW has now opened a second outlet in Markaz Al Bahja- Seeb, and will be highlighting Muriya's freehold properties in both branches during 'Muriya's Week at Gulf Property World' from April 4-11, 2009.

Both GPW branches will showcase Muriya's two integrated tourism complexes 'Jebel Sifah' and 'Salalah Beach', and staff will be able to provide progress updates and answer queries of interested clients.

"Gulf Property World is delighted to showcase the stunning Jebel Sifah

and Salalah Beach projects in our branches. We will provide existing and future clients with the latest information and detail about the projects and allow them to see the progress that has been achieved on the sites.

"We have a strong relationship with Muriya as they are both professional and highly experienced in tourism development; their Oman projects will be world class," said Mike Harris, CEO of Gulf Property World.

Muriya will also find a prominent position in Gulf Property World's recently launched website. The technologically advanced website is a one-stop shop for property updates in Oman and receives more than 400 visitors a day.

"This new alliance will undoubtedly bring a new level of interest and add considerable value to our upcoming projects in Oman.

Gulf Property World has significantly changed the face of real estate in Oman, and we are happy to have tied up with such an esteemed

organisation," stated Cyril Piaia, CEO of Muriya.

The two destinations 'Jebel Sifah' and 'Salalah Beach' will feature a diverse range of commercial, tourism and high end luxury facilities such as freehold residential properties, marinas and marina towns, 18 hole PGA golf courses, retail outlets, restaurants and cafés and world class hotels including Four Seasons Hotels and Resorts, Banyan Tree Hotels and Resorts, Angsana Resorts and Spas, Missoni Hotels, Club Med, Rotana and Movenpick Hotels and Resorts.

In 2006, Egypt's 'Orascom' (70 per cent) and Omani government owned 'Omran' (30 per cent) came together to establish Muriya.

Since then, Muriya has announced four ambitious projects across the beautiful locales of the Sultanate of Oman. Two of the ongoing projects are integrated tourism complexes (ITCs) – 'Jebel Sifah' and 'Salalah Beach'. In addition, Muriya also has extensive plans to develop 'City Walk' in Muscat and a Boutique Hotel on Al Sodah Island.

Firms line up for work at Oman airports

Source: *MEED* - March 30, 2009

Oman's Transport & Communication Ministry has received bids from five firms for a contract to provide design and construction supervision services for the maintenance, repair, and overhaul of facilities at Muscat and Salalah airports.

The bidders are France's Aeroports de Paris, the local office of Asie Etudes Engineering Consultants, UK-based Atkins, the local Ghafari Associates and UK-based Simon Engineering.

The ministry has also invited consultants to bid by 4 May for the contract to provide design and construction supervision services for the cargo facilities at the two airports.

Earlier in March, the ministry began negotiations with the three lowest bidders for the main construction contract on the development of Muscat International airport.

The three lowest bidders are the lo-

cal Galfar Engineering & Contracting Company and India's Larsen & Toubro (L&T), with a price of RO473m (\$1.22bn); Athens-based Consolidated Contractors International Company (CCC) and Turkey's TAV at RO509m, and Cyprus-based Joannou & Paraskevaides (J&P) at RO520m.

The contract involves building the northern runway, taxiway system, aprons, roads, utility buildings and other civil works.

The Wave bucks trend, to expand construction workforce

Source: *Times of Oman* - March 22, 2009

The Wave Muscat, the \$2.5 billion mixed-use beachfront development, is bucking the global economic and real estate industry downturns with the announcement of a workforce expansion across its portfolio.

With its first hundred villas delivered earlier this year, The Wave Muscat is moving steadily ahead with its plans to deliver luxury apartments and town homes, leisure and retail components on schedule. The company has identified at least 27 immediate new openings across its functions to propel growth.

Nick Smith, CEO, The Wave, said: "The Wave's resilience and growth in difficult conditions is a measure of the confidence in its offering from investors across Oman and the AGCC. We are proud to make this contribution to the Oman community, and look forward to securing the best available talent to strengthen our operations."

The downturn, he added, is a signal opportunity for carefully considered development projects like The Wave to boost resources and improve efficiency. More than 700 homes are currently under construction at The

Wave, Muscat, with 300 scheduled for delivery in Q4 2009. More than 5,000 men and women currently staff the company's operations.

Abdullah Al Shidi, deputy CEO, The Wave, Muscat, praised the company's staff for driving the company forward and ensuring quality and timely delivery and service.

"The Wave is driven by the greatness of its people, Omani nationals and expatriates, who work together to deliver this outstanding project because they believe in its significance for the economy and its quality."

Construction of Qaryat Qurum project making good progress

Source: *Times of Oman* - March 12, 2009

Despite the recent global slowdown and upheavals in the real estate market, the growth of Qaryat Qurum, a joint venture project of ETA Star Properties and OHI group, is making good progress.

This fact was reinforced as Maqbool Hameed, chairman of OHI SAOG and Abid Junaid, executive director of ETA Star Property Developers LLC, Dubai, met recently in Oman to review the project.

"While the current scenario is certainly not ideal, there is no doubt that the economy will bounce back. We jointly reviewed the various operational aspects of Qaryat Qurum and are confident that the unique location of Qaryat Qurum and its attractive product mix will help it do well in the medium-term horizon. I'm

sure the real estate sector will quickly get back on even keel and realise its full potential," said Maqbool.

Commenting on the current market state, Abid said: "Though there has been a slowdown in the market which has affected the progress of several projects, our evaluation tells us that there also has been positive developments with regards to the reduction of construction costs as well as availability of construction materials. We have reviewed the project of Qaryat Qurum and are confident that its unique concept, location and marketability will definitely help us meet the desired objectives. ETA Star Properties is strongly committed to its partnership with OHI and to Qaryat Qurum."

According to recent reports, Oman's real estate sector is well protected from the global economic slowdown compared to other markets in the region because unlike other countries, the Sultanate of Oman has not been a victim of speculative buying. In Oman, different facets of the economy are opening up, the expatriate workforce is expanding steadily and there is construction happening everywhere.

The real estate projects launched by other major developers in Oman seem to be progressing quite well. Market confidence is a key factor in the success of real estate markets, and with the stability of the regional economy, it is not surprising how more investors are being drawn towards buying properties in the region.

Abraj Zumurud launches residential project

Source: *Times of Oman* - March 22, 2009

Abraj Zumurud LLC, a local real estate developer, will enter the market in the coming weeks with an exciting portfolio of low-end affordable property solutions to Omani and AGCC nationals.

The launch of sales for Abraj Zumurud 1 — a nine-story high residential building consisting of 34 two-bedroom apartments, two one-bedroom apartments, four retail/commercial units and two offices — will be unveiled in the coming weeks by its exclusive selling agent, Elite Properties.

“We are delighted to be launching

this project with our exclusive selling agents, Elite Properties, who have been instrumental in delivering the sales and marketing platform for us at a time when the market is going through a property correction,” Mohammed Nassir Al Saadi, Group chairman of Abraj Zumurud LLC, said.

“We feel that the product, pricing and positioning of Abraj Zumurud 1 in Al Khoud, close by to Sultan Qaboos University, will be an attractive purchase for property seekers and offer an excellent return on investment,” he added.

“This is another example of our company’s commitment to working with developers that share the same vision as us. Sixty-five per cent of the Oman market is under the age of 30 with the majority of this generation not having the opportunity to get a foothold on the Oman property ladder.

Abraj Zumurud 1 has the potential to change this, with local banks supporting the project with mortgage lending facilities, we are confident that Abraj Zumurud 1 will be a sound investment for all to benefit from,” Will Blake, chief executive officer of Elite Properties, said.

75-kilometre Batinah Expressway project flagged off

Source: *Oman Observer* - March 21, 2009

Development of one of Oman’s biggest road infrastructure projects — the Batinah Expressway — has been formally kicked off with the award of a key government contract last week. The 275-kilometre expressway, which runs the length of the Batinah region, will serve as a new superhighway for passenger and freight traffic. Further, conceived in parallel with the equally ambitious Batinah railway project, the Expressway will help underpin the region’s development into a vast industrial and economic belt.

According to officials of the Ministry of Transport and Communications, which is overseeing the implementation of the project, the Batinah Expressway will start from where the Muscat Expressway — currently under execution — ends at Halban near Naseem Garden. Aligned mostly in parallel with the existing Batinah Highway, the new road will hug the foothills of the North Hajar mountains as it travels all the way to

Khatmat Malaha on Oman’s border with the United Arab Emirates.

Development of the project is being fast-tracked in tandem with the planned implementation of a number of ambitious economic initiatives in the Batinah region, most notably the Special Economic Zone in Sohar. The Expressway, along with other infrastructure projects such as the Batinah Railway and the proposed Sohar Airport, is seen as key to securing the long-term success of these initiatives. Given the tight timeline envisioned for completion of the project, the Expressway will be designed in three sections of roughly equal lengths.

Last week, the Government Tender Board awarded contracts for the design of sections II and III at a total cost of RO 6.404 million. Section III covers the final 85km segment stretching from near Al Khadra (close to Al Suwaiq) to Sohar. Section I — a 90km length from Halban

to Al Khadra — will be tendered out in a separate contract. A total of 10 well-known consulting engineering firms had participated in a competitive tender for the consultancy contract covering Sections II and III. They are Dar al Handasah, National Engineering Services Pakistan & Partners (NESPAK), Parsons International, Consolidated Consultants Engineering & Environment, Khatib & Alami, Cowi & Partners, Century Architects, Conser & Partners, Modern Engineering, and Botek Bosphorus.

The selected consultant will study and design all elements of a limited access expressway along with the necessary interchanges, flyovers and underpasses. Bridges, culverts and other drainage systems will ensure that the expressway is secure from wadi flooding of the kind that often puts the existing Batinah Highway out of operation. Significantly, the consultant will also design a series of toll plazas at key

points along the Expressway along with operating systems for revenue collection.

Additionally, the Batinah Expressway will be integrated with the existing Batinah Highway through a series of link roads. Around 170 kilometres of link roads are envisaged along Sections II and III alone, with existing link roads proposed to be upgraded and dualised. Importantly, the Expressway will run along a corridor that also incorporates the alignment for the proposed Batinah Railway. A joint venture of France's Systra and Oman's National Engineering Office was recently awarded a contract to study the design requirements of an arterial railway system, based upon which a full-

fledged feasibility study and design will be undertaken.

According to officials, both the Expressway and the arterial railway will help cater to a projected exponential growth in vehicular and freight traffic as major industrial and economic investments in Sohar and the wider Batinah region come on stream. The Expressway in particular will serve as a speedy and convenient alternative to the Batinah Highway, which is prone to traffic disruption caused by wadis overflowing at Irish crossings, as well as serious mishaps.

Moreover, as an extension of the 53km Muscat Expressway, which runs from Qurum to Naseem Garden,

the Batinah Expressway will serve as a limited access freeway that would allow motorists to drive through and through with no halts (save for the toll plazas) all the way to Oman's border. Travel times between Muscat and Khatmat Malaha will be at least an hour shorter on normal days, officials say.

Underlining the Batinah region's importance as an engine of economic growth, the government has also initiated development of another major road project — the Batinah coastal road. The 241 kilometre-long, four-lane dual carriageway runs for the most part, parallel to the Gulf of Oman coast from Naseem Garden to Khatmat Malaha on the Sultanate's border with the UAE.

Mega infrastructure projects to sustain economy through '09

Source: *Oman Observer* - March 7, 2009

Government infrastructure projects involving capital outlays in excess of RO 1.5 billion will help Oman's economy weather the global downturn currently weighing down economies around the world, analysts say. Work on a slew of big-ticket infrastructure projects, financed primarily by the government, is due to kick off in the course of this year. Notable are the Muscat Airport development, the Batinah Coastal Road, and a major housing and rehabilitation scheme linked to the coastal road project.

Also due to be awarded this year are a host of smaller, but capex intensive projects, such as regional airports, water distribution schemes, wastewater networks, flood protection dams, port related improvements, and at least one major power and desalination plant. The upshot, analysts say, is a sustained injection of government capital which should help the economy chug along at a relatively healthy pace until a turn-

around in the global economic slump, predicted during the middle of 2010, takes hold. "There is every confidence that Oman's government will not hold back on infrastructure spending this year," said one market observer.

"Regardless of how international oil prices perform, the government is widely expected to live by its budget commitments to spend around RO 800 million on major infrastructure and modernisation schemes during 2009. After all, a lot is at stake if spending is curtailed; it could lead to job losses and a damaging economic slowdown — something the government will be very keen to avoid." For many large contracting firms, which traditionally employ thousands of workers, government contracts represent the mainstay of their business.

Infrastructure projects in particular not only ensure continued employment of these workforces, but cru-

cially also have a beneficial knock-on effect on other economic and service industries, notably the cement, steel and building materials sectors, transport firms, and a host of retail sectors. The most coveted of all the major government projects up for grabs this year is the main construction package (MC1 contract) linked to the modernisation of Muscat International Airport. A joint venture of Galfar Engineering & Contracting and Larsen & Toubro (Oman) is the lowest bidder (RO 473 million) for the contract, which involves the construction of a new runway, as well as several taxiways and aprons, utility buildings and the complete landside redevelopment of access roads to the terminal.

Beyond landing a plum contract for the successful bidder concerned, the project promises significant spin-offs for a wide spectrum of Omani businesses — from suppliers of construction materials and heavy equipment to transport firms and as-

sorted service providers, according to analysts Equally prized is the Batinah coastal road project, the first phase of which is now out to tender. With a total outlay in excess of RO 300 million, the project will translate into significant business opportunities for Omani firms. The Ministry of Transport and Communications is overseeing the implementation of the 241-kilometre-long dual carriageway, which will run parallel to the Gulf of Oman coast from Naseem Garden to Khatmat Malaha on the Sultanate's border with the UAE.

Development of the project will be undertaken in two phases. The first phase, which is now out to tender, covers a roughly 125-kilometre length of the coastal road, while the balance 116 kilometres will be implemented in Phase 2. To make way for the coastal road, the government has already commenced the task of relocating and rehabilitating the thousands of people who will be displaced by the project. Several thousand modern homes will be built alongside new access roads, utilities, souqs and other amenities as part of smart, new residential neighbourhoods that will be created to house those displaced by the venture.

Contracts worth several hundred

million riyals will be up for grabs when the rehabilitation programme is taken in hand for full implementation.

Contractors are also eyeing opportunities linked to the government's plan to develop a string of regional airports around the Sultanate. Construction of at least four airport projects — at Sohar, Duqm, Ras al Hadd and Adam — is expected to get under way this year. The total outlay towards these projects is in the range of RO 400-500 million, say analysts. Also on the anvil are a host of water supply schemes, notably in Al Jabal al Akhdar, Al Musannah and Adam involving capital allocations in excess of RO 150 million.

All three schemes, as well as a number of large-sized wastewater projects in Muscat Governorate, are expected to go ahead this year. Further impetus to economic activity will come from a number of planned port development initiatives. Authorities at the Port of Sohar are preparing to award a contract valued at around \$200 million for the construction of a deepwater bulk jetty to support a huge pelletising plant and iron ore distribution centre being developed by Brazilian mining giant Vale at a cost of \$1.356 billion. Development of the jetty is being overseen by Sohar International De-

velopment Company (SIDC), a new vehicle set up jointly by the Omani government and the Port of Rotterdam.

Meanwhile at Duqm on the Wusta coast, development of an ambitious port and dry dock complex continues apace. Oman Dry-Dock Company, which will own and operate the ship repair yard at Duqm, plans to award several large contracts this year linked to the superstructure development of the facility ahead of its scheduled launch in December 2010. Oilfield contractors and service providers are also gearing for a number of hefty contracts due to be awarded this year. Several projects planned in North and South Oman, including the Kauther and Harweel developments, are expected to go ahead during the year.

According to some analysts, the current economic environment also makes abundant sense for the government to proceed with planned infrastructure projects, particularly as commodity prices are at multi-year lows. Imported commodities are now 5-10 per cent cheaper than what they were a year ago. Steel prices have crashed from a high of around RO 700 per metric ton to around \$200. Several finishing items used in building construction are also a lot cheaper, it is pointed out.

Construction award for Muscat airport development likely by mid-year

Source: *Oman Observer* - February 23, 2009

The first of several key construction contracts linked to the expansion and modernisation of the Muscat and Salalah international airports is expected to be awarded by as early as mid-2009, it is learnt.

In all, four major construction contracts are now out to tender with a number of international and local construction heavyweights participating in the competitive bidding

process overseen by the Tender Board on behalf of the Ministry of Transport and Communications. Also tendered out apart from these construction packages are a number of other contracts pertaining to the provision of various kinds of equipment, systems and services at the two airports.

According to officials, the actual construction of the two airports is

organised in four distinct packages labelled as Main Contracts (MC) 1, 2, 3 and 5. While MC 1, 2 and 3 pertain to the development of Muscat International Airport, MC5 focuses entirely on the expansion and refurbishment of Salalah International Airport. Each of the main contracts comprises a substantial package of works involving significant allocations in capital investment by the government.

The most prestigious of the four packages is MC1, which covers the development of airside facilities at Muscat International Airport. Envisaged in this package is the construction of a new 4.3-kilometre, 60-metre-wide runway built to Code-F standards, meaning it can handle the largest aircraft in service today, notably the Airbus A380 Superjumbo or its equivalent.

The existing runway will be upgraded, while a number of taxiways and aprons will be built — all to Code-F standards. The modernised airport will thus boast two runways instead of today's single runway facility. Also as part of this package, the selected contractor will undertake the complete landside redevelopment of connectivity to the airport. A total of seven bridges/interchanges, as well as over 60 kilometres of access roads will be built both on the airside and landside, while the existing roads will be widened.

Importantly, the redeveloped airport will feature a modern storm water drainage system designed to secure

the complex against flooding of the kind witnessed in the city during the adverse weather conditions of June 2007.

The second package (MC2) centres primarily on the construction of a new state-of-the-art Air Traffic Control tower, which at around 100 metres in height, will be a landmark in its own right. Also envisaged in this package are facilities for Crash Fire Rescue, air traffic management centre, data centre, as well as other facilities and services.

Equally coveted by contractors is the MC3 package, the centrepiece of which is the construction of a world-class passenger terminal with a capacity to handle 12 million passengers per year.

Designed and built to IATA's A-class standards, the terminal will be equipped for every modern passenger convenience and amenity associated with some of the best-known airports in the world today. Covering an area of around 500,000 sq metres, the passenger terminal will also include a number of piers, con-

course, access ramps and forecourt complex. Provision for travelators/escalators and other services is also made in this package.

Envisaged in MC5 is the complete redevelopment of Salalah International Airport. A new 55,000 sq metre passenger terminal designed for three million passengers per annum will be built. The package also entails the construction of a new 4,000-metre runway, as well as taxiways and aprons — all built to Code-F standards. The existing runway will be upgraded and converted into a parallel taxiway. Additionally, the selected contractor will build the crash fire rescue station, car park, utility buildings, data centre and other facilities, as well as enhance landside connectivity.

Industry watchers expect the airport construction awards to be announced in quick succession as the government could seek to capitalise on the current economic environment — with prices of steel, building materials and contracting services at multi-year lows — to accelerate development of the projects.

'Oman construction unaffected by crisis'

Source: *Times of Oman* - February 08, 2009

Construction work in Oman is in full swing despite the current financial crisis across the globe, said Rashid Haroon Al Kindi, Managing Partner of Panorama Investments LLC, at a building materials seminar held in Grand Hyatt Hotel yesterday.

"The Omani markets are least affected by the economic crisis which is the reason why construction work here is going on in full flow," Rashid said speaking to Times Business.

Asked if there was any increase in the cost of building materials in the Omani market, Rashid said the prices were stable. "There is no

change in the cost factor. If you look at the prices in other countries there is a perceptible difference. But as of now there is no change in the Omani market," he said.

Panorama investment is a 100 per cent Omani company that started its operation last year. They currently sell furniture, tiles and sanitary wares. "We have now tied up with some of the best companies in the world like Vabene, SU Smart Utilities, Coppha Fuvi, Paschal and Aluplast," Rashid said.

Representatives of Aluplast, Paschal and Coppha Fuvi spoke on their products in the seminar at the

Afrah room of Grand Hyatt.

Talking about the economic crisis, Michael Roser, head of Technical Support, Aluplast, admitted that around 13 companies in Germany would be affected by the recession. "We are a major player in the German market and we have not been affected by the financial upheaval. But around 13 companies will be affected by the crisis. If you do a reliable business nothing can stop you. We don't cry over the crisis because we sell the best products to our clients," Michael said. Aluplast is one of the main expansion-driven international manufacturers of window profile systems.

Muriya's projects on schedule

Source: *Times of Oman* - January 24, 2009

Clients owning properties in Muriya's projects have been appraised of the developments in Jebel Sifah and 'Salalah Beach'. Having started construction in Q2 of 2008, Muriya is well on target to fulfil its commitment to its buyers, future guests of hotels and tourism activities.

"We are dedicated to completing and delivering the projects on schedule as is evident from the work in progress. The construction progress at Salalah Beach and Jebel Sifah for both the hotels and real estate properties are in accordance to the itineraries drawn out. With the financial backing of our parent company, Orascom Development Holding (ODH) and the support of our government-owned partner Omran, we are confident of keeping to our deadlines and delivering on time," said Cyril Piaia, chief executive officer of Muriya.

For phase-1 construction in 'Salalah Beach', the foundation has been laid for 35 villas and casting of slabs completed for 19 villas. 170,000m³ of the marina basin has been excavated and 12,000m³ of the quay wall dredged.

In 'Jebel Sifah' excavation, levelling and grading of 31 villas facing the golf course has been completed.

Construction on the 18 marina apartment blocks is in progress and due to be completed within 17 months. Excavation and levelling of three marina apartment blocks is already

in progress. Work on the marina has been proceeding at a good pace – 107,000m³ of the quay wall has been dredged and 155,000m³ of the marina basin excavated.

With the announcement on November 3, 2008 of the major deals signed between Samih Sawiris, chairman of Muriya Tourism Development and representatives of world renowned hotel brands for 'Jebel Sifah' such as Four Seasons Hotels and Resorts, Banyan Tree Hotels and Resorts and Angsana Resorts and Spas and Missoni Hotels, construction for one of the marina boutique hotels will start no later than February 2009, and is expected to be completed within 17 months. Designs on the remaining hotels signed in November 2008 are nearing the final stages, and the plan is to start construction before the end of 2009.

The portfolio for 'Salalah Beach' includes brands such as Club Mediteranee, Rotana and Movenpick. The excavation and soil replacement of the foundations for the Rotana Hotel has already started and is moving at a fast pace.

On the fringes of 'Salalah Beach' and 'Jebel Sifah', Muriya is offering a unique spin-off property investment avenue 'Al Jannat' that provides an opportunity for owners to design their own homes on a minimum land area of 4,200 square metres. At 'Al Jannat' properties in Salalah, 75 per cent of the four-metre high stone wall surrounding the plots of land has been completed.

In Jebel Sifah, excavation for 29 'Al Jannat' properties has been completed while pouring of concrete is in progress for the foundations.

Muriya will provide customers with single-storied homes covering 7.5 per cent of the plot, leaving the rest for nature. While the owners will enjoy the independence of owning a private retreat, they will be in close proximity to the leisure and entertainment facilities provided by the two projects that include luxury hotels, marinas, golf courses and retail outlets.

On the planning and development of 'Salalah Beach' and 'Jebel Sifah' projects, Muriya is drawing immensely from the experience and expertise of its parent company ODH that has projects in seven countries. One of the examples is the successful business model of El Gouna in Egypt that started 20 years ago and is still being developed. The planning that has gone into the project has resulted El Gouna to be bestowed with several prestigious awards.

Established in March 2006, Muriya Tourism Development Company is a joint venture between Egypt's renowned Orascom Development Holding with a stake of 70 per cent, and 30 per cent with the Omani government, represented by Omran. Muriya is a leading developer investing in four major projects, namely Salalah Beach, Jebel Sifah, a city complex in Muscat and a Boutique Hotel on Al Sodah Island.

Phase 1 of Mirbat Beach project nearing completion

Source: *Times of Oman* - January 24, 2009

Phase 1 of the RO 1 billion Mirbat Beach project in Dhofar Govern-

norate — centering on the development of the five-star Royal Tulip Re-

sort & Spa Mirbat — is now clearing completion, according to the

promoters Dhofar Tourism Company.

The project is poised to dramatically enhance the governorate's tourism appeal as the company sets out to develop a world-class holiday destination around the Mirbat Beach project. "Mirbat Beach is the most exciting tourism development project in the region. Its massive plan for a supreme tourist destination is designed to attract tourists and investors from across the globe.

The dramatic landscapes of Mirbat town are a stunning sight and a memorable experience," the company said in a press statement. Osama Mariam, Chief Executive Officer, Dhofar Tourism Company, added: "Tourism has already increased in the region with tourists placing Oman at the top of their list of holiday locations." Mirbat lies on

a small peninsula in a wide bay and has a port protected against the monsoon winds. The town has now become an important fishing port for the abalone (sufailah) and for the export of dry fish. Apart from fishing, many local residents are also engaged in boat building, net manufacturing, and crafting clay incense burners and wood and stone implements used in building construction.

In the waters off Mirbat is a treasure trove of marine riches in the form of exotic underwater species, untouched coral reefs and unparalleled marine diversity. The waters are also a haven for divers, while Mirbat Bay offers many superb beaches with secluded waterways, adorned by breathtaking natural beauty. The company has placed great importance on the way the development's

architecture and design should blend harmoniously with the beauty of its natural environment. Careful consideration and planning have gone into ensuring that the project enjoys all modern amenities. Dhofar Tourism Company is also looking to develop Mirbat into a destination for nature lovers and holidaymakers, as well as an ideal venue for business meetings and conferences.

Phase 2 of the project features 161 marina apartments around a marina which will have 75 berthing spots; 258 town homes of different sizes; 47 golf villas; over 10,000 sq m of retail space and 10,000 sq m of office space. Other project highlights include a 9-hole golf-course and clubhouse, a water park, a private hospital/clinic with helipad, nursery and child care facility, as well as an entertainment centre for adults and children.

Mega-projects to fuel domestic cement demand in 2009

Source: *Times of Oman* - January 22, 2009

Domestic cement demand is expected to remain robust during 2009, fuelled in large part by planned investments in major infrastructure projects, integrated tourism and residential complexes, and general housing growth, according to a top official of Oman Cement Company. Jamal Shamis al Hooti, CEO of the joint stock company, said cement consumption trends would continue to be sustained by the large government outlays towards a raft of mega-projects planned for implementation during the year.

Al Hooti's positive assessments came during a presentation on the company's performance at the Muscat Securities Market (MSM) yesterday. Present at the event were representatives of a number of brokerage and investment firms. The official

ticked off a long list of major projects that would contribute to cement uptake during the year.

The project line-up included the six domestic airports at Sohar, Ras al Hadd, Duqm, Shaleem, Adam and Haima; port developments at Sohar and Duqm; the tourism and residential developments in Ras al Hadd, Sifah, Yiti and Taqah; and the Batinah coastal road rehabilitation programme.

In fact, up to 10 per cent of the estimated RO 800 million in allocations towards infrastructure projects, announced by the government in its 2009 budget, would go towards cement purchases alone, said Al Hooti. The private sector is expected to match this figure with investments of their own in cement-intensive ventures, thereby ensur-

ing an even healthier demand for the commodity during the year, he added.

Significant cement demand will also be generated when many Omanis, keen to have their own homes, embark on the development of their government-allotted residential plots. Around 196,000 plots were distributed during the 2003-2007 period, against which only around 37,000 building permits have been issued so far. This leaves some 160,000 plots awaiting potential development, not counting the scores of allotments that authorities have begun to make to a broader segment of Omani women, the official explained.

In his presentation, Al Hooti also provided an update on Oman Cement's ongoing expansion

programme. A new production line currently under execution will raise clinker capacity from 4,000 tonnes per day (TPD) to 8,000 TPD. The new plant, being built by China National Building Materials Equipment Corporation (CNBMEC) at a cost of \$162 million, will be operational in the first quarter of 2010, he said.

Significantly, the expansion is expected to eventually lead to the elimination of clinker imports by Oman Cement, which imported nearly 922,000 tonnes of this intermediate commodity in 2008. In contrast, clinker imports by the company are projected at around 500,000 tonnes this year. Cement imports, on the other hand, which totalled around 265,000 tonnes last year, will be nil this year, he added.

Also under way is a project to upgrade the company's packing plant, which will impact favourably on its sales of bagged cement.

The upgrade is due to be completed by April this year. Another project to expand the grinding capacity of the company's cement mills by 3,000 metric tonnes per day, was completed last year, the CEO said. Meanwhile, cement sales by Oman Cement peaked at 2.120 million tonnes last year, as against sales of 1.878 million tonnes in 2007, according to Deepak Dikshit, CFO.

The record sales generated a turnover of RO 63.521 million in 2008, compared to RO 49.911 million in 2007. The company has projected a sales target of 2.1 million tonnes for

2009, which should yield RO 67.528 million in earnings based on the existing price of RO 30 per tonne of cement, he said.

Company officials said they foresaw no prospects of a decline in cement prices in the Sultanate despite reports of a slump in the real estate sector — the main driver of cement demand — in the wider region. On the contrary, Oman Cement has seen cement demand soar to around 9,000 TPD at present, from 7,000 TPD a year ago, the CEO stressed. Total domestic demand for cement was estimated at 4.5 million tonnes in 2008, with Oman Cement and Raysut Cement — the two main producers — accounting for around 3.5 million tonnes of this volume. The remainder was met through imports.

Al Habib celebrates 30 years of real estate success

Source: *Times of Oman* - December 23, 2008

Al Habib and Co. celebrated three decades of real estate excellence with an anniversary dinner at Crowne Plaza on Monday evening. The celebration was presided over by Khalil bin Abdullah Al Khonji and was attended by key players in Oman's business, trade and commercial communities.

Al Habib began life in 1978 when chairman and founder, Ali Malallah Habib Al Lawati, recognised that the real estate sector in Oman consisted of a mix of small agencies and large landlords, all operating independently of one another. With the aim of developing a 'model real estate company', the ambitious entrepreneur, saw a loophole in the market for professional, reliable and personal real estate services. Habib subsequently built the Sultanate's largest and most professionally managed real estate services company from the ground up.

As the first real estate brokerage company to be registered with the Ministry of Commerce and Industry, Al Habib has played a key role in the development of the Sultanate's real estate industry.

In the last three decades Al Habib has built homes, purpose-built offices, offered consultancy services, managed properties for private and government bodies and most importantly grown with the country, supporting His Majesty Sultan Qaboos bin Said's vision of creating a diversified and sustainable economy.

Today Al Habib is one of the leading real estate companies in the Sultanate with over 1,200 staff. Through its five professional divisions, Al Habib provides a full range of real estate services including: finding suitable land, providing consultancy, offering a valuation service, managing property rentals,

undertaking property construction, as well as handling the buying and selling of real estate. In addition the company can also provide electrical and civil contracting, civil engineering projects, building refurbishments and interior decoration.

Most recently Al Habib has developed a number of landmark buildings in Oman including the Ernst & Young Commercial Centre, City Residence Apartments, Centre Point in Muscat and in Salalah, and the Sanitary and Drainage offices in Salalah amongst others.

Current projects include the four-star Park Inn Hotel and residential developments such as the Lavendar Apartments and Canary Villas as well as 40,000m² mixed commercial and residential block for the Ministry of Defence Pension Fund.

On reaching thirty years in real es-

tate Habib said: "I believe that to ensure long term success teamwork, hard work, tenacity and professionalism is key. Through our values of empowerment, accountability, trust and excellence in all of our activities we have achieved a reputation that befits our experience in the market place. By investing in our staff

through innovative HR, training and communication activities we are making a commitment to our clients, ensuring that no matter how small or big, they will receive the best possible service. As a result of this dedication to our clients and team, our future will hopefully see continued success and growth."

"Corporate Social responsibility is also at the heart of our activities. By donating to the six charities here this evening, I am recognising the important role business plays in continuing to support and develop the cultural, economic and social prosperity of our wonderful country."

Global financial crisis will not hit Salam-Yetti Project: Sama CEO

Source: *Times of Oman* - December 12, 2008

Farhan Faraidooni, CEO of Sama Dubai Company, the arm for international development and real estate investment of Dubai Holding, has denied rumours about suspension of works of Salam-Yetti Project, executed by the company in the Sultanate, saying that "work on the project is on and will not be affected by the international financial crisis and will continue as scheduled".

"We will offer the residential units for sale during the second quarter of the next year as per a pricing policy that will cope with the developments in the real estate market," he added.

"What applies for the Salam-Yetti Project applies for the other projects executed by the company in Dubai, Qatar, Bahrain, Morocco and Tunisia," he said, adding that Sama Dubai was keen on proceeding with its plans as scheduled for completion of its projects and fulfilment of its obligations toward its clients and the community.

"But, at the same time, we do not ignore the financial crisis witnessed worldwide which made the company review its project plans," he said.

The international financial crisis has cast a shadow on the various sectors, including the banking and real estate, he said.

"Sama Dubai and the other companies operating in the field of real estate development cannot work in the same manner in the light of the aftermaths of the international financial crisis and impacts of the same on the states of the region," he said, pointing out that the world was "witnessing a new stage, which will necessitate the companies operating in the field of real estate development to re-programme their plans and mechanisms as per the new economic outcomes".

The states of the region would not escape the impacts of the international crisis as they operate within an integrated international financial and economic system, he said, stressing the need for transparency in disclosure of the facts of concern to the public.

Speaking on the banks' reluctance to finance real estate projects in the present time, he said: "I hope the banking sector will begin to finance the same during the second quarter of next year in the light of the 2008 disclosed profits of the companies."

Sama Dubai currently holds investments estimated in billions of dollars in the Middle East and North Africa and is planning to extend its operations worldwide.

On completion, the Salam-Yetti

project will represent a unique tourism destination and a prestigious residential complex in terms of the natural beauty of the area and the opportunities the project will create.

The project, which occupies a strategic location between Al Hajar Mountains and the Gulf of Oman, began less than a year ago in cooperation between Sama Dubai and Omran Company of the Ministry of Tourism of the Sultanate of Oman.

The concept and design of the project rely on the features of the rich Omani heritage and culture and aim at meeting the requirements of tourists from all around the world.

The Salam-Yetti project is 25km from the centre of Ruwi, which hosts the business centre of the capital. It takes 45 minutes from Muscat International Airport and 20 minutes from Al Qurum to reach the site of the project.

The project, spread on a total area of 4.19sqkm, is expected to improve the surrounding environment, develop residential areas and preserve the natural beauty of up to 70 per cent of the project's area. The project, worth \$1.7b, is carried out in two phases: the first phase will be complete in 2011 and the second is expected to be completed by year 2013.

Agreement to develop resort in Duqum signed

Source: *Times of Oman* - December 2, 2008

Oman, the government of Oman's tourism and development arm, and IHG have announced the signing of an agreement to develop Crowne Plaza Duqum Resort, the second Crowne Plaza Resort in the Sultanate of Oman.

Present at the signing were Minister of Tourism and chairperson of Omran Dr Rajiha bint Abdul Amir bin Ali, and John Bamsey, chief operating officer, IHG, Middle East and Africa.

Also present from Omran were Eng. Wael Al Lawati, CEO and Prakash Gabra, CFO. While from IHG Rani Gharbié, director of development Middle East & Africa, and David Todd, general manager of Crowne Plaza Muscat, were also present.

Crowne Plaza Duqum Resort, which is scheduled to open in 2011, will consist of 228 rooms — will include 11 spacious executive suites and six

family/junior suites. The property is in close proximity to Duqum town on the Arabian Sea, which is reinventing itself as Oman's next major industrial and commercial hub.

Commenting on the signing, John Bamsey said: "We are extremely honoured to be partnering with Omran once again for the development of Crowne Plaza Duqum Resort. We already operate other government-owned properties in Oman — and our collaboration on the Duqum project further demonstrates our long-standing relationship with Omran and our commitment to cooperate on future development opportunities within Oman. Crowne Plaza Duqum Resort is the first hotel to be built in the initial construction phase of Duqum's expansion and will mainly cater to the increasing business travellers into the area — consultants, contractors, investors and project managers — looking for high levels of service in close prox-

imity to their place of business."

The new Crowne Plaza Hotel will feature several diverse dining options including a speciality dining restaurant, an all day dining restaurant, a seafood grill/pool bar and a lobby lounge. In addition, the property will offer a complete fitness centre with the latest in high-tech equipment, a spa and tennis courts — all of which will give business guests the opportunity to mix business with pleasure.

More significantly, Crowne Plaza Duqum Resort will provide business guests with state-of-the-art meeting and conference facilities that will cater to their specific needs.

The master plan for Duqum's scale-up also includes designated areas for an airport, an oil refinery, free trade zones and oil storage facilities as well as a fishing harbour complete with fishery-related industries.

Blue City ties up with Anantara Hotels & Resorts

Source: *Oman Observer* - November 30, 2008

Blue City Company1 (BCC1) has recently announced an agreement with Anantara Hotels & Resorts, part of the Minor Hotel Group, for a new beachfront hotel development in Al Madina A'Zarqa currently under Phase-I of its construction.

The agreement with Anantara signals the launch of the first-ever hotel alliance for Al Madina A'Zarqa, as well as the debut of Anantara in Oman. Roger Kacou, Vice-President of Hotels and Leisure Development, BCC1 said: "I am delighted to welcome Anantara to Al Madina A'Zarqa.

The alliance combines the strength of Anantara's experience in designing, developing and managing

luxury hotel developments with Al Madina A'Zarqa's commitment to building a city of the future and placing Oman on the map as a premier tourist and business destination in the Middle East." The luxury destination will offer residents and visitors alike outstanding facilities, exceptional service and a broad range of rooms delivered in an environment of unmatched elegance and refined luxury.

It will also feature a 5-star spa that will offer its guests an unmatched range of services and treatments. Supported by world-class dining options, the beach front resort will provide a unique blend of ambience and exclusivity.

Dilip Rajakarier, Chief Operating Of-

ficer of Minor International PCL, the company heading Anantara Hotels & Resorts said: "We are excited to have signed this MOU with such a prestigious development as Al Madina A'Zarqa as a first step towards our entry in Oman. We believe Oman, with its rich culture and heritage will be an ideal location for our luxury Anantara brand and will complement our developments throughout the GCC region.

We are confident that this partnership will create one of the most talked-about destinations in the world." Born in Thailand in 2001, the Anantara Resorts and Spas is a collection of five-star luxury and boutique resorts and spas, providing an immersion in culture, history, and unique natural settings.

AQPL unveils premium luxury township Qaryat Qurum

Source: *Times of Oman* - November 10, 2008

With the objective of setting a new benchmark in ultra luxury living, Al Qurum Properties LLC, a joint venture between ETA Star and OHI group, has unveiled Qaryat Qurum, a premium luxury township in the heart of Muscat, at the entrance of PDO heights.

Commenting on the partnership at a press conference held in Hotel Intercontinental, Maqbool Hameed Al Saleh, chairman, OHI Group said: "It was our vision to create something extraordinary to meet the aspirations of a modern day consumer. Every component of the project — be it the concept, the people, the design, the materials — have been meticulously planned and will be executed similarly, in order to ensure that Qaryat Qurum is an ultimate statement in exclusivity."

Stating that the project will be a landmark in Oman, Abid Junaid, executive director, ETA Star Properties said: "Though Al Qurum Properties LLC is a recently formed organisation, it embodies the collective values of trust, expertise and results inherited from both the parent companies — ETA Star Properties and OHI. Qaryat Qurum is the maiden venture of AQPL and we are very excited about this project. We

strongly believe that it will not only be a landmark in Oman but will also reinforce Oman's potential to become a significant real estate destination of the future."

Maqbool Hameed also stated that the group was not discouraged by the global financial crisis.

"We believe it is not a wrong time to launch the project as we have been getting positive response from the banks and interested buyers," he said. Stating that it would take 30 to 36 months for the owners to occupy the place, he said: "There have been bookings for the project even more the launch." When asked what the most striking attraction of the project was, Maqbool Hameed said: "It is location, location and location."

"With prime properties becoming scarce within the city, the project offers a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity for GCC investors," he added.

Behram Divecha, CEO, OHI said, "The demand for property is very high in Qurum area as people prefer to reside close to their work places. With an upmarket property like the one in Qaryat Qurum, people can have the best of both worlds."

Qaryat Qurum's residential and commercial properties are spread over an area of 128,934 sq.mts and a total development area of over 500,000 sq. mts. The development has been broken down into two major categories — the main centre and the Hill-top Residences. The main centre comprises of a retail area (approximately 52,000 sq mt), commercial towers (approximately 95,000 sq mt), business hotels (approximately 150 rooms) and service apartments (approximately 8000 sq mt). The hill top residences comprises of 13 towers of 1, 2, 3, & 4 BHK duplex apartments. The exquisite residences have been carefully designed to offer an extensive landscape, a plethora of modern amenities and contemporary architecture with a distinct Arabic flavor. Only Omanis and GCC nationals are entitled to own property in Qaryat Qurum.

Qaryat Qurum residences will have several unique features like a smart home system, a private garden, private terraces, a common swimming pool as well as one in every building, club houses and state of the art health centers. A gated community, Qaryat Qurum epitomises the very best of the 'Qurum culture' — where tradition blends with modernity in a distinctive fashion.

Work on \$325m Sohar aluminium rolling mill to start next year

Source: *Oman Observer* - November 9, 2008

Construction work on a major aluminium rolling mill, utilising hot metal from the Sohar Aluminium smelter, is scheduled to commence at the Sohar Industrial Estate in the second quarter of next year. The project, involving a capital investment of around \$325 million, is one

of half a dozen aluminium-based downstream ventures promoted by Takamul Investment Company SAOC, a start-up firm set up by the state-owned energy investment vehicle Oman Oil Company SAOC. Takamul has joined hands with Bahrain's Gulf Aluminium Rolling

Mill Co (GARMCO) in the planned establishment of the aluminium rolling mill venture.

Also backing the project is the Abu Dhabi Water and Electricity Authority (ADWEA). Development of the project is envisaged in two phases,

according to a senior representative of Takamul. Anil Kumar Bishnoi, General Manager (Finance), stated at a business forum held at the Oman Chamber of Commerce and Industry (OCCI) recently that the project will boast a total capacity of 160,000 tonnes per year of aluminium general coil, foil and paint stock products. The output is primarily earmarked for markets in the Middle East and Europe.

As with all the aluminium-based downstream ventures promoted by Takamul, the rolling mill project will depend on hot metal as feedstock from the Sohar Aluminium smelter. "We have already received a com-

mitment of 80,000 tonnes (of liquid metal) from the Sohar Aluminium smelter, and we are in discussion with smelter's partner Alcan for an additional 80,000 tonnes," said Bishnoi. The project will contribute significantly to employment generation, according to the official. "We hope to hire at least 450 people for this project, and we are targeting at least 50 per cent Omanisation to start with," he said.

Development of the rolling mill, which will come up in a dedicated Metals Park adjoining the smelter, follows the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) by the project partners in September

last year, for the commissioning of a study into the feasibility of the project. GARMCO, a key partner in the venture, already operates the largest downstream aluminium plant in the Gulf region, with a capacity of over 165,000 tonnes per year. The company takes its feedstock from Aluminium Bahrain (ALBA), which is among the biggest primary aluminium producers in the world.

Launched in 1986, GARMCO specialises in producing high quality rolled aluminium products of various sizes and alloys. The product range includes high-value items, such as foil stock, computer components and building products .

Muriya brings leading international hotel brands to Oman

Source: *Times of Oman* - November 03, 2008

Samih Sawiris, chairman of Muriya Tourism Development, signed major deals worth over \$450 million with representatives of international hotel brands at InterContinental Hotel here yesterday.

The signing ceremony was held in the presence of Rajiha bint Abdul Ameer, minister of tourism.

Along with its partners Orascom Development Holding and Omran, representing the Ministry of Tourism, Muriya has secured the portfolios of hospitality brands, including Four Seasons Hotels and Resorts, Banyan Tree Hotels & Resorts and Angsana Resorts & Spas, and Missoni Hotels to its tourism destination 'Jebel Sifah'. These hotel properties represent 695 rooms, with more slated for development in the future.

Four Seasons Hotels and Resorts will be worth \$170 million, Missoni Hotels at \$80 million and Banyan Tree Hotels & Resorts and Angsana

Resorts & Spas and Viceroy at \$200-250 million.

Samih Sawiris; Cyril Piaia, CEO, Muriya Tourism Development; Phillipe Bijaoui, vice-president-Business Development, Missoni Hotels; David Clessen, director, development, Four Seasons Hotels and Resorts; Pankaj Khimji Ramdas, director, Jabal Resorts; Bernold O. Schroeder, senior vice-president-managing director, Hotel Operations, Banyan Tree Holdings; Haytham Macki, board member, Jabal Resorts; were present at the signing ceremony.

"Muriya has been pursuing alliances with premium hotels and resorts that have secured leadership positions worldwide. The alliance with leading international hotels is an indication of our commitment to bringing the worlds best to Oman, thus playing a fundamental role in harnessing the country's tourism potential," said Samih Sawiris.

Four Seasons is dedicated to the

highest standards of hospitality embodying the concept of a home away from home for those who appreciate the best. Continuous innovation, focus on service excellence, exceptional guest and employee experiences, and a targeted expansion programme of opening hotels in cities and resort destinations around the world have earned the company leadership in the hospitality industry. Founded in 1960, the Canadian-based company currently manages 81 properties in 34 destinations with more than 31 properties under development.

Muriya has partnered with Jabal Resorts LLC (Omani company established in 2007 as joint venture between Omani and AGCC investors) as a third party developer for the development operation of two famous branded resorts, namely Banyan Tree Hotels and Resorts and Angsana Resorts and Spa.

Banyan Tree is a leading international operator in the boutique resort, residences and spa industry,

and offers a signature blend of romance and travel with a green conscience. The philosophy behind the hotels, resorts, residences, spas, retail galleries and destination club is based on rejuvenation of the body, mind and soul - a sanctuary for the senses.

Angsana Resorts & Spa is the ideal complement to Banyan Tree, comprising contemporary, chic and ecologically sensitive retreats. Based in areas of outstanding natural beauty and exciting city hubs, Angsana hotels, resorts, residences, spas and retail galleries reflect the spirit and communities of its environment. To date the Banyan Tree Group manages and/or has ownership interests in over 20 resorts and hotels, over 60 spas, in excess of 60 retail galleries, as well as two golf courses.

Italian fashion house Missoni recently signed a worldwide licence agreement with the Rezidor Hotel

Group to launch the first Hotel Missoni in 2009 (Kuwait and Edinburgh). A new and distinctively different kind of hotel, Hotel Missoni will set itself out to capture the increasingly important lifestyle sector of the hospitality market.

Located 45km from Muscat, 'Jebel Sifah' is set on 6.2 million square metres. As a complement to the hotels it will also include luxurious villas and apartments, a world-class 18-hole PGA golf course, up to 200-berth marina and marina town, retail shops, two boutique marina hotels and four five-star internationally branded hotels.

'Salalah Beach', Muriya's second integrated tourism complex, is set in the pristine natural environment of the Dhofar region that is known for its temperate climate and beautiful landscape. This will be the venue for another three hotel chains in Oman, namely Club Mediteranee,

Rotana and Movenpick, with a total of 1,150 rooms and more to come. The Crown-Jewel of Muriya's Hotel enterprises in Oman is a unique luxury resort on Al Sodah Island, one of the four Halaniyat Islands, 35 nautical miles off the southern coast.

Spread over an area of one million square metres, this boutique hotel will comprise 32 lavishly-created chalets each with its own individual private beach aimed at the very top end of the international market, honeymooners and luxury-holiday makers.

"Muriya's strategic initiatives with world-renowned hotels and resorts reinforce its commitment to the country's booming tourism sector while maintaining high standards of comfort and luxury and conclude yet another step forward in the development of its projects in Oman," said Cyril Piaia.

Bank Sohar to finance new Radisson SAS at Sohar

Source: *Times of Oman* - November 2, 2008

Bank Sohar has entered into a long-term agreement with Al Nabri Global Investment LLC to finance the development of a new beachfront hotel and resort in the Zafaraan area of Sohar.

When complete, the luxury property will be managed and operated as Radisson SAS Hotel & Resort Sohar by the Rezidor Hotel Group — a well-known, reputed and fast growing international hotel chain.

This arrangement will be in much the same way as has been done by Al Nabri Global Investment and Radisson SAS in Muscat.

This new five-star property will meet the growing requirements for top end hospitality, business and leisure facilities in the Sohar area.

The agreements for project finance and the agreements for the design and management of the new hotel were signed at a formal ceremony organised under the patronage of Rajiha bint Abdul Amir bin Ali, minister of tourism at the Radisson SAS Hotel Muscat.

Several dignitaries from the government, the private sector and senior managers from Bank Sohar were present on the occasion.

Speaking on the occasion, Abdullah Ali Al Nabri, owner-promoter of the new Sohar hotel project mentioned that the necessary feasibility studies have been completed and construction will begin as soon as the final approvals have been obtained.

The property which will consist of

197 rooms, 15 suites, three restaurants, leisure and health facilities and business and conference amenities will take around two years to complete. A tentative date for the soft opening will be in the third quarter of 2011.

"We have nearly a decade of singular experience in the hotel industry in Muscat and a successful business model that we now plan to replicate in Sohar. When commissioned, this property will provide five-star amenities for both business and leisure to the people of Sohar, the Batinah region, the Gulf region and to international visitors to the city.

"Our endeavour in Sohar will also create hundreds of job opportunities in the neighbourhood for

trained and qualified Omanis both prior to after 'Rezidor Hotel Group had begun managing the property'.

Abdullah Ali Al Nabri expressed his appreciation for the impressive turn-around time and with which the Corporate Banking Department at Bank Sohar responded to their request for project finance and the professionalism with which they finalised all the arrangements.

Speaking on the sidelines of the function, Nani B. Javeri, CEO of Bank Sohar mentioned that the bank is proud to be partnering Al Nabri Global Investment in a project that further strengthens the potential for

tourism in the country and also meets the growing corporate requirements for hotel accommodation and services in and around Sohar.

"Bank Sohar has on many occasions confirmed its intent to provide support to corporate ventures that contribute to essential amenities and simultaneously add to the stature of the country."

He added that the bank has started a corporate desk at its branches at Salalah and Sohar to make certain that corporate customers in these two fast growing regions of the country get prompt and top quality banking convenience.

"Our approach is to create knowledge and share it with our corporate clients as and when they need it through our highly competent project finance unit.

"This unit develops cost effective solutions for companies planning to set up new businesses in Oman, or having plans to acquire companies abroad."

The project finance unit is also involved in bringing in international banking resources who will partner Omani banks in providing workable financing solutions to corporate customers.



Sultanate construction sector to come on focus at BIG Show



By Kabeer Yousuf

MUSCAT — Oman is to witness the BIG Show, the Builders International Gathering, a high-profile international exhibition for the region's building and construction sector, an industry that is currently involved in billions of dollars worth of major development projects in March 2011.

Organised by Omanexpo, a leading organiser of professional trade shows in the Sultanate under the auspices of the OCCI (Oman Chamber of Commerce and Industry), this three-day-expo is expected to be a venue for innovative concepts in building and construction, most modern equipment in the industry, and world class interiors for the whole region.

"Just like with Interiors & Buildex before, The BIG Show will serve as a major platform for meeting the rapidly growing requirements of the industry with the continued implementation of major residential, commercial and industrial projects throughout the region.

"We are rebranding the show this year in light of the event's firmly established reputation as one of the biggest and most important exhibitions in the Middle East for the building and construction industry," said Nasser Diab, General Manager of Omanexpo.

The BIG Show, to be held

from March 21 to 23, 2011 at the Oman International Exhibition Centre, will prominently feature all types of building materials, construction equipment and interior furnishings, many of which will be brought in by foreign companies and introduced for the first time in the local and regional market.

The wide range of products to be displayed will include air-conditioning systems, doors and windows, cement and concrete products, bathroom fittings, ceramic wall and floor tiles, paint products, heavy equipment, kitchen modules and appliances, marble and stone products, and hundreds of other products for any type of construction activity, renovation work or interior design project.

"Thanks to the nation's well-planned growth, Oman is least affected in the recession and we are still maintaining good income from our natural resources", said Khalil bin Abdullah bin Mohammed al Khonji, Chairman, Oman Chamber of Commerce and Industry.

"The government has been

floating lots of tenders, lot of projects are coming such as water desalination project, airport, roads, dams and so on and so forth. So we don't have to be bothered about what is happening far away. We are on the right track at the right time and we need the support from exhibitions of this sort", Khalil added.

The previous edition of the event, which was held last March 15-17, set many new records including the participation of 202 local and international companies whose displays covered both halls of the Oman International Exhibition Centre.

For the very first time, more than 25 countries were also represented in the 2010 exhibition, spearheaded by the national pavilions of Turkey, UK, UAE, Sri Lanka, Egypt, and Italy. The other international participants came all the way from Canada, China, Germany, India, Iran, Jordan, Korea, Kuwait, Lebanon, Malaysia, Malta, Pakistan, the Philippines, Poland, Russia, Saudi Arabia, Syria, and the USA.

— Pic by Khalifa al Ruzaiqi

Buildex to get a 'BIG' makeover



Omanexpo general manager Nasser Diab (left), OCCI chairman Khalil bin Abdullah bin Mohammed al Khonji (centre) and OCCI director general Abdul al Bahrani addressing the press conference on Monday

Our Correspondent Muscat

Exhibition management company Omanexpo announced that it is rebranding and expanding its successful Interiors and Buildex event for 2011 under the name The BIG Show.

To be held from March 21 to 23 at the Oman International Exhibition Centre, the Builders International Gathering (BIG) Show is expected to provide a platform for firms eager to take advantage of an industry currently involved in a wide range of multi-million dollar development projects.

New features will include a construction equipment demonstration zone. The first of its kind in the Middle East, it will give companies an opportunity to demonstrate the capabilities of their heavy equipment.

Two conferences will also be held as part of the exhibition. The first will concentrate on new trends and concepts in the interiors industry, while the second will focus on safety in the construction industry.

Khalil bin Abdullah bin Mohammed al Khonji, chairman of the Oman Chamber of Commerce and Industry (OCCI), said

the private sector needs strong support as the building industry experiences strong growth in the face of stable oil prices and an improving global economy. "The building industry is a very promising sector and Oman is focused on infrastructure development. It is the right time to support the sector. The world economic situation is improving and oil prices are improving and stable."

Nasser Diab, general manager of Omanexpo, explained that the Interiors and Buildex event had been rebranded as The BIG Show to reflect its expansion in terms of both size and content over the last seven years.

"The event was rebranded after the big success of the last Buildex event. We have had tremendous response locally and internationally.

"Based on that, we did a survey to find a brand name that will make an impression on the minds of the local and international markets and includes all the industries. We renamed it The BIG Show to include every aspect of the industry." Diab added.

OMAN

OMAN DAILY Observer

TUESDAY, JUNE 1, 2010

Omanexpo to organise The BIG Show

MUSCAT — Omanexpo, the leading organiser of professional trade shows in the Sultanate, is gearing up for The BIG Show, a high-profile international exhibition for the region's building and construction sector, an industry that is currently involved in major development projects.

Formerly known as Interiors & Buildex, The BIG Show — or the Builders International Gathering — will be held from March 21 to 23, 2011, at the Oman International Exhibitions Centre in Al Seeb. The three-day event, which is much-awaited every year by industry professionals, is once again expected to attract the participation of a record number of local and international exhibitors aims to take full advantage of existing major opportunities in the market.

During the Press Conference held at Oman Chamber of Commerce and Industry (OCCI), Khalil bin Abdullah al Khonji, Chairman of (OCCI), said that the BIG Show in March 2011 aims to support the building, construction and real estate sectors being one of the promising sectors in the Sultanate and represents the future infrastructure due to improvement in economic situations and global oil prices.

"Just like with Interiors & Buildex before, The BIG Show will serve as a major platform for meeting the rapidly growing requirements of the industry with the continued implementation of major residential, commercial and industrial projects throughout the region. We are rebranding the show

this year in light of the event's firmly established reputation as one of the biggest and most important exhibitions in the Middle East for the building and construction industry," said Nasser Diab, general manager of Omanexpo, the pioneer exhibition management company in the Sultanate.

Diab pointed out that The BIG Show will prominently feature all types of building materials, construction equipment and interior furnishings, many of which will be brought in by foreign companies and introduced for the first time in the local and regional market. The wide range of products to be displayed will include air-conditioning systems, doors and windows, cement and concrete products, bathroom fittings, ceramic wall and floor tiles, paint products, heavy equipment, kitchen modules and appliances, marble and stone products, and hundreds of other products for any type of construction activity, renovation work or interior design project.

According to Diab, a new and exciting feature of The BIG Show will be the Construction Equipment Demonstration Zone, which will provide a platform for suppliers, manufacturers and distributors to showcase how their heavy equipment works. To be held for the first time ever in the Middle East, this special zone to be set up at the back of the exhibition centre will enable users to familiarise themselves with the advanced features and amazing capabilities of the different brands of heavy equipment in the market. — ONA

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٢٤ صفحة

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٢٠٠ بيعة

المدير العام رئيس التحرير

حاتم الطائي

الخنجي: الغرفة تعزم إقامة ٤٠٠ فعالية في إطار الاحتفالات بالعيد الأربعين

300 شركة في الملتقى العالمي للبنائين.. وتوقعات بمشاركات كبيرة



الخنجي خلال المؤتمر

أعلنت شركة عمان أكسيو في مؤتمر صحفي أمس بغرفة التجارة والصناعة عن تفاصيل الملتقى العالمي للبنائين The Big Shows، والمعروف سابقاً باسم معرض البناء والديكور، خلال الفترة ٢١-٢٣ مارس ٢٠١١ بمركز عمان الدولي للمعارض.

ومن المتوقع أن يجذب هذا المعرض آلاف الزوار من المختصين في هذا القطاع المهم من الصناعة، حيث تشير التوقعات إلى وصول عدد المشاركين في هذا المعرض إلى رقم قياسي مقارنة بالأعوام الماضية لكونه يتناول قطاعاً حيوياً فيه فرص متنوعة يمكن استثمارها من قبل المهتمين في هذا القطاع.

مسقط- خالد الدخيل

من ناحية أخرى، أعلن سعادة خليل بن عبد الله الخنجي رئيس غرفة التجارة والصناعة أن الغرفة تستعد لإقامة ٤٠٠ فعالية خلال الفترة القادمة مشاركة منها في احتفالات السلطنة بالعيد الأربعين، وقال خلال المؤتمر الصحفي إن هذه الفعاليات تساهم في تنشيط الاقتصاد الوطني باعتبار أن أدوار الغرفة يجب أن تفسد في هذا الاتجاه.

وتقوم شركة عمان أكسيو، الشركة الرائدة في مجال تنظيم وإدارة المعارض التخصصية والتجارية في السلطنة، بالتحضيرات لتنظيم المعرض العالمي التخصصي في مجال البناء والتشييد، حيث إن هذا القطاع من الصناعة، تشهد خلاله مشاريع عملاقة تصل تكاليفها للمباراة الدولارات. وحول المعرض قال سعادة خليل بن عبدالله الخنجي أن السلطنة متعطشة لإقامة مثل هذه المعارض، ومتابعة أحدث التطورات العالمية بهذا الصدد خاصة وأن البلاد تشهد توسعات ومشاريع كبيرة لبنية الأساسية، ونشاط عمراني وتوسعات، بالإضافة إلى عدد من المشروعات الضخمة التي تقوم بها الدولة مما يجعلها بعيدة عن التأثر بالركود الذي تأثرت به بلدان العالم.

وقال ناصر دياب، المدير العام لشركة عمان أكسيو مضيفاً لكلام سعادة رئيس الغرفة أن المعارضين الدوليين أكدوا أنهم استفادوا عندما عرضوا في السلطنة أكثر من استفادتهم من ٢٠ معرضاً آخر بالعالم، وقالوا أنهم لم يشعروا بما تعاني منه بلدان العالم من ركود بل لمسوا إقبالاً غير عادي على ما يعرضونه ولم يكن هناك تأثير للركود ولهذا تريد هذه

شركة محلية ومالية عرضت منتجاتها وخدماتها على أرض مركز عمان الدولي للمعارض، وللمرة الأولى شاركت ٢٥ دولة ضمن المعرض في أجنحة خاصة مثل الجناح التركي، والمملكة المتحدة، ودولة الإمارات العربية المتحدة، وسريلانكا، ومصر، وإيطاليا، بالإضافة إلى مشاركين من كندا، والصين، وألمانيا، والهند، وإيران، والأردن، وكوريا، والكويت، ولبنان، وماليزيا، ومالطا، والباكستان، والفلبين، وبوتسوانا، وروسيا، والمملكة العربية السعودية، وسوريا، والولايات المتحدة الأمريكية.

كما كان عليه الحال في معرض البناء والديكور، فإن The Big Show ٢٠١١ سيعمل على جذب عدد أكبر من الشركات المشاركة على صعيد المنطقة والعالم وكذلك الشركات الرائدة في السلطنة، حسب قول عبد الله بيح، مدير المشروع. سيعكس المعرض بوضوح بروز السلطنة في مجال صناعة البناء والتشييد، والتأثيث والديكور الداخلي، والمعدات الثقيلة، ويقام The Big Show ٢٠١١ تحت رعاية غرفة تجارة وصناعة عمان، ودعم من فوايد بانوراما ش.م.م الراعي الذهبي، وتنظم المعرض شركة عمان أكسيو إحدى شركات مجموعة سابكو، وهي عضو الجمعية الدولية لصناعة المعارض UFI، والجمعية الدولية للمعارض IAEE، وكانت الشركة قد تأسست في عام ١٩٨٦، ومنذ ذلك الحين ولمدة ٢٥ سنة اكتسبت شهرتها في مجال تنظيم وإدارة المعارض حيث هي الآن الرائدة في هذا المجال، والعدد الكبير للمعارض التي تنظمها الشركة والمعتمدة من قبل الجمعية الدولية لصناعة المعارض UFI، دليل واضح على موقع الشركة المتميز بين مثيلاتها التي تعمل في نفس المجال.

كما أشار دياب إلى أن The Big Show سيضم كافة أنواع مواد البناء، ومعدات التشييد، ومستلزمات الديكور الداخلي والتأثيث. حيث إن العديد منها يتم عرضه للمرة الأولى من قبل العديد من الشركات العالمية المشاركة في المعرض، وسيضم المعرض مكيفات الهواء، وأبواب وشبابيك UPVC، والإسمنت والمنتجات الخرسانية، ولوازم الحمامات، بلاط السيراميك للأرضيات والجدران، والأصباغ، والمعدات الثقيلة، وأثاث وأدوات الطابع، والأبواب والشبابيك، ومركبات التشييد، ومنتجات الرخام، والديكور الداخلي، والمئات من المنتجات الأخرى التي تستخدم في بناء وصيانة وتطوير المباني.

واستناداً إلى دياب فإن المعرض The Big Show سوف تتخلله مساحة خاصة يتمكن المجهزون والمصنعون من استعراض طريقة عمل معدات التشييد الثقيلة الخاصة بهم، وتقع هذه المنطقة، التي تستحدث للمرة الأولى في الشرق الأوسط، في مؤخرة المعرض وسوف تمكن الزوار من التعرف على مواصفات هذه المعدات المتطورة، ومن علامات تجارية مختلفة.

وقد أكد دياب على كون الشركة حاصلة على عضوية الجمعية العالمية لمنظمي المعارض التجارية UFI، فإن ذلك سوف يطمئن المعارضين والمشاركين من تلقي خدمات عالية الجودة طيلة أيام المعرض، ففي دورته الثامنة، من المتوقع أن يحافظ المعرض على نموه المستمر من ناحية عدد المشاركين والدول المشاركة، المساحة الكلية التي يغطيها المعرض، وعدد الزوار.

سجلت الدورة السابقة التي تم تنظيمها في الفترة ١٥-١٧ مارس الماضي، إرقاماً قياسية حيث كان عدد المشاركين ٢٠٢

الشركات التوقيع على مشاركتها في المعرض القادم من الآن، وخاصة الرعاية ومن هؤلاء شركة ويندوز على سبيل المثال وأجيلنتي بانوراما وقد وقعوا بالفعل وهم على يقين من الفوائد التي ستجنيها لهم مشاركتهم في المعرض. وأكد دياب أن عدد الدول المشاركة في المعرض بلغ حتى الآن ٧ دول بالإضافة إلى السلطنة، ويقام المعرض على مساحة ٨ آلاف متر مربع من الخارج والداخل، وأشار إلى أن عدد الشركات المشاركة حتى الآن بلغ ٢٢٠ شركة ومن المنتظر أن يصل العدد إلى ٣٠٠ شركة على الأقل، أما الرعاية الرسميون فلن يقل عددهم عن ٨ شركات. وقال عبد العظيم بن عباس البحراني مدير عام غرفة تجارة وصناعة عمان أن الغرفة باعتبارها أحد الرعاة لهذا المعرض الهام، تقدم دعماً كاملاً له إيماناً منها بأهمية دورها في مساندة مثل هذه الفعاليات وأضاف: عندما تقوم الغرفة برعاية هذا الحدث فإن ذلك يعني إعطاء الدعم العنوي للحدث عند الدول الأخرى وخلق نوع من الثقة وتحت في الغرفة نسعى مع الجانبين دائماً لدعم المؤتمرات، وعلان أكسيو واحدة من الشركات الجادة والفاعلة وهذا يخلق ثقة وتعاوناً لدى البلاد الأخرى.

ويؤكد ناصر دياب المدير العام لشركة عمان أكسيو أن المعرض سيكون بمثابة قاعدة واسعة لتلبية احتياجات قطاع البناء والانشاءات بسبب المشاريع الضخمة التي يتم تنفيذها في المنطقة سواء السكنية منها والتجارية، ويضيف أن تغيير اسم المعرض هذا العام جاء لكونه أصبح الأكبر من نوعه في مجال صناعة البناء والتشييد في الشرق الأوسط، بعد أن اكتسب شهرته على مر السنين.

لدعم قطاع البناء والتشييد والعقار بالسلطنة

العربية

مارس ٢٠١١ انطلاق المعرض الدولي في مجال البناء والديكور



■ الخنجي وعدد من المسؤولين بشركة اكسيو خلال الاعلان عن تفاصيل المعرض

مسقط - «الأكابر»: «تصوير: ابراهيم الشكيلي»
المعرض من «معروض البناء والديكور» التي الملتقى العالمي للبناء والتشييد متوقعا ان يستقطب المعرض أكثر من 15 ألف زائر و 300 شركة محلية ودولية.

وأشار الى ان المعرض سيضم كافة أنواع مواد البناء ومعدات التشييد ومستلزمات الديكور الداخلي والخارجي ومكيفات الهواء والأبواب والنوافذ والإسمنت والمنتجات الخرسانية والمواد الصحية والبلاط وسيراميك الارضيات والجدران والأصباغ والمعدات الثقيلة وأثاث وأدوات المطابخ ومركبات التشييد ومنتجات الرخام والديكور الداخلي.

وقال ان المعرض سيشهد لأول مرة إقامة مؤتمرات حول الديكور والبناء الى جانب عقد ندوة حول متطلبات الأمن في البناء موضحا ان هذه المؤتمرات ستناقش كيفية ادارة قطاع الديكور والبناء والتقنيات الحديثة المستخدمة في ذلك الى جانب استعراض بعض التجارب الناجحة في مجال الديكور والبناء والتشييد.

وأشار الى ان الدورة السابقة للمعرض كانت قد حققت أرقاما قياسية حيث وصل عدد المشاركين الى 220 شركة محلية وعالمية عرضت منتجاتها وخدماتها وقد مثلت 25 دولة من مختلف دول العالم. كما تمكنت من استقطاب أكثر من 10 آلاف زائر ومتخصص.

تنظم شركة (عمان اكسيو) في الحادي والعشرين من شهر مارس من عام 2011 بمركز عمان الدولي للمعارض أعمال المعرض الدولي المتخصص في مجال البناء والتشييد ويستمر ثلاثة أيام. أعلن ذلك سعادة خليل بن عبدالله الخنجي رئيس غرفة تجارة وصناعة عمان خلال المؤتمر الصحفي الذي عقده أمس بقصر الغرفة.

وقال سعادته: ان استضافة الغرفة للمؤتمر يأتي دعما للقطاع الخاص وبالذات قطاع البناء والتشييد والعقار باعتباره من القطاعات الواعدة بالسلطنة وكونه يمثل الركيزة المستقبلية للبنية الأساسية التي تنفذها السلطنة حاليا وذلك نتيجة لتحسن الأوضاع الاقتصادية وأسعار النفط العالمية.

من جانبه قال ناصر دياب المدير العام لشركة (عمان اكسيو) ان المعرض يعد بمثابة قاعدة ثابتة لتلبية احتياجات هذا القطاع المتنامي بسبب المشاريع الكبيرة التي يتم تنفيذها في منطقة الخليج العربية سواء السكنية منها أو التجارية مشيرا الى انه تم تغيير اسم



دائم من المؤتمر (لتصوير: محمد سامر)

300 شركة في معرض البناء والديكور 2011

مسقط - راشد بن أحمد البلوشي

وجهة اقتصادية. وتابع: لقد اجتمعنا مع عدد من الحكومات والشركات الخارجية لدعم المعرض، ووصلنا إلى مرحلة الحاجة لإقامة معرض دولي عالمي تحضره شركات عالمية وقرنا ان نقيم معرضا يحمل اسم البنائين العالميين يختص بمقاولي البناء.

وقال ناصر دياب: من خلال هذا المعرض يتمكن الجميع من عرض جميع ما يتعلق بالبناء أو التشييد، وهذا العام وصلنا تأكيدات كثيرة من قبل المعارضين والزوار من شركة بانوراما وشركة ويندوز 2000 وغيرها ومن خلال هذا المعرض كذلك سنبني أفكارا جديدة منها إقامة مؤتمرات الأولى يغطي قطاع الديكور والأخر قطاع البناء.

وأضاف: سيكون المعرض على مساحة أكثر من 8000 متر مربع ويتسع لأكثر من 300 شركة متوقع مشاركتها وأكثر من 15000 زائر.

والتشبيد وأن عمان اكسيو من الشركات الرائدة في إقامة المعارض المتخصصة واليوم بأشور بصورة جديدة وإقليمية وعالمية.

من جانبه قال مدير عام شركة اكسيو ناصر دياب: بداية أوجه الشكر والتقدير لغرفة تجارة وصناعة عمان على الدور الذي تلعبه في دعم القطاع الخاص لا سيما بما يتعلق بجانب المعارض.

وأضاف: كما نعرفون أن معرض البناء والديكور سيقام في مارس من العام المقبل وذلك بمركز عمان للمعارض، ولقد حققت المعارض السابقة نجاحا باهرا في استقطاب العديد من الشركات حيث شاركت في العام الفائت أكثر من 220 شركة من أكثر من 6 دول ولم تكن تتوقع هذه الأرقام من الشركات، وقد حضر أكثر من (10000) زائر لهذا المعرض وهذا يدل على أهمية مثل هذه المعارض التي تقام على أرض السلطنة باعتبارها واحة أمن

تقوم غرفة تجارة وصناعة عمان بدعم القطاع الخاص لا سيما قطاع البناء والتشييد والعقار، حيث عقد مؤخرا مؤتمر بالغرفة نظمته شركة عمان اكسيو بحضور مدير عام شركة عمان اكسيو ناصر دياب ومدير عام غرفة تجارة وصناعة عمان عبد العظيم البحراني والرئيس التنفيذي لشركة التوافذ 2000 سعيد الصغري .

وقال رئيس غرفة تجارة وصناعة عمان سعادة خليل الخنجي ان قطاع البناء والديكور قطاع واعد في السلطنة، ولا بد من التكاتف والتعاون من أجل تحقيق الأهداف في مختلف القطاعات وبخاصة قطاع البناء والتشييد باعتباره الركيزة المستقبلية للبنية الأساسية التي سوف تنفذ في السلطنة خلال السنوات المقبلة، وذلك لتحسن الظروف الاقتصادية العالمية وكذلك ارتفاع أسعار النفط العالمية، والتركيز على قطاع البناء

يسعى إلى استقطاب مشاريع عملاقة إلى السلطنة

معرض عالمي للبناء والتشييد . . مارس القادم

كتب: صالح بن محمد العززي



جانب من المؤتمر الصحفي

تصوير: خلفان الرزيقي

أعلنت شركة (عمان اكسيو) عن تنظيم معرض عالمي متخصص في مجال البناء والتشييد في الفترة من 21 إلى 23 مارس القادم 2011 معرض The Big Show. ويرعاية غرفة تجارة وصناعة عمان، وبدعم من نوافذ وبانوراما الراعي الذهبي، وسيقام المعرض بمركز عمان الدولي للمعارض.

جاء ذلك في المؤتمر الصحفي الذي عقد أمس بغرفة تجارة وصناعة عمان والذي أكد خلاله سعادة خليل بن عبدالله الخنجي رئيس مجلس إدارة غرفة تجارة وصناعة عمان على دعم القطاع الخاص وبالأخص قطاع البناء والتشييد والعقار لأنه قطاع واعد في السلطنة ولا بد من التكاتف حول مختلف القطاعات وهو الركيزة المستقبلية للبنية الأساسية التي سوف ينفذ في السلطنة في السنوات القادمة لتحسن الظروف الاقتصادية وأسعار النفط العالمية.

وأضاف انه لا بد من التركيز على هذا القطاع موضحا ان شركة عمان اكسيو رواد في تنظيم وإدارة المعارض المتخصصة والتجارية في السلطنة.

من جانبه قال ناصر دياب مدير عام شركة عمان اكسيو أن الشركة تقوم بالتحضيرات لتنظيم معرض. وهو معرض عالمي متخصص في مجال البناء والتشييد، حيث إن هذا القطاع من الصناعة تنفذ خلاله مشاريع عملاقة تسهل تكاليفها لمليارات الدولارات.

وسيمت تنظيم المعرض أو الملتقى العالمي للبنائين والذي كان يعرف سابقا بمعرض البناء والديكور، خلال الفترة 21-23 مارس 2011 على أرض مركز عمان الدولي للمعارض. حيث سيحشد هذا المعرض آلاف الزوار من المختصين في هذا القطاع المهم من الصناعة. ومن المتوقع أن يكون عدد المشاركين في هذا المعرض رقما قياسيا مقارنة بالسنين الماضية لكونه يتناول قطاعا حيويا فيه فرصا متنوعة يمكن اغتنامها من

حيث بلغ عدد المشاركين 202 شركة محلية وعالمية عرضت منتجاتها وخدماتها على أرض مركز عمان الدولي للمعارض. و للمرة الأولى شاركت 25 دولة ضمن المعرض في أجنحة خاصة مثل، الجناح التركي، والمملكة المتحدة، ودولة الإمارات العربية المتحدة، وسريلانكا، ومصر، وأيطاليا. بالإضافة الى مشاركين من كندا، والصين، وألمانيا، والهند، وإيران، والأردن، وكوريا، والكويت، ولبنان، وماليزيا، ومالطا، وباكستان، والفلبين، وبيوتندا، وروسيا، والمملكة العربية السعودية، وسوريا، والولايات المتحدة الأمريكية.

وكما كان عليه الحال في معرض البناء والديكور، فإن المعرض سيعمل على جذب عددا أكبر من الشركات المشاركة على صعيد المنطقة والعالم وكذلك الشركات الرائدة في السلطنة، حسب قول عبدالله بيح، مدير المشروع، سيكس المعرض بوضوح بروز السلطنة في مجال صناعة البناء والتشييد، والتأثيث والديكور الداخلي، والمعدات الثقيلة.

ومركبات التشييد، ومنتجات الرخام، والديكور الداخلي، والمئات من المنتجات الأخرى التي تستخدم في بناء وصيانة وتطوير المباني. وسوف تتخلله مساحة خاصة يتمكن المجهزون والمصنعون من استعراض طريقة عمل معدات التشييد الثقيلة الخاصة بهم. وتقع هذه المنطقة التي تستحدث للمرة الأولى في الشرق الأوسط، في مؤخرة المعرض وسوف تمكن الزوار من التعرف على مواصفات هذه المعدات المتطورة ومن علامات تجارية مختلفة.

وأوضح ان الشركة حاصلة على عضوية الجمعية العالمية لمنظمي المعارض التجارية UFI، وهذا يضمن المعارضين والمشاركين من تلقي خدمات عالية الجودة طيلة أيام المعرض. ففي دورته الثامنة، من المتوقع أن يحافظ المعرض على نموه المستمر من ناحية عدد المشاركين، والدول المشاركة، المساحة الكلية التي يغطيها المعرض، وعدد الزوار.

وسجلت الدورة السابقة التي تم تنظيمها في الفترة 10-17 مارس الماضي، أرقاما قياسية

قبل المهتمين في هذا القطاع. كما كان عليه الحال مع معرض البناء والإنشاءات، سيكون المعرض بمثابة قاعدة راسخة لتلبية إحتياجات هذا القطاع المتنامية بسبب المشاريع الضخمة التي يتم تنفيذها في المنطقة سواء السكنية منها والتجارية. وجاء تغيير اسم المعرض في هذا العام لكونه أصبح الأكبر من نوعه في مجال صناعة البناء والتشييد في الشرق الأوسط بعد أن اكتسب شهرته على مر السنين.

وأشار الى ان المعرض سيضم كافة النوع مواد البناء، ومعدات التشييد، ومستلزمات الديكور الداخلي والتأثيث، حيث ان العديد منها يتم عرضه للمرة الأولى من قبل العديد من الشركات العالمية المشاركة في المعرض. وسيضم المعرض مكيفات الهواء، وأبواب وشبابيك UPVC، والإسمنت والمنتجات الخرسانية، ولوازم الحمامات، بلاط والسيراميك للأرضيات والجدران، والأصباغ، والمعدات الثقيلة، و أثاث وأدوات المطابخ، والأبواب والشبابيك،

REAL ESTATE

< FROM B1 'BIG Show' to meet industry needs

BIG PLANS: The dignitaries and organisers of the 'BIG Show' present their plans to the media. - Photo by Shamsul Mohemmed/TIMES OF OMAN

Abdul Adheem Abbas Al Bahrani, director general OCCL, pointed out that the support of OCCL to the private sector provides them with confidence and security.

"Just like with Interiors and Buildex before, The BIG Show will serve as a major platform for meeting the rapidly growing requirements of the industry with the continued implementation of major residential, commercial and industrial projects

throughout the region. We are re-branding the show this year in light of the event's firmly established reputation as one of the biggest and most important exhibitions in the Middle East for the building and construction industry," said Nasser Diab, general manager of Omanexpo, the pioneer exhibition management company in the Sultanate.

Diab pointed out that The BIG Show will prominently feature all

types of building materials, construction equipment and interior furnishings, many of which will be brought in by foreign companies and introduced for the first time in the local and regional market.

The wide range of products to be displayed will include air-conditioning systems, doors and windows, cement and concrete products, bathroom fittings, ceramic wall and floor tiles, paint products,

heavy equipment, kitchen modules and appliances, marble and stone products, and hundreds of other products for any type of construction activity, renovation work or interior design project.

According to Diab, a new and exciting feature of The BIG Show will be the Construction Equipment Demonstration Zone, which will provide a platform for suppliers, manufacturers and distributors.

REAL ESTATE EXHIBITION

Omanexpo set to be 'BIG Show'

Times News Service

MUSCAT: Omanexpo, the leading organiser of professional trade shows in the Sultanate, is gearing up for a high-profile international exhibition that will focus on the region's building and construction sector, an industry that is currently involved in billions of dollars worth of major development projects.

Formerly known as Interiors and Buildex, The 'BIG Show' - Builders International Gathering - will be

held during March 21-23, 2011 at the Oman International Exhibition Centre in Seeb.

The three-day event, which is much-awaited every year by industry professionals, is once again expected to attract the participation of a record number of local and international exhibitors which aim to take full advantage of existing major opportunities in the market.

The Oman Chamber of Commerce and Industry has to support the private sector, and building and con-

struction sector as well, said Khalil bin Abdullah Al Khonji, Chairman, OCCL, at a press conference held yesterday.

"The Sultanate is currently undergoing significant infrastructure projects. This expo comes in a way to support the private sector, and building and construction sector. Though other countries have been affected due to the recession crisis. However, we were least affected, and we are now moving on the right track," Al Khonji said. >B2

SPACE APPLICATION FORM

Exhibitor Contact Details

Company Name		Contact Person	
Office Address		Designation	
Telephone No.		Mobile No.	
Fax No.		Email Address	
		Products	

Stand Requirements

Type of Stand	Cost per sqm	Area (sqm)	Amount (USD RO)
<input type="checkbox"/> Shell Scheme	USD 390 RO 150	X <input type="text"/>	= <input type="text"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Space Only	USD 340 RO 130	X <input type="text"/>	= <input type="text"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Outside Space	USD 130 RO 50	X <input type="text"/>	= <input type="text"/>

All Payments must be made by cheque in favour of Omanexpo LLC, or by bank transfers to:

Bank Name: National Bank of Oman
Account Name: Omanexpo LLC
Account No: 1049 -114576 – 001 (RO) | 1049 -114576 – 002 (USD)
Swift Code: NBO MOMRX

Exhibitor Declaration

We hereby confirm our interest in exhibiting at **The BIG Show 2011** and that we have read and we agree to all the Exhibition Terms and Condition of Contract. The signature of this Space Application Form and its receipt by Omanexpo is deemed conclusive evidence of the Applicant's agreement to pay the full fees due. The application may not be cancelled by the Applicant. The Applicant further acknowledges that Omanexpo, having incurred expenses as a result of the application, is not required to refund any of the fees and that Omanexpo is also entitled to any unpaid amounts that may be owed by the Applicant to Omanexpo.

Name		Company Stamp	
Designation		Date	
Signature			

For office use only

Total Amount Due	USD RO	<input type="text"/>	USD RO	<input type="text"/>	--	50% initial payment due on signing of the contract
Invoice No.		<input type="text"/>		<input type="text"/>	--	Balance 50% due by 31 st December 2010
Exhibition Code		<input type="text"/>				(All contracts signed after 31 st December 2010 requires 100% settlement)
Space / Stand No.		<input type="text"/>				

Authorisation for The BIG Show

Name		Signature	
Designation			
Date			

Comments:

The Organiser



Head Office: P. O. Box 20, P.C. 117, Muscat, Sultanate of Oman
Tel: +968 24660124 | Fax: +968 24660125/126 | Email: info@omanexpo.com



Regional Office: P.O.Box 80674, Dubai, UAE
Tel: (+9714) 2587774 | Fax: (+9714) 2587776 | Email: infodubai@omanexpo.com

TERMS AND CONDITIONS

1. In these conditions, the term Exhibitor means the signatory of this application and includes all employees or agents of such, and the term Exhibition means that described on the reverse hereof "The Organiser" means Omanexpo LLC.
2. In case of "Joint Ventures" howsoever described, the Exhibitor is deemed to have obtained the consent of all the individual participants to all the conditions of this contract.
3. When payments for space are not made when due, the organizers reserve the right to charge interest on any overdue amounts at 2% above the Base Rate as set by the National Bank of Oman, any previous deposit may be forfeited and the space reallocated by the organizers. Any loss incurred by the organizer arising thereon must be paid by the exhibitor.
4. Applications for space must contain details of the proposed exhibit and the names of other companies represented by the Exhibitor whose products are to be shown on or whose services are to be referred to on the stand. The Organiser reserves the right to refuse participation to any Exhibitor.
5. The charge for space is exclusive of any applicable local Government or exchange and will be subject to alteration in the event of any change therein. A notice signed by the organizers and sent by recorded delivery to the address on the applications form shall be sufficient notice of such amendment to the contract which shall otherwise remain binding in all respects.
6. The organizers shall give full power to determine in every respect the allocation of area and position of space and they shall be entitled for any to vary the general layout or the situation and area of any particular stand even if already allotted and the exhibitor shall accept such new allotment of space in substitution of that originally allotted.
7. Upon the allocation of space, a contract shall arise between the organizers and the exhibitor in terms of these conditions subject to variation as mentioned as regards space allotted. The relationship of licensor and licensee shall immediately arise and continue between the organizers and the exhibitor. In case of the non-payment of any sum due or any breach or non-observance of any of these conditions by the exhibitor, the organizers shall have full right to revoke his license and to re-enter upon the allotted space and may remove and exclude the exhibitor without prejudice to recovering all monies payable hereunder, all other claims against him and damages sustained by the organizers.
8. Every exhibitor shall occupy the space allotted to him by 8:00 a.m. on the day prior to the opening of the exhibition. In the event of default from any cause whatsoever, the exhibitor shall pay to the organizers the further sum in liquidated damages equal to the total charge for the space and the organizers shall have the right to deal with the space in any way they think best.
9. In the event of any exhibitor committing an act of bankruptcy or if a limited company being wound up, the contract with him shall be determined and all monies already paid shall be retained by the organizers.
10. Exhibitors may not assign, sublet or grant license in respect of any part of the space allotted to them nor any advertisement of firms who are not bonafide exhibitors to be exhibited on any stand without the prior permission of the organisers. Only those products, services and companies mentioned on the application form may be incorporated in the stand.
 11. Exhibitors will be totally responsible for the cost of restoring to its original condition any part of land or structure occupied by them which has been altered or damaged in any way.
 12. Exhibitors shall be totally responsible for the obtaining of visas as may be required to enable them, their servants, agents, representatives, invitees or others to attend the exhibition and in no event shall there be any claim for damages or otherwise against the organizers of any loss or expense relation thereto.
 13. The organizers will not be responsible for the safety of any exhibit or property of any exhibitor, or any other person, for the loss of, or damage, or destruction to same, by theft, or fire, or other cause whatsoever, or for any loss or damage whatsoever sustained by any exhibitor, by reason of any defect in a building caused by fire, storm, tempest, lightning, national emergency, war, labour disputes, strikes or lockouts, civil disturbances, explosion, inevitable accident, force majeure, or any other cause not within the control of the organizers, whether ejusden generic or not, or for any loss or damage occasioned, if by reason of the happenings of any such events, the opening of the exhibition is prevented or postponed, or abandoned, or their own stand fittings, and for their proportion of the shell scheme stand, as the exhibitors are advised to cover themselves by insurance in respect thereof to any extent available.
 14. In no event shall the exhibitor have any claim for damages of any kind against the organizers in respect of any loss or damage, consequential upon the prevention, or postponement, or abandonment of the exhibition, by reason of happening or any of the events referred to in condition 12 or otherwise, or of the exhibition building becoming wholly or partially unavailable for the holding of the exhibition for reasons beyond the organiser's control and the organizers shall be entitled to retain all sums paid by exhibitors, or such part thereof as the organizers shall consider necessary. If, in the opinion the organizers, by re-arraigning or postponement of the period of the exhibition, or by substitution of another hall, or building or any other reasonable manner, the exhibition can be carried through, the contracts for space shall be binding upon the parties, except as to the size and position necessary shall be determined by the organizers.
 15. Stands must be properly manned and exhibits displayed during all the time that the exhibition is open to trade visitors and the public. No exhibits may be removed before the end of the exhibition without the written permission of the organizers, which will only be given in exceptional circumstances.
 16. The organizers reserve the right to make an additional charge to each exhibitors equal to any amount charged to them for any services supplied whether specifically ordered or not. The organizers accept no responsibility for breakdown or failure of any of the services provided for, or in connection with, the exhibition.
 17. Breach of contract and withdrawal by the exhibitor – without prejudice to the rights and remedies of the organizers in respect of any breach of the contract on the part of the exhibitor, the organizers may at their discretion allow the exhibitor to withdraw from the exhibition subject to the following conditions:-
 - a. The exhibitor must give a written notice to the organizers that he desires to withdraw, and if the organizers allow such withdrawal, they will notify the exhibitor of their decision in writing.
 - b. Any such notification by the organizers to the exhibitor will constitute a cancellation of the contract subject to the payment by the exhibitor to the organizers of a consideration for release from the contract.
 - c. The amount of such payment will be specified in the organiser's notification to the exhibitor and will be that proportion of the space rental payable under the contract specified in the second column below which appears the period date in the first column below upon which the organizers receive the notification from the exhibitor:

Date of Receipt by Organisers of Notice of withdrawals	Proportion of Space Rental payable %
More than 6 months prior to the opening of the exhibition	25%
6 months to 4 months prior to the opening of the exhibition	50%
4 months to 2 months prior to the opening of the exhibition	75%
Less than 2 months prior to the opening of the exhibition	100%
 - d. Upon payment of such amount to the organizers by the exhibitor (credit being given by the organizers for all rental already paid by the exhibitor), the contract shall be cancelled and neither party shall have any further claim against each other.
18. The organizers reserve the right to alter, add to, or amend any of these conditions or not, the decision of the organizers shall be final. No alternation, addition, amendment, or waiver to or of, these conditions shall operate to release any exhibitor from his contract.
19. Particular attention is drawn to the relevant safety standards which must be strictly observed for any exhibits involving lasers or radioactive materials, or materials which might provide noxious fumes or which make use of or display any other materials which may involve danger to the health or safety of any person. No such materials may be brought into the exhibition without prior agreement in writing of the organizers and also the exhibitor or person arising from the use or display of such materials. An exhibitor's manual will be issued to the exhibitor containing detailed instructions for the organization of the exhibition.
20. Stand rentals may be paid for in Omani Rials or US\$.
21. Claims: The organizers cannot accept any complaint or claim against them unless it is submitted in writing to the address given on the previous page within two weeks of the closing date of the exhibition. All claims and disputed shall be settled in Muscat in accordance with the law and customs of the Sultanate of Oman.

All communications should be addressed to:

OMANEXPO
Global Business Platform
 P O Box 20, PC 117, Muscat, Sultanate of Oman
 Tel: +968 24660124 | Fax: +968 24660125
 Email: info@omanexpo.com
 Website: www.omanexpo.com

We have read all the above terms and conditions of this form and we undertake to observe and to be bound by them.

Signature:

Date:



THE
B I G **SHOW**
Builders International Gathering

8th International Exhibition of Building Materials,
Construction Equipment and Interior Furnishings



21-23 March 2011
Oman International Exhibition Centre
Muscat, Sultanate of Oman

The image features a background of scattered, semi-transparent squares in various colors including yellow, light blue, pink, and orange. A prominent blue horizontal bar spans the width of the image, with a grey bar overlapping its bottom edge. On the left side of the blue bar, the word "visit" is written in white, lowercase letters.

visit



www.thebigshow-oman.com

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Your Expectations



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Be Part of One of the Biggest and Most Respected Shows in the Region



With the government allocating more funds for infrastructure development and with the private sector likewise investing heavily in various major development projects, the Sultanate of Oman continues to experience an unprecedented construction boom that has greatly increased the demand for all types of building materials, construction equipment and interior furnishings.

The BIG Show, which was formerly known as Interiors & Bulldox, is a high-profile event that will connect you directly to your target clients in the vibrant building and construction industry not just in Oman but throughout the region. Now on its 6th edition, the three-day event serves as a highly effective platform for introducing your latest products and equipment, acquiring new customers, expanding your business contacts, and further strengthening

your presence in the ever-lucrative Middle East market.

As a "UFI Approved Event" and with its well deserved reputation as one of the region's leading events for the building and construction industry, **The BIG Show 2011** is a major event that your company simply cannot afford to miss. Participating in the exhibition is a sound business investment that will ensure that you would be able to take advantage of existing and emerging opportunities in the industry.

Participate in **The BIG Show 2011** and be right in the centre of exciting developments in the region's building and construction industry. Book your stand today!

A Sampling of Major Development Projects in Oman

Project Name	Owner/Developer	Project Cost
Al Madina A'Zarqa (Blue City)	Al Sawadi Investment & Tourism	USD 15-20 billion
Muscat and Salalah airports expansion	Ministry of Transport and Communications	USD 3 billion
Mirbat Beach Project	Dhofar Tourism Company	USD 2.5 billion
Naseem A' Sabaa	Amouage Hotels & Resorts and BRDB	USD 2.5 billion
The Wave, Muscat	The Wave, Muscat	USD 2.4 billion
Integrated Tourist Resort Complex	Yenkit Tourism Development	USD 2 billion
Salam Resort & Spa – Yiti and Salam Resort & Spa - Shinas	Sama Dubai and Oman Tourism Development Company	USD 2 billion
Omagine Project	Omagine LLC	USD 1.6 billion
Barka Resort	Alargan International Real Estate Co.	USD 1.1 billion
Tilal Al Khuwair	Al Madina Real Estate Co.	USD 1 billion
Salalah Beach, Jebel Sifah and Al Sodah Island	Muriya Tourism Development Company	USD 850 million
Khasab Resort	Majan Gulf Properties	USD 780 million

“Thank you once again for successfully and professionally organizing Interiors & Buildex, which has now become Alomi’s most important exhibition in the GCC. It cannot be missed by anyone who is serious about doing business in the GCC and Oman in particular. I would like to immediately rebook my stand again for next year.”

Albert Douglas
 CEO
 Alomi Real Wood Floors (UK)

Exhibition Profile:

The Widest Range of Products and Equipment

The BIG Show will showcase a comprehensive range of products, equipment and services that would effectively serve the growing requirements of the vibrant building and construction industry in the region. Among those to be displayed prominently are the following:

- Air Conditioning & Refrigeration
- Bathroom and Bedroom Products
- Building Materials and Systems
- Ceramics and Tiles
- Concrete and Cement Products
- Construction Supplies and Equipment
- Doors, Windows and Walls
- Electrical & Electronic Equipment
- Flooring and Roofing Materials
- Furniture and Furnishings
- Heavy Equipment & Construction Vehicles
- Interior Design Products and Services
- Kitchen Modules and Products
- Lighting Fixtures and Accessories
- Marble and Other Stone Products
- Metal, Welding and Woodworking Machinery
- Paints, Hardware and Tools
- Sanitary Wares and Fittings
- Steel and Other Metal Products
- Wood and Timber Products
- Plus Many Other Products!



Special Feature:

Construction Equipment Demonstration Zone

For the first time ever in the Middle East, **The BIG Show** will have a special area, wherein distributors will be able to showcase how their heavy equipment works. Different brands of the latest heavy equipment in the market will be given an opportunity to demonstrate their special features and capabilities. This new dimension of the show is expected to create much excitement and attract large crowds of would-be users who are eager to find out how a particular heavy equipment would be highly useful in their projects.

"The exhibition was very professional and well organized. Most of the visitors were genuine and returned satisfied. It was well done, and congratulations to the team. Keep it up!"

Koshy P. Thomas
Managing Director
Decorstone International (Oman)



Visitor Profile: The Biggest Crowds of Industry Professionals



With its reputation as a highly important event for the building and construction industry, The BIG Show will enable you to effectively network with your target clients and to establish strong contacts with the following:

- architects
- interior designers
- contractors
- manufacturers
- consultants
- project managers
- property developers
- property owners
- engineers
- purchasing managers
- end-users/buyers
- real-estate agents
- Importers/distributors
- retailers and suppliers
- homeowners
- site managers



The Most Comprehensive Media Coverage

To successfully attract a much higher number of industry professionals in 2011, **The BIG Show** will be aggressively promoted using a wide variety of media channels. The visitor promotion campaign will focus not only in Oman but throughout the Middle East as well as other parts of the world. This will ensure that a large number of trade visitors at **The BIG Show** will come from all over the world.

The comprehensive campaign will consist of the following:

- **heavy ad placement in local and regional newspapers, both in English and Arabic**
- **advertisements and editorial coverage in trade publications focusing on the building and construction industry**
- **regular press releases in newspapers, magazines and websites, such as AmelInfo, Zawya and MenaFN**
- **e-mail and fax campaigns targeting industry professionals throughout the Middle East region.**
- **SMS broadcasts before and during the event to effectively reach as many industry professionals as possible**
- **dissemination of flyers, e-newsletters and personalized invitations to greatly raise awareness on the event**
- **radio announcements and newspaper supplements to further highlight the importance of the show**

"I would like to congratulate you on a very good show. We were very pleased with the number and quality of the visitors to our stand. Overall, the show was a very well run, successful and pleasant."

David Hudson
Sales Manager
Rawson Carpets Ltd. (UK)

"Interiors & Buildex 2010 was one of the best in recent times. The quality of the products and overall exhibition has improved a great deal."

Mannu Kapoor
Marketing Manager
National Aluminium Products Co. (Oman)

The Most Beneficial Sponsorship Opportunities

To maximize the impact of your participation, **The BIG Show** offers a wide range of sponsorship opportunities that will give you a sure edge over your competitors and further boost your company's presence in the local and regional market.

- Platinum Sponsor
- Gold Sponsor
- Silver Sponsor
- Bronze Sponsor
- Visitor Bag Sponsor
- Visitor Badge Sponsor
- Floor Plan Sponsor
- Lanyard Sponsor

Each sponsorship option above carries a range of exciting benefits, such as great media mileage with the inclusion of your logo in all newspapers and magazines ads, visitor invitation leaflets, banners, show catalogues and other promotional materials. Many other benefits are specific to a particular sponsorship option to enable you to get the greatest promotional value for your investment.

Contact us today for more details on each sponsorship opportunity as well as the benefits that you will be entitled to as a valued sponsor of **The BIG Show**.



The Venue

Established in 1985, the Oman International Exhibition Centre (OIEC) is the ideal venue for major trade fairs and exhibitions in the Sultanate of Oman. It offers up to 12,000 square meters of indoor exhibition space and it has enough parking spaces for over 2,500 vehicles. It is conveniently located near Muscat International Airport, close to major hotels, and just a short ride away from the city centre of Muscat. For more information, visit www.omanexhibitions.com.



The Organiser



OMANEXPO®
Global Business Platform

Established in 1986, Omanexpo is the pioneer exhibition management company in Oman and the leading organizer of professional trade shows in the sultanate. The company is a member of UFI-The Global Association of the Exhibition Industry and the International Association of Exhibitions and Events (IAEE).

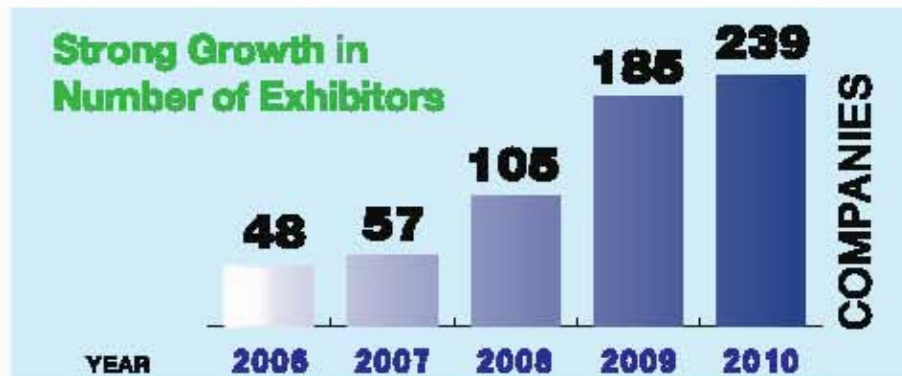
In addition to The BIG Show, Omanexpo's portfolio of major trade exhibitions includes the Motor Show, Food & Hotel Oman, Women Expo, MedHealth & Wellness, Weight Loss and Cosmetology Show, and OGWA-The Region's Leading Oil & Gas Exhibition and Conference. For more information, visit www.omanexpo.com.

"Thanks to all the team in Oman's Interiors & Buildex. We found the exhibition to be very well run and very well attended. The staff was hugely supportive prior to the exhibition, during the build phase and during the show. We enjoyed the whole experience and hope that it will bring its rewards during the coming year."

Lucy Boatwain
Design Director
Diffuse Ltd. (UK)

Interiors & Buildex 2010: A Record-Breaking Event

Interiors & Buildex 2010, the former name of **The BIG Show**, smashed all previous records of the event, with the continued growth in the number of local and international exhibitors, participating countries, and total number of industry professionals who visited the show. It was another resounding success for a high-profile trade event that continues to increase in popularity and relevance every year.



COUNTRIES REPRESENTED IN 2010

Spearheaded by the national pavilions of Turkey, UK, UAE, Italy, Sri Lanka and Egypt, Interiors & Buildex 2010 featured companies from over 25 countries including the following:

Belgium
Canada
China
Egypt
Germany
India
Italy

Jordan
Korea
Kuwait
Lebanon
Malaysia
Oman
Pakistan

Philippines
Poland
Saudi Arabia
Sri Lanka
Turkey
UAE
UK





Visitors by Product Interest

Air Conditioning and Refrigeration	-	78%
Bathroom and Kitchen Products	-	82%
Ceramics and Stone Products	-	71%
Concrete and Steel Products	-	80%
Doors, Windows and Walls	-	65%
Heavy Equipment & Construction Vehicles	-	55%
Interior Design Products & Services	-	62%
Electrical and Electronic Products	-	64%
Paints, Hardware and Tools	-	56%

Main Purpose of Visit

1. To gather information on new products	-	6694
2. To meet potential suppliers/business partners	-	4216
3. To make a purchase or place orders	-	3374
4. To interact with Industry professionals	-	4520
5. To explore potential representation/partnership	-	2983

"It was of great advantage to us to participate in the exhibition since we were able to introduce our products to the private sector. We think that our stand was one of the most visited ones since we received hundreds of visitors during the event."

Walid Haroun
Marketing Manager
Al-Mutawee Trading Co. (Oman)

"Thanks for your perfect service. For sure, we will participate once again in the exhibition in 2011."

Jimmy Zhang
Sales Manager
Shandong Xingang Group (China)

"The event was indeed very productive and effective for us. Kindly keep us posted with all the newsletters regarding upcoming events."

Fahad Mohammed Riaz
Managing Director
Mohammed Riaz & Partner Co. (Oman)

The BIG Show At-a-Glance



8th International Exhibition of Building Materials
Construction Equipment, and Interior Furnishings



21-23 March 2011

**Oman International Exhibition Centre
Muscat, Sultanate of Oman**

**Exhibition Timings:
11:00 am – 8:00 pm**

**Registration Deadline:
15 February 2011**



About Oman

The Sultanate of Oman is the third largest country in the Arabian peninsula. It borders the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia in the west, the United Arab Emirates in the northeast, and the Republic of Yemen in the south.

Muscat is the heart of the sultanate, the political and administrative hub of the nation, the centre of tourism and commercial activities. The capital area is a prime example of intelligent and aesthetic development, amalgamating modernity with tradition.

Modern Muscat is home to a range of luxury hotels with upscale restaurants. Among its attractions are a number of magnificent beaches and breathtaking creeks such as Qurum Beach, Al-Jissah, Yitti, and Al-Bustan. Several restored forts, folk museums and traditional souqs are other popular attractions not to be missed.

Oman has consistently ranked first in peace and stability in the Middle East and North Africa, and it also ranks high in economic freedom among all the Arab countries. For more information, visit www.omantourism.gov.om.



For more information, please contact:



OMANEXPO®

Global Business Platform

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P.O. Box 20, P.C. 117, Muscat, Sultanate of Oman
Tel. +968-24860124 | Fax +968-24860125 / 126
E-mail: info@omanexpo.com

Regional Office:

P.O. Box 80674, Dubai, United Arab Emirates
Tel. +971-4-2587774 | Fax +971-4-2587776
E-mail: info@dubai@omanexpo.com

www.omanexpo.com

Act now before all prime locations are gone.
Book your stand today!

Main Contact Person:

Abdullah Beg

Project Manager

Mobile: +968-95140107

E-mail: abdullah@omanexpo.com

The background features a white space with scattered, semi-transparent, colorful rectangular blocks in shades of yellow, light blue, dark blue, orange, and pink. A solid blue horizontal bar runs across the bottom of the page.

www.thebigshow-oman.com



8th International Exhibition of Building Materials, Construction Equipment and Interior Furnishings



21-23 March 2011
Oman International Exhibition Centre
Muscat, Sultanate of Oman

Supported By



Oman Chamber of
Commerce & Industry

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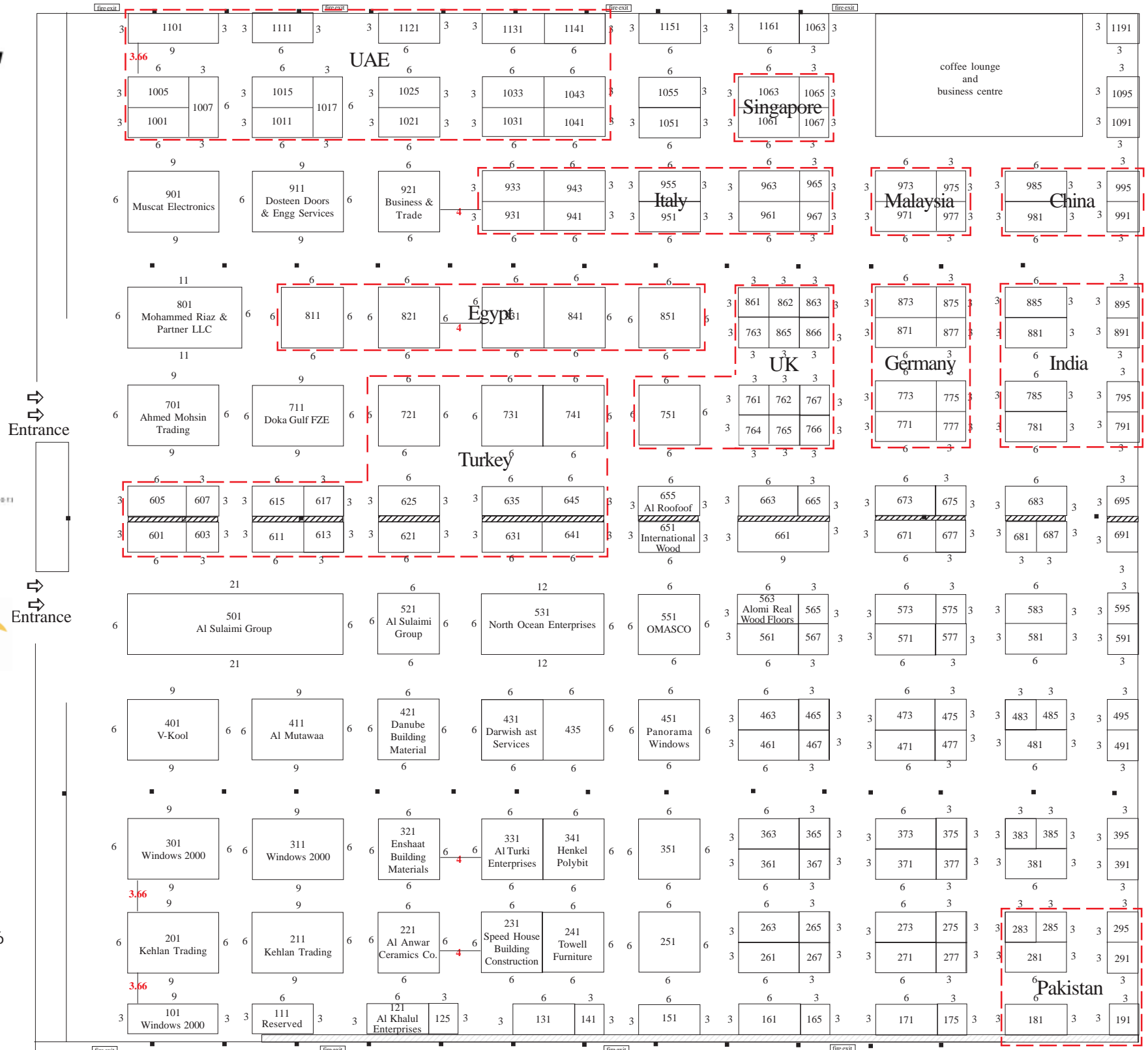


Organiser



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(as of 17 June 2010; floor plan is subject to change)

OMAN'S DEVELOPMENT PUSHES AHEAD. BE PART OF IT!

 **ufi**
Approved
Event

THE
 **BIG** SHOW
Builders International Gathering

21-23 March 2011
Oman International Exhibition Centre
Muscat, Sultanate of Oman

Organiser:



OMANEXPO®

Global Business Platform



OMAN: IN THE MIDST OF MASSIVE CONSTRUCTION WORKS

These are high times for the building and construction industry in the Sultanate of Oman. With the implementation of large-scale industrial, commercial and residential projects across the country, the sultanate is witnessing an unprecedented growth in the market for all types of building materials, heavy equipment, and interior furnishings.

The **BIG Show 2011** can put your company in a position to effectively take advantage of growing opportunities in the market.



The US\$15-billion Al Madina Al Zarqa or The Blue City



Muscat Hills



The Wave, Muscat

As the biggest event that is dedicated for all requirements of the sultanate's vibrant building and construction industry, the exhibition is the perfect venue for showcasing the products and services you offer to all your potential clients.

EXAMPLES OF MAJOR PROJECTS IN OMAN

Project Name	Owner/Developer	Project Cost
Al Madina A'Zarqa or The Blue City	Al Sawadi Investment & Tourism	USD 15-20 billion
Mirbat Beach Project	Dhofar Tourism Company	USD 2.5 billion
The Wave, Muscat	The Wave, Muscat	USD 2.4 billion
Integrated Tourist Resort Complex	Yenkit Tourism Development	USD 2 billion
Salam Yiti Project	Sama Dubai and Oman Tourism Development Company	USD 2 billion
Omagine Project	Omagine LLC	USD 1.6 billion
Barka Resort	Alargan International Real Estate Co.	USD 1.1 billion
Qaryat Qurum	Al Qurum Properties LLC	USD 1 billion
Tilal Al Khuwair	Al Madina Real Estate Company	USD 1 billion
Salalah Beach, Jebel Sifah, Al Sodah	Muriya Tourism Development Co.	USD 850 million

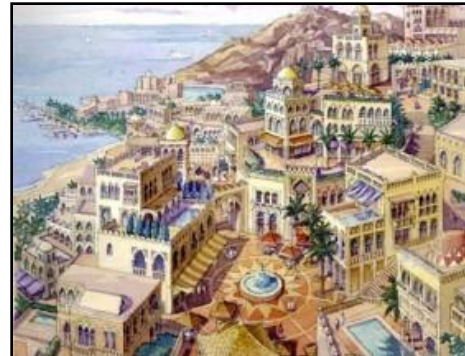
A SAMPLING OF MAJOR DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS



Al Madina A'Zarqa or The Blue City



Omagine Project



Salam Yiti Resort



Qaryat Qurum



Tilal Al Khuwair



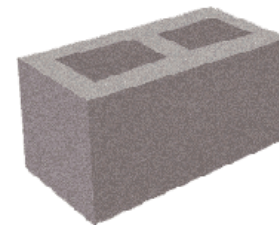
Jebel Sifah

Exhibition Profile:

ALL REQUIREMENTS OF THE INDUSTRY

The BIG Show 2011 gives you an excellent opportunity to showcase your products and services and to successfully attract the attention of potential clients. The range of products to be displayed includes the following:

- air conditioning systems
- bathroom fittings
- building materials
- ceramics and tiles
- concrete and cement products
- construction vehicles
- curtains and beddings
- decorative panels
- doors, gates and shutters
- electric heating systems
- environmental technologies
- fiberglass products
- fire prevention products
- flooring materials



- furniture and accessories
- heat control films
- heavy equipment
- home décor and furnishings
- kitchen modules and equipment
- landscaping products and services
- lighting fixtures
- marble and other stone products
- maintenance supplies
- metal, welding and woodworking machinery
- paint products
- pipes and plumbing fixtures
- PVC building materials
- real-estate properties
- refrigeration equipment
- roofing materials
- sanitary wares
- saunas and swimming pools
- security systems
- steel and other metal products
- wall panels and partitions
- and a whole lot more!



TECHNICAL CONFERENCES

In response to the need for the continued professional development of the industry's workers, The BIG Show 2011 will feature two major technical conferences:



- One conference will be managed by the International Federation of Interior Architects/Designers, which is based in Canada. It will give industry professionals the opportunity to learn about all the latest developments and trends in interior design.



- Another technical conference will be organised in partnership with Ikan Media FZ, which is based in Dubai, UAE. It will focus primarily on ensuring safety at construction sites, an issue that is increasingly becoming urgent through the years.

MEET ALL YOUR TARGET CLIENTS

Participating in **The BIG Show 2011** will enable you to interact with the right people in the building and construction industry in Oman. Just like in 2010, among those who will visit the exhibition are:

- architects
- contractors
- consultants
- property developers
- engineers
- end-users/buyers
- importers/distributors
- interior designers
- manufacturers
- project managers
- property owners
- purchasing managers
- real-estate agents
- suppliers and dealers



BENEFIT FROM OUR EXTENSIVE PROMOTIONAL CAMPAIGN

To ensure that you get the most out of your participation, **The BIG Show 2011** will be aggressively promoted in the media to attract a maximum number of visitors to the event.

The range of promotional activities includes:

- advertisements in both English and Arabic newspapers
- advertisements and editorial coverage in trade magazines
- press releases to newspapers, magazines and websites
- e-mail and fax campaigns targeting industry professionals
- SMS broadcasts to maximize public awareness of the event
- flyers and triads to raise awareness on the event
- radio announcements and direct mailing campaigns





THE VENUE

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The OIEC offers 12,000 square meters of indoor exhibition space and it has enough parking space for over 2,500 vehicles.

It is conveniently located near Muscat International Airport and is just a short ride away from the city centre of Muscat.



THE ORGANISER

Omanexpo LLC is the pioneer in the events industry in Oman, with over 25 years of experience as an exhibition organiser and event management company.

In addition to The BIG Show, our major exhibitions include OGWA, Food & Hotel Oman, Motor Show, MedHealth & Wellness, and the Eid Festival.

Omanexpo is a member of UFI-The Global Association of the Exhibition Industry and the International Association of Exhibitions and Events .

21 - 23 MARCH 2011



OMAN INTERNATIONAL EXHIBITION CENTRE

HIGHLIGHTS OF INTERIORS & BUILDEX 2010



21 - 23 MARCH 2011



OMAN INTERNATIONAL EXHIBITION CENTRE



BE PART OF OMAN'S CONSTRUCTION BOOM

Participate In



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For stand reservations or more information, please contact:



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