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46th
National Day
Sultanate of
Oman

Glorious November ... Around the World!

H.M. Sultan Qaboos bin Said
Sultanate of Oman

SULTANATE OF OMAN
BAISA 300
العيد الوطني ٤٦
46th NATIONAL DAY
2016



His Majesty Sultan Qaboos bin Said

His Majesty Sultan Qaboos bin Said was born on the Shawwal 17, 1359 AH, corresponding to 18 November 1940 of the Gregorian calendar, in Salalah in the Dhofar Governorate of the Sultanate of Oman. He is the eighth Sultan and a direct descendant of the al bu Said dynasty, established by the Imam Ahmed bin Said in 1741 of the Gregorian calendar. His Majesty the Sultan began his education in Oman, and he was then

sent by his father Sultan Said bin Tamour to United Kingdom in September 1958 for further studies. He spent two years in a private School in Suffolk and joined the Sandhurst Royal Military Academy in 1960. He graduated after two years and joined the Cameroonians (Scottish Rifles), which was then stationed in Germany. There he spent six months as a leadership trainee. After completing his military training within

the British army in Germany, he studied local government, and completed training courses in management, and embarked on a worldwide cultural tour.

He returned to Oman in 1964, and then spent most of his time furthering his knowledge of Sharia law and of the history and civilization of Oman.

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Special Feature Report by:

Mian Fazal Elahi

Editor



Patron in Chief:	Mr. Zia-ur-Rahman Zabeh
Editor/Publisher:	Mian Fazal Elahi
Editor in Chief	Mian Asadullah
UK/EU Edition:	Justin Plaza 3, 341 London Road, Mitcham, Surrey-CR4 4BE
Chairman Advisory Board:	Mr. Kanwar Muhammad Tariq
Deputy Editor:	Muhammad Saeed Yousafzai
Sub Editor:	Abdul Basit
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Creative Art Director:	M.Shahbaz Nawaz, RN Scanner Islamabad
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Web Developer:	Liaqat Ali
Chief Photographer:	Ramzan Mughal
Country Director	Fazal Hussain 004540521485
Copenhagen Denmark	Email: fazal1955@hotmail.com
Javeed Iqbal Butt	Bureau Chief Australia, Newzealand

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Resident Editors

Eng. Moshin Ali 1st Floor Office No 50 Gulf Plaza Madina Street P.O B ox 65454 Jeddah 21556 Cell: +966-506389895

Bureau Office

Qaisar Masood Muhammad Athar Northern Virginia Georgia Israr Masood M. Jamil Rathore Sydney Australia Bureau Chief Jeddah KSA Shahid Akbar Toor Cell: +966-502583608 Vehari

Printer

Roohani Art Press, Chughtai Plaza, Fazal-e-Haq Road, Blue Area Islamabad.

Publisher Mian Fazal Elahi, House No 167, Street 58, Sector F-11/4 Islamabad.

Tel: +92-51-2101411, 2101412, News Room: +92-51-2101413

Fax: +92-51-2101410-2101413

Mobile: +92-345-5565552, +92-322-5565552

Email: mianfazalelahi@gmail.com, diplomaticfocus.isb.pk@gmail.com
www.diplomaticfocus.org

Karachi Office: Mobile: +92-321-5558221

Price

Pakistan	\$ 6	Middle East	8 Riyal
UK	£ 6	Schengen State	€6
Malaysia:	\$ 8	Canada:	\$8
USA:	\$6		

Published from Islamabad

October 2016



September 2016



August 2016



July 2016



Our previous issues



Mian Fazal Elahi

November is an extremely meaningful month for the Omani population. In addition to National Day, November 19th is the birthday of Oman's Sultan, Qaboos bin Said. Simplicity, spontaneity and directness are the main features of the relationship between His Majesty Sultan Qaboos bin Said. Universally praised for introducing significant socio-economic reforms in the Sultanate of Oman, Sultan Sultan, Qaboos bin Said stands out as a dedicated leader with a sharp focus: how to create opportunities to improve the educational and health care levels of Omanis in a secure environment. Sultan Qaboos served Oman as few men have in the Sultanate's long and distinguished history, which speaks to his foresight and impeccable credentials. His moderate course in foreign policy started with a long-standing relationship with world. In current situation of the world and especially Arab world, Oman has great importance. Its policies and economic stability is a role model for other Arab countries through which they can overcome on their internal and external problems.

On the behalf of Pakistani people, we team of the "Diplomatic Focus" cordially congratulates H.M. Sultan Qaboos bin Said, Omani government officials and people of Sultanate of Oman on their National Day.



Mian Assad Ullah

Important Announcement

It has been announced for the general information that Mr. Mian Assad Ullah has been appointed as Editor In Chief of the Monthly "Diplomatic Focus" for the UK/EU Edition. He is entitled to participate official /non-officials diplomatic(engagements, events, national days, social evenings/gatherings, press conferences/interviews and can be contacted for all kinds of stuff including articles, supplements and advertisements etc). It is requested to all Diplomatic missions and government high officials of UK, please contact with Mr. Mian Assad Ullah on His mailing address, 4 Ipswich Road, SW17 9RH, London. Cell number:+44-7961005954/ 2087694850, Email: uk.diplomaticfocus@gmail.com, assadmian1@gmail.com

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DAILY 12 O'CLOCK NEWS

DAILY PAKISTAN JOURNAL



His Majesty, Sultan Qaboos bin Said



A New Dawn

Historical Speech of His Majesty, Sultan Qaboos bin Said

I promise you to proceed forthwith in the process of creating a modern government. My first act will be the immediate abolition of all the unnecessary restrictions on your lives and activities.

My people, I will proceed as quickly as possible to transform your life into a prosperous one with a bright future. Every one of you must play his part towards this goal. Our country in the past was famous and strong. If we work in unity and cooperation we will regenerate that glorious past and we will take a respectable place in the world.

I call upon you to continue living as usual. I will be arriving in Muscat in the coming days and then I will let you know of my future plans.

My people, I and my new government will work to achieve our general objective.

My people, my brothers, yesterday it was complete darkness and with the help of God, tomorrow will be a new dawn on Muscat, Oman and its people. God bless us all and may He grant our efforts success."

H.M. Sultan Qaboos bin Said 23 July 1970



His Majesty Sultan Qaboos has laid the foundations for a comprehensive national economic, social, and cultural renaissance, and has promoted Oman regionally and internationally, thus restoring the glories of its history and the greatness of its civilization.

His Majesty has had a clear, precise, and well defined vision for the future of Omani society, within its regional and international context. This has been his goal in order to advance Omani society and priorities the country's needs.

It was of extreme importance to strengthen the social fabric of Omani society by preserving the heritage of the Omani civilization; this provides a stepping stone for all those efforts aimed at achieving and entrenching the spirit of solidarity and coherence, within the Omani identity.

His Majesty was able to establish clear framework for stable sustained development, with careful thought, and a comprehensive approach to the goal of completing two main tracks:

- To establish a national spirit as the pillar for the building
- To development of all areas

This task requires a climate of security and safety and has been achieved. His Majesty the Sultan stressed on 27th July 1970 that the “the government and the citizen act as one body that would cease to work as whole if one single organ were to fail to function”.

He continued by stating that the citizen is: “the axis of the hand mill round which all aims and achievements are focused and for whom various plans and programs and schedules are drawn This is the truth that every individual should deliver and every official should bear

An insightful Leader H.M. Sultan Qaboos bin Said

“The government and the citizen act as one body that would cease to work as whole if one single organ were to fail to function” His Majesty the Sultan stressed on 27th July 1970



in mind " This is indicative of an orientation towards mutual understanding, hence His Majesty the Sultan's eagerness to achieve the highest possible level of mutual understanding between the state's legislative and executive establishments and between the government and the private sector. "Mutual understanding and enlightened thinking serve as the starting point for the advancement of Oman and an improved service to its people'.

Enlightened thinking is one of the characteristics of His Majesty the Sultan's wise leadership, mutual understanding stems from the participation of Omani citizens, and various institutions in society, in realising the vision expressed by the His Majesty the Sultan, and translating them into plans and programs within the priorities, resources, and targets of the homeland.

Enlightened thinking is also one of the characteristics of His Majesty the Sultan's style in dealing with all issues by means of reasonable and deliberate study. This approach is what lies behind the success of the national development plans, and the huge change and tremendous progress achieved in all sectors.

Enlightened thinking is one of the characteristics of His Majesty the Sultan's wise leadership. In addition mutual understanding stems from the participation of Omani citizen and various institutions in society in realizing the vision expressed by His majesty the Sultan, as well as participating in the translation of these ideas into plan and programs with priorities, resources, and targets of the homeland.

The great transformation of Omani society was been coupled with the building of a modern state, depending in its functioning and roles on the institutions of a modern state. Citizens are included and empowered to participate in building this modern state, on the basis of the rule of law as the foundation stone for government. This raises the citizens' resolve to make a success of their role in building the state, which helps entrench positive thinking further, and strengthens the will for participation and solidarity, and deep allegiance to the homeland and its leadership. Cooperation between the government and the private sector, and the results being achieved, is a clear expression of this.

His Majesty the Sultan has also broadened the basis of government and Shura (consultation) through the role and duties of the Omani Shura institutions, stemming from the Council of Oman, comprising the State Council, and the Shura Council.

The shura regime and its state institutions are bolstered by a modern and independent judicial regime, aimed at achieving justice, and a feeling in society of total safety and security,

such as the Omani people have enjoyed since the launch of the modern Omani Renaissance.

His Majesty the Sultan always strives to allow every opportunity for maximum use of the capabilities of the Omani people at all levels and in all sectors in order fulfill the requirements of the current phase of national development. He also endeavors to achieve an atmosphere of harmonious cooperation between the government, the private sector, and the citizens. He seeks to strengthen and encourage the commitment of all Omani experts. His Majesty sees their role and positive contribution the present and future and wants to see them flourish within a climate of safety

His Majesty the Sultan always strives to allow every opportunity for maximum use of the capabilities of the Omani people at all levels and in all sectors in order fulfill the requirements of the current phase of national development.

and security, in this flourishing age of rebirth, where all institutions of the state perform

their roles in building the structure of Oman's modern awakening. These Sam institutions protect Oman's numerous achievements, and maintaining stability and security in the homeland under the rule of law.

In addition to his achievements in building the modern state, His Majesty has always respected Omani heritage and tradition. He goes on annual field tours round the country, where he meets his people face to face, He receives personal letters from them, listens to their views and suggestions, and directing government establishments to take action for their interests and security.

Alongside his achievements in creating a modern state, His, Majesty remains committed to Oman's heritage and tradition. He makes annual tours of the country to examine the state of affairs and meet his loyal people face to face in the remote regions. There he listens to their requests and views, addresses himself to their interests and security and receives personal letters, which he reads with care before deciding on appropriate courses of action.

Applying his military experience, His Majesty has successfully modernized his armed forces. He is committed to the protection of international shipping in Omani territorial waters, which include an important part of the Strait of Hormuz; this Strait is vital to the Gulf region and is the corridor through which most of the region's oil production is shipped to the outside world. In addition, this important maritime passage has been utilized for the shipment of many of the region imports and exports.





**Message of
H.E. Waleed Issa Ali Al Zadjali
Deputy Head of Mission Sultanate of Oman in Islamabad
On 46th National Day of the Sultanate of Oman**



**Dear Brothers and sisters,
Assalam O Alaikum!**

No doubt the National Day is a landmark in the history of any nation. As we celebrate the auspicious occasion of the 46th anniversary of the Sultanate of Oman National Day. I am really honored to share with you some of the achievements that the Sultanate of Oman has achieved during these glorious forty-six years of the reign of His Majesty Sultan Qaboos Bin Said. Since 1970 the march of the Omani Renaissance is progressing with full determination towards its goals, inspired by the enlightened vision and the farsightedness of His Majesty Sultan Qaboos Bin Said, the architect of modern Oman and the leader of its blessed renaissance.

The Renaissance seeks to develop modern state institutions to meet the requirements of continuous economic and social progress and respond properly to the expectations of Omani citizens.

The State's policies, programmes and plans have been designed to enable the citizens to exert more efforts and energy to build a better future. They also aim to achieve the full practice of

citizenship and enhance the principles of justice and equality under the rule of law.

Accordingly Oman, approach to bilateral, regional and international diplomacy and the sound polices implemented at home has helped it to boost strong ties with our neighbors, GCC partners, the Arab region, the Islamic Countries and the whole global community.

As far as Pakistan-Oman relationship, It is well known that these brotherly relations go back even before the Independence of Pakistan. However, Since 1970 these relations have struck gold and it is self evident in the thriving relations between our two brotherly countries the Exchange of high level visits, growing cooperation in all fields including defence and economic.

This issue of the magazine of Diplomatic Focus is only a glimpse into some of the brilliant achievements that the Sultanate has recently made under the leadership of His Majesty Sultan Qaboos Bin Said so that, in his blessed reign, Oman continues to enjoy the highest degrees of dignity, prosperity and stability. May the Almighty bless His Majesty the Sultan with full health and a long life!



Oman marks 46th National Day

The Sultanate is nowadays celebrating its 46th National Day, the 18th of November anniversary, which remains carved deeply in the memory of the Omani people, and whose benign reality projects itself everywhere on the landscape. This historic date represents a major turning point in the life of Omani citizens.

Since the outset of the Omani modern renaissance under the leadership of His Majesty Sultan Qaboos Bin Said 46 years ago, Oman has entered into a new stage of its glorious history. The country was on a tryst with the launch of a comprehensive strategy to establish a prosperous present and a promising future.

The renaissance strategy covered all aspects of life and its outreach prevailed at all levels—on the domestic front and on external relations, thus offering the Sultanate an admirable status among sisterly and friendly countries in this region and in the world at large.

Because Oman has a deep-rooted history and a prominent location, it has always played a vital role at different epochs. The prudent vision of Sultan Qaboos drew insights from Oman's history and its strategic location.

The Sultan has had a dream of establishing a modern state that enjoys peace, security and stability and achieves a better life for the Omani people. Not only that, this vision inspired the leader's aspiration that peace, security and stability might prevail in the Gulf region, the surrounding region and the world at large, so that all countries and their peoples would enjoy constant growth and prosperity.

The National Day represents an opportunity for the Omani people to express their deep thanks and gratitude to the builder of modern Oman. It is also an opportunity to ponder on the achievements and objectives of various types of national action.

The renaissance accomplishments are actually a source of pride for all and they are an incentive to exert more efforts to achieve further achievements. Attention to be accorded to citizens and provide them with all the basic services should always be placed on top of development plans, the Sultan confirmed.

The year 2016 forms a turning point in the Omani development track with a view to safeguarding achievements made over the past 46 years in accordance with Vision 2020 objectives. These objectives include providing jobs for Omani youths, focusing efforts on social solidarity through education, training, health and human resources development and improving economic diversification through the development of promising sectors: converting industries, logistics services, transport, tourism, fisheries and mining.



Cordial Relations @ Glance between Oman & Pakistan



The Sultanate of Oman is the nearest Arab country to Pakistan. The relations between Oman and Pakistan are excellent close, warm, brotherly, cordial and deep. Ties between Pakistan and Oman are characterized by friendliness, cooperation and common perception over regional and international issues. Both countries are members of United Nations (UN), Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) and Non-Aligned Movement (NAM).

Islamic Republic of Pakistan and The Sultanate of Oman are enjoying bilateral ties from last four decades. The new era of diplomatic relations between the two countries started

when Sultan of Oman Qaboos Bin Said paid an official visit of Pakistan to attend the meeting of Organization of OIC in 1974. It was second Islamic summit conference of OIC hosted by Pakistan held in Lahore. Now Pakistan has friendly relations with the brotherly country Oman. Both countries are working on new avenues of cooperation in industrial, agricultural, health, defence and education sector for a better future of their people. Historically Pakistan and Oman are working for a strategic partnership to bring progress prosperity and peace in the region. For that purpose, two countries are reinforced by the regular exchange of high-level visits. Shaheed Mohtarma Benazir Bhutto visited Oman in



1994, that time she was enjoying her second term as Prime Minister of Pakistan, followed by high-level visits by the then chief executive of Pakistan in 2000. From the Omani side, a landmark visit was paid by His Majesty Sultan Qaboos bin Said in April 2001, the former President of Pakistan Muhammad Rafique Tarar conferred country's highest civil award "Nishan e Pakistan" on Oman's Sultan Qaboos Bin Said in recognition of outstanding leadership for the



people of his country and for the promotion of understanding and cooperation between Muscat and Islamabad. For the process of bilateral visits continued by the both countries leader in this regard former Prime Minister Shaukat Aziz visited Oman in March 2005 and former Prime Minister Syed Yusuf Raza Gilani visited Oman in December 2010. In May 2013, Minister for Labour and Manpower, Syed Khursheed Ahmad Shah met with the Omani Manpower Minister Abdullah bin Nasser al Bakri and said that the Omani workforce can be trained to reach global standards, if they choose a wide array of Pakistani institutes for the purpose. The Minister stated Pakistan has infrastructure to train Omani workers in any category. The Minister stressed on the system to put in place wherein recruitment of Pakistani workers would be more facilitated through official channels.

It is also a matter of great pride for Pakistan that since Oman's creation, hardworking and committed Pakistanis, have contributed towards Oman's development. Today more than 0.2 million Pakistanis are making their contribution in Oman. This contribution will strengthen the ties between both the countries in future. The volume and value of trade has been steadily increasing over the years between the two countries especially in the food sector, with a quantum leap witnessed during 2008-09 and in 2013-14. The total trade volume between the two countries in 2013-2014 stood at \$450 million said by the ambassador of Pakistan Ayaz Hussain. In future strong diplomatic relations will be helpful to improve the life style of the people of both sides. Major General Matar Bin Salim Bin Rashid Albalushi, Commander of Royal Army of Oman has called on Prime Minister Muhammad Nawaz Sharif in May, 2014. Prime Minister said, "Pakistan attaches immense importance to its fraternal relations with Oman. The bilateral relations are historical, deep-rooted and based on commonalities of faith, culture and traditions."

In April, 2015, a high level delegation was visiting Pakistan from Oman, in order to interact





with their Pakistani counterparts to ascertain the business opportunities in Pakistan and Oman and both have agreed to strengthen support in the field of economy, trade, defense and security. Oman is a close neighbour and ally of Pakistan with many Pakistanis working and trading in Oman.

At September, 2016, Pakistan and Oman have expressed the resolve to intensify exchanges and cooperation to fully benefit from their geographical and maritime proximity.

This was decided during a meeting between Adviser to Prime Minister on Foreign Affairs Sartaj Aziz and his Omani counterpart Yusuf Bin Alawai Bin Abdullah in Muscat.

They also discussed entire spectrum of bilateral relations between the two countries.





Foreign Policy of Oman

Over the years of the blessed renaissance, Sultan Qaboos has shaped the Omani foreign policy in accordance with solid principles founded on consistency, balance, clarity and rationality in establishing relations with countries of the world and in tackling various regional and international issues.

This Oman foreign policy stems from the country's strategic location, its deep-rooted history and its spirit of belonging and solidarity with Arab and Islamic world.

In various local and international occasions, Sultan Qaboos has reaffirmed the fundamentals and principles of that policy when establishing friendly relations with different countries of the world. The Sultan laid emphasis on joint cooperation, exchange of benefits and interests, establishment of good relations with neighboring countries, non-interference in the internal affairs of others and mutual respect for the rights and policies of countries.

Oman advocates commitment to principles of justice, fairness, peace and harmony, the settlement of disputes by peaceful means and the safeguarding of security and stability in the region. This is in addition to respecting international charters and treaties, commitment to rules of the international law and supporting issues of legitimate cause in global arenas.

Omani diplomacy implemented the enlightened thought of Sultan Qaboos in developing good foreign relations and utilizing that for the service of national development and the settlement of many regional and international issues and crises. The stand of Oman is therefore based on reality,

“While we take pride in friendships which bind Oman and the international community, we also reaffirm our keenness to continue playing our full role in the international arena in accordance with principles which we approved since the beginning as a starting point for our policies which strives sincerely for friendship, cooperation and support for the legitimate cause of all peoples and countries of the world and (this policy) works to achieve peace and stability at international levels.”

H.M. Sultan Qaboos bin Said



wisdom, farsightedness, tact, consistency and calculation of consequences. That is how Oman developed its own balanced foreign policy in regional and international arenas replete with discrepancies and upheavals.

The Sultanate has been enhancing efforts for peace and continuously supporting peaceful initiatives in various regional disputes, working for rapprochement so that these issues could see a successful end that guarantees the intactness of countries and the interests of their peoples on the basis of participation, justice and equality.

Based on the stock of confidence accorded to it by conflicting parties, the Sultanate has thus exerted efforts to push forward the Yemeni negotiations and develop rapprochement between disputing parties, mainly to remove the cause of the ongoing war in Yemen.

Since the beginning, the Sultanate tackled the Yemeni crisis in a clear and frank manner. Its sincere initiatives in this regard began in Muscat in August 2015 and continued through negotiations in Kuwait on April 21, 2016. Oman's action derived insight from a prudent vision that perceives the deep impact of conflict in the sisterly state of Yemen.

Oman also acted from a conviction that a delay in establishing peace will cost the next Yemeni generations decades of suffering. Human suffering in Yemen has already become enormous and the country's infrastructure has been demolished. The impact of the conflict in Yemen is also crippling political, economic, security and social ties in Yemen and beyond. The turmoil in Yemen is one of the main conflicts in the Middle East that derails development by increasing the armament race is causing further tensions.

SEARCH & RESCUE: Following the directives of Sultan Qaboos, the Sultanate also contributed to finding and releasing foreign hostages who went missing in war zones. This is in addition to Oman's initiatives to rescue the lives of many other people through its reception of those injured in the Yemen war and providing them with treatment. The injured were offered assistance mainly as Yemenis, irrespective of which camp they belong to. This gesture is based on the concepts of good neighborliness, fraternity and cooperation that distinguish the Omani diplomacy.

A similar gesture was made towards resolving the Libyan political issue. Oman hosted a meeting of the main consultative authority of the Libyan constitution in which 32 members of the authority took part. The talks were hosted by the city of Salalah with effect from the 18th of March 2016 and lasted three weeks in a quiet environment seeking to end the rift between

the Libyan people. The Omani efforts met with success because the talks led to the production of constitution draft to be presented to the Libyan people for a referendum.

Oman's reputation in serving world peace, harmony and fraternity is source of pride. The Sultanate has many honorable stands on promoting the Palestinian cause, but it considers these as an obligation dictated by Arab

solidarity. Since the outset of its renaissance, the Sultanate has been performing its role as an active member of the international community that seeks to serve the objectives of peace and global harmony. Oman organized a Week of Rapprochement and Human Harmony in April 14-17, 2016 for the fifth year in a row. Oman participates sincerely in the UN-sponsored Religious Interfaith Week every February.





Oman: A flourishing Economy



In the backdrops of dwindling oil prices and their impacts on the country's budget, the Sultanate has adopted a host of measures to guarantee the soundness of the state's financial position. It capitalized on enhancing economic growth by continuing developmental projects of economic and social priority and by providing proper support to furnish an encouraging environment for private sector investments.

In the meantime, the Sultanate continued to maintain basic public services. The state's budget this year focused on a set of procedures, namely: increasing the flexibility and sustainability of the fiscal system, rescheduling public resources by increasing oil revenues' contribution to the state's total revenues and, diminishing dependence on oil resources and raising the capacity of state-owned companies by founding holding companies whose job is to draft plans and strategies in accordance with new governance principles.

Estimated total revenues in the 2016 budget stood at RO 8.6 billion, of them RO 4.56 billion as net oil revenues, RO 1.6 billion as gas revenues and RO 2.4 billion as current revenues.

In the first half of 2016, the Sultanate's oil production increased to 1 million barrels per day as against 970,000 bpd in the corresponding period in 2015. Accordingly, Oman's crude and condensates rose by 182 million barrels per day by mid-2016, compared to 175.6 million barrels per day by mid-2015.

In the meantime, oil exports rose from 154.8

million barrels to 164.5 million barrels. However, the average price of Oman Crude dropped to \$35 in the first six months this year, from \$59.3 during the corresponding period in 2015.

Oman economic policies gained international acclaim due to the country's advanced position in global economic reports. In the annual report of Transparency International index 2015-2016 issued by World Economic Forum (Davos, Switzerland), the Sultanate won sixth place among Arab states and 62nd place in the world at large.

The Sultanate also ranked 7th in the Arab world and 14th worldwide in the index of logistic serves for nascent markets in 2016. This report was filed by Agility agency of Switzerland, a corruption monitoring watchdog. The index

is based on two criteria, which are business practice and communication environment which help attract logistic service suppliers, customs clearance agencies, distributors and cargo companies of all types. China topped the rating, which covered 45 countries.

Oman also won second place among Arab countries and ranked 26th among world countries in the Global Food Security Index 2016 issued by the Economist magazine of Britain. This annual index covers 113 countries and indicates that the Sultanate got 73.6 out of 100 points in the index.

A new economic development this year (2016) has been the addition of Ras Markaz area to the Special Economic Zone in Duqm (SEZAD), raising the total size of the economic zone from 1,745 square kilometres to 2,000





square kilometres. The Ras Markaz area will be developed to receive crude storage activities. Oman Oil Company looks forward to making Ras Markaz a global crude storage terminal.

The plant will be set up in a number of stages and its storage capacity in the first phase will range from 6 million barrels to 10 million barrels. A 1,600-hectare area has been allocated for the storage plant. This area will allow for the setting up of storage facilities that will accommodate 200 million barrels of crude, which will expand the basis of development of refineries and petrochemicals in the SEZAD.

In addition, SEZAD signed, this year, a cooperation and land development agreement for the setting up of the Oman-China Industrial City at Duqm, with its investments standing at \$10.7 billion. The industrial city will accommodate 35 projects on an area of 1,172 hectares.

SEZAD offers a variety of incentives to investors. These include a 30-year income tax exemption (renewable), exemption from customs tax for goods imported to the SEZAD from abroad and for goods exported from SEZAD, a 50-year land

development (usufruct) right, also renewable, and it is also allowed that the full capital of a project is owned by a non-Omani entity. Investors get all sorts of permits, clearance and approvals through the SEZAD's one-stop-shop that offers various incentives to SEZAD investors.

A major development this year (2016) was that Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) have been entitled to enjoy a set of support procedures, including land development (usufruct) rights in accordance with the land development system. This decision is considered one of the most important initiatives which enable entrepreneurs to start their small businesses.

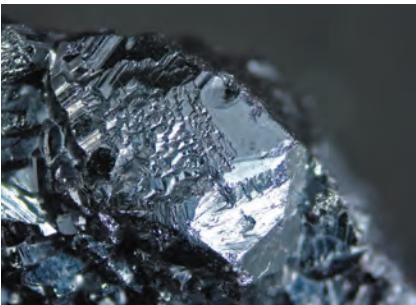
In the meantime, the Ministry of Civil Service issued a decision allowing government sector employees to take leave for the setting up and management of their private projects. In addition, (pending) decisions pertaining to the allocation of 10% of government tenders and procurements to SMEs were activated.

FOOD SECURITY: The Sultanate seeks to achieve food security through a strategic plan focusing

on increasing local food output, augmenting strategic stock of imported commodities, encouraging food processing and aquaculture and offering incentives to investors in farming, livestock and fisheries sectors. In appreciation of such efforts, the GCC Agricultural Cooperation Committee agreed, during its meeting in March 2016, to set up a food security studies centre in the Sultanate.

FISH FARMS: Optimizing the Sultanate's strategic location, which covers a stretch of coast lines on three seas measuring 3,165 kilometres long, the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries decided to allocate a special sector for fish farms to produce the best quality of fishery products from the country's large stock. Oman has 10 integrated fish farms and its fisheries output rose from 5 tons in 2014 to 20 tons in 2015.

SHORT-CUT TO IMPLEMENTATION: Also, in the context of economic diversification, the directives of Sultan Qaboos gave rise to the activation of a pioneering national programme codenamed Tanfeeth (or execution), which seeks to revolutionize specific plans, programmes





and policies across the various economic sectors in accordance with well-studied and executable visions, with major focus on the five main economic projects of converting industries, tourism, logistics, mining and fisheries. Tanfeeh follows up all work requirements, right from supplies through financing and employment to the labour market needs.

Within the view that the 9th Five Year Plan (2016-2020) is the last phase of the Omani economic vision (Oman 2020), it is understood that what will be achieved within the framework of Tanfeeh will constitute a solid foundation for the future and will pave the way for the next Strategic Vision (Oman 2040), which is being drafted now.

A tremendous boost to the country's socioeconomic drive was the issuance of Royal Decree No. 48/2016 on the promulgation of the National Training Fund. This development goes in line with the national development needs now and in the future and it symbolizes the Sultan's keenness to put to action the objective recommendations and studies aimed at optimizing the use of human resources.

Programmes such as Tanfeeh, which caps

the 9th Five Year Plan, and Royal decrees and other Royal directives reflect the Sultan's deep understanding and concern for the welfare of citizens.

Transport

The Sultanate is taking steps to set up a network of tarmac roads to connect all governorates with a view to facilitating the movement of



citizens and residents across the country and activating trade and the industrial and tourism sectors, besides connecting the Sultanate to neighboring GCC states.

Some of the major roads being carried out by

the Ministry of Transport and Communications are: Bidbid-Sur dualization (phases 1 and 2) which extends 249 kilometres, the Batinah Expressway, from Batch 1 to 6, which stretches 273 kilometres, the dualization of Jibrin-Ibri road, second segment, 90 km, the Sinaw-Mahout-Duqm road, segments 1 and 2, 181 km, the Ibri-Yaqul carriageway dualization, second phase, 34 km, the Nizwa-Thamrait highway dualization, phase 1 and 2, 240 km, the dualization of Barka-Nakhl road, 39 km, the dualization of Mahda-Rowdha road, 58 km and other road projects.

In 2015, the first phase of a public transport framework study for Muscat Governorate was carried out. This study aims to develop and interactive schema that serves all segments of society in accordance with the topmost quality standards with a view to resolving traffic jams, diminishing environmental impacts and ensuring road safety.

The plan is being executed by operating some public transport routes through Oman National Transport Company (Mwasalat), which managed to transport more than 2.1 million passengers since the inauguration of its new logo in November 2015 till the end of July 2016 at a rate of 10,000 passengers a day. The company seeks to develop its services in the fields of cargo operations, electronic booking of tickets, opening of integrate communication centres, introduction of wireless internet and increasing the number of routes operated to Al Dakhiliyah and other governorates of the Sultanate.

The Ministry of Transport and Communications is working to draft legislations to regulate land transport activities after the promulgation of Land Transport Law by Royal Decree No. 10/2016, which aims to provide the best services for transport of people and goods.

This year, Oman Air launched its route to the city of Meshad and Nagaf in Iran and added a second flight to London route. Oman Air's network has 51 destinations in 28 countries





and the number of destinations is due to reach 75 by 2020. The national carrier's fleet has 70 aircraft, of them 25 are wide-body aircraft and 45 are single passage aircraft.

The number of passengers via Muscat International Airport rose 7.3 million in 2014 to 8.4 million in 2015, with a growth rate of 15.9%, while the number of flights rose from 68,000 to more than 78,000, an increase of 15.5%.

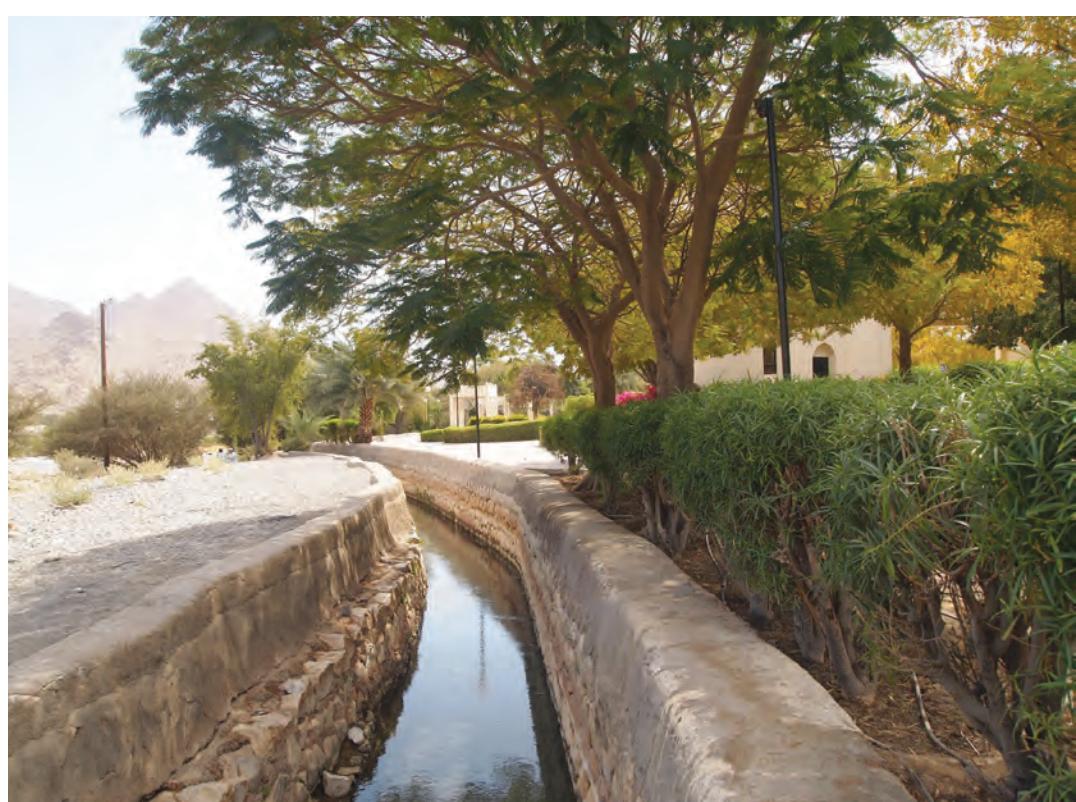
Tourism

This year the Sultanate started the implementation of Oman Tourism Strategy (2016-2020) which aims to provide 500,000 jobs, increase the volume of expected investments to around RO 19 billion—12% of them to be allocated to the public sector. The strategy also aims to raise the tourism sector's contribution to the GDP by 10% by the year 2040, besides developing the local economy and SMEs.

The tourism strategy focuses on making the Sultanate one of the most visited tourism designations by 2040 by targeting 11 million international tourists and local visitors per annum. It also targets the utilization of 14 tourist gathering spots like forts, castles, heritage attractions, nature reserves, Beduin settlements, coastal lands, deserts of graded colours, the Sindbad home, relics from the iron age and bronze age, wadis, springs, mountain villages, modern Omani villages built to fancy ancient houses, the Empty Quarter desert, the frankincense route and the wildlife prairies of Dhofar.

The growth of activity of the tourism sector can be gauged by the increase of hotel establishments from 297 in 2014 to 318 establishments in 2015. During 2015, the revenues of 3-5 star hotels stood at RO 192.1 million as against 191.5 million in 2014. The number of hotel occupants stood at 1.2 million, while hotel occupancy was 57.3%.

As a result of the attention accorded to the tourism sector, the Sultanate occupied the 16th position in the global ranking of fast growing tourism destinations. The Sultanate was the only country to figure in this rating among Arab states due to its rich tourism, historical and modern landmarks, coupled with services extended to tourists.





Land of Diverse Business Opportunities

The Sultanate is eager to develop and expand the scope of its trade with various friendly and brotherly states, not only within the framework of preparing for the GCC Customs Union, of the Arab Trade Free Zone, and of the Indian Ocean Rim for Regional cooperation, but also on the level of bilateral relations through joint committees and bilateral agreements.

The trade sector is achieving positive tangible results on the level of increasing goods exports in general and exports of Omani origin in particular.

Marketing of national goods continues at the local market level, and stresses the adherence to international specifications in local products so as to enable them to compete in regional and foreign markets. Omani goods are exported to over seventy-six countries in the world. It is commonplace that priority is given to Omani products in procurements by public establishments, bodies, and ministries.

In addition to facilitating export operations via border points and the abolishing of the sponsors' commission, a customer protection department has been set up, and the authorities are very concerned with the

Omani goods are exported to over seventy-six countries in the world

implementation of copyright protection law. In January 2014 the Sultanate of Oman hosted a conference of the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO): 'Our Identity and Future', which stressed the importance of copyright as a means of protecting knowledge as part of our heritage.

It is worth mentioning that textile products, livestock and their produce, agricultural products, fish, minerals and their products, plant produce, electrical tools, and appliances are among the most important goods that Oman exports. The United Arab Emirates is the first trade partner of Oman, followed by Japan, Britain, the USA, Italy, Germany, France, Saudi Arabia, India, and China. It is also worth mentioning that the container port in Salalah is playing an increasingly important role in stimulating trade between the Sultanate and other countries within the region and beyond.



Dedication of Oman in Health Sector



In terms of healthcare, Oman is now one of the world's advanced nations. Working on the principle that 'prevention is better than cure,' the health care provided by the state includes education as well as treatment. A special initiative on non-communicable disease prevention and control designed to fight current and potential future problems such as obesity, cardiovascular disorders and diabetes is in place alongside programmes to provide physiotherapy rehabilitation services as an essential component of the country's overall health care package.

The Sultanate's health care system operates at three levels. They are:-

- 1 – Effective, high quality primary health care provided by the health centres, polyclinics and local hospitals in all the Sultanate's governorates and regions.
- 2 – Secondary health care provided by the referral hospitals in all Oman's governorates and regions, as well as other hospitals in some of the main wilayats, which offer specialist healthcare requiring a higher level of specialized skills.
- 3 – Tertiary health care provided by the major hospitals in Muscat (the Royal Hospital, Khouda Hospital and al Nahda Hospital), which operate as nationwide referral hospitals.

The Sultanate operates extensive child immunization programmes against tuberculosis, polio, diphtheria, whooping cough, tetanus and measles, as well as viral hepatitis, German measles, mumps, hemophilus, influenza B and other diseases.



Oman: Educational Activities at peek

One of the Sultan's first priorities was to address illiteracy, realizing that education, "if only under the shade of a tree", was the most effective weapon against ignorance. Within the first five months of his rule, 16 primary schools were established to educate over 9500 pupils, a 662%

increase in the number of children receiving education. Educational establishments spread dramatically across the Sultanate for the next five years. By 1975, there were 262 schools and institutions, comprising 213 primary schools, 45 preparatory schools, 3 secondary schools and 1 teacher training institute.

Children and adults with learning disabilities have not gone unnoticed by His Majesty. In 1984, the Madrasa Al Tarbiya Al Fikriya School was established to cater for the needs of children with severe learning disabilities.

His Majesty has a deep sympathy towards





Omani youths and is committed to preserving Oman's deep-rooted traditions and customs which have been inherited from her ancestors.

Sultan Qaboos' hope for a civilised future for all humanity and his ambitions for Oman to play a prominent role in the world form the backdrop to his concept of modern material and human development.

From 1982 to 1986, the vast campus of the University was under construction. In 1986, it was inaugurated and received its first intake of students.

The government subsidises the study fees, books, food and on-campus accommodation, as well as public transport to and from the University. Sultan Qaboos has kept a careful eye on his university since its opening, and in May 2000, during an official visit there, he stressed the importance of scientific research, stating in his speech, "we have to keep abreast of development at all times."





Oman: A Land of Cultural Diversity

Oman is a modern country and the oldest independent state in the Arab world. The long trading history of Oman has led the Omani culture into the land of diverse cultures.

National Dress - Men

The national dress for Omani men is a simple, ankle-length, collarless gown with long sleeves called the dishdasha. The color most frequently worn is white, although a variety of other colors such as black, blue, brown and lilac can also be seen. Its main adornment is a tassel (furakha) sewn into the neckline, which can be impregnated with perfume. On formal occasions, the dishdasha may be covered by a black or beige cloak, called a bisht. The embroidery edging the cloak is often in silver or gold thread and it is intricate in detail. Some men carry the assa, a stick, which can have practical uses or is simply used as an accessory during formal events. Omani men, on the whole, wear sandals on their feet.

The Khanjar

The curved dagger, the khanjar is a distinguishing feature of the Omani personality



as well as an important symbol of male elegance. It is traditionally worn at the waist. Khanjars are worn on formal occasions and at feasts and holidays, and almost all Omani men boast one.

Once worn in self-defense, the khanjar is today both a fashion accessory and a prestige item much in demand.

National Dress – Women

Omani women have very colorful costumes which vary from region to region. The main components of a woman's outfit comprise of a dress which is worn over trousers and the headdress, called the lihaf. The embroidery on these dresses can take around two months to complete.

Traditional Omani Food

The Omani people are well known for their hospitality and offers of refreshment. To be invited into someone's home will mean coffee (kahwa), a strong, bitter drink flavored with cardamom, and dates or halwa, a sticky sweet gelatinous substance which is made from brown sugar, eggs, honey and spices. Lokhemat is another accompaniment to coffee, which are balls of flour and yeast flavoured with cardamom and deep fried until golden then served with a sweet lime and cardamom syrup. The sweetness of this dish often counteracts the bitterness of the kahwa.

More substantial meals often have rice as the main ingredient, together with cooked meats. The rukhal bread is a thin, round bread originally baked over a fire made from palm leaves. It is eaten at any meal, typically served with Omani honey for breakfast or crumbled over curry for dinner.

Shuwa is a typically Omani delicacy prepared only on very special occasions. Whole villages participate in the cooking of the dish which consists of a whole cow or goat roasted for up to two days in a special oven prepared in a pit dug in the ground.

Omani halwa (sweet) is famous at home and abroad as a symbol of traditional Omani hospitality. It is usually served in Omani homes before drinking Arabic coffee.

Folk Songs and Dances

Each region of Oman has its own songs and dances unique to the area. During festivals and ceremonies, these are performed for the appropriate occasion. In the Sharqiya region, there are three main types of songs pertaining to the different environments in the area.



These songs fall into the following categories: of the sea; of the desert; and of the urban areas.

The desert songs often praise the sturdiness of the camel. The Al Taghrud is sung while riding the camels, which encourages both the animal and its rider. It is a group song with a fixed chant which does not change from place to place. The Razha is a dance which is characterized by the sword and poetry exchange. It is

mountains there and involves 8 - 10 drummers who move forward and backwards and then in a circle. It has different verses pertaining to different times of the day. In the Dhofar region, the Bar'a is performed as a celebration of youth by two dancers, each holding a dagger in his right hand and his shal, fixed at the waist, in his left hand. The characteristic movement of the Bar'a is a powerful one-footed leap into



performed in most areas of the Sultanate. The men participating in the dance must leap into the air, carrying a heavy sword. Upon landing, they must not falter. The men will also throw the sword into the air and catch it as it comes down; a show of strength and prowess. The Musandam region has very different songs to the rest of the districts in Oman. The Al Ruwah is unique to the Bedouins who live in the

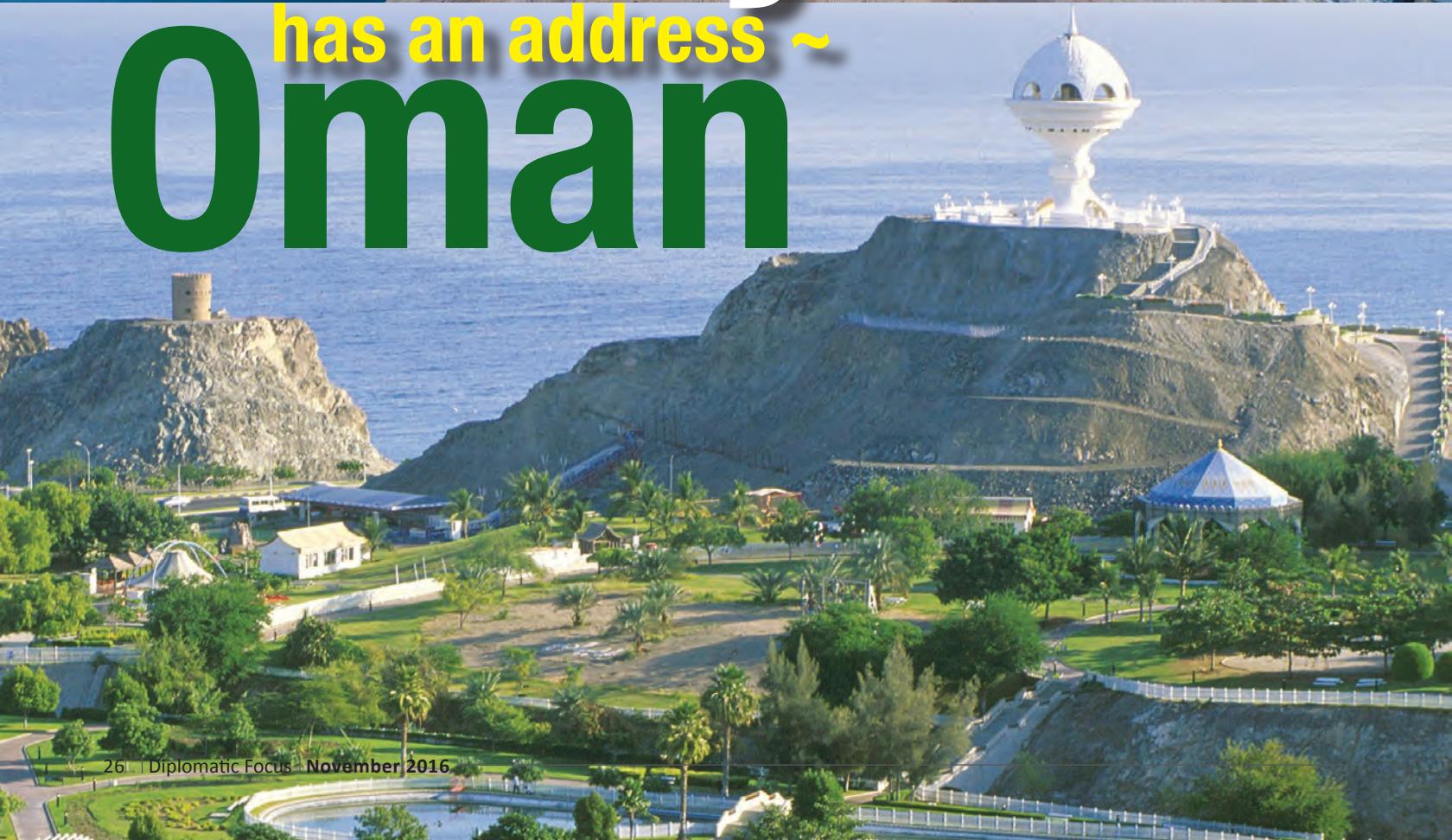
the air.

The Raqs al Nisaa is the Women's Dance, which is one of the most frequently performed dances in that region. The Al Wailah is a dance performed by women in the wilayat of Ibri in the Dhahira region. The Taymina is a traditional song of the Dakhliyah region which is sung when a child learns the Quran by heart.w





Beauty has an address ~ **Oman**



Tourism in Oman has grown considerably recently, and it is expected to be one of the largest industries in the nation. Oman has one of the most diverse environments in the Middle East with various tourist attractions and is particularly well known for Cultural tourism. The capital of Oman was named the Second Best City to visit in the world in 2012 by the travel guide publisher Lonely Planet. Muscat also was chosen as the Capital of Arab Tourism of 2012.

Beaches

Oman's coast is lined with many soft sand beaches. Activity for beach visitors include sunning, swimming, kite surfing, diving, snorkeling, boating, surfing, beach combing and shell collecting.

Qurum Beach access is possible from several beachside hotels. This beach is popular with families, walkers, and joggers. The beach is lined with restaurants, snack bars and cafes. At Qantab beach local fishermen will offer fishing excursions and boat rides.

There are an increasing number of resort hotels on the coast west and east of Muscat. These offer dives, snorkeling, speedboat rides



and water scooters. The coast beyond Quriyat can be reached by driving southeast on a four-wheel drive. There are a variety of beaches between rocky outcrop, the most prominent

being Mokallah (also known as White Beach). This spot is very popular for overnight camping on the shore and snorkelers.





Water sports and diving

Oman offers world class kitesurfing conditions, due to the daily sea breeze effect. Kiteboarding centres can be found at Al Sawadi Beach 70 kilometres north of Muscat and especially on Masirah Island where the monsoon in summer guarantees wind steadily over 20 knots. Muscat city also offers clean safe conditions for learning to kitesurf. Alzaiba Beach is the hot spot for kite surfing and kitesurfing lessons.

With Oman's long coastline and clean unpolluted waters, there is a wealth of underwater flora, and marine life. Sea life is abundant with a variety of hard and soft corals. The waters around Oman have an average visibility of 20–30 meters.

Turtle, dolphin and bird watching

Several species of turtles living for over 100 years swim the length and breadth of the Indian Ocean and return every year to lay their eggs on the beaches of Ras al Hadd, Ras Al Junayz and Masirah island.

Dolphins frequent the seas of Oman on a regular basis and can be seen in close proximity to the coast. Fahal Island is a popular dolphin watching site. Spinner, common and bottlenose dolphins are most common.

Whales visit the shores beaches of the Sultanate at irregular intervals, especially in Ash Sharqiyah and Al Wusta regions, in addition to Dhofar Governorate. The most common types of whales that visit Oman are: Bryde's whales or tropical whales, blue whales, humpback whales, sperm whales, dwarf sperm whales, Cuvier's beaked whale, pygmy killer whales, killer whales, melon-headed whales and false killer whale.





Oman is becoming increasingly popular with bird watchers. More than 460 different bird species have been recorded in Oman, out of which, 80 species have been classified as resident, while the rest are migrant and seasonal species. Oman offers a unique opportunity to watch birds from Europe, Africa and Asia in one spot during their annual migrations in spring and autumn. These migratory periods coincide with the cooler weather between October and April.

Desert safari

The most renowned Omani desert is Sharqiyah Sands (also called Wahiba Sands) with its dunes rising to nearly 200 meters. Witnessing sun setting is an inspiring event in itself but once the sun has drifted below the dunes a truly spectacular blanket of stars is revealed. Desert adventures in Oman can be by camelback or four-wheel drives. Activities generally include sleeping out in Barsti huts, Omani BBQ under the stars, camel riding and visiting the Bedouins. No desert tour would be complete without jumping on board a sand board. As with snowboarding, sand boarding is becoming a loved sport.

Caving

Oman abounds with many caves of different sizes, topography and ruggedness, some of which can be accessed with a group of amateurs, like Muqal Cave in Wadi Bani Khalid in Ash Sharqiyah region, while others need considerable effort, training, experience and specialized equipment. The most famous cave in Oman is Al-Hoota cave. It's located at the foot of Jebel Shams of Al Hamra. It has one of the largest cave systems in the world.



Markets

Omani Souqs (Markets) are preferable locations to purchase handicrafts and are always bustling with tourists. Omani markets are characterized by their diversity. Old markets are full of handicrafts like silver, gold, textiles and masterpieces produced by other Omani industries like daggers and coexist with modern shopping malls and other shopping centres that contain everything the visitor is looking for at the best prices.

As for the traditional markets in Oman, the morning hours are the best time for shopping. There are Souqs in every Omani town. The most famous amongst these are the Ruwi and





Mutrah Souq. Shoppers can even get their hands on old Arabian muskets at these souqs.

Trekking and rock climbing

Rock climbing enthusiasts of all levels will find plenty to keep them busy as routes of all grades are available. Rugged mountains, steep cliffs overlooking breathtaking sceneries, rugged paths, deep canyons and towering cliffs present an enigmatic challenge. The rocky towers of Wadi Ghool, scales to a height of 300 meters and the gorgeous façade of Jabal Mishfat has climbs from 120 to 500 meters. Jabal Misht remains the model location due to its rocky façade that extends roughly for 6 km and rises to 850 m.



Forts

Nearly every Omani city and town has its own fort. Most of them were built or had major expansions during Al-Yarubi dynasty rule of Oman in between 1624 and 1744. They represent the fine Omani architecture and prosperity at that time.

The list is long but here are some of the well-known names: Al-Jalali Fort, Al-Mirani Fort, Nakhal Fort, Rustaq Fort, Sohar Fort, Nizwa Fort, Bahla Fort, Qurayat Fort, Khasab Fort, Al-Hellah Fort, Al-Khandaq Fort, As-Suwaiq Fort, Barka Fort, Bait An-Nuaman, Al-Hazm Fort, Iibri Fort, Bait Ar-Radaidah, Jibrin Fort, Al-Muntarib Fort, As-Sunaasilah Fort, Bilad Sur Fort, Ras al-Hadd Fort, Mirbat Fort, Sadah Fort and Taqa Fort.

Festival

1. Muscat Festival
2. Salalah Festival

Shopping

Oman's mix of traditional and cosmopolitan shopping venues offers a great insight into the life and culture of Omani people. The traditional Arabic market place is called the Souq and it sells household items as well as traditional handcrafts. Beside its economic purpose, the Souq has long been a focal point of social interaction. A visit to Muttrah, Nizwa and Salalah Souqs is a must. Tourists could buy carved hand-made distinctive Omani Khanjars (daggers), rose-water sprinklers, fragrant frankincense, incense burners, garments, rugs and saddles. Women jewellery ranges from small silver boxes, to earrings and rings, bracelets, anklets and necklaces. In some Souqs like Nizwa and Sinaw livestock are auctioned and bartered.





Royal Opera House Muscat

Royal Opera House Muscat is the leading arts and culture organization in the Sultanate of Oman. Located in Muscat, Oman, the vision of the Opera House is to serve as a centre of excellence in global cultural engagement. We strive to enrich lives through diverse artistic, cultural, and educational programs. The multidisciplinary work of Royal Opera House Muscat showcases rich and diverse artistic creations from Oman, the region, and the world; provides a space for culture and socioeconomic development reflections and actions; inspires audiences and nurtures creativity with innovative programs; fosters cultural vitality and unleashes talent; promotes cultural tourism; and puts cultural diplomacy into practice by reinvigorating global and multi-disciplinary collaborations and exchanges.

The leadership of the Royal Opera House Muscat is guided by the vision of His Majesty Sultan Qaboos bin Said.



The ruler of Oman, Sultan Qaboos bin Said Al Said has been always a fan of classical music and arts. In 2001, the Sultan ordered the building of an opera house. Initially called 'House of Musical Arts', the name 'Royal Opera House Muscat (ROHM)' was finally chosen. This opera house, which was built by Carillion Alawi, became the first in the world equipped with Radio Marconi's multimedia interactive display seatback system, Mode23. It was officially opened on October 12, 2011.





Sports that Attract Tourists



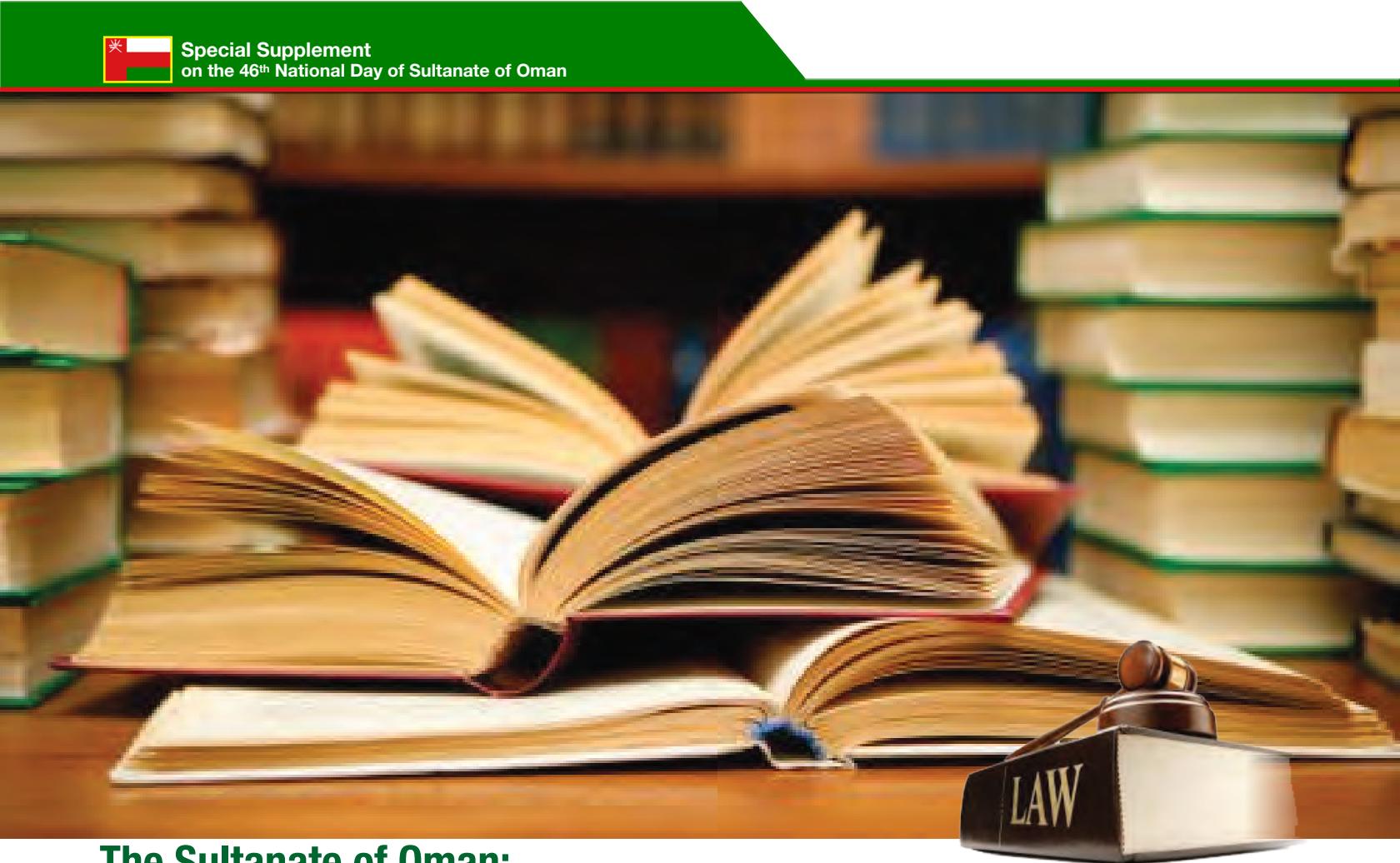
The younger generations usually use the word 'sports' to denote traditional games like football, baseball, cricket and so on whereas for Omanis the word 'sports' has a different meaning. According to them 'sports' mean their traditional sports like Camel racing, Horse racing, Dhow racing, Falconry and Bull fighting in which Omanis excelled others. The people of Oman are fortunate to get a robust heritage from ancient Arabia and the Bedouin tribes.

In Oman, Horse racing and Camel racing are very popular sports. In the interior regions of Oman, at the age of two, people start training camels for racing. The winners of these races are highly honoured.

People of the interior areas used to enjoy the Bullfighting. However, this sport is loosing popularity during the last two decades. Yet another traditional sport is Falconry. Here falcons hunt for its masters. This sport requires taming and training of falcons which requires a lot of patience and skill.

In Oman, the modern-day sports such as soccer, cricket, water skiing, sand surfing, basketball etc are all well-liked and day by day these sports items gain popularity.





The Sultanate of Oman:

The Basic law of the State

The Basic Statute of the State, promulgated by His Majesty Sultan Qaboos in 1996 is Oman's constitution, and provides the legal framework for the development and implementation of all legislation and government policy.

Since its promulgation the Basic Statute has been the basis for all legal decisions in the Sultanate of Oman and is the ultimate point of reference for judicial authority.

The Basic Statute determines the form of government of the Sultanate of Oman, and the framework within which legislative and other political institutions will develop. It establishes the Majlis Oman, comprising the directly elected Majlis ash-Shura and the appointed Majlis a-Dawla, as well as an independent judiciary. It determines the basic structural organisation of political administration in the Sultanate.

The Basic Statute also defines the rights and responsibilities of Omani citizens. These include the freedom from discrimination of any kind, the rights of speech and assembly, the right to participate in the political decisions of the country, the rights to private property

and personal privacy, freedom of religion and gender equality.

All these rights are derived from Islamic and Omani legal and social values and traditions,

and the Basic Statute represents a modern codification of longstanding Omani custom and practice, as well as providing a framework for future development of legislation, institutions and political participation.





On the Glorious Occasion of Oman's 46th National Day
The Board of Directors and Management of WorldCall Telecom Limited
Extend Noble Greetings & Sincere Appreciation to the Esteemed Presence of

His Majesty Sultan Qaboos bin Said



Wishing him blessings of health, joy and prosperity with
further progress for the honorable people of
Sultanate of Oman

