

Tourist sites on spotlight after Wadi Darbat cleaning

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April 26: The cleanliness and facilities at Wadi Darbat may surprise the visitors this Khareef (monsoon) season, as a massive exercise to clean the wide bed of the Wadi completed past weekend with the help of environmentalists, volunteers and stakeholders from the tourism sector.

The exercise has put other tourism sites in Dhofar on spotlight for similar effort to make them clean, add more amenities and make them presentable for tourists and local visitors. Taking a step further Clean Up Oman, a group of volunteers, has decided to do a 'Clean up of Khour Taqah' on April 30.



A large number of volunteers took part in the Clean Wadi Darbat drive after which used tyres, broken pipes and plastic materials in bulk were removed from the Wadi and most of the volunteers called for such exercise

every year before the advent of the Khareef season. Saeed bin Ali Babat, Assistant General Director of Dhofar Tourism, called this an important drive and an idea which could lead to similar activity at other tourism sites with the

involvement of private and public sector establishments. "The idea is not only to offer the visitors a clean and beautiful sight to behold, but also to keep the environment clean and save the marines from pollution," he said.

The idea perceived by Anissa Kirch, Operations and Commercial Manager of National Tours, Oman, got unconditional support from the Office of the Conservation of Environment, Ministry of Environment and Climate Affairs, Ministry of Tourism, Ministry of Health and Taqah Municipality. Port of Salalah and Crowne Plaza were among many other corporate supporters of the event.

Anissa was overwhelmed over the response as she saw very high attendance for the drive and almost all who registered turned up and did their bit. "We were expecting not more than 50-75 volunteers, but there were more than 200. More amazing was to see the

mixture of volunteers: locals, expatriates, from general workers to general directors, adults and kids, everyone was there."

"We all had the same target and had a great and successful day together. To see them working hand in hand made me really happy and the result was a clean Wadi. It brought the motivation for another event already," she said.

The trash collected from the Wadi was dumped in a municipality truck and everyone involved in the drive, was of the opinion that something tangible should be done to keep the Wadi clean. The authorities promised to take up the task and deliver before the advent of the Khareef this year.

DRY LANDS Management of water resources discussed

MUSCAT: Dr Ahmed bin Nasser al Bakri, Under-Secretary of the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries for Agriculture, received in his office yesterday Badr Omar al Dafa, Executive Director of the Global Dry Land Alliance (GDA).

The two sides reviewed means of enhancing aspects of cooperation with the GDA in light of forests elimination and soil degradation in the dry lands, besides discussing the policies and techniques of water management and means of preserving.

The GDA is a Qatari initiative that was launched by Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad al Thani, Emir of Qatar, in coordination with UN. The initiative aims to achieve food security in countries that have dry lands, which are more than 50 countries and their population exceed two billion. — ONA

School administrations forum opens

CRUCIAL ROLE: The forum aims to target 500 school headmasters, assistants and administrative supervisors

MUSCAT: Dr Rawya bint Saud al Bussaidrah, Minister of Higher Education, inaugurated the First School Administration Forum, on April 25, Monday, under the presence of Dr Madeha bint Ahmed Al Shaibaniyah, Minister of Education. The opening of the Forum was held at the Conference Hall.

Dr Rawya in her speech said that "improving the practices of school administrations would enhance the academic achievements and develop the educational process which is what the Ministry of Education is seeking through such events." She also hoped that the participants would get the most benefit out of this forum.

Dr Madeha said that "the Forum comes in the framework of the ministry's efforts to develop its human resources and doubling the needed support for improving school administrations."

She also added that "the forum



targeting school headmasters is due to the crucial role they play in the positive change in the school environment to improve the educational work."

The opening program included the ministry's speech delivered by Dr Bader al Kharusi, Director-General of the Directorate-General for Human Resources Development, followed by a visual presentation

entitled "Illuminations in school administration."

The main spokeswoman of the Forum, Dr Deanne Magnusson from University of Minnesota, presented a paper titled "Futuristic Vision of School Administration in the Global Context: Leadership Perspective."

The two-day Forum targeted 500 school headmasters and assistants, administrative supervisors, supervisors

of school performance moderation at the Directorate-General at the governorates as well as the concerned Directorates at the Ministry.

The forum came under the title "Improving School Administration to Enhance Academic Achievements" to discuss some issues of priority for the educational field, as it focused on two main themes: the Educational indicators and their impact on academic

achievements, and the Legal awareness and Administrative and Legal culture in Schools Administrations and their implications on school effectiveness due to its importance in school work improvement, as well as creating a systematic work environment.

The participants in the forum presented and discussed a number of papers and distinct experiences of international and local initiatives.

KR funds Oman Down Syndrome Association

MUSCAT: The Khimji Ramdas Group offers support and financial aid to a number of charitable organisations as part of its core philosophy to enrich the lives of people.

Among its most notable contributions is the company's funding of the Oman Down Syndrome Association, which helped the association to acquire critical equipment in the treatment of down syndrome. Commenting on KR's support of the association, Nallesh Khimji, Director, KR said, "At Khimji Ramdas we are passionate about supporting social causes that help improve the quality of life for people from every socio-economic background.

We operate on firm principles



of giving and doing so generously especially to organisations and charities that work tirelessly towards creating equal opportunities for everyone."

Ahmed Mohammed Al Jabry, Chairman, Oman Down Syndrome

Association expressed gratitude on behalf of the association, saying, "We are immensely thankful to the KR Group for providing us with critical financial aid, which has made it possible for us to purchase physiotherapy equipment.

Their contribution and support will also help us initiate plans to set up small care centres across different wilayahs in Oman to address the needs of individuals with Down Syndrome."

Set up under the Ministry of Social Development, the Oman Down Syndrome Association helps integrate children and individuals with the condition into mainstream society so that they reach their full potential.

Apart from providing specialised treatment, the association also conducts vocation training to enable individuals find suitable and gainful employment.

The association's facilities include classrooms that provide education and therapy.

Oman to host largest indoor amusement park



KABEER YOUSUF
MUSCAT

April 26: The largest of its kind for an indoor amusement park will soon make its presence felt in the Sultanate of Oman aiming to offer families a perfect entertainment area for their little ones soon.

Built at an estimated cost of RO 8 million by the Abu Talib Investment at the Oman Avenues Mall, the project named 'Funtanzo' is aiming at bridging the gap of such an indoor entertainment option for the growing populace of the country from May 5 this year, according to the promoters.

"We are aiming at children from a very young age to those adults who are young at heart to try the breath-taking amusement and ride options lined up at the two floors of the Avenues Mall", Amad Aldin Razaq Ahmed Talib, Chairman, Abu Talib Investments said.

"We are happy to be offering space to this project which Oman has been badly missing where shopping and entertainment can be mixed and weekends can be made more fruitful by saving considerable amount of family time", Ben Watson, General Manager, Oman Avenues mall said.

There are two parts to



Funtanzo—the first being Funtanzo Kids which is situated on the first floor and caters especially to kids in the age group of 0 to 3. It is an ideal place for kids to have fun and stay engaged while parents can relax and shop while they can be monitored from the gallery provided.

The second floor hosts the main attractions with a double height space giving the entire place a wow effect.

"An indoor entertainment centre of this size needed to have a venue that can match up to the scale and we are glad to have stuck deal with the largest mall in town which is Oman Avenues Mall", Ahmed Talib said adding, "The advantage of this mall besides its diverse shopping experience is that it has convenient access and ample parking facilities and the largest food court with foods and beverages to match all taste buds which is a critical factor for an FEC to attract and retain the crowd."

PEIE aims to promote Sultanate as a regional hub for manufacturing, promoting IT

Chinese trade delegation visits PEIE

MUSCAT: A Chinese trade delegation led by Qian Zhenhu, Vice Chairman of All-China Federation of Industry and Commerce (ACFIC) and comprising 14 investors visited the Public Establishment for Industrial Estates' (PEIE) headquarters at the Knowledge Oasis, yesterday.

Hilal bin Hamad al Hasani, CEO of PEIE, welcomed the delegation and briefed them about investing in the Sultanate and the incentives granted to foreign and local investors.

He explained the geographical advantages of investing of the Sultanate being located at the center for the European and Asian markets.

He pointed out to the Sultanate's political stability as an important contributor to the success of investment as well as the constant support given by the government to investment and the economic sectors.

Currently the PEIE possesses investment opportunities worth \$ 1



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billion in the sectors of infrastructure, residential cities and logistics in different industrial estates. Al Hasani said adding that PEIE targets to realize its vision in promoting the Sultanate as a leading regional hub for manufacturing, information and communication technology and innovation and seeks to draw industrial investments and provide support for investors through a package of competitive strategies and value-added services and simplified procedures, Al Hasani said.