

PROMOTING VOLUNTEERISM



The Omani Women's Association in Sur organised variety of events on the occasion of Omani and International Volunteer Day under the slogan 'voluntary life'. An exhibition of household products and health check-up camp for the elderly was also the part of the activities.

TRADITIONAL LIVESTOCK SOUQ

Those keen on getting a feel of real Omani life and tradition, the best place to experience that is the Friday livestock souq in Nizwa. Every Friday the souq comes alive as shoppers flock to buy cows, oxen, sheep, goats and sometimes even camels.



Qatari company acquires stake in Oman's biggest power project

STAFF REPORTER
MUSCAT

Jan. 2: Doha-headquartered Nebras Power has entered into an agreement to acquire Qatar Electricity and Water Company's (QEWC) stake in Phoenix Power Company, which owns and operates one of the largest Independent Power Projects (IPPs) at Sur in the Sharqiya South Governorate.

The acquisition, expected to be completed in January 2016, covers OEWC's 9.75 per cent stake in Phoenix Power and a 15 per cent stake in Phoenix Operating and Maintenance Company, which carries out the operation and maintenance activities of the plant.

The agreement was inked on behalf of QEWC by Fahad bin Hamad al Mohammadi, Managing Director and General Manager, and on behalf of Nebras Power by Khalid M Jolo, Chief Executive Officer. The signing ceremony was attended by a number of representatives from both companies.

Sur IPP, with an installed capacity of 2000 MW, is considered the largest power plant in the Sultanate and represents about 28 per cent of the total installed capacity for electrical connection system in the Sultanate. Project agreements were signed between Oman Power and Water Procurement Company (OPWP) and Phoenix Power Company in 2011, while commercial operations began in December 2014. Output from the plant



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is sold to OPWP under a long-term power purchase agreement that expires in 2029. Other project partners are Marubeni Corporation, Chubu Electric, and Multitech company.

Commenting on the deal, Khalid Jolo, Chief Executive Officer of Nebras

Power said, "We are proud of this achievement, which contributes to the expansion of Nebras Power activities and strengthening its financial income as well as supporting its strategic plan in development and becoming a global leader in the power sector. We would like to thank QEWC for their cooperation to conduct this transaction. We would also like to emphasise that the Sultanate of Oman is one of the countries that Nebras Power is looking to expand its investments in as it has a proven track record for the development of power plants projects based on well-structured IPP programmes."

Nebras Power Company was established in 2014 as a Qatari joint stock company by Qatar Electricity and Water Company (60 per cent), Qatar Petroleum International Limited (20 per cent) and Qatar Holding (20 per cent).

OSC conference seeks to address key challenges

CONCERNS: Construction, finance professionals meet to discuss issues, budget and the impact of oil prices on the sector

KABEER YOUSUF
MUSCAT

Jan. 2: The Oman Society of Contractors (OSC) will discuss the various issues the contractors are facing relating to the scarcity of skilled local manpower, the settlement of dues, the impact of budget 2016, as well as the sliding oil prices on the sector at a conference on January 11 and 12 at the Crowne Plaza Muscat.

"We are trying to identify key challenges in the construction sector and address them with a collective pool of knowledge and best practices from across the region and elsewhere," Shahswar al Balushi, CEO, Oman Society of Contractors (OSC), told the *Observer*.

"We will also look at the sector in next 5 years and what necessary measures need to be taken in order to achieve considerable growth to the sector, he said, adding that the sliding oil price is a matter of concern for the contractors who are dependent on the projects in the country, besides the manpower. There will also be an attempt to study the budget in full and to equip the members of the Society to face the future challenges."

The two-day conference will see KPMG's senior partner Ashok Hariharan assess the budget 2016 in the light of the ongoing projects in the country.

The major challenge the construction and contracting sectors are facing is the scarcity of skilled local manpower, and according to Shahswar, the issue is subdued in the recent past as there is a scarcity of projects as well and companies are trying to cut corners to save some money or not to lose too much money. He said most of the construction companies are not profitable and are reporting losses owing to the current challenges.



Shahswar al Balushi

The first part of the forum will assess the budget and the issues while the second part will have a number of brainstorming sessions and debates on the solutions.

The OSC had earlier proposed the government for Omanisation levels at realistic levels. "We seek to achieve 12 per cent during 2016 and aspire to reach 15 per cent by 2020. A working team from the Ministry of Manpower (MOM) and OSC was formed to refine the proposal. The final proposal has already been submitted to the MOM and we are awaiting final approval."

It has also submitted targets for long term Omanisation at 30 per cent and is applicable to all companies without exceptions. Also, a less than 12 per cent penalties as specified in article 114 of

Labour Law is applicable while above 12 per cent credit points will be given to companies at a rate of RO 325 per person per month. Preference will be given to these companies on the basis of tenders when it comes to tenders. OSC will also facilitate labour clearances and lands for labour camps for these companies.

OSC's Annual General Meeting (AGM) will be held in March this year where a new board of directors will be elected for a term of 2 years.

The OSC was established by the contractors' community in the country in 2007 under the Ministerial Decision No (38/2007) issued by the Ministry of Social Development which falls under the Royal Decree (14/2000). With a cross section of stakeholders, including contractors, clients, the government and the employees.

OSC represents the interest of its members and helps in addressing the varied challenges facing the construction industry. It achieves this through a process of engagement, dialogue and stakeholders' alignment. It also aims at elevating the present industry standards by driving specific agendas in four key focus areas of Human Resource Development, Health, Safety and Environment, In Country Value, and communication.

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Majan Electricity Co. (SAOC) announces the following Tender:-

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(147/2015) Re-Tender	CONSULTANCY SERVICES FOR PROVIDING MANPOWER FOR SUPERVISION OF 33KV PROJECTS	Specialized	13/01/2016	20/01/2016	135/=

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Tenders should be submitted in a sealed envelope addressed to The Chairman of the Tender Committee and marked with Tender Number and the subject. No other marks or any reference thereto should be printed outside the envelopes.

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The Completed Tender should be deposited in the Tender Box at, MJEC building at Al-Khuwair Near to Park Inn Hotel & LULU hyper market, **before 10 A.M.** on the assigned date for submission of the Tender. Any Submitted Tender after the mention date will not be accepted.

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