

'Trade and investment high on agenda'

Bangladesh, Oman set for stronger ties as new ambassador chalks out plan for enhanced relations

Our Correspondent
Muscat

The new Ambassador of Bangladesh to Oman H E Md Nazmul Islam is geared up to strengthen relations between his country and the sultanate, uplifting community members and fostering increased investment in Bangladesh.

With a wealth of experience and determined to realise his vision, H E Islam is committed to serving the people of both nations. His tenure promises to be marked by transformative initiatives aimed at enhancing cooperation and mutual prosperity.

Muscat Daily caught up with H E Islam for an exclusive interview. Excerpts:

As the new Ambassador of Bangladesh, what are your top priorities?

Bangladesh and Oman enjoy excellent bilateral relations based on shared values, and mutual interests and respect. Our relations date back to thousand



H E Md Nazmul Islam

years and the heritage and culture of Bangladesh are influenced by Omani and Arab culture. The presence of a large number of Bangladeshi expatri-

ates in Oman contributes significantly to bringing the two friendly countries closer.

As a new ambassador, my top priority will be to maintain the existing friendly political rela-

tions and to upgrade it to a higher level. I am happy to mention here that over the last few years, we have been holding political consultations between the two countries on a regular basis. The third round of political consultations between Bangladesh and Oman was held on May 28 and 29 in Muscat. I will be working to continue the political consultations regularly as well as to arrange important visits between the two friendly countries.

Another priority will be to boost business, trade and investments between the two countries, which is not up to full potential at present. We are also working on signing a few agreements and planning the launch of a joint platform/chamber for communication between the apex chambers of the two countries. Also, establishing port-to-port connectivity and exchange of visits are some of my important targets to further improve the business, trade and investment relations between the two friendly countries. Direct port

connectivity to Sohar will save time as well as expenses.

I am happy to inform that currently Bangladeshi expatriates are the largest diaspora in Oman numbering around 700,000. Ensuring their wellbeing and rights in the host country and creating employment opportunities for skilled and semi-skilled Bangladeshi people is my other top priority.

How do you plan to increase cultural relations?

Bangladesh and Oman have rich culture and heritage, which is similar in many respects. Renowned Bangladeshi artists have been performing in different cities of Oman regularly in programmes organised by our expatriate community and the embassy. Every year, we invite renowned individuals, academicians and journalists to take part in a programme organised by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Bangladesh, which gives them the opportunity to see

Bangladesh and exchange views with their counterparts. We are also planning to collaborate in the field of sports. Our sports teams regularly visit Oman. Our under-19 hockey team recently took part in a junior Asian hockey tournament in Salalah. Earlier, our national men's football and cricket teams also came to play here. We look forward to increase collaboration in this area.

What events are lined up for 2023?

We held our National Day reception recently this year after a period of three years. Many Omani dignitaries, diplomats and Bangladeshi expatriates joined the celebration enthusiastically. Next year, we are planning a more grand event. Every year, we also celebrate cultural occasions like Bangla New Year and International Mother Language Day. We collaborate with the Bangladeshi diaspora living here to organise cultural and social events. Apart from these regular events, I am planning to organise

a painting exhibition where renowned Bangladeshi artists will showcase their art later this year.

How can contact between people be enhanced?

People-to-people contact between the two friendly countries is good. Currently, Birman Bangladesh, Oman Air, SalamAir and US Bangla operate 33 direct flights every week between different cities of the two countries. We are encouraging our Omani friends to visit Bangladesh. The procedure to apply for a Bangladesh visa is fast and easy. Before the COVID-19 pandemic, the number of visitors from Oman was increasingly growing. I am happy to note that the number of Omani visitors has started to increase again.

There are many places to enjoy in Bangladesh, including beaches, forests, wildlife safaris and adventure sports along with varied cuisine and multi-cultural festivals.

Call for blood donations in summers

Our Correspondent
Muscat

The Central Blood Bank in Bausher has called on donors to volunteer and help save lives.

A statement said, 'Due to a drop in the number of blood donors at the Central Blood Bank during summer, the Department



of Blood Banks Services encourages everyone to donate blood during these months.'

Those interested can donate blood from 8am to 8pm, Saturday to Thursday, and from 8am to 2pm on Friday.

Appointments can be made through WhatsApp - 94555648 - or by calling 24591255.

OCCI to host forum on tourism investment opportunities

Our Correspondent
Muscat

Oman Chamber of Commerce and Industry (OCCI) is preparing to hold a two-day forum starting August 7 at Oman Convention and Exhibition Centre.

The event will focus on highlighting the abundant investment opportunities within the tourism sector with a specific emphasis on sports tourism and real estate ventures across the sultanate.

The forum aims to serve as a platform that showcases a wide range of lucrative prospects awaiting potential investors. These opportunities encompass the development of resorts, ho-



Faisal al Rawas

integrated recreational cities, waterparks and other innovative projects within the tourism industry.

In addition to exploring investment avenues, the forum will

delve into the realm of sports. The sultanate will present its vision for the establishment of sports medical cities and hosting international tournaments and sports events.

As part of the forum, the chamber will facilitate bilateral meetings between investors and companies. These sessions will shed light on Oman's foreign investment law and honour pioneers in the fields of tourism and real estate investment in the sultanate.

Running alongside the forum, an exhibition will provide individuals and enterprises a platform to showcase their ideas and explore potential investment opportunities.

The event presents an opportunity to foster economic growth and attract international investments, further consolidating Oman's position as a prime hub for tourism and development.

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TRA seizes illegal postal firms

Our Correspondent
Muscat

The Telecommunications Regulatory Authority (TRA) took action against several firms operating without licence to provide postal and delivery services on Tuesday.

A statement issued by TRA said, 'The authority seized a number of companies that were not licensed to provide postal and delivery services, thus violating the provisions of the Postal Services Regulation Law issued by Royal Decree No 71/2012.'

TRA has warned that anyone who offers postal services



(Supplied photo)

and activities without a licence can be fined up to RO100,000.

'Anyone who wishes to offer postal services and related activities must obtain the necessary licence. Postal services include receiving, sorting, distributing and delivering postal items such as parcels and letters,' it stated.

TRA also urged all individuals and companies to deal with licensed companies only, a list of which can be found on www.tra.gov.om

State Council discusses new studies, proposals

Muscat - The State Council reviewed a number of studies and proposals submitted by the permanent and special committees of the council.

It looked into a study submitted by the Culture, Information and Tourism Committee titled 'Scope for Promoting Local Tourism in the Sultanate of Oman' and another submitted by the Social Committee titled 'Omani National Identity'. Studies submitted by the Technology and Innovation Committee and the Legal Committee were also discussed.

The meeting was headed by H E Sheikh Abdul Malik Abdullah al Khaili, Chairman of the council.

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