



In addition to a guided tour of the Port of Duqm, the AIGMF delegation made visits to the Indian Embassy in Muscat and the Majan Glass factory.

AIGMF delegates explore opportunities in Oman

A delegation from the All India Glass Manufacturers' Federation (AIGMF) accepted an invitation from the Port of Duqm in the Sultanate of Oman recently to explore opportunities provided by the new seaport for Indian glass manufacturers. The Port of Duqm is the gateway to the planned special economic zone at Duqm (SEZAD), which spans over 2000 square kilometres and is the largest integrated free zone development in the region. Mohammed Ali Ghazi reports.

Last year's AIGMF tour was preceded by Port of Duqm representatives attending an AIGMF executive committee meeting in Hyderabad, where opportunities for glass manufacturers in Duqm were raised. The delegation to Oman was led by Raj Kumar Mittal, AIGMF President, along with representatives from the container and solar glass sectors. The delegation also made a courtesy visit to the Indian Embassy in Muscat and met Ambassador Munu

Mahawar, who was briefed about the prospect of AIGMF members setting up glass manufacturing units in Duqm.

Free zone incentives

Potentially, glassmakers may be attracted by the free zone incentives



The Port of Duqm is situated on the south eastern seaboard of the Sultanate of Oman.



AIGMF dignitaries with representatives from the Port of Duqm.

that Duqm offers, including 30 years of corporate tax exemptions, no customs duties, free repatriation of profits and 100% foreign ownership.

Delegates took the hour-long flight from Muscat to Duqm, which lies in central Oman. Their visit started with a guided tour of the SEZAD area, which includes several different areas, including an industrial zone, a residential zone and a tourist zone, all served by a recently built international airport and the seaport, which is operated by Port of Duqm Co SAOC. SEZAD also includes a series of mining areas, where prospects for several industrial minerals such as limestone, dolomite, silica sand/quartz, salt, shale and clay are being explored and mined, close to the special economic zone.

The glassmakers also visited Port of Duqm's industrial land, which is being developed and marketed by a subsidiary company called DILC (Duqm Industrial Land Co). This industrial land is described as being ideally suited for glass manufacture. It is situated close to the seaport and is connected by an excellent network of roads, making logistics very convenient. Proximity to the port makes it easy to import raw materials via the port's dry bulk and break bulk terminals, as well as exporting products via the proposed 1.7 million TEU/ annum container terminal. The industrial land is also close to locally available raw material sources such as a dolomite and limestone quarries, as well as silica sand prospects. The DILC land is connected with essential utilities including electricity, natural gas, water and waste handling services.

A guided tour of the Port of Duqm and its various cargo terminals was followed by a detailed discussion about glass industry prospects in Duqm, including opportunities for the soda ash industry. Delegates were informed that there is an excellent prospect for a salt works near Duqm, which is expected to lead to downstream developments including soda ash manufacture.

Soda ash project

The Port of Duqm is actively working on bringing a soda ash plant to the site, which could potentially serve adjacent glass manufacturing units. Port representatives also attended the World Soda Ash Conference 2019 in Cannes, France, where meetings with several prominent industry players were arranged. Officials are now hopeful of announcing a soda ash project in the near future.

Majan Glass visit

AIGMF delegates also visited local glass packaging specialist, the Majan Glass factory, where Asit Chawla, CEO, organised a guided tour of the manufacturing facilities. There are currently two manufacturers of container glass in Oman, with opportunities for several more. Pragati Glass and Majan Glass operate plants in Sohar and Nizwa respectively, cities that are in the north of Oman. There are currently no float glass manufacturers in Oman and it was suggested that tremendous opportunities exist for float as well as safety glass production. ●

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