

June 2013

Al Ghanjah



الشركة العمانية للغاز الطبيعي المسال ش.م.ع.
Oman LNG LLC.



Benchmark for
Oman's Business

A New Dawn
for Science

Colours
of Celebration



Printed on recycled paper

Foreword by the Chief Executive Officer



Dear Colleagues,

The celebrations in the first quarter of this year were an important way to share with our various stakeholders the great success that the Oman LNG project has come to be associated with: its contributions as a reliable supplier of a clean fuel to the world and a dedicated partner in shaping the continued progress of Oman.

Indeed, our company has become known for a range of accomplishments on many fronts of the business.

In terms of profits, for instance, our company has often times exceeded in a single year of operations, the amount invested by all its shareholders in building a world-class plant for the production and export of liquefied natural gas.

And these profits have allowed us to make a number of meaningful investments including the development of our staff where, for this year, we have earmarked over OMR 2m towards growing the competency of our employees, of which some 90% are Omani nationals.

Proceeds from the sale of liquefied natural gas have also funded the growth of a large portfolio of social investment projects spread across Oman's entire landscape — in fields like education, entrepreneurship,

tourism, delivery of medical care, environment, etc., — that is aligning with the Government of Oman's efforts at establishing a progressive country that citizens can be proud of.

Our premier position as a model company was confirmed recently when the *World Finance*, after a series of intense scrutiny, first by its readers and later by an international jury, named Oman LNG the Best Company in Corporate Governance in the Sultanate for 2013. We have thus become the first company in Oman to earn this prestigious honour.

These many achievements, rather than cause us to be complacent, should challenge us not only to maintain our current successes but look to break new grounds where we can add even greater value. Our successes should call us to higher standards of stewardship so that Oman LNG remains a reference point within Oman and around the world of how a good business is superbly managed.

In this new issue of *Al Ghanjah*, I am happy to share with you the highlights of the festivities we held earlier in the year, and an article that elaborates a little more on the benefits of LNG to the country.

Have a pleasant read.

Harib Al Kitani
Chief Executive Officer

CONTENTS

Company News	2
Benchmark for Oman's Business	7
A New Dawn for Science	9
Celebrating the Benefits of LNG	12
How we prepared for Oman LNG Day	16
Colours of Celebration	19



COMPANY NEWS

RECOGNISED FOR CORPORATE GOVERNANCE

Attesting to the company's high degree of transparency, thorough standards of accountability and use of independently verifiable audits for business transactions with its various stakeholders, the **World Finance** has adjudged Oman LNG as the Best Company in Corporate Governance in the Sultanate for 2013.

The Award makes Oman LNG, Oman's primary producer and exporter of liquefied natural gas (LNG), the first company in the country ever to win the **World Finance's** prestigious recognition for an exemplary corporate governance practice.



Corporate governance refers to utilisation of an established mechanism of procedures and policies that are fair and consistent across stakeholders of a business concern, and which working together, promote transparency, assure ethics and facilitate the application of due process to ensure the long-term sustainability of an organisation.

To earn the World Finance's Corporate Governance Award for 2013, Oman LNG was vetted by the publication's over one hundred thousand readers, many of whom nominated it as one of the companies deserving of the honour.

The World Finance Award Selection Panel then subjected the selected organisations to deeper scrutiny, using a set of criteria including "overview of governance structure; committees and their quorum; leadership and board composition; role, term and liability of directors, disclosure and transparency" to determine the eventual winner of its corporate governance award.

OMAN LNG CLOCKS ONE THOUSAND LTI-FREE DAYS

With safety as the centre-piece of its operations, Oman LNG has announced a milestone achievement of one thousand days without Lost-Time Injury (LTI).

The new record translates to over seven million, one hundred and fifty thousand man-hours (7.15million man-hours) or almost three complete calendar years without casualty to any of its personnel. This signposts the company's continuing vigorous attention to the safety and health of employees and contractors, after it crossed the five million man-hours mark in May last year.

Lost-Time Injury (LTI) is used as a measure of safety in the workplace and generally refers to a work-related injury



or illness that occurs when a person is injured during the execution of his/her duties and as a result, that individual is unable to work on a subsequent scheduled work day or shift.

The nature of the global energy industry, with key operations and functions, often requiring the performance of delicate tasks which involve the handling of heavy machinery and chemicals by personnel, have placed increasing emphasis on the need for safety and due care in the workplace to safeguard lives.

Besides normal day-to-day functions, operators in the industry often contend with periods of intense activities at their work sites geared towards maintaining efficiency and keeping production outputs stable in meeting the world's demand for energy.

FASHION EXHIBITION SHOWCASES SME INVESTMENT VALUE

In a fashion exhibition held in Sur, one of South Sharqiyah's major towns, forty-eight ladies who were assisted by Oman LNG to start a tailoring workshop in Qalhat will display their wares—various kinds of colourful, finely embroidered dresses—to prospective buyers, aiming to consummate sales.

“We are showcasing different types of clothes, mainly for women and children. All the clothes were made at our



own workshop in Qalhat,” said Salima Al Shoibai who manages the Qalhat Ladies Tailoring Workshop that produced the articles of clothing.

Only a fortnight ago, His Majesty Sultan Qaboos, issued a Royal Decree, establishing the OMR 70 million Al Rafd Fund that targets the development of small and medium scale enterprises.

The fund, to be increased annually by OMR 7 million, will help many Omani youths in realising the ambition of running their own businesses.

To familiarise them with the nuts and bolts of running a sound business, a group of twelve from among the women, received further tutorials in management.

BOATS SUPPLY TO PROPEL SUR FISHING ECONOMY

The fishing economy in Sur and its neighbouring locations is poised to trawl in a larger fish net, positively impacting fishermen’s income and increasing the agriculture sector’s overall contribution to the Sultanate’s gross domestic product (GDP).



This positive outlook follows from a new agreement forged between Oman LNG and the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries, designed to provide engine-

powered boats to fishermen in the coastal city and its surrounding towns, thus empowering fishermen to earn higher incomes and supporting the further growth of a thriving commercial endeavour.

Details of the newly signed pact show plans by Oman LNG to fund the supply of over five dozen boats, each measuring 23 foot-long with a 75 horse-power capacity engine to fishermen communities in Sur, Ras Al Had, Tiwi, Qalhat, Al Bar and Al Ghalilah.

OMAN LNG FUNDS RESEARCH LAB, VESSEL ACQUISITION

In two agreements signed recently, Oman LNG will support capacity building at a couple of institutions of learning in the Sultanate by way of providing funds to equip a science research laboratory, and acquire a fishing vessel for training fishermen.



In the first agreement, the company will earmark up to sixty eight thousand, eight hundred and twenty-six Omani rials (OMR 68,826) towards procuring vital equipment for establishing a modern oil and gas laboratory at the Nizwa College of Technology.

Oman LNG’s funding support is a total of two hundred and seventy-eight thousand, eight hundred rials

(OMR 278,800) estimated by the College as needed for the acquisition of various tools it requires in the laboratory.

Some of the pieces of equipment the College intends to purchase for its oil and gas research facility include a liquid viscosity meter, a rotary drilling rig model, centrifugal pump, piston pump, scanning electron microscope and a well-bore hydraulic demonstrator, among others.

In the second agreement, Oman LNG will be contributing some one hundred thousand rials (OMR 100,000) for the purchase a fishing vessel that will be used for training young Omanis at Salalah's Fishermen Training Institute.

PACT EASES TRANSPORTATION WORRIES FOR OWA MASIRAH

Based on a pact inked recently, the Omani Women's Association (OWA) in Masirah is in line to receive funding support from Oman LNG, that will ease its transportation troubles.

The company will provide up to ten thousand rials (OMR 10,000) for the purchase of a twenty-six seater bus to be used in ferrying women and children to the association's premises for various activities, including



pre-school learning interaction for children and other educational social programmes for the women.

"In the past when we asked people in the community why they didn't bring their children for pre-school classes, they would normally say they had transportation problems," said Mrs. Amera Al Farsi, President of the Omani Women's Association (OWA) in Masirah, "but with this bus, we will be able to solve that issue definitively."

ALI HAMEED WINS OMAN LNG NATIONAL GOLF CHAMPIONSHIP

After two days of intense golfing competition with a full field of a hundred and twenty players participating, Ali Hameed, has emerged as this year's winner of the Oman LNG sponsored 38th National Golf Championship.

The national championship also witnessed healthy competition in the women and junior categories with Sanjoli Singh and Sam Battersby claiming the ladies' gross and juniors' gross title.

Ten juniors took part in the event, a record high for the championship and a testament that junior golf is developing successfully in the Sultanate.



At a Glance

90%

Omanisation - Oman LNG has remained at the forefront of attracting and retaining the best talent, with Omani nationals occupying 6 of the seven positions in the company's Management Team.

5.8

million USD, the amount allocated on staff training and development in 2013.

1000

Days without Lost-Time Injury (LTI).

44

staff sponsored by the company for tertiary education.

129

staff are undergoing professional courses, sponsored by Oman LNG.

35

million OMR at least - amount invested in 270 projects all across the Sultanate of Oman in the first decade.

99.69%

Pacesetter Reliability of Trains.

Information provided are as at April 2013.

www.omanlng.com

35%

of yearly allocation for Social Investment is put aside as Reserve Fund to secure the future viability of Oman LNG's Social Investment Programmes.



Benchmark for **Oman's Business**

by Effiong Henshaw

Companies that are determined to succeed in today's business environment must manage their resources assiduously, do their utmost to prepare for least-likely-to-occur but possible risks, and secure the support of stakeholders for what could become a long and arduous journey to success, all while working hard to keep their activities aligned to the business' original intentions.

Since its establishment by the Royal Decree of His Majesty Sultan Qaboos in 1994 to tap into Oman's

natural gas resources and "produce, market and deliver Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) safely, reliably and profitably"; Oman LNG, with shareholders consisting of the Government of Oman (51%); Royal Dutch Shell (30 %); Total S.A. (5.54%); Korea LNG (five%); Partex Oil & Gas (two%); Mitsubishi Corporation (2.77%); Mitsui & Co. (2.77%); and Itochu Corporation (0.92%), has pursued with resolute commitment the objectives of its founding.

KEY MARKET SUPPLY

In broad terms, the ambitions of Oman's primary exporter of liquefied natural gas translate into becoming a reliable supplier of what is the cleanest fossil fuel available to the world, and to the application of proceeds from this endeavour for the development of Oman and its people – a catalyst for economic growth and prosperity.

Since exports started from the company's Sur-based plant in 2000, Oman LNG, which operates a three-train, 10.4 million tonnes per annum (MTPA) production plant (one of its train is owned by its sister company, Qalhat LNG) has succeeded in keeping LNG supply to its key markets in the Pacific Rim, Asia and Europe steady.

After over 12 years of operations – more than 1,500 cargoes have left its jetty, navigating through international sea trading routes on the Strait of Hormuz to reach buyers in faraway destinations – Oman LNG now is a trusted brand. At home, the company's reputation as a properly managed and valid contributor to the Sultanate's national growth and the development of its people is perhaps even more stellar.



THIRST FOR GOVERNANCE

"Oman LNG has received strong support from the Government of Oman in running its operations in a most transparent manner and in accordance with widely accepted standards of accountability and integrity,"

says Harib Al Kitani, the company's CEO. "This has gone a long way towards assuring stakeholders of the strength of our purpose and the viability of our activities. It has also cultivated a thirst for good governance all across Oman."

Income from the Sultanate's LNG production and exports, ploughed back into the economy, has supported the Government of Oman's efforts at economic diversification. The country's potential for tourism, for instance, has been energised, and more emphasis placed on the vocational and formal education of its youth, who make up over 50 percent of the population.

Oman LNG regularly partners with a number of responsible agencies in the Sultanate, such as the Oman Society for Petroleum Services (OPAL) and the country's Ministry of Manpower to equip candidates with the requisite skills to start a career. It goes a step further to place them in jobs where they can start earning a living – at the last count in December 2012, over 1,400 jobs had been created in this way.

"If I could attribute Oman LNG's success to any one thing – obviously there are a number of factors that account for our performance – I would place it on our strong corporate governance structure, because it sets down the rules, policies and procedures that drive our business success. Whether it is cultivating a relationship with buyers, attracting credit, or investing in our country's social development, Oman LNG abides by a code of conduct to meet its goals and keep the company aligned to its founding intentions," says Maqbool Al Lawati, the company's outgoing Chief Financial Officer.

It is this characteristic, writ large at all levels of its operations and activities, that has led Oman LNG to become a trusted model of how companies in the Sultanate can grow their businesses, engage robustly with their various partners and contribute to the development of the Omani society.

A New Dawn for Science

by Effiong Henshaw

On 23rd March, “The Young Inventor of the Year Competition” funded by Oman LNG was officially launched 2012 under the patronage of H.E the Chairman of Oman Chamber of Commerce and Industry (President of the Competition National Supervisory Committee) and H.E the Undersecretary of Ministry of Education. The new award aims at encouraging young students to apply scientific principles to problem solving.

The beneficial role of science in the development of modern societies require no introduction.

For centuries, findings from scientific research have been pivotal in developing cures that have helped the complete eradication or containment of many diseases including small pox, polio, measles, yellow fever, malaria, tetanus and tuberculosis.

Scientists are now applying empirical thinking in looking for ways to combat the scourge of cancer in its various forms, and the human immunodeficiency virus better known as HIV, which causes AIDS (acquired immune deficiency syndrome) among a host of other debilitating illnesses.

Around the world, governments, reputable organisations and individuals continue to lend their support to the



“...Hence one of the priorities of the current stage of development and the next stage, which we prepare for is to revise the educational policies, its plans and its programmes, which need to be developed to keep pace with the changes that the country is going through. More attention should be accorded to the requirements imposed by scientific and cultural development towards the evolution of a generation armed with awareness, knowledge and the abilities required for worthwhile work. ...”

Excerpts of Inaugural Address Delivered
By His Majesty Sultan Qaboos Bin Said
to the Council of Oman, November 2012

study of science and its principles because when properly deployed, scientific methods can trigger new discoveries capable of alleviating mankind from some of its more dire troubles.

Looking at the possibilities and potential that science holds, Oman LNG in partnership with the Ministry of Education (MoE) last year established “The Young Inventor of the Year Competition.”

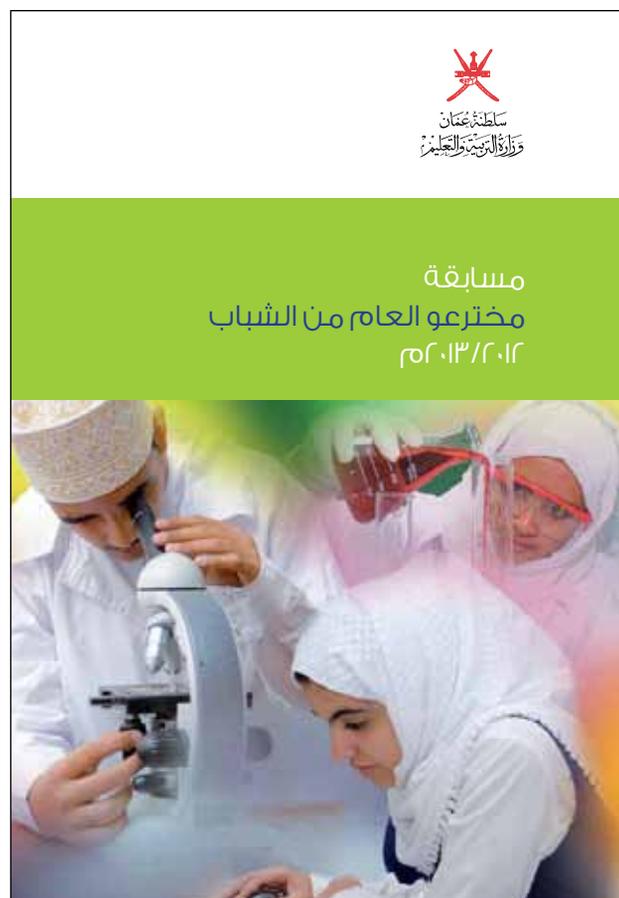
The contest will engage young students across the Sultanate, awarding those who, through careful application of science and its principles, develop an invention that carries with it, like all good works of science, some benefits for its users.

The competition, which targets students in Grades Eight to Eleven in “all schools following the Ministry of Education curriculum in Oman” aims at promoting science.

The first endowment of the award, scheduled for this year, will come after intense competition among some thirty-three (33) finalist schools to be drawn from the various governorates with their innovations submitted for vetting at a public exhibition.

From shortlist of thirty-three (33), an independent jury—the National Supervisory Committee for the Award—comprising scholars, academics, scientists and practitioners drawn from Oman’s prestigious Sultan Qaboos University (SQU), Oman LNG, and the Ministry of Education among others, will determine the first, second and third place winners.

The new award comes under Oman LNG’s social investment programme, funded from one and half percent of its yearly net income after tax.





Celebrating the **Benefits of LNG**

by Effiong Henshaw

Every February, for more than a decade now, Oman LNG has organised hearty festivities to commemorate the Royal Decree issued by His Majesty Sultan Qaboos bin Said on 9th February 1994. That auspicious decree expressly paved the way for the country's natural gas resources to be parlayed into a better quality of life for the Omani people.

The celebrations, collectively called the Oman LNG Annual Day, which hold in Sur and actually only run for a couple of days at a time are carefully tailored by the company to engage with all segments of the society—children, women and men—and as expected, bring with them, at least for those two days, a spell of unhindered excitement and lively merriment as activities unfold.

This year, as fireworks from the Abu Al Adham Mountain lit up the dark sky on the night of 27th February, children and women already being entertained at Fat'h Al Khair let out sighs of pleasant amazement at the brilliant display of colourful sparks.

The following day, even larger crowds that gathered at Fat'h Al Khair and spilled onto the corniche, cheered in loud chorus to encourage competing teams of sailors engaging in a boat-racing competition, a major highlight that in many ways pays tribute to Sur's long-held tradition of close interaction with the coastal waters bounding it.

And yet these yearly rituals of fun and gaiety, although largely symbolic, barely manage to capture the many benefits that have come with production and export of liquefied natural gas (LNG), since the first cargo made its

way from Oman LNG's jetty in 2000 to be delivered to Korea's KOGAS.

REVENUE EARNER

In monetary terms, the income earned from LNG exports have averaged well over USD 3 billion annually in the past half-decade leading up to 2012 and now stands as the highest value for the Sultanate's gross domestic product (GDP), after oil.



Such returns are positively outstanding for the country, as the plant was built with an initial investment of only USD 2 billion.

Looking beyond the substantial revenue gas exports have generated for the Sultanate, the over 1,500 cargoes of Omani liquefied natural gas sent abroad in the past thirteen years have triggered a renaissance in the nation's shipping and maritime industry.

Beginning with the acquisition of LNG Sohar to convey cargoes produced at Oman LNG's plant and followed

shortly by LNG Muscat, burgeoning global demand for gas has led Oman Shipping Company (OSC), the country's main maritime carrier, jointly owned by the government and Oman Oil Company, to grow its portfolio of vessels.

OSC now has more than 34 vessels in its ownership engaged in ferrying not only LNG but crude oil, chemicals, dry bulk and the general cargo specification; its fleet is expected to expand even further.



Salalah LNG, one of the vessels owned by Oman Shipping Company

Often described by keen observers of the Sultanate's economic growth indicators as the critical catalyst of economic diversification, revenue from cargo exports has emboldened Oman's determined efforts to invest in its other vital sectors, such as tourism and agriculture as a way of jump-starting contributions from these sectors towards a buoyant treasury that will deliver Oman's ambitious infrastructure development plan.

More broadly, through its liquefied natural gas shipments, Oman provides the world with a welcome alternative fuel to other traditional sources of energy, such as coal and oil, to power industries and give heating to homes among others. And its supply of this cleaner energy choice meets the international push towards using fuels that leave a less damaging carbon footprint on the earth's natural environment, thus preserving a precious ecosystem for sustaining humans, animals and plant life.

"We have exported some 1,500 LNG cargoes and this is a great achievement," said Harib Al Kitani, the company's Chief Executive Officer, speaking at a recent media briefing at the Ministry of Oil and Gas attended by chief executives of key oil and gas companies including Petroleum Development Oman (PDO) and Oman Refineries and Petrochemicals Company (ORPIC) who delivered presentations on their operations and later answered questions from local and international journalists.

"In a sense, we are the ambassadors for Oman because we deal with the market out there and are fortunate because our location in the centre of two big LNG markets—the Far-East and the Atlantic Basin— enables us to sometimes use this geographical advantage to arbitrage our cargoes depending on where the dollar prices are the highest so we get strong value for them."

TECHNICAL SKILLS FOR OMAN

If the country's location at the nexus of two important gas markets for a trade that is essentially dictated by regional LNG demands was a matter of good fortune, Oman LNG's push to develop a thoroughly skilled pool of Omani personnel has been deliberate.

From its incorporation, the company set out determined to recruit and train nationals to occupy all positions as a way of ensuring they would be superbly skilled and qualified to run operations at its world-class natural gas liquefaction plant.

The recruitment, predating the start-up of the trains, gave astonishing exposure to many of the locals who would go on to work in the plant at its completion, getting them involved in construction of the trains and enabling them gain lucid understanding of how the nuts and bolts of building an LNG processing facility actually tie in with the main and more scientific liquefaction process.

Liquefying natural gas involves a sequence of heating it to remove impurities and then cooling the gas to 162 below zero degree that facilitates its transformation to liquid before transferring it to specially built ships that carry the product to usually distant locations that's harder to reach by pipelines.

"I remember that I was recruited after a series of tests and then enrolled in a training programme with other new recruits. After we successfully completed the programme, we were brought to the plant just as the construction of the trains were getting underway. We would accompany the supervisor around the construction site as he checked the work and he would educate us on the relevance of what was going on to the eventual operation of the plant", said Salim Al Hinai, who started his career in plant operations at the company fifteen years ago and was recently honoured with a group of more than eighty staff for fifteen years of loyal service.

His colleague, Rashid Al Rawahi with whom he joined at the time, explains further "I was recruited by Oman LNG in 1997 and placed in a programme for two years. That programme enabled me become familiar with the work areas—the Utility and Process areas. After I finished the programme, I went to Scotland for a Higher National Diploma in Chemical Engineering. This was for a year and a half and when I returned I completed my work in the Process Area and then went on to the Utility Area and also worked for two years there."

"I took part in tie-in activities for Train 3 with Trains 1 and 2. Because at that time, we were doing commissioning of Train 3. Then I did some two years' work in Process Panel before moving to work in the Utility Panel."

With the company's Omanisation drive currently touching 90%, Oman LNG has succeeded in building for the country a strong workforce, at ease with operating the levers of a critical industry that pundits say will be pivotal to meeting many future decades of global demand for liquefied natural gas.

The advantages of such focused training can be seen, for instance, during periodic shutdown activities that take place at the plant, aimed at assuring efficient functioning of the three trains operated by Oman LNG where Omanis assume full control of all the major tasks, including the repair or outright replacement of columns, combustion parts, turbines and water exchangers.



Recent Train 3 shutdown activity supervised by Omani staff

CATALYST FOR SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

And yet an interesting paradox of selling liquefied natural gas abroad is the significant benefit the trade brings home in the form of social development.

From its establishment, shareholders of Oman LNG, comprising the Government of Oman (51%); Royal Dutch Shell (30%); Total S.A. (5.54%); Korea LNG (5%); Mitsubishi Corporation (2.77%); Mitsui & Co. (2.77%); Partex Oil & Gas (2%); and Itochu Corporation (0.92%) had agreed to set aside 1.5% of net income after tax (NIAT) annually towards a social investment that would support the Sultanate's development and provide a better quality of life for its people.

In Sur for instance, where the cornerstone of Oman LNG's social development programme took root with US\$48million invested in setting up Sur General Hospital, quality medical care has become more accessible to over two hundred thousand people in the five wilayats that make South Sharqiyah.

And the company has followed up its initial investment with funding support for procuring pieces of medical equipment such as 64-Slice CT Scan, video endoscope, laparoscope and the creation of coronary care unit in the facility.

Funding from Oman LNG's social investment programme is also driving employment by, in some cases, training candidates in developing specific skills required in the

job market or more directly, in small-and-medium scale businesses, such as the Qalhat Tailoring Workshop where a group of forty-eight women received training in dress-making and fashion design and thereafter, were provided with start-up trade paraphernalia, transportation and office space to begin business.



Ladies at Qalhat Tailoring Workshop

From the fringes of Dhofar in the south to Al Buraimi in the north and the island of Musandam, Oman LNG is blazing a new trail of social initiatives—sunshades for schools; support for social welfare institutions like the

Omani Women’s Association (OWA) branches and the Al Wafa Social Centres; funding for school laboratories, hospitals and start-up businesses — that is adding to the government’s efforts and sketching a vibrant, progressive landscape aimed at providing nationals with a better quality of life.

With plans now at an advanced stage for the establishment of an Oman LNG Foundation that will assure the long-term sustainability of the company’s many social investment initiatives, the groundwork for delivering robust value to Omanis for many more years to come will effectively be in place.

“Oman LNG has brought many good things to Sur and the country in general and this is the real reason people are happy and excited when the celebrations come in February,” said Rashid Al Arami, a member of the planning committee who successfully executed what many of the locals in Sur aptly described as a thrilling two days of annual celebrations.

As the prospects for using liquefied natural gas to power more industries and provide heating to more homes, among other uses, grow brighter in many corners of the world, Omanis can look to the future with plans for many festivities.



How We Prepared for Oman LNG Day

The magnitude of Oman LNG Day celebrations which usually runs for two whole days, requires dedication and careful planning from a number of men and women who work strenuously behind the scenes to ensure risk-free entertainment is delivered to citizens, residents and tourists looking forward to enjoying the occasion.

*Al Ghanjah's **Bassim Al Battashi** and **Effiong Henshaw** sat with two of the people – Rashid Al Araimi and Abdullah Al Araimi—both of whom hail from Sur, to ask some details of their roles and get a good sense of what is involved in the preparations to deliver the memorable event. While Rashid was a member of the planning committee, Abdullah captained a rowing team to its second consecutive victory in the boat-racing competition, one of the main highlights of the competition.*



Rashid Al Araimi

• **Rashid Al Araimi who was a member of the planning committee speaks about his experience with Oman LNG Day.**

What kind of preparation goes into celebrating the Annual Oman LNG Day here in Sur?

Preparations usually start with Oman LNG deciding on a day for the event. Working with a number of agencies including Ministry of Sports Affairs, Ministry of Culture and the Royal Oman Police (ROP) we usually discuss a

number of issues relating to the occasion including the sea level to make sure it is safe for the activities we plan to have, particularly the boat racing competition.

There's also some coordination with the Marine Section of Oman LNG to ensure no vessels are expected to arrive or leave the jetty on that day. The Planning Committee inspects the boats that will be used in the competition, familiarise ourselves with the teams and the dancers that will entertain on that day.

Beyond the company and the government agencies, we have to engage with the locals and ensure that the Day comes at a time when it's not the fishing season because fishing is the main occupation of the people and they wouldn't be able to participate in scheduled events if they are busy.

What are some of the specific roles of the Oman LNG Planning Committee?

One of the committee's main responsibilities is supervising the boat racing competition. Firstly, we choose the particular type boat that will be used on

that day. We call for the different clubs to get involved in the competition and register their intentions and we determine which places/routes in the sea will be used as lanes for the competition. We have to follow up with these clubs to register their members, choose a captain for each team etc. We hold meetings with Ministry of Health, so we have an ambulance on stand-by and a medical team ready should the need for them arise on that day. So we have to coordinate a lot of activities with Ministry of Health and the ROP. These are some of the duties handled by the committee.

How many boats were involved in the boat-racing competition?

There were six boats involved in the competition. We had three from the sports club, one from the Ministry of Environment, one from Sur Health City and one from Oman LNG. Six clubs in all.

What methods does the committee use in judging and deciding the winner of the boat racing competition?

We have a judging committee that stays on the water so they can determine the boat that arrives first in a way that's clear and acceptable to all clubs taking part in the tournament. We also use a digital camera that captures the exact moment the boats cross the finish line, so it's clear and there's no reason for disputes to arise.

Why do you think the Oman LNG Day is important,?

The Day is important because it celebrates the good relationship between the company and the community.

Everyone in Sur looks forward to this day and it's an occasion for families and all members of the community to come together and really be joyous. One also has to understand that boat-racing in particular touches on Sur's illustrious sea-faring history.

This is the reason you find some people, particularly the older members of the community, when they don't see the young men training for the competition, begin to wonder if there will be no celebrations, because every member of the community is looking forward to it.

I remember a couple of years ago when the celebrations coincided with the Tour of Oman, it was a real thrill to see our boats, the competition and the celebrations in general, captured on CNN and *Al Jazeera*.

The Oman LNG Day has also always brought good things to Sur. A couple of years ago it was the multi-purpose hall at the Omani Women's Association and the year following that, the 64-Slice CT Scanner for the Sur General Hospital and this year we are seeing the start of a new building for the Oman Sail School.

As a member of the Sur Community, how do you feel about having a Sailing School in Sur?

I think it's a very good idea, especially looking at the history of the community. Building a sailing school here will further the development of Sur. It will also offer employment opportunities for the people of Sur and provide them with training to do the job, which is a very good thing and has many benefits for the youths and the community in general.





Abdullah Al Araimi

- Abdullah Al Araimi shares some insights that help them win the race.

Did you and the team train differently for this year's boat racing competition?

No. I simply followed the training plan I deployed last year. Last year my team won the cup and I also got married on the same day so it was a double celebration for me and Minister of Sports gave me a double congratulations. Thanks to God, this year again we have been able to accomplish the same feat and we are very happy about it.

How many people were on your team for the boat racing competition?

There were eleven people in my team. Ten were rowers and I was the captain.

What did your role as captain entail?

My role involved motivating and coordinating the movement of my team mates so they all rowed as one group to move the boat faster and to direct them in such a way that we could cross the finishing line ahead of any other team in this competition.

How long did your team prepare for this competition?

We prepared for about a month up to the start of the competition. But the last fifteen days were the most intensive preparation for the competition.

In your own view, why is the Oman LNG Day an important occasion?

It's important because the company brings us all together as one to celebrate the success of the company and it is a day of joy for all of us.

How do you feel about the foundation stone that was laid for the Sailing School?

It's an excellent idea from Oman LNG and will enable many people in Sur learn more about sailing. Especially when one looks at the history of Sur and the way the people have built their lives around the sea.

Days and months after the celebrations are over, what do you remember most about the Oman LNG Day?

I usually remember everything. Even the minutest details about the preparations and discussions with my friends in the community. Our activities in the boat, how we performed as a team...all the details, everything and that's because it's a day of fun and celebration.

Abdullah Al Araimi and team celebrating their victory in this year's competition.



Oman LNG Celebrates

Earlier this year, Oman LNG commemorated the Royal Decree issued by His Majesty Sultan Qaboos in February 1994 establishing the company with Annual Day Celebrations in Sur and Stakeholders' Dinner in Muscat.



Oman LNG Celebrates - continued

