

Asyad has Omani logistics under control

Deserts and mountains meet

Oman wants to expand its logistics infrastructure and benefit from the flow of goods off its coasts. The head of marketing of the logistics firm Asyad presented the sultanate's plans at a forum held in Switzerland recently.

Switzerland certainly has a number of more important trading partners than Oman. In 2017, Switzerland exported goods worth CHF331 million to the Gulf state, which corresponds to around 0.1% of the country's total exports. This figure represents a rise of just under 20% for 2017 compared to 2016, so at least an upward trend can be ascertained.

The Oman-Switzerland Friendship Association also believes that this trend should continue. At the end of April the bilateral association held its first forum in Bern, Switzerland's capital city. It was devoted largely to cooperation between the two countries.

In addition to tourism topics, the focus was also on economic exchange, with particular attention paid to logistics. The sultanate in the southeast of the Arabian Peninsula wants to make better use of its

rather advantageous strategic location in the future and strongly expand and develop its logistics sector.

When it comes to logistics in Oman, you cannot ignore Asyad. Founded in 2016, the group is a port operator, shipping company, post office, bus and railway company, and even operates free-trade zones. Ahmed Akaak, Asyad's head of marketing, presented his country's vision for the future of logistics at the recent forum in Switzerland.

Oman to make the best of its location

"Important sea routes pass by Oman. We want to exploit this through the ports of Sohar, Duqm and Salalah," said Akaak. Asyad is entrusted with the implementation of Oman's 'Logistics strategy 2040', which aims to expand the sector in the country. Oman also draws on foreign know-how, with the ports of Sohar and Duqm cooperating with Rotterdam and Antwerp.

The development of a railway network is slower, however. Perhaps Oman will gain from Switzerland's experiences – the latter is well-known as a railway country par excellence, after all.

Marco Wölfl

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Ahmed Akaak highlighting the Sultanate of Oman's logistics ambitions.

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