

PRESS RELEASE

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USG-Zawawi Gypsum aiming to increase exports from Salalah hub



Zawawi Gypsum, one of the leading mining and mineral processing companies in Oman successfully loaded its first export consignment of Gypsum from Port of Salalah today. The vessel loaded 66,000 MT of gypsum for India. USG - Zawawi Gypsum envisages the exports increasing to about 2 Million MT per annum within the next 3 years.

In addition to the gypsum mining, the USG Corporation - Zawawi Minerals JV, which is one of the first Joint ventures between an Omani conglomerate and a

major US Corporation, is setting up a state of the art gypsum board plant and a Plaster of Paris plant manufacturing facility in the Salalah Free Zone with an aggregate investment of USD 37 million. The facility adopts American environmentally-friendly manufacturing technology and will comply with all applicable national and international standards related to safety and environmental quality measures. The facility is expected to go on stream within the next 12 months and will target the growing markets of the Middle East, Indian Sub-Continent, East Africa in the first phase but will cater to the extended global markets in the subsequent phases. The projects are expected to provide jobs to more than 320 people directly and indirectly.

The project will bring substantial, long-term benefits and job opportunities to the people of Dhofar Governorate. The mining project will also enhance valuable foreign exchange earnings for Oman as these operations are mostly export oriented. In addition, the combination of US-standard Gypsum board with 'Made-in-Oman' branding would enhance the brand image of Oman in the international marketplace.

On the occasion, Mr. Ramachandran, the CEO of Zawawi Minerals and the Board member of the JVs, said "This shipment is the beginning of a long term relationship between the port and our company. This relationship will grow stronger when our manufacturing facility in the Free zone project commences exports through the port. Salalah, with its proximity to the main trade lanes and direct main line connectivity to our export destination was the ideal and logical location for setting up our facility in Oman. We are delighted with the level of cooperation extended by all the port executives to make this venture a success."

Mr. Ahmed Akaak, the Acting CEO for the Port of Salalah said "We are happy to be playing an active role in USG - Zawawi Gypsum business success. The gypsum export reinforces our belief that Salalah is the ideal location for companies targeting the global markets from a single location. We continue to support similar industrial projects which add value to the country but also provide employment opportunities for the youth in the Dhofar region."