

Oman Air Lends Support to the Geological Society of Oman

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Oman Air, the national carrier of the Sultanate of Oman, supported the Geological Society of Oman on a scientific journey to the mountains of Dhofar Governorate recently.

The trip aimed to explore the geological formations in the province of Dhofar and revealed some of the mystery about the origin and age of some of the types of rocks in the area. The trip was led by David Alsop, a geological expert working at Petroleum Development Oman, and Dr. Mohamed Al Kindi, President of the Geological Society of Oman. A group of geological scientists participated in the trip including scientists from petroleum companies, the Department of Earth Sciences in Sultan Qaboos University and the German University of Technology in Oman.



Commenting on Oman Air's support for the field trip undertaken by the Geological Society of Oman, Usama Karim Al Haremi, Head of the Corporate Communications and Media department, Oman Air, said:

"Oman Air is keen to support endeavours such as this that contribute to enriching knowledge about Oman and unravelling certain scientific facts unique to Oman. Through this sponsorship, Oman Air provides an opportunity for many people to get to know of the importance and diversity of Oman's geology. We hope to contribute to the Society through supporting the development of ideas in geology, and to enable Omani scientists to benefit from the experiences of other experts in this area. Oman Air is happy to have joined up with the Geological Society of Oman, which focuses on raising awareness among geologists, especially among students and young people, and helping to create job opportunities for young Omanis."

On the first day of the trip, participants visited the Wilayat of Mirbat to study the components of the glacial sedimentary rocks that date back more than 700 million years and are the oldest types of sedimentary rocks in the Sultanate. The participants studied the nature and characteristics of the cracks and the crevasses in the area and tried to explain how they were formed. The deposition of these rocks occurred during the ice age, which ended at least 10,000 years ago.

On the second day of the journey, participants went to the area of Hadbeen in the Wilayat of Sadahto to study the forms of semi-oval rocks found on the beach and to try to explain the methods of erosion which led to the formation of these rocks. In the immediate vicinity of Hadbeen, participants also studied volcanic dikes, igneous rocks and metamorphic units, as well as the types of minerals found in the region. After that, the team visited the sinkhole of Tawi Atair, one of the largest sinkholes in the world, which was possibly formed after the collapse of pre-existing cave's roof.

At the end of the trip participants visited the Museum of the Frankincense Land to discover the history of the province and the wealth of diverse civilizational heritage.

Explaining about the trip, Dr. Mohammed Al Kindi, President of the Geological Society of Oman, said:

“The geology of the Dhofar Mountains spans a long period of the Earth’s history and reveals a lot of important evidence of the evolution of the Arabian Plate, dating from more than 700 million years ago. Evidence of life, represented by bacterial mats and domes, known as stromatolite, are dated to be around 710 million years old and they are probably the oldest evidence of life found in Oman so far. There is still much scope for discovering more interesting scientific information in the Dhofar Mountains and there is potential for many Masters and PhD degrees to be done in this area.”

The Geological Society of Oman is one of the first professional associations established in the Sultanate. It aims to preserve the heritage and diversity of geological uniqueness of the Sultanate and educate the community of the importance of preservation and its role in enriching tourism, known as geotourism. The Geological Society of Oman has been involved in many projects and studies about Oman’s geology and it provides geological consulting to the ministries and institutions. It has a large base of members and has enrolled close to thousand members in the past year alone. The members’ list includes geological experts, researchers, students and others interested in Oman’s geology.



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