

## Sur transmission line work to start soon

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MUSCAT: Oman Electricity Transmission Company (OETC) has started initial work for setting up a transmission line linked to the development of the first phase of a large independent power project (IPP) in Sur.

The power generation capacity of proposed IPP in Sur has been enhanced to 2,000MW -- 500 MW in the first phase and 1,500MW in the second phase, OETC chairman Saif bin Abdullah al Sumri, told Times of Oman, on the sidelines of a function to sign several agreements to expand transmission and distribution networks with a total capital expenditure of RO42.9 million. This is against an earlier proposal to set up an IPP with 1,500 MW capacity. "We are currently doing the front end design (of transmission lines) for the first phase. Immediately, we will do the design work for the second phase, which is 1500MW. The first phase will come on stream within three to four years," Surmi said, adding; "Transmission lines should be in place three to four months ahead of power projects."

"We have to provide transmission lines to accommodate new power projects. This is a challenge for us." Surmi also said that his company has devised a five year expansion plan, which is linked with the overall development of the power sector in the country.

OETC yesterday signed several important agreements for expanding transmission and distribution network of electric lines in different parts of the country.

### **More projects**

The agreements were signed by Saif bin Abdullah al Sumari, with several contracting firms. The signing ceremony was attended by senior officials of the company.

Sumari said that the new lines will meet growing demand for power and bring down loads on existing lines and transformers connected to the main lines.

An important agreement was signed for replacing a portion of existing 220 kV & 132 overhead lines by underground cables in Muscat governorate (Phase I - Part III), with a capital expenditure of RO 21.5 million. This agreement was signed with the Saudi National Contracting Company. The project is part of a government's move to change over head lines to ground cables, especially in cities or near residential areas. Surmi said that there will be more projects to replace overhead lines by underground cables in Muscat region.

Another pact was signed with Larsen & Toubro (Oman) for building a new grid station 132/33KV in Quriyat and installation of required overhead lines in Muscat. This project, with a cost of RO10.6 million, is expected to meet addition power needs in Quriyat region.

Agreements were also signed for strengthening main electricity transformer stations in Wadi Kabir and Madinat Sultan Qaboos with a total cost of RO1.5 million.

Yet another RO3.3 million contract was signed with ABB for developing the communication network between major stations and the dispatch centre.

Sumari said that OETC is planning several other projects, which is part of the network expansion strategy aimed at meeting the growing power needs of the country.