

WINNERS OF VISUAL ART CONTEST TO BE HONOURED

The Ministry of Culture, Sports and Youth will organise today a function to honour the winners of the visual art competition. The function will be organised under the patronage of His Highness Sayyid Azzan bin Qais Al Said at the Omani Society for Fine Arts. **>A5**



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HM CONGRATULATES PRESIDENT OF FIJI

MUSCAT: His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik has sent a cable of congratulations to President Wiliame Katonivere of the Republic of Fiji on his country's Independence Day anniversary. In his cable, His Majesty the Sultan expressed his sincere greetings and wishes to the president and to his country's people. **-ONA**

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OFFICIAL VISIT

Zanzibar President to visit Sultanate of Oman on Tuesday



MUSCAT: Dr. Hussein Ali Mwinyi, President of Zanzibar will pay an official two-day visit to the Sultanate of Oman on Tuesday.

A statement issued by the Diwan of Royal Court states: For further cementing the deep-rooted relations and historic and cultural ties between the Sultanate and Zanzibar and for enhancement of existing cooperation between the two countries in various spheres and for further development of horizons of cooperation, for the joint inter-

est and for further development, progress and prosperity, Dr. Hussein Ali Mwinyi, President of Zanzibar will pay an official two-day visit to the Sultanate effective from Tuesday 11 October 2022, during which aspects of existing cooperation between the two countries and ways of enhancement of cooperation would be discussed for achievement of aspirations of the peoples of the two countries. May the Almighty Allah grant success to the endeavours/efforts of the leaders of both the countries" **-ONA**

NATIONAL PROJECT

Sayyid Theyazin to preside over Wusool Project launch

MUSCAT: His Highness Sayyid Theyazin bin Haitham Al Said, Minister of Culture, Sports and Youth will preside over the launch of Electronic Records and Archives Management Wusool Project at Al Bustan Palace Hotel on Monday.

Wusool Project is one of the national projects concerned with digital transformation led by the National Records and Archives Authority and is in line with the government efforts aimed to boost



e-governance under Oman Vision 2040. The project aims to provide a system for optimal management of archives and records in consistence with the National Manual of the Procedures for Management of Electronic Records and Archives.

The project for managing e-records and archive is a system to take care of all electronic records and archives of establishments in accordance with the standards and procedures followed by the

National Records and Archives Authority. The system represents a specialised and safe platform which enables government departments to initiate and manage all electronic records in an integrated manner. The system also enables such departments to directly communicate reducing paperwork and facilitates procedures and upgrades the efficiency of communication of government departments. **-ONA**

BUDGET SURPLUS HELPS CUT PUBLIC DEBT IN OMAN

Since the beginning of the current year, the Sultanate has achieved a financial surplus due to an increase in oil prices for the first time since 2014

Times News Service

MUSCAT: The Sultanate of Oman has used windfall oil revenues to ease pressure on public finances and the fiscal reform programme and favourable oil prices have together contributed greatly to the recovery of Oman's economic sector, according to a top government official.

Speaking during an *Al Shabiba* programme, 'Ma'a Al Shabiba', Aseel bint Mohammed Redha Al Lawati, Director of Public Debt Management Unit at the Ministry of Finance said: "The Public Debt Management Unit was set up in 2016 and has been at the forefront in managing the nation's public debt portfolio and its associated risks."

Aseel said: "The easing of pressure on public finances has improved our ability to meet debt obligations. Our department has constantly reviewed the status of



existing loans, ensuring refinancing of loans at low cost and diversification of the sources of local and international finance." The top government official's comments come in the wake of positive ratings from global rating agencies recently.

On Friday, global ratings agency, Moody's upgraded Oman's outlook to 'positive' from 'stable', citing elevated oil prices easing the nation's debt position over the next few years as the nation swung to a budget surplus in the first half of 2022. Moody's expects

Oman's fiscal balance to remain surplus over the next two years.

Public debt

Aseel said: "The elevated oil prices has led to a curb in the growth of public debt, attributable to deficit financing since 2015 and later due to the impact of Covid-19 pandemic. The public debt had exceeded OMR20 billion."

She added: "The external public debt accounts for 75% of the public debt portfolio. Since the beginning of the current year, we have

achieved a financial surplus due to an increase in oil prices for the first time since 2014.

"We have used part of the surplus in early payment of loans/borrowings. At the end of August 2022, the public debt has come down to approximately OMR18.4 billion, thus enabling the economy to avoid any crises in the future. We exceeded our expectations as we paid approximately OMR2.4 billion of the public debt. During the current year, OMR4 billion will be paid further." **>A5**

OMAN

Oman Science Festival to boost innovation

1 The third edition of the Oman Science Festival, under the slogan 'With science we meet again', will start today at the Oman Convention and Exhibition Centre. **>A3**

WORLD

Putin signs decree to tighten security

2 Russian President Vladimir Putin signed a decree on enhancing security measures for the Crimea bridge, following the explosion at the bridge that killed at least three people. He also called for securing the energy bridge and the gas pipeline linking Crimea and mainland Russia. **>A6**

MARKET

Moody's upgrades Oman's outlook

3 Moody's agency has raised the outlook on the credit rating of the Sultanate of Oman from stable to positive. It affirmed the rating at Ba3. The modification of the future outlook reflects the extent of the government's commitment to implementing measures to control financial conditions. **>B1**

FEELING THE PINCH

Eating out? Be prepared to shell out more at restaurants

MUSCAT: Be it weekends or daily snacks, eating out is a common practice in Oman.

But diners and regular customers at restaurants and cafeterias are now feeling the pinch as many restaurants and cafes have increased the prices of their meals.

From a simple and popular shawarma plate to delicacies in restaurants, all have become pricier.

While the owners and managers of restaurants and cafes justify the increase due to the rising costs of ingredients, including oil and poultry, forcing customers to fork out more when they dine out.

Against the trend

While there has generally been an increase in prices across restaurants, a well-known Indian restaurant – Maya Firangi Indian Lounge – has turned the trend by reducing



the prices.

Mahendra Singh, manager of the restaurant, said: "When the restaurant started in 2014/15, we had high prices as we had only a few other restaurants running along in the Cave Complex. Since COVID, most of the restaurants have closed down and we would

like to attract people to come to our outlet. We have found that in the present situation, prices need to be competitive and that's why we have brought down the prices by nearly 20 per cent."

Arguably, Turkish shawarma is the most popular snack/meal for many in Oman.

OMR1
"Earlier it was 700 baisas, then with the introduction of VAT it was made 750 baisas, now they have made it OMR1, which is too much," Indian expat Saji said

And there are quite a few places in Muscat where we often find long queues each day to grab a bite of it. The taste and the aroma of the shawarma shops is something that one enjoys.

However, the increase in the prices of this staple meal across the capital has left few clients

concerned. A popular cafeteria at Ruwi, which has been selling these Turkish shawarma for the past many decades, admitted to hiking the price by 250 baisas. "I was shocked as they increased the prices again. Earlier it was 700 baisas, then with the introduction of VAT it was made 750 baisas, now they have made it OMR1, which is too much," Indian expat Saji said.

Admitting the increase, a popular Turkish shawarma shop owner in Al Khuwair, said: "There are various factors that have led to the rise and we have got the revised prices approved by the concerned ministry and municipality officials. But we have ensured that the quality remains the same." Restaurant owners say that a lot of ingredients from Turkey are used and that makes it costlier. **>A5**





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HOLY QURAN

PSM observes Eid Milad un Nabi



Times News Service

MUSCAT: A formal session was conducted to celebrate Eid Milad un Nabi with passion and warmth to pay homage to the Holy Prophet (Peace Be Upon Him) the Saviour of mankind at Pakistan School Muscat Hall on the 12 Rabi Al Awal 1444 Hijri on October 8, 2022.

The session started with the recitation of the Holy Quran and followed by the recitation of Na'ats, poetry, speeches and views by the guest speakers.

A large number of students, teachers, parents and community members attended the session with full religious fervour.

The guest speakers addressed the audience and highlighted the significance of various aspects of

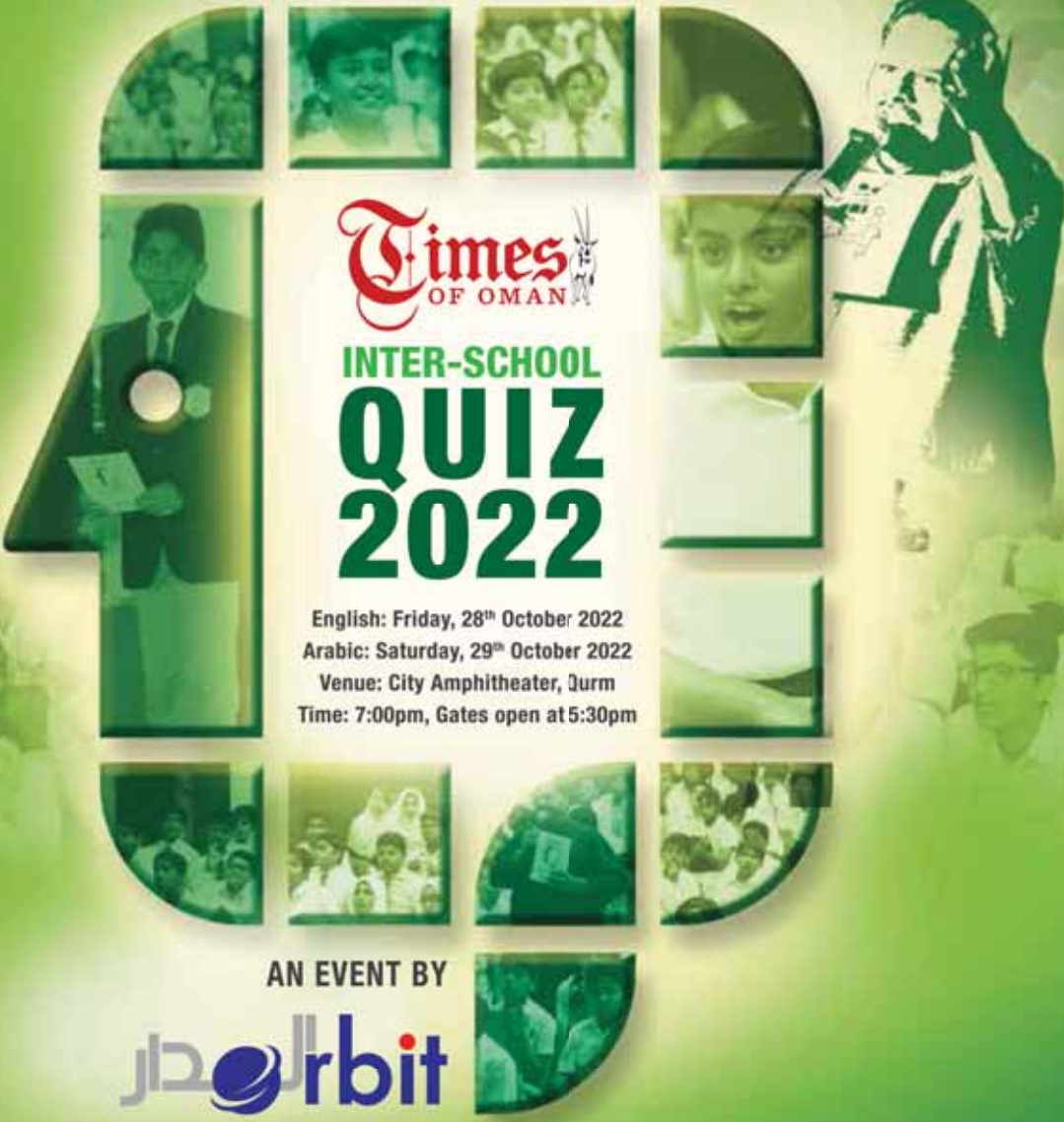
the life and teachings of the Holy Prophet (Peace Be Upon Him) to understand the true essence of his message.

The occasion was graced by Chief Guest Dr. Abdullah bin Saeed Al Moamri along with Dr. Hilal Al Lawati, Defence Attache of the Embassy of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, Dr. Ikram Burney, Dr. Zahid Qamar, the Chairman Board of Directors Ameer Hamza, Members Board of Directors, Senior Principal Nasir Nawaz and other dignitaries.

Na'ats were recited by the renowned Na'at Khawans Asif Raza Sultan, Ghulam Mur-taza Qadri and Jamil Zaidi. Nasheed was recited by the PSM student Yasmeen Muhammad. Na'at was recited by PSM teacher Muhammad Faraz.



PRESENTS



Times OF OMAN INTER-SCHOOL QUIZ 2022

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MONDAY COLUMN



A clue in the profile photo



Saleh Al-Shaibany

I took a pause while looking at a social media's profile photo of one of my contacts trying to make out what it meant in real terms.

I always think that these innocent looking profile photos really mean something. They always tell a story about people who posted them. This particular one, had an artist impression of a picture showing a little girl helping out her mother in the kitchen.

The caption "it's the little memories that will last a lifetime" written across the profile photo said it all. For a moment, it was tempting to ask what really inspired this young woman to post that informa-

tion in her profile. Instead, I dwelled back to my growing up years looking for clues to what I am today. The past do add up to give an answer to the present.

The casual slap on the face at home, the shove on the street or a word shouted at you in the classroom, all made us what we are today. How we deal with all that now is crucial. So crucial that it can be the ingredient of success or a complete breakdown further down at the finishing line. Though that slap leaves no physical scar but the clues of its effect are everywhere in the way we carry on.

I bet Elon Musk does not just want to make money for his electric cars but try unwar-ily to settle a score to someone in his days as a child in South Africa. Perhaps the same can be said for Napoleon in his attempt to conquer Europe, Pele in his footballing wizardry or even the explorer Ibn Battuta in his quest trying to find new foreign lands.

It is like a boomerang of actions, no matter how far it is thrown, it always come back to us, in one form or another. It is just some people turn their

vented up anger of childhood into good use while others, just steer the wheel of their present life to self-destruction. We don't need a psychiatrist to tell us how well we can use our growing up experience to our advantage. It is just we need to understand and reconcile with our past. We cannot go back to rearrange things and come back into the present.

But even for the seemingly fortunate ones, who spent 'quality time' with their parents helping out with household chores, or just mingle with the 'right' friends in their spare time, the rudder of their bearings could still steer to the wrong direction.

In a nutshell, whether we look lovingly in the past or just dread it, we all need to march on. But the most important part of understanding the past is to understand people around us.

If you had a bad childhood, then make sure your children do not go through the same experience. That's how you reconcile with your past and make better use of it. So next time you see someone's profile, cast your thoughts into your past to get some answers.

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THIRD EDITION

Oman Science Fest to encourage innovation among students



Times News Service

MUSCAT: The third edition of the Oman Science Festival, under the slogan 'With science we meet again', will start on Monday at the Oman Convention and Exhibition Centre and will continue for six days. The festival aims to disseminate science to students and members of society in an easy way, in an interactive way that stimulates creative thinking, and a positive trend towards science, innovation and scientific research.

In an effort to keep pace with global trends based on the dissemination of science and technology and the future changes

and developments, students will be encouraged to realise the importance of science in life, urging them to innovate, enhance their skills to integrate into the knowledge-based economy, and encouraging them to continue learning in scientific disciplines.

The festival has the participation of 110 government, private, military and civil institutions and bodies, and associations, and more than 1,000 participants, and it will include approximately 452 various activities, interactive scientific seminars, scientific exhibitions of innovations, experiments and scientific competitions, lectures and discussion sessions, and scientific theatre.

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THE LIFE OF PROPHET MUHAMMAD

BY HAFIDH SAIF AL-RAWAHY
*Islamic Information Center,
Sultan Qaboos Grand Mosque*

Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) was born in Makkah in the Arabian Peninsula, a town known as a hub of trade and pilgrimage; it was visited by people from Yemen in the south and the Levant in the north. Arabs are descendants of Prophet Abraham (PBUH) through his first born child Ishmael (PBUH). Prophet Abraham (PBUH) made a supplication for the Arab guardianship of the sacred house of Ka'abah, and for a Prophet to be sent to guide them and the worlds. Arabs had solid characteristics of bravery, generosity, altruism, trustworthiness, and sharp memory to receive, preserve and propagate God's last message. Arabia was an isolated piece of land from the rest of the world, but at the same time laying between two rival powers of its time, the Byzantines in the west and the Sassanids in the east. Due to geographic location of the Arabian Peninsula and being isolated from the rest of the world, Arabs were not influenced or assimilated by either culture or civilization – a perfect condition for maintaining the last message in its pristine form.

The political culture of Arabia consisted of tribal laws where clans formed alliances to defend each other and their territories, resources, and land. Tribal rulings and customs were the only laws, and were enforced with no mercy, and in accordance with the whims and caprices of the rulers. Verbalized history, poetry, and verbal literature of tribal story telling helped tribes to protect their identity.

The majority of Arabs were unlettered, and for that reason verbal tradition was common. Poets from different tribes would attempt to outshine one another at public poetry forums. Poetry was something that could trigger conflicts and violence; but it could also be the cause of peace. For this reason, the highly sophisticated eloquence of the Qur'an with its rich meaning in its verses, beauty in its expressions, and greatness in its style posed a big challenge to the Arab pagans.

They knew that Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) was unlettered and was not a poet, yet they could not explain why suddenly he became eloquent in literature. The Qur'an itself poses a challenge to anyone who thinks that it did not come from the Almighty God to produce something similar, and because Makkan pagans could

not fulfill the challenge, they resorted in discrediting the Prophet – a pattern that has since been repeated throughout history.

The Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) challenged three core matters that upset the status quo in Makkah. First, the irrational idea that material things are worthy of worship; and instead, he invited people to worship one true God who created and sustains the universe and everything in it. Second, the social hierarchy that maintained the superiority of certain tribes and families at the expense of others, and instead, he proclaimed that no human being is superior to another because of race, gender, or any physical quality; he rejected all forms of racism and he argued that the only superiority among people is that of moral excellence or piety. Third, he demolished the system of injustice, corruption, and harmful practices of society, and instead, he built a society that was based on social justice, charity, dignity, respect for others, and with a strong spiritual and moral foundation.

The Prophet (PBUH) propagated his message in Makkah for 13 years, but as Islam began to make impacts in the society, he and his followers were perceived by the Makkan elites as a direct threat to their social, economic, and political privileges that came with their control of Ka'abah. The Prophet (PBUH) was met with strong opposition, hostility, anger, intense hatred, and slander, as well as violence, torture, and boycott.

The Makkan elites began with the strategy of physical violence and torture on Muslims of the lower social status, who could not be defended by their clans. For the nobles, they would reproach and ridicule them, oppose their views, and treat them with contempt.

When this strategy did not deter the Prophet (PBUH) and his followers, they widened their campaign of terror and maximum pressure to cover all individuals. Throughout the Makkan period, the Prophet (PBUH) forbade Muslims to respond in kind and the use of any form of violence. Instead, he nurtured them away from hatred, violence and extremism.

The Prophet (PBUH) established Dar al-Arqam as a center of learning, to educate and develop his followers both intellectually and spiritually, and to keep them away from the conflict zones. The Prophet (PBUH) knew he was sent as a mercy to all humanity, and he asked Muslims to be patient and persistent in their suffering to overcome the short-term challenges so that the last message of God could reach all people.



The Prophet (PBUH) propagated his message in Makkah for 13 years, but as Islam began to make impacts in society, he and his followers were perceived by the Makkan elites as a direct threat to their social, economic, and political privileges that came with their control of Ka'abah

When the pressure became unbearable and some Muslims complained to the Prophet (PBUH), he reminded them of previous believers who suffered more, but did not turn back from faith and reassured them that the Lord will accomplish His purpose.

After 13 years of persistent suffering, the Prophet (PBUH) and his followers received an invitation to migrate to Madinah. The Arabs of Madinah pledged to take the Prophet (PBUH) as their leader and to defend him and his message. The migration or hijrah took place in 622 CE when close to 200 Muslim families from Makkah migrated to Madinah with the Prophet (PBUH). This marked a shift for Muslims from persecution to nation building.

Moving away from tribalism, the Prophet (PBUH) established

the first civil society in Medina. A civil treaty was signed by all community members of Madinah that laid out the framework for a political constitution that had never been seen before in Arabia, and for that matter, in the world, until the publishing of the Magna Carta in 1215 CE. The document is referred as the "Constitution of Madinah" and it defined the reality of a city nation-state with a common citizenship, consisting of Makkan Muslims migrants, Madinan Muslims hosts, Madinan Jews, and Madinan polytheists.

These groups made a unified community (ummah), having equal rights and responsibilities, as distinct from other peoples. The treaty provided a federal structure with a centralized authority on matters of public finance, security,

and national defense, while at the same time, the distinct tribes and clans in various districts enjoyed autonomy in certain matters of a social, cultural, and spiritual character. The Prophet as the leader and arbiter of the community based his actions on the common law, negotiated in this legally binding civil treaty.

Madinah became a paradigm of a multi-ethnic, multi-cultural, pluralistic society, with a rule of law and religious and cultural tolerance, and where each member of the community was guaranteed protection and religious freedom – a forerunner of a contemporary nation-state.

In Madinah, the Prophet (PBUH) introduced many other political, social, and economic reforms. Madinah, as a city-state, was modelled on Islamic values of human rights, women's rights, the rights of minorities, and peaceful co-existence. It was governed by a civil constitution and a system of consultation (Shura), with full respect, tolerance and acceptance of other religions and cultures. This level of pluralism (religious and cultural) and tolerance would be the hallmark of Muslim govern-

ance – something that was scarce in Europe at that time.

Madinan society moved away from tribalism, and into a centralized political system abiding by the rule of law, diplomacy, and international relations, as well as a national army for maintaining peace and security.

The diplomacy of the Prophet (PBUH) was exceptional, especially his effort to reach out to the Christian communities. He negotiated and signed treaties of peace and friendship with the Christians of Najran, the Monks of Sinai, the Christians of Persia, the Christians of the world, the Assyrian Christians, and the Armenian Christians of Jerusalem.

The Prophet (PBUH) established public treasury or Baytul al-Mal and introduced reforms on commercial ownership, contracts, social security, distribution of wealth through institutions of charity and endowments. He also redefined economic activities and factors of production free from usury and moral hazards. In the social sphere, reforms were introduced on rules related to marriage, inheritance laws, and child support. There was also a lot of emphasis on education and learning.

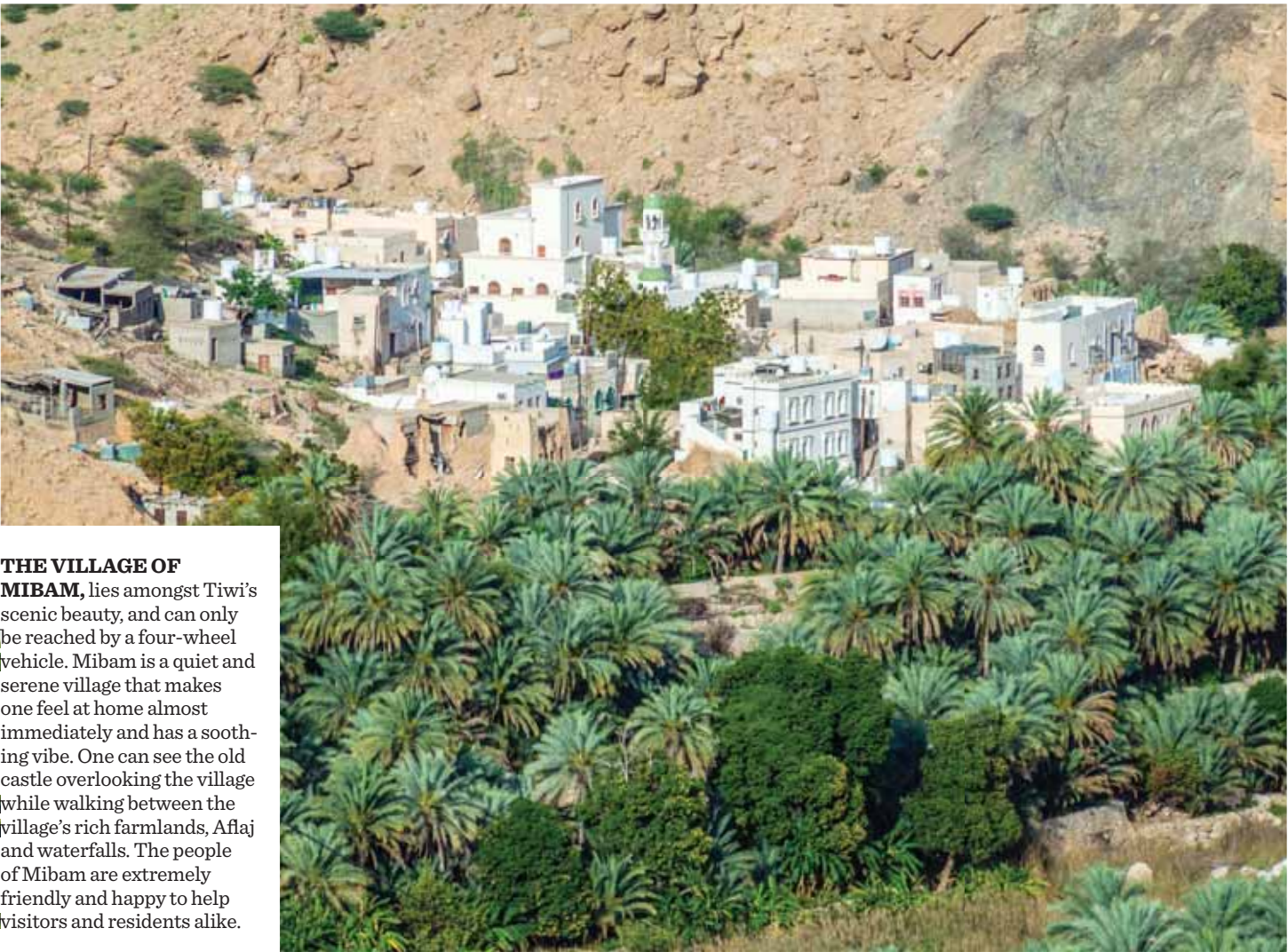
For the 13 years of struggle in Makkah to eradicate idolatry and corruption, the Muslims were violently persecuted, tortured, and embargoed. On more than one occasion, Muslims had asked for permission to fight back, but the Prophet (PBUH) replied that the Almighty God had not given him permission to fight back. The Prophet knew that aggression breeds further aggression, and the holy city would have turned into a nightmare of violence and blood-bath. He was trying to teach them forgiveness, tolerance, mercy, and perseverance.

Hundreds of Prophet Muhammad's biographies have been written, both in classical periods and contemporary. Many of these biographies have been translated and are available in different languages. More recently, there are Western scholars who are more sympathetic to the figure of Muhammad, who have also written biographies that are more objective than the traditional Western distorted view of the Prophet (PBUH).

To name a few: Karen Armstrong, Craig Considine, Lesley Hazleton, Juan Cole amongst others. There is no reason for anyone to remain ignorant about this great Prophet of Islam and open oneself to manipulations of polemics and propaganda of orientalists, Islamophobes and far-right that have colored all discourses of Islam.

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Winners of visual art competition to be honoured

The function will be organised under the patronage of His Highness Sayyid Azzan bin Qais Al Said at the premises of the Omani Society for Fine Arts



photography. The number of artworks presented in the five fields amounted to over 1,500 works, including 1,008 in the field of photography for 287 artists of which 50 works for 38 artists have been accepted. In the fine arts, 382 artworks for 192 artists have been presented of which 73 were accepted. In the field of digital art, 129 artworks have been presented of which 11 artworks have been accepted. In the field of Arabic calligraphy 70 artworks have been presented of which 39 have been accepted. -ona



FOOD ITEMS<FROM A1> ‘Prices have increaesd’

“There are a few other options from other countries like Brazil. But we are committed to giving our customers the same taste. As we are paying higher prices on our purchase, we decided to pass a nominal burden on to our clients,” he added. Another manager at a popular restaurant in the CBD area agreed that prices have been raised but said that there has been no impact on the sales. “We have been forced to increase the prices due to the rise in costs, especially basic ingredients like oil, chicken, meat, etc,” said the manager of this Indian/Arabic restaurant.

The hike has not gone down well with a few regular customers though most of them are of the opinion that prices have increased across many items. “These are difficult times. It would have been nicer if the restaurants would not have increased the prices,” a resident said.

FISCAL REFORMS<FROM A1> Economic recovery is gaining traction



“In March, we re-financed a loan due for payment in 2023. This is in addition to the early payment of some loans such as the Chinese loan which amounted to US\$3.6 billion besides the re-purchase of sovereign government bonds in the local market. “For instance, the debts due for payment between 2023 and 2025 exceed OMR6 billion. But we expect to reduce it to less than OMR5 billion. In January next, the maximum external finance would be approximately US \$1.25 billion,” she said. Aseel said the change in outlook of leading rating agencies is due to the assumption that oil prices will remain elevated for the next few years, which will afford the government additional time to advance its fiscal and economic reform agenda.

Economic recovery Oman’s economic recovery is gaining traction, supported by a revival of the hydrocarbon sector and the relaxation of Covid-19 restrictions, the International Monetary Fund said earlier this week. The economy is set to expand 4.3 per cent in 2022, supported by continued recovery of non-hydrocarbon economic activity, according to the fund. The sultanate’s gross domestic product growth rebounded to 3 percent last year, after a 3.2 percent contraction in 2020. Earlier this month, S&P Global Ratings had also affirmed its ‘BB-’ long-term and ‘B’ short-term foreign and local currency sovereign credit ratings on Oman. The rating agency has maintained its ‘stable’ outlook on the sultanate’s ratings.



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2022/2528	maintenance works at old IBRA polyclinic	Before 9 am Tuesday 18/October/2022	Before 10 am Thursday 17/November/2022	Specialized Companies registered with Tender Board Fourth degree	R.O 25 Per set

- All Specialized and interested Companies registered with Tender Board on the above mentioned Grade may obtain Tender documents from the E. Tendering website: <https://etendering.tenderboard.gov.om> against non-refundable payment as mentioned above for each set of document.
- Tenders should be submitted on line on the given website signed and sealed. The Tenderer should enclose scan copy of Bank Guarantee or a certified Cheque issued by a Local bank for not less than One percent (1%) for the Tender value validity for (90) days from the Tender Submission date, addressed to The Chairman of the Tender Committee before one day of date submission.
- The Original Bank Guarantee should be submitted to the office of Director of Purchase and Tenders one day before the submission date for all Tenders.
- Ministry is not bound to accept the lowest tender and reserves the right to accepts or reject any tender.

(<https://etendering.tenderboard.gov.om>) Any Clarification, you may contact via, Telephone: 24402200

Putin signs decree to tighten security for Crimea bridge

Putin also called for securing the energy bridge and the gas pipeline connecting the peninsula with mainland Russia

MOSCOW: Russian President Vladimir Putin signed a decree on enhancing security measures for the Crimea bridge, the Kremlin said on Saturday, following the explosion at the bridge that killed at least three people.

In a statement, Russian President Vladimir Putin also called for securing the energy bridge and the gas pipeline connecting the peninsula with mainland Russia. "The Federal Security Service of the Russian Federation shall be vested with the authority to organize and coordinate protection measures for the Kerch Strait transport crossing, the power grid's energy bridge between the Russian Federation and the Crimean Peninsula, along with the main gas pipeline between the Krasnodar Region and Crimea, during their operation," TASS quoted the document.

This is done to enhance the efficiency of protection measures for



the transport crossing, the energy bridge and the gas pipeline across the Kerch Strait, the report added. A truck exploded on the road bridge, causing seven fuel tanks of a train heading to the Crimean Peninsula to catch fire. Three people were killed in the blast, which also led to the partial collapse of two spans of the road bridge, according to media reports. Traffic reopened to cars and buses with a full inspection procedure needed on the road route of the Crimean Bridge, after an explosion on the viaduct on Saturday. Crimea's head Sergei Aksyonov said that trucks are still required to cross the Kerch Strait by ferry.

An initial assessment of the railway part of the Crimean Bridge has been carried out, and restoration work is underway, the Russian Ministry of Transport said. The bridge was opened in 2018 by President Vladimir Putin, four years after Moscow annexed Crimea and was designed to link the peninsula to Russia's transport network. The 19-kilometre bridge, which runs across the Kerch Strait and connects Crimea with mainland Russia, consists of a railway and vehicle sections. It became fully operational in 2020. Earlier, the transport ministry had said the bridge, which consists

of two parallel routes for automobiles and trains, will possibly open to trains by 8 pm Moscow time on Saturday. "In light of the emergency situation on the Crimean Bridge, Putin heard reports from Prime Minister Mikhail Mishustin, Deputy Prime Minister Marat Khusnullin, Emergencies Minister Alexander Kurenkov and Transport Minister Vitaly Savelyev, as well as heads of security services," the Kremlin statement said. Putin instructed the Prime Minister to set up a government commission to investigate the incident and eliminate the aftermath as soon as possible. **ANI**



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ELECTIONS

Austria elections likely to see President Van der Bellen reelected



VIENNA: Austrians head to the polls on Sunday to vote in a presidential election likely to see the incumbent, Alexander Van der Bellen, stay in office. Van der Bellen is seen as a stable leader at a time of grave crisis when energy costs and inflation top voters' concerns in the Alpine nation, which is member of the European Union but is not part of the NATO security alliance. At his last campaign rally Friday, Van der Bellen said, "The biggest competitor on Sunday will be the sofa."

Six vying for the presidency
Austria has a voting public of 6.4 million in a country of 9 million. With ads proclaiming Van der Bellen is "the safe choice in stormy times," the one-time lead-

er of the Greens is running as an independent. Van der Bellen faces six challengers in the race, all of whom trailed him in the polls leading up to the vote. To avoid a run-off, he will have to secure more than 50% of the vote in the first round. Most of Austria's major parties have backed Van der Bellen, except for the far-right Freedom Party (FPÖ). The far right has instead put forth as a candidate Walter Rosenkranz, currently in second place in the polls with 15% support. Support for the FPÖ has declined since 2019 amid a corruption scandal that eventually forced former Chancellor Sebastian Kurz from power. The Austrian president serves a term of six years in the largely ceremonial role. **ANI**

LANDFALL

Hurricane Julia makes landfall in Nicaragua

MANAGUA: Tropical Storm Julia strengthened into a hurricane late on Saturday before making landfall on the eastern coast of Central America. Julia passed the Colombian island San Andres before hitting the coast of Nicaragua just north of Bluefields with maximum sustained winds of 85 miles per hour (140 kilometers per hour), the US National Hurricane Center (NHC)

said on Sunday morning. "Life-threatening flash floods and mudslides possible from heavy rains over Central America and Southern Mexico through early next week," the NHC previously warned. **Thousands evacuated** Julia is classified as a Category 1 storm, on the low side of the five-tier Saffir-Simpson hurricane

wind scale. As the hurricane approached, Nicaragua evacuated some 6,000 people in the Laguna de Perlas area, in the Miskito keys located off the coast, and in other zones. In Bluefields, one of the Nicaraguan towns expected to be affected, fishermen were seen safeguarding their boats. Locals rushed to ATMs and stocked up on essentials. Colombian President Gustavo

Petro said he hoped "the damage would be less than last time," referring to the destruction from Hurricane Iota in 2020. He has called on hotel chains to "open their doors for shelter." Julia is expected to weaken after making landfall in Nicaragua, before moving north towards the coasts of Honduras, El Salvador, and Guatemala on Sunday and Monday, forecasts said. **ANI**

MISSILES FIRED



North Korea fires missiles after Washington-Seoul military drills

PYONGYANG: South Korea said North Korea fired two short-range ballistic missiles into its eastern waters early on Sunday morning local time, the latest in a series of launches that Pyongyang has called a "righteous reaction" to military drills by Seoul and Washington. South Korea's Joint Chiefs of Staff said in a statement it detected the two missiles launched between 1:48 a.m. and 1:58 a.m. on Sunday (1648 and 1658 UTC Saturday) from the eastern coastal city of Munchon. The Japanese government also reported that North Korea had fired missiles, with Vice Defense Minister Toshiro Ino saying they had both landed in the sea outside of Japan's exclusive economic

zone. Authorities were investigating what type of missiles were launched and the possibility they were submarine-launched ballistic missiles. Ino said both missiles flew about 350 kilometers (217 miles) at a maximum altitude of 100 kilometers and ended their journeys in waters between the Korean Peninsula and Japan. UN resolutions prohibit North Korea from testing ballistic missiles of any range amid fears over the communist country's nuclear weapons program. The US Indo-Pacific Command said in a statement that the launches highlighted "the destabilizing impact" of North Korea's unlawful weapons programs. It said the US remained unwaveringly committed to the defense of

South Korea and Japan. **Escalation of weapons tests** In the past two weeks, North Korea has fired several ballistic missiles into the sea in multiple launch events, with one nuclear-capable missile on Tuesday flying over Japan for the first time in five years. The reported launches came at the conclusion of drills by the US and South Korea that involved the participation of the nuclear-powered aircraft carrier USS Ronald Reagan. North Korea regards such military exercises as a rehearsal for an invasion of its territory and reacts particularly strongly if the US deploys major strategic assets such as an aircraft carrier. **ANI**

NEW BRANCH

Indian Air Force announces new weapon system branch

CHANDIGARH: Pride and valour echoed in the celebrations of the Indian Airforce which marked the completion of 90 years of its foundation on Saturday. IAF chief Air Chief Marshal Vivek Ram Chaudhari lauded the forces and informed that the Indian government approved the creation of a weapon system branch for the officers in IAF. This year's anniversary celebrations theme was "IAF: Transforming for the Future". This aptly highlights the Indian Air Force's needs to redefine, reimagine and recalibrate to transform into a contemporary and future-ready force. "It is my privilege to announce that the government has approved the creation of a Weapon System Branch for Officers in the IAF. This is the first time since the independence that a new operational branch has been created," said Air Chief Marshal Vivek Ram Chaudhari. The move will essentially be for manning four specialised streams of Surface-to-Surface missiles, Surface-to-Air Missiles, Remotely Piloted Aircraft and Weapon System Operators in twin and multi-crew aircraft. He also informed that the creation of this branch would result in savings of over Rs 3,400 crore due to reduced expenditure on flying training. He also stressed the induction of air warriors into IAF through the Agnipath scheme and called it an opportunity to harness the potential of youth in India. "We have changed our operational training methodology to ensure each Agniveer is equipped

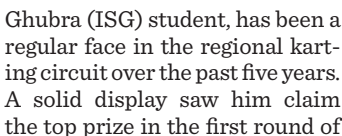


with the right skills and knowledge to start their career in the Air Force. In December this year, we would be inducting 3,000 Agniveer Vayu for their initial training. This number will only go up in the years to come to ensure adequate staffing," he added. He also outlined the plans for the induction of women Agniveers starting next year and informed that the creation of infrastructure is underway and the streamlining of trade structure is being finalised. Highlighting the jointness amongst three defence forces he said, "There is a need to plan for integrated and joint application of combat power. The key to success in multidomain operations is to have flexible, robust and redundant Command and Control Structures which will allow a joint force to dominate across domains. Work is in progress to enhance the jointness amongst the three services." The Indian Air Force on Satur-

day began celebrations to mark its 90 years of foundation at the Sukhna Lake. This is the first time that the annual parade and fly-past are being held outside Delhi-NCR. Defence Minister Rajnath Singh wished the force early this morning. "Greetings and best wishes to all courageous IAF air warriors and their families on the Indian Air Force Day. The IAF is known for its valour, excellence, performance and professionalism. India is proud of its men and women in blue. Wishing them blue skies and happy landings," Singh tweeted. The IAF conducted an hour-long air show at the lake with participation by nearly 80 military aircraft and helicopters, including the recently inducted indigenous-built Light Combat Helicopter (LCH) "Prachand" will showcase their aerial prowess during the fly-past. **ANI**

Djokovic cruises into Astana final after Medvedev retires

MUSCAT: Shonal Kunimal began his 2022-23 season in Oman on a victorious note as the 11-year-old claimed the top honours in the Mini Max category of the opening round of the Oman Rotax Max Challenge (RMC) Championship at the Oman Automobile Association (OAA) Muscat Speedway recently.



the 2022-23 Oman Rotax Max Challenge by the best lap time of 56.316 sec. He was followed by another promising racer Adam Awan, who has a best lap time of 56.498 sec. With the best lap time of 57.377 sec Devansh Bandyopadhyay completed the podium. Ahead of the final race, the round included qualifying and pre-final races. Shonal dominated all the three sessions. This is the inaugural edition of the Oman Rotax Max Challenge Championship and the next round will be held on December 10.

All the rounds will be held at the Muscat Speedway and the overall

champion will be crowned after the third and final round, to be held on February 3, 2023. Later, OAA Oman Automobile Association manager Sanad al Rawahi gave away the awards. Speaking after winning the first round, Shonal said, "It was a good start to the new season. It also served as a good warm-up for the MENA Nations Cup 2022. I hope to continue with my good form and hope to claim the overall title."

Meanwhile, OAA is getting ready to host the biggest karting championship in the region, the MENA Nations Cup, for the third time later this year.

ASTANA: Novak Djokovic advanced to the final match on Saturday at the Astana Open after Daniil Medvedev retired from the duo's semi-final clash at the end of a dramatic second-set tie-break due to a leg injury.

Medvedev's shocking retirement came moments after Djokovic had clinched a dramatic tie-break to level the match at 4-6 7-6(6).

"I really hope that his injury is nothing too serious. I know Daniil—he's a great guy, he's a fighter, he's a big competitor. He wouldn't retire a match if he didn't feel that he [could] continue or [if it wouldn't] worsen his injury. He told me that he pulled an adductor muscle in

his leg," ATP.com quoted Djokovic as saying.

"It was such a close match, particularly in the second set. I would probably say he was a better player on the court in both sets. I was fighting and trying to find a way. I found a way to win the second, but I'm just sad for the tournament and for these people who were enjoying the battle, and for Daniil that it had to end this way," he added.

Djokovic will now aim to seal back-to-back titles in Sunday's final against Stefanos Tsitsipas, who was a 4-6, 6-4, 6-3 winner against Andrey Rublev.

The Serbian, who lifted his 89th tour-level crown in Tel Aviv last week. **ANI**

Iyer's ton helps India beat Proteas

RANCHI: Shreyas Iyer's unbeaten ton and Ishan Kishan's 93-run knock helped India beat South Africa by 7 wickets here at the JSCA International Stadium to level the three-match ODI series 1-1.

Chasing a tricky 279-run target India did not get the ideal start losing their skipper Shikhar Dhawan for 13 as the hosts lost their first wicket for 28. Left-arm pacer Wayne Parnell cleaned him up. Opener Shubman Gill looked in good touch hitting boundaries but he too was dismissed for 28 off 26 by Kagiso Rabada caught and bowled.

At 48/2 India needed a partnership and Shreyas Iyer and Ishan Kishan did just that. Team India crossed the 50-run mark in 9.1 overs.

The Iyer-Kishan duo batted sensibly to strike a 50-run partnership off 70 balls and in the process crossed the triple-figure mark in 20.3 overs.

Southpaw Ishan Kishan also went on to score his half-century off 60 balls. Iyer was the quicker off the two notching up his half-century off just 48 balls. South African pacers had no answer to their partnership as these two put



Iyer-Kishan helped India reach the 150-run mark in 27 overs. Wicket-keeper batter Ishan Kishan started batting aggressively and alongwith Iyer took the partnership beyond the 150-run mark.

South African bowlers looked helpless as India crossed the 200-run mark in 33.3 overs. The 161-run partnership was finally broken when Bjorn Fortuin dismissed Ishan Kishan for 93 falling just seven runs short of his maiden ODI ton.

Sanju Samson then joined Shreyas Iyer as the duo took India's total beyond the 250-run mark in 42.1 overs. Shreyas Iyer

went on to score his second ODI ton off 103 balls and also crossed his previous best score of 103.

The Iyer-Samson duo crossed the 50-run mark off 51 balls as the hosts inched closer to victory. Shreyas Iyer went on to hit the winning runs to help India chase down the target in 45.5 overs and level the three-match series 1-1.

Earlier in the day South African captain Keshav Maharaj won the toss and was elected to bat first in the second ODI. South Africa made three changes while India made two. Temba Bavuma and Tabraiz Shamsi were replaced by Bjorn Fortuin and Reeza Hendricks, while Anrich Nortje came in for Lungi Ngidi. -ANI

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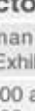


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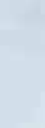
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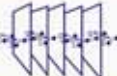
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AMAZON OUTPOST SERVICES

For the first time in the Sultanate of Oman, Oman Data Park (ODP) launched - Amazon Outpost cloud services, in cooperation with Amazon International, one of the largest American companies in the field of cloud services and e-commerce worldwide

Moody's upgrades Oman's outlook to positive, ratings affirmed at Ba3



Moody's report states that the upgrade of the Sultanate's outlook reflects the extent of the commitment of the government to execute government procedures for control of financial condition

Times News Service

MUSCAT: In a report, Moody's, the global credit rating agency, has raised the outlook on the credit rating of the Sultanate of Oman from stable to positive by fixing the rating at Ba3.

Moody's report states that the upgrade of the Sultanate's outlook reflects the extent of the commitment of the government to execute government procedures for control of financial condition, besides availing from the increase in

oil price in meeting its obligations towards the public debt during 2022, which resulted in regaining financial flexibility towards the external risks' shocks such as the geopolitical changes and the decrease in oil prices.

Moody's stated that despite the expectations for a continuation of fluctuations of oil prices which could drop to \$50 to 70 per barrel in the medium term, the oil price would remain high during 2023 and 2024, mainly under the current political and military tensions.

Moody's stated that the public debt would hopefully drop from 63 per cent in 2021 to less than 45 per cent of the GDP by end of the current year. Moody's stated that the procedures taken by the government would contribute to the reduction of the initial fiscal deficit.

The agency stated that the credit rating could improve in case the government continued on its track towards enhancement of the sustainability in the general finance in the short and medium term, which includes the continuation of the actions aimed at improvement of financial and economic aspects in a manner that would lessen the risks of the Sultanate's exposure to economic risks and fluctuations of oil markets in particular.

On the other hand, the agency stated that the slowdown in the pace of implementation of the financial condition earlier taken and the occurrence of additional pressures on the state's general finances may affect Oman's rating, mainly in case of a decrease in oil prices. - With ONA inputs

OMAN INSURANCE COMPANY REBRANDS ITSELF AS SUKOON



Oman Insurance Company, a leading insurer in the region, has rebranded itself as Sukoon. The company unveiled the new corporate logo at the iconic Burj Khalifa on October 6, 2022. The grand reveal happened at an event attended by the company's Chairman, board members, partners and members of the press.

Expressing his opinion on the unique milestone, His Excellency Abdul-Aziz Abdulla Al Ghurair, Chairman of Oman Insurance Company now referred to as "Sukoon", said "With a vision to develop local expertise and a solution to protect people, my father Abdullah Al Ghurair launched Oman Insurance in 1975, almost half a century ago. A lot has been achieved and much impressive progress has been made in all these years to prepare ourselves for the future of insurance. Today, the company is amongst the best, strongest and most customer-centric insurers in the region. It is the right time for us to reflect these changes and our values in a new brand."

Sukoon means peace of mind in Arabic, Urdu and Hindi - the

3 most widely spoken languages in the region. The brandmark represents two human hands coming together, vividly depicting a sense of security and protection for customers, reflecting again peace of mind with the brand.

Explaining the journey of the company from Oman Insurance to Sukoon, Jean-Louis Laurent Josi, CEO of Sukoon said, "In the last 3 years, we carried out extensive market research and brought together some of the world's best-in-class rebranding experts to guide and advise us. We have gone through several focus groups, interviews, and surveys. We have tested dozens of names, logos and colours to finally select Sukoon. This rebranding represents a new, exciting chapter for us following our successful transformation in the past years, centered around building a rock-solid company and delivering an unrivalled quality of service to our 800,000+ clients."

Murtadha Al Ajmi, The General Manager of Sukoon said, "Sukoon will remain committed to always striving for the continuous development of its insurance products and services to our customers and

stakeholders. The decision to introduce the new trade mark is part of the company's strategy, which aims to reduce confusion with similar brand names to ensure distinction and quality customer service delivery".

Murtadha Al Ajmi added, "The legal name of the company will remain the same and there will be no impact on the ownership of the company and the management structure. Most importantly, there will be no impact on existing or new policyholders, partners or service providers. With the new trade mark Sukoon our goal is to give our customers and partners complete peace of mind".

Jean-Louis further commented, "Sukoon is a new starting point where leveraging our foundations, we will develop an exceptional insurance platform with the objective of providing an unmatched customer experience and unrivalled insurance expertise in the region. We will achieve this by investing massively in our transformation with dozens of projects in the pipeline focused on digital, partnerships and international development, notably with our Lloyd's syndicate."



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Oman Data Park launches Amazon Outpost cloud services in Oman

This new advanced cloud service comes within the framework of Oman Data Park's efforts that aim to enhance cyber security, facilitate digital transformation processes, and make a quantum leap in the management of applications and data for government agencies and companies



Times News Service

MUSCAT: For the first time in the Sultanate of Oman, Oman Data Park (ODP) launched - Amazon Outpost cloud services, in cooperation with Amazon International, one of the largest American companies in the field of cloud services and e-commerce worldwide. The launching of this new advanced cloud service comes within the framework of Oman Data Park's efforts that aim to enhance cyber security, facilitate digital transformation processes, and

make a quantum leap in the management of applications and data for government agencies and companies and hosting information and data in Sultanate of Oman internally, instead of abroad. This new cloud service will also contribute to enhancing Oman Data Park's capabilities in helping to protect its clients in Oman against the various kinds of cyber security risks and maintaining data security and confidentiality, by hosting data within the country's borders. This new service is also consid-



ered an advanced technical initiative that meets the requirements of Oman Vision 2040 implementation, which aims at utilising modern technologies and employing them to serve the economic development in the Sultanate of Oman. In a statement about this service, Maqbool bin Salem Al-Wahaibi, CEO of Oman Data Park, said, "The Amazon Outpost service is considered as a qualitative shift in the management of the infrastructure for managing applications and data in Oman, and it also contributes to reducing the technical operational

costs of government entities and the private companies, compared to traditional systems in managing, operating and securing the applications and data." Al-Wahaibi added: "One of the advantages of the Amazon Outpost service also is that it contributes to accelerating the implementation and management of applications, as well as it works automatically with no need for human cadres in managing its infrastructure system." Al-Wahaibi stressed that most government entities and private companies can take advantage

of this technology in terms of its flexibility, speed and dynamism in managing applications and data. He also called on all sectors to utilize such kinds of advanced technologies in managing modern application operations. Al Wahaibi affirmed Oman Data Park's capabilities to provide its specialised professional services to the various administrative units of government agencies in the Sultanate in the cloud services fields and security assessment services that aim at identifying, evaluating technical weaknesses, and setting preventive measures to protect them from external and internal cyber threats related to information technology. Al-Wahaibi added that ODP's keenness to provide its services to the public and private sectors is backed by the confidence of both sectors' entities in the professionalism of Oman Data Park in providing various solutions related to Artificial Intelligence, Cloud services, Web hosting, and Cyber Security services, including their Security Operations Center services (SOC) and Network Operations Center services (NOC) which are operated around the clock, seven days a week.

OMAN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY

Importance of participating in OCCI BoD elections highlighted

Times News Service

MUSCAT: The Royal Decree No. 56/2022 regarding the Oman Chamber of Commerce and Industry (OCCI) is evidence that the Sultanate is moving steadily towards achieving Oman Vision 2040 goals and themes namely 'Man and Society', 'Economy and Development', governance and institutional performance. With regard to the second theme 'Economy and Development', the Sultanate has been keen to enhance the participation of the private sector in economic growth and development by giving it the opportunity to express its voice, views and proposals and communicate them through the right channels to decision-makers. The Royal Decree No. 56/2022 regarding the elections of the OCCI Board of Directors emphasised the fact that OCCI is the official representative of the private sector. The Royal Decree gave everyone the right to participate in this important democratic event in a way that ensures the success of this process and achieves its future goals. The Royal Decree has provided a set of terms and condi-



tions that the voter or candidate must meet. The candidate should be an Omani national except for those nominated for membership of the OCCI Board from among the representatives of public shareholding companies listed on the Muscat Stock Exchange, and foreign investors holding investor residency. The candidate should have been a member of OCCI for a period of no less than (5) five years. Other conditions include that the age is not less than 30 Gregorian years, and he should not be an employee in one of the units of the state's administrative apparatus and other public legal persons, or a paid worker in the private sector



inside or outside the Sultanate of Oman - except the nominees from among CEOs in public shareholding companies. OCCI's new system also states that for the registered member to cast his vote at the OCCI election, he must have paid OCCI annual subscription fees and should have at least one Omani worker at his company, or be a holder of a Riyada card from the Authority for Small and Medium Enterprises Development. The legislator defined the OCCI roles and responsibilities which include proposing the general strategy regulating the activities of the private sector, setting the necessary plans which should be in line with the general policy of the

state, expressing an opinion on the legislation regulating private sector activities and other economic legislations before issuance, submitting proposals for amending the laws in force, and referring proposals related to the development of the commercial, industrial and economic sectors to the concerned authorities. "The Decree No. 56/2022 issuing the OCCI system came with fundamental changes that serve the private sector and enhance its participation in the economic development of the Sultanate of Oman. This includes changing OCCI Board of Directors membership composition," said Sheikh Salem bin Ahmed Al-Ghazali, Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Golden Group Holding. "The Royal Decree stated that the membership of the OCCI Board of Directors shall be five members from the Governorate of Muscat, 10 chairmen of OCCI branches in addition to five members representing the public joint stock companies listed on the Muscat Stock Exchange and one member representing foreign investors holding an investor residence permit. These fundamental

changes support the private sector and enhance its influence in decision-making," Al Ghazali added. "We hope that this election process will bring positive results that achieve the goal behind these changes and contribute to activating OCCI's roles in the socio-economic development process taking place in the Sultanate," he concluded. For his part, Sheikh Ali bin Hamad bin Saif Al Kalbani, Chairman of the Board of Directors of Al Kalbani Group, said: The Sultanate is preparing to organise a democratic economic event in all governorates - the elections for the OCCI Board of Directors and its branches in the governorates. The OCCI elections enhance and complement the elections of the Shura Council and the municipal councils. This democratic event is expected to play a major role in accelerating economic growth and progress and contribute to achieving the goals of Oman's Vision 2040. These elections are an opportunity for all companies and institutions to cast their vote, ensuring that we have qualified and efficient members on OCCI's Board of Directors."

ACTIVITIES

Opaz to reveal details of AMAD DUQM event

MUSCAT: The Public Authority for Special Economic Zones and Free Zones (Opaz) and the Ministry of Culture, Sports and Youth will hold, on October 11, a press conference, in which it will reveal the ongoing preparations for (AMAD DUQM2022) event, which will be hosted by the Special Economic Zone at Duqm (Sezad) in November. The 9-day event will bring more than 30 youth activities in various fields, including culture, sports, innovation, technology, sustainability and entertainment. The press conference will be held at the Innovation Factory in Muscat to reveal the details of the activities that are being prepared in the Special Economic Zone at Duqm. This event is aimed to attract over 20,000 youth. During the conference, further details about the facilities, provided by the two organising parties for AMAD DUQM 22, in regards to the event, accommodation facilities and activities will be announced during the press briefing.

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ICAEW REPORT

Opec+ move may lead to tightening in market, reverse drop in oil prices

MUSCAT: The decision by Opec+ members to cut oil production from November by 2 million barrels per day, its largest cut since 2020, is aimed at putting a floor under oil prices and limiting the risk of fiscal strain across oil-producing countries, according to ICAEW (Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales). Although main countries are currently producing below their quota and the actual oil supply is likely to be reduced by around 1 million barrels per day, the cuts are likely to see a significant tightening in the market in Q4 and reverse the recent downward trend in oil prices. Scott Livermore, ICAEW Economic Advisor, and Chief Economist and Managing Director, Oxford Economics Middle East, explains, "There are significant uncertainties around both the demand and supply outlook and Opec+ is trying to get ahead of the possibility of weaker demand growth as the US and Europe slip into recession and the outlook for China remains clouded by its zero-Covid policy. Opec+ is trying to tread a fine line with oil prices - we don't think it wants to push oil prices significantly above \$100 per barrel and exacerbate inflationary issues in oil-importing countries, but equally, it is concerned the oil prices might continue their recent slide. "Opec+ will hope the produc-



tion cuts keep Brent crude oil prices comfortably and sustainably above \$90 per barrel and probably stand ready to make further cuts if prices do resume a downward trend. We don't think this will be necessary as we expect oil prices (Brent crude) to trade in

the \$90-100 per barrel range over the coming months. "However, Opec+'s announcement will lead to a downgrade of forecasts for GDP growth next year across the GCC, who will shoulder the brunt of the actual production cuts."

2 CONTRACTS

Pacts signed to build new berths at Jeddah Islamic Port

RIYADH: The Saudi Ports Authority (Mawani) has signed two contracts with major contractors PC Marine Services and Modern Building Leaders (MBL), the latter in consortium with Huta Hegerfeld Saudia Ltd, to deepen and build new berths at Jeddah Islamic Port with a total of SAR642 million. These agreements are part of Mawani's initiatives to accelerate growth in the maritime transport and logistics industry, drive a transformative shift in port operations by implementing over 160 projects, and develop a prosperous and sustainable maritime sector in the quest to position the Kingdom as a global logistics hub connecting three major continents in line with the objectives of the National Transport and Logistics Strategy. The contract with MBL, in association with Huta Hegerfeld Saudia Ltd, aims to develop the credentials of the port as a pioneering logistics destination through the deepening of harbour approach channels, turning basins, waterways, and the South Terminal basin. These upgrades will enable the arrival of giant vessels that hold a capacity up to 24,000 TEUs, besides enhancing the port's competitive capability and attracting new global shipping lines to local shores. **-SPA**



IS CELEBRATED



LIFESTYLE

Postal services might appear a little out of date in the era of the internet and instant messaging services. However, particularly in places with little to no digital footprint, the postal system is a crucial component of a region's connectedness. Therefore, it is crucial to comprehend why World Post Day is celebrated on October 9 each year.

The United Nations states that World Post Day is celebrated on the anniversary of the establishment of the Universal Postal Union in Bern, Switzerland, in 1874.

● **WORLD POST DAY: HISTORY**

Postal services have been around since ancient times when individuals wrote messages that couriers would then carry on foot or by horseback. Postal systems started to emerge and spread throughout various nations in the 1600s. With the slow growth of international letter interchange in the late 1800s, a global postal system first emerged. It was painstaking and slow, but after the UPU was established in 1874, it started to work.

● **WORLD POST DAY: SIGNIFICANCE**

It is often commemorated to support a number of programme initiatives through which the general public can learn about the significance of the postal system in a nation, such as its enormous contribution to a nation's social and economic growth. They are typically commemorated to launch or advertise fresh postal goods and services.

More than 150 countries mark World Post Day in a variety of ways, according to the United Nations' list of observances. On World Post Day, some nations also honour their staff for a job well done. Additionally, there are occasions like philatelic exhibitions, new stamp releases and date cancellation markings.

Other events include posting World Post Day posters in post offices and other public areas and hosting open days at post offices, mail processing facilities, and postal museums. To celebrate World Post Day, conferences, seminars, and workshops are also planned in addition to cultural, sporting, and other leisure activities.

● **WORLD POST DAY: THEME**

'Post for Planet' will be the theme for World Post Day in 2022. The Post is unmatched in terms of logistics. Every year, World Post Day is celebrated by more than 150 countries through a variety of events and activities. In several countries, World Post Day is celebrated as a paid holiday. (ANI)

More than 150 countries mark World Post Day in a variety of ways, according to the United Nations' list of observances. On World Post Day, some nations also honour their staff for a job well done. Additionally, there are occasions like philatelic exhibitions, new stamp releases and date cancellation markings.



FEATURE



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Insuring extreme weather disasters: Losing money to climate change

Insurers are paying more for extreme weather while continuing to finance and underwrite activities that warp the climate. Climate activists are pushing them to stop.

At first, the insurance companies didn't know what had hit them.

Summer rains had been pouring for weeks in the summer of 2021. The soil in western Germany was sodden. When the storm struck, flooding homes and washing away livelihoods, scientists at the companies who would pick up the bill pored over weather data as they watched footage of destruction roll in on TV.

"It took a couple of days until we realised roads, railways and bridges were also destroyed, [as well as] telecommunication lines and power systems," said Ernst Rauch, chief climate scientist at Munich Re, the world's biggest reinsurance firm. The total insured losses, he would find out later, would come to €8.2 billion (\$7.8 billion) in Germany alone. His employer would cover nearly half a billion euros of that.

The rains that battered northern Europe last July killed more than 220 people in Germany, Belgium and the Netherlands, resulting in the most expensive weather-related disaster the continent has ever seen. Scientists from the World Weather Attribution network found that burning fossil fuels had made the

rainfall 3-19 per cent stronger and at least 20 per cent more likely. The insurers liable for paying out damage claims had not fully priced in the risk.

"I have never, in my more than 30-year career working on natural disasters with Munich Re, seen such destruction from a flash flood," said Rauch.

Paying for damages, heating up the climate

As the planet heats up and weather extremes grow more violent, insurance companies have found themselves in a unique position near the frontlines of climate change. On the one hand, they are paying more for damages and struggling to price unpredictable risks. On the other hand, they are financing and underwriting polluting activities that warp the climate further.

Insurers have traditionally used historical data to work out the risk of storms and wildfires that threatened their assets — and charged their clients accordingly. But such calculations no longer cut it. A landmark review by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) in April concluded that climate risks are becoming more complex and difficult to manage, with crises increasingly striking at the same time. Sea levels have crept higher. Heat waves have become hotter. Tropical cyclones are growing stronger.

That poses an existential problem for an industry that acts as a "strategic pin" holding the economic system together in the face of catastrophes, said Zac Taylor, a climate finance expert at the Technical University of

Delft in the Netherlands. "When it disappears — or it becomes more difficult or more expensive to insure — there are ramifications for the entire system."

Pulling out of areas deemed too risky

In response, insurance companies have started to push up premiums and pull out of areas they deem too risky. "Ordinary folks are going to feel this at home in two ways," said Taylor. "Either their insurance is going to cost a lot more or they're not going to be able to have it."

When disasters strike and insurers can't pay, governments may foot the bill with public money. Reinsurance companies — who sell insurance to primary insurers — act as a barrier by sharing that risk among actors with more money. They too expect to raise premiums.

Because the reinsurance market is global, people will pay more even when extreme weather hits other parts of the world, said Taylor. "If there is a really bad flood in Germany, a bushfire in Australia, a typhoon in Japan, then a homeowner's insurance in Florida goes up — whether or not there's a hurricane in Florida."

World leaders promised in 2015 to limit global warming to "well below" 2 degrees Celsius and ideally to 1.5 C this century. But current policies are instead set to heat the planet 2.7 C, according to an analysis in November 2021 by Climate Action Tracker, a project from two German environmental

research institutes. By the end of the century, floods that used to hit once a century will strike most coasts every single year.

Such changes could push weather risks beyond what the global insurance industry can sustainably finance. Speaking in 2015, the then-CEO of insurance giant Axa said "a 2 C world might be insurable — a 4 C world certainly would not be."

Enabling fossil fuels - or blocking them?

Still, insurance companies also wield enormous power over the energy transition. They can block or enable fossil fuel projects by choosing whether to insure them and for what price. Speeding up the switch to green energy would cut their exposure to catastrophic weather.

A 2021 analysis by McKinsey, a management consultancy, found capital spending on climate solutions like wind farms and electric vehicle charging stations could lead to \$10-15 billion in insurance premiums on capital spending alone. The oil and gas market is worth about \$18.5 billion in annual premiums, including both new and existing projects, according to a report published last year by environmental campaign group Insure Our Future.

The reinsurance market is so concentrated that you don't need a lot of movement

to make big changes, said Regina Richter, a green finance campaigner at Urgewald, a nonprofit in Germany that worked on the report. "Even a powerful industry like oil and gas at some point is looking for reinsurance. If only a handful of companies move on this, it makes a big difference."

In a pathway for meeting the 1.5 C temperature target published last year, the International Energy Agency found that no new coal mines, oil fields or gas fields should be approved for development. Activists say the insurance industry has not taken those recommendations seriously.

Munich Re, which has warned about the dangers of climate change for more than half a century, still solicits companies who "handle large amounts of hydrocarbons," according to its website, and claims it has been a leader in the downstream energy market for 35 years.

The company did stop insuring coal mines and plants in 2018. And more recently, it set targets to cut emissions from the oil and gas projects it insures 5% by 2025, with a view to reach net-zero emissions by 2050.

"Indeed, one can argue this can be faster," said Rauch. "The issue is if we would pull out of the market of covering fossil fuels, say, by tomorrow or so, the industry still would be there be-

cause the demand is there."

Still, competitors have proven that bolder action is possible. Swiss Re and Hannover Re, the second and third-largest reinsurance firms respectively, have stopped insuring new oil and gas projects. Hannover Re told DW in a written statement it also plans to make a 30 per cent cut in the emissions of its investments by 2025, though it declined to put a number on the current size of its fossil fuel assets.

Berkshire Hathaway, a reinsurance company with no exclusion policy for fossil fuels, declined an interview request. Two other big reinsurers, China Re and Lloyd's, did not respond to a request for comment.

Campaigners hope that if more insurers exclude new oil and gas projects, energy companies will find it harder to extract polluting fuels. This has already happened with coal, said Richter. "Some coal plants or mines find it really hard to find insurance — and when they do it's more expensive — so they have to ask if it makes sense or not." - DW





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ROUND-UP



Skyline Duqm: Largest integrated tourism project by Sezad in Oman

The project covers a sprawling expanse of 148 acres of exquisite oceanfront properties and is part of the tourism zone along with residential spaces and a variety of commercial and hospitality amenities

MUSCAT: Nestled about 550km from Muscat is the town of Duqm. Strategically located on the Arabian Sea coast, Duqm is three times the size of Singapore. Duqm is fast evolving into an industrial/manufacturing hub with a focus on sustainable development. Duqm has been attracting huge investments in varied sectors.

Skyline Duqm is the largest integrated tourism project in Oman which is being built under the auspices of Sezad. The project covers a sprawling expanse of 148 acres of exquisite oceanfront properties. It is part of the tourism zone along with residential spaces and a variety of commercial and hospitality amenities. The project site is 8km away from the Duqm airport. Construction commenced in 2019 and currently, 100+ apartments and 18 villas are ready. The ocean-facing premium Elite villas have 1- and 2-bedroom options. Elite Villas are lined up along a breathtaking azure coastline, just a stone's throw away from the beach with amenities like access to a host of beach sports activities, car parking and 3 exclusive view areas. The Pearl apartments consist of 1 BHK & 2BHK seafront apartments with amenities like a swimming pool, landscaped garden, children's play area, laundry room and parking areas with access to the beach. Starting from OMR22,500 are the Pearl apartments, owners of which are eligible for lifetime visas. Already 40+ units have been sold so far and visas have been issued to more than 10 families.



ONE-OF-ITS-KIND

Sohar Aluminium inaugurates Sohar Industrial Training Institute

MUSCAT: Sohar Aluminium celebrated the inauguration of its Sohar Industrial Training Institute in the presence of Sheikh Hamed bin Khalifah Al Abri, Wali of Liwa, and officials and executives from the public and private sectors. The event started with a speech by Eng. Said Al Masoudi, Sohar Aluminium's CEO, highlighted the establishment and development phases of the institute from its being inception as a training centre to being upgraded to an officially credited institute. Al Masoudi said, "The establishment and development of this institute springs out of our deep belief in the importance of investing in human capital, and its long-term return. Despite the institute's short life, it was able, through the efforts of its team, to train a large number of employees and contractors, not only the company but even neighbouring private and public institutions, as well as a number of organisations and companies in the aluminium sector from outside the Sultanate of Oman." The event also included an over-



view of the programmes and training services provided by the institute, and a graduation ceremony of Lean Six Sigma Green and Black Belts trainees from the company and other organisations as well. This institute is considered one-of-its-kind in the Sultanate in the industrial sector and has been approved by the Ministry of Higher

Education, Research and Innovation and the Ministry of Labour. Sohar Industrial Training Institute is one-of-its-kind in the Omani industrial sector. It focuses on providing training in the technical, and vocational fields, while also offering soft skills training courses for employees and trainees from within and outside the company. The institute includes several facilities such as electrical and mechanical workshops, classrooms, a welding and fabrication workshop, a computer lab, and a multipurpose hall. The institute employs qualified and trained Omani training staff conducting various technical and non-technical training courses and programmes.

PHARMACY EVENT



College of Pharmacy, NU celebrates World Pharmacists Day

MUSCAT: To commemorate World Pharmacists Day 2022, the College of Pharmacy, National University of Science and Technology (NU) organised a pharmacy event, where the celebration was held on the college's campus in Bausher, under the auspices of Dr Ali Bin Saud Al Bimani, Vice-Chancellor of the university. 'Pharmacy united in action for a healthier world' was the theme of World Pharmacists Day 2022, whereas this annual event reflects the pharmacy's positive impact and the prominent considerations of the role of pharmacists in the healthcare sector. Dr Khaled Al-Balushi, Dean of the College of Pharmacy, delivered a speech praising the pharmacist's role in providing a healthier life for humans, noting the importance of pharmacists and the important role they play in the health field. This was followed by an extensive speech by the pharmacist Ahmed Kamona, Oman College of Health Sciences.

EDUCATION GROUP

ABQ joins Southampton Football Club International Academy Partner Programme

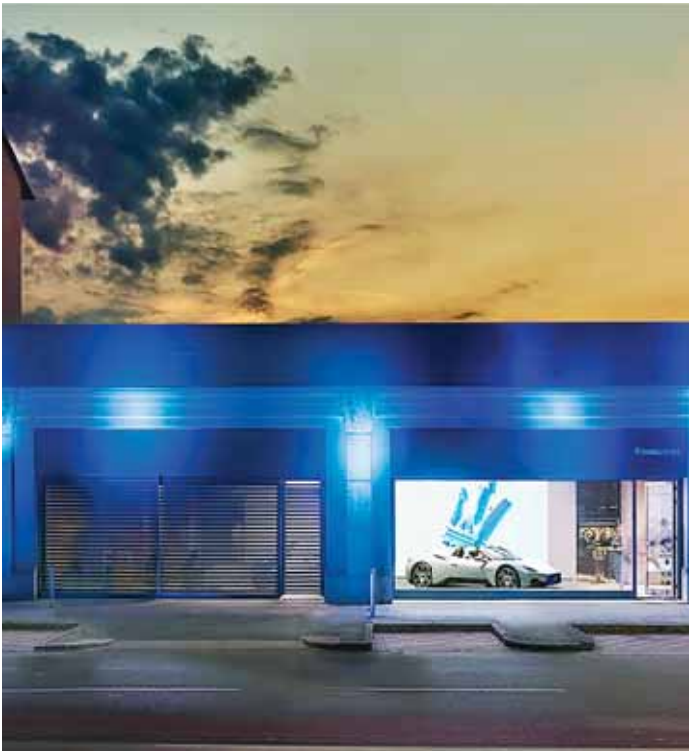
MUSCAT: ABQ Education Group is delighted to join Southampton Football Club's portfolio of International Academy Partners, marking the club's first partnership in the Sultanate of Oman. The partnership will see Southampton FC working with ABQ's three international schools: ABQ Azzan Bin Qais, ABQ Seeb and ABQ Sohar over the next three years to support the schools' football development programmes, as well as boost their educational objectives on and off the pitch. ABQ Education Group Chairman, Al Zubair Muhammad Al Zubair said, "Through its innovative teaching methods, ABQ has always strived to be the best academic school in Oman. Along with being the leader in international school education, we also aim to be the frontrunner in school sports and our partnership with Southampton FC will help us to achieve this goal. I am extremely pleased with this partnership and look forward to many opportunities for our students and outstanding sports achievements from our schools." Mark Abrahams, Director of Business & Community Development commented, "The Southampton Way has the development of young people at its core which aligns with ABQ's values and aspirations for their students. ABQ



is the largest international school operator in Oman and their unique operator model, The ABQ Way, has developed a consistent standard for all academic and non-academic activities in each of their international schools which is in line with our approach. We are looking forward to working in Oman for the first time, especially with the ABQ staff, students, and parents in the years to come." The partnership will see a range of exciting opportunities for the ABQ community to engage with Southampton FC's Coach and Player Development Programme. Areas of focus include access to the SFC Curriculum,

the online resource library, and Coach Education/Player Development Webinars. Southampton FC Academy staff will also visit Oman each year to work with the coaches and players, with opportunities for both staff and students to visit Southampton through SFC's Player Development Tour Programme. ABQ Education Group Chief Executive Office, Humayun Kabir said, "A healthy balance of academics and extracurricular clubs is key to a successful learning experience and this partnership offers ample opportunities for personal development. "Southampton FC has a proven track record of developing players from beginners to elite level. This initiative echoes our commitment to provide a well-rounded education for our students to flourish after school." Nibras Al Mljawi, an ABQ school parent commented, "The unique opportunity for the children to experience the benefits of an elite club such as Southampton FC in Oman demonstrates ABQ's commitment to the students. This is a wonderful initiative." Southampton FC has a growing portfolio of International Academy partners which supports like-minded clubs and schools with their ambitions on and off the pitch.

RETAIL STORE



Maserati celebrates opening of its new store in Milan

MILAN: Last night, Maserati feted the opening of its world's first new retail store along with personalities from the world of fashion, showbiz, sports and music in the heart of Milan's elegant Magenta district. Intended to express the Italian House's power and prowess in luxury craftsmanship, the innovative retail space combines the refinement of a sartoria – a tailor's atelier – with the rawness of an officina – a workshop, allowing clients to unleash their creative passion to bring to life their own bespoke vision of the ultimate luxury sports car. Italian – French – Egyptian model and social entrepreneur Elisa Sednaoui, Spanish top model, actor and philanthropist Jon Kortajarena, Italian actor Alessandro Borghi, world-class skipper Giovanni Soldini, Italian pianist and composer Dardust were among those who raised a glass and celebrated the opening Maserati's new flagship store. Guests enjoyed an intimate preview of the new space sipping Italian sparkling wines and savoring exquisite delicacies by Michelin-starred chef Massimiliano Alajmo, while enjoying the tracks spun by Italian DJ Scilla Ruffo di Calabria. The pioneering new architectural concept, co-created together with the New York-based experience design firm Eight Inc., marks a departure from the traditional aesthetics of the "bright and sterile" car showroom. The inviting new environment, imbued with Italian beauty, presents the cars dramatically spotlight like dynamic sculptures in a darkened art gallery.

"From the early stages of developing a new car to the complete luxury retail experience, everything at Maserati is designed with the client in mind. Our new store concept embodies our values of passion, innovation and beauty through the lens of Italian luxury. Our wish here is for clients to express their passion by creating their very own Maserati", says Davide Grasso, CEO of Maserati. Outside the store, guests' attention was captured by a show-stopping window installation with Maserati's latest spyder MC20 Cielo set in front of a theatrical backdrop of an LED wall. Inside, guests were greeted in a contemporary living space of earthy colours, evoking old towns in the Italian countryside, and were encouraged to discover the retail store on their own terms. The ultimate Maserati experience available at the new flagship store is known as 'Fuoriserie', the Trident's customisation programme, which allows clients to express their personality and creativity to design one-of-a-kind vehicles. They can start from a blank slate and include a wide range of personalisation features, from bold exterior colours and patterns to the subtle details in the multi-coloured stitching of the interior leather upholstery. Following the world debut in Milan, Maserati will be opening new stores in Hong Kong, Shanghai, Melbourne, Madrid and Berlin by the end of 2022, with many more locations across the world to come in 2023, including Los Angeles, Toronto, London and Tokyo.



ROUND-UP



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SalamAir orders Embraer E195-E2 jets for next stage of growth

E195-E2 for SalamAir will be delivered in a comfortable dual-class configuration with 135 seats, starting in fourth quarter of 2023

MUSCAT: SalamAir, Oman's value-for-money airline, has announced a firm order for six Embraer E195-E2 passenger aircraft, with purchase rights for six more. With this, the airline will become the first Embraer E195-E2 operator in the Middle East.

The largest aircraft in the E-Jet E2 family, the E195-E2, has been designed for better capacity utilisation and efficiency on low-density routes. E195-E2 for SalamAir will be delivered in a comfortable



dual-class configuration with 135 seats, starting in fourth quarter of 2023. The deal will be a huge step forward in Salam Air's growth plans. With the recent addition of its fleet portfolio, SalamAir fleets

will reflect the diversity of market needs by having a capacity ranging from 212 seats in the Airbus 321neo, 180 seats in the Airbus 320neo and 135 seats in the Embraer 195-E2, which will include 3

Luban Class seats.

Captain Mohamed Ahmed, CEO of SalamAir, said, "The aircraft will grow to be a core part of our fleet portfolio. It is exhilarating for us to be the first airline in the Mid-

dle East to fly the incredible E195-E2. Embraer's aircraft represents the best environmental efficiency, operating performance, and passenger comfort. The aircraft's sophisticated aerodynamics, novel wing design and new technologies enable its exceptional energy efficiency. These aircraft are perfect for the next frontier of our growth. They will allow the airline to open new local and regional cities and increase its frequency to these destinations due to its fuel efficiency and capacity, which suits the needs of these markets. The new fleet will be used on domestic flights initially, including the 4 oil fields and 4 international airports within Oman, as we receive more aircraft, we will be able to use them on regional airports in neighbouring countries which today are not connected to Oman.

Arjan Meijer, President and CEO of Embraer Commercial Aviation, added, "It's great to be growing in the Middle East, a region that has often focused on long-haul travel. For Embraer it is also important to see a pioneering low-cost carrier like SalamAir recognise the value that E-Jets

deliver in the LCC scenario, complementing larger narrow bodies to grow and maintain networks."

SalamAir's induction of Embraer's E195-E2 will complement its Airbus fleet of six A320neo and four A321neo.

SalamAir meets the nation's growing demand for affordable travel options and aims to generate further employment and business creation opportunities in various sectors in Oman. In a short span, SalamAir has grown in its operations and expanded its reach across the region, serving customers across a cross-section of society.

SalamAir flies to domestic destinations, including Muscat, Salalah, Suhar, and Duqm international destinations to Dubai, Doha, Riyadh, Jeddah, Dammam, Kuwait, Bahrain, Sarajevo, Istanbul, Trabzon, Bursa, Kathmandu, Baku, Phuket, Prague, Shiraz, Tehran, Alexandria, Khartoum, Multan, Sialkot, Karachi, Dhaka, Chittagong, Jaipur, Trivandrum, and Lucknow. SalamAir flies directly from Suhar to Shiraz, Salalah and Calicut, and Trabzon from Salalah to Calicut and Prague.

EMPOWERING YOUTH

Shell celebrates launch of 'Nawafidh' programme's second batch of students

MUSCAT: Oman Shell along with its partners, GUtech and Outward Bound Oman, celebrated the launch of the Shell Nawafidh Programme's second batch of Omani students.

Oman Shell inaugurated the second batch's six-month-long journey of learning with a ceremony that showcased alumni success stories and an icebreaker session to help the participants get acquainted with one another and the programme.

Conducted in partnership with GUtech and Outward Bound Oman, the main objective of Shell Nawafidh is to enable and empower youth to lead the transition into the emerging energy markets through technical training, workshops and networking opportunities with industry professionals. The holistic learning programme not only helps Omani students and fresh graduates develop their technical abilities and improve their leadership skills but also enhances their potential, enabling them to take on diverse and important roles in the energy industry.

Speaking about Oman Shell's aim behind the launch of the programme, Malak Al Shaibani,



General Manager - Corporate Relations & ICV, Oman Shell, said, "Our aim is to power progress and adapts to the changing energy markets. Tomorrow's energy leaders must be provided with the opportunities they need to gain knowledge and skills pertaining to newer and cleaner energy sources

and solutions. The focus of the programme is on learning the latest technologies and applications related to these new sources of energy, which is in line with Oman Vision 2040 and its energy diversification goals."

She added, "We thank Shell Nawafidh's alumni for attending

the opening ceremony today and inspiring the 55 new participants of the second batch, by sharing their experiences coming through this programme. Along with our partners, we look forward to supporting the new batch as they work towards becoming the energy leaders of tomorrow."

NESTO HYPERMARKET HOLDS 'SHOP AND WIN' CONTEST

Nesto Group Oman's 'Shop and Win' contest was held at Nesto Hypermarket Wadi Kabir outlet recently. In the 1st eRaffle draw, the ceremony was led by the representative of the Ministry of Commerce Suliman Al Qanobi, Nesto general managers & management teams participated. Muhammed Asif, who won the first prize, shared his happiness and gratitude to Nesto group in the Oman retail sector. Wadi Kabir and Ruwi outlets general managers Rafi and Ajmal said in a press release that Nesto, which started the retail revolution, is committed to bring the best products to the people at a huge discount. — Supplied picture



PROMOTION

Malabar Gold & Diamonds gears up to usher in festive season

MUSCAT: With a strong retail network of over 285 outlets spread across 10 countries, Malabar Gold & Diamonds, the 6th largest jewellery retailer in the world, has announced the much-awaited festive season offers to add more sparkle to customers' celebrations.

Customers can get assured gold coins with gold & diamond jewellery purchases, in line with the festive tagline, 'With you in all your celebrations' that the brand unveiled in its latest festive film. Malabar Gold & Diamonds will also be showcasing a stunning array of festive jewellery collections in gold, diamond and precious gems, designed to be an alluring attraction to customers. The limited pe-

riod offer can be availed across all Malabar Gold & Diamonds outlets in the Middle East, Far east and the USA from October 6 to 23.

For every diamond or precious gem jewellery purchase worth OMR 500, customers will get free 1gm gold coin and for diamond and precious gem jewellery purchase worth OMR 300, they will be eligible for half gram gold coin.

Embracing the spirit of the season, the festive jewellery collection that the brand has unveiled puts forward an exquisite collection of gold & diamond jewellery designed to enthrall jewellery lovers. The special design has been made available across a wide range of sub-brands such as Mine,

Era, Precia, Viraaaz, Ethnix and Divine, comprising of 22k gold, diamonds and precious gem jewellery. Elegant designs crafted in contemporary fashion have also been introduced in the 18K gold category. To top it all up, the brand will also be hosting Special Buy counters at all showrooms that offer an exclusive range of jewellery at amazing discounts.

"It is the festive season and as communicated in our latest film, Malabar Gold & Diamonds is with our customers in all their celebrations. As part of this, we have made all possible efforts to incorporate the design preferences of all our customers while launching our festive collection. This is a strong

testament to our commitment to ensuring that our customers get to indulge in their celebrations with all the pomp and vigour they can muster. Furthermore, we are providing our customers with even more reason to celebrate as they get to take home free gold coins with each jewellery purchase," said Shamlal Ahamed, MD - International Operations, Malabar Gold & Diamonds.

To protect customers from the fluctuating gold rates, Malabar Gold & Diamonds has also introduced a Pay 10% advance campaign, wherein customers can block the prevailing gold rates by paying just a 10% as advance, valid till October 23.

“

We are providing our customers with even more reason to celebrate as they get to take home free gold coins with each jewellery purchase

Shamlal Ahamed
MD - International Operations, Malabar Gold & Diamonds



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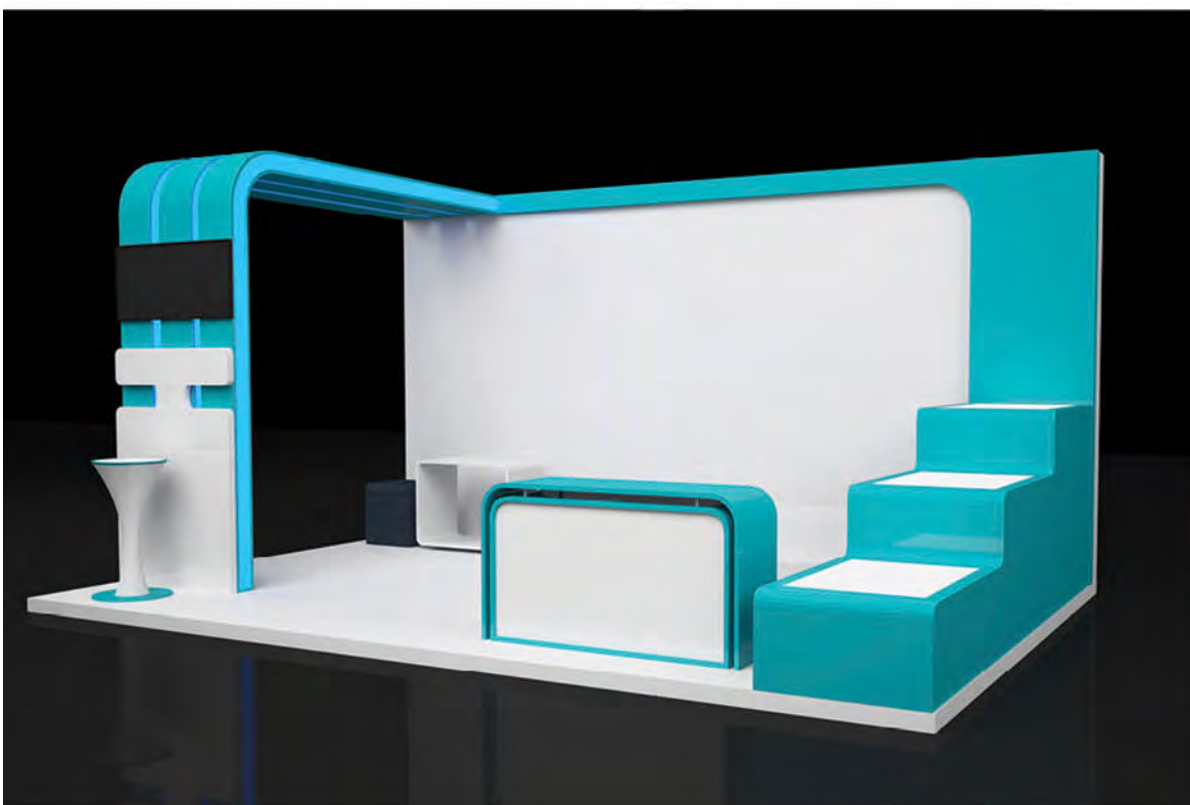
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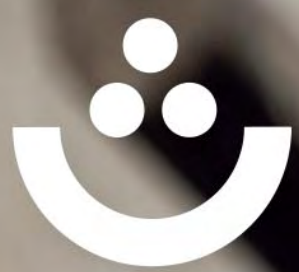
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