

**LUXEMBOURG MINISTER PRAISES  
OMAN'S ROLE IN THE REGION**

Sayyid Badr Hamad Al Busaidi, Foreign Minister held a session of political talks with Jean Asselborn, Minister of Foreign and European Affairs of the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg, who is currently on an official visit to the Sultanate of Oman. **>A2**



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**HIS MAJESTY THE SULTAN  
GREETES KING OF NORWAY**

**MUSCAT:** His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik has sent a cable of greetings to King Harald V of the Kingdom of Norway on his country's National Day. In the cable, His Majesty the Sultan expressed his sincere sentiments and best wishes of good health and happiness to King Harald V. His Majesty also wished the people of Norway further progress and prosperity. — **ONA**



Founded 1975 · Volume 48 No. 57 | 16 Pages · Baisas 200 · Subscription OMR63 | ISO 9001:2008 Certified Company | Chairman/Editor-in-Chief: Mohamed Issa Al Zadjali | Printed & Published by Muscat Media Group

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**MINISTRY OF FINANCE**



## Circular on rules to prepare 2024 budget estimates issued

**MUSCAT:** The Ministry of Finance and the Ministry of Economy have issued Financial Circular No. (1/2023) on rules for preparing 2024 budget estimates.

The step comes in line with the implementation of national strategies and programmes of five-year development plans for achieving comprehensive development as per the goals of Oman Vision 2040.

The financial circular requires all ministries and government departments to prepare estimates for their respective budgets (current budgets and development budgets).

The government departments are expected to submit their proposed annual plan drafts that include the following: general goals and indices for accomplishing them, programmes and initiatives that achieve those goals, the proposed budgets set for them and the time plan for their implementation and criteria on which the 2024 budget estimates are designated, compared to the 2023 budget.

The departments are also required to present their medium-term plans in line with the respective revenue and expenditure schedules. **>A3**

**TOP THREE INSIDE STORIES**

**OMAN**

### Oman to induct EVs to cut emission

**1** A special programme has been launched by the Ministry of Transport, Communications and Information for cutting down carbon emissions. The ministry has divided its plan into three phases: Cutting down 3 percent of carbon emissions by 2030; 34 percent by 2040; and 100 percent by 2050. **>A3**

**WORLD**

### Bahrain and Qatar to resume direct flights

**2** Bahrain Civil Aviation Affairs has announced the resumption of flights between the Kingdom of Bahrain and Qatar, from May 25. The resumption of flights between the Kingdom of Bahrain and Qatar comes within the framework of the brotherly relations between the two countries. **>A6**

**SPORTS**

### Liverpool trounce Leicester City

**3** Liverpool brushed aside Leicester City to maintain their winning streak and push the Foxes closer to Premier League relegation. Klopp's side have won their past 7 games to boost their push for a top-four finish and now lie a point behind Newcastle and ManU. **>B6**

# SAYYID FAHD PRAISES SHURA FOR SERVING OMAN AND ITS CITIZENS



## Shura to host ministers and discuss projects for providing best services to citizens

**MUSCAT:** His Highness Sayyid Fahd bin Mahmoud Al Said, Deputy Prime Minister for the Council of Ministers, and some members of the Council of Ministers received Khalid Hilal Al Ma'awali, Chairman of the Shura Council, and members of the Shura Council's Office on Tuesday.

The meeting was held within the framework of joint coordination between the Council of Min-

isters and the Council of Oman.

The two sides held a joint meeting, as stipulated by in the Basic Law of the State and Council of Oman's Law. The meeting aimed to enhance the process of continuous coordination among all establishments of the state. It underlined a conviction on the need to arrive at common visions for supporting programmes to promote economic and social aspects.

At the outset of the meeting, HH Sayyid Fahd commended the Shura Council's stance in co-operating with the government for maintaining efforts to serve Oman and its citizens, while at the same time advancing the supreme interest of the country.

HH Sayyid Fahd spoke about a number of points that enhance co-operation between the two councils within their strive to consolidate joint coordination.

During the joint meeting, emphasis was laid on the government's giving priority to initiatives that support the role of the Shura Council as a partner in the national action aimed at implementing the plans of comprehensive development.

In pursuance of this approach, service ministers will answer Shura Council requests to present and discuss ministerial statements on ways to carry out projects that focus on providing the best services to citizens. This is in addition to dealing positively with the Shura Council's proposals about plans and programmes that are implemented at each stage.

The joint meeting reviewed the agenda, which included many topics, among them steps to activate the role of the joint ministerial coordination committee.

The panel has a mandate to enhance joint cooperation between the two sides towards promoting the goals of sustainable development. **>A3**

**TRA**

## ‘Early warning system could save lives’

*Times News Service*

**MUSCAT:** An emergency alert that buzzed on thousands of mobile phones in Muscat Governorate was part of a trial run for the early warning service that is expected to be launched later in the Sultanate of Oman.

Several subscribers in Muscat confirmed that they had received messages for ‘Emergency Warning Broadcast’ on their phones on

Tuesday morning.

While some subscribers panicked thinking it was a spam alert, others followed the instructions and appreciated the service.

Some were even clueless, when they got the message. “I didn’t know what was happening as the ringtone was completely different. I just accepted the message and then it stopped,” Kumar, an expat living in Ruwi said.

The early warning service sys-



tem is expected to warn people of natural disasters such as hurricanes, tsunamis, heavy rains, strong winds, poor visibility and industrial disasters such as fires or gas leaks.

The experiment on Tuesday was done by Telecommunications Regulatory Authority (TRA) in collaboration with the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) and the telecom services providers Ooredoo and Omantel. **>A2**

**GULF LEADERS CIRCLE (GLC)**

# Telecom and Finance leaders to discuss impact of technology at Roundtable by Gulf Leaders Circle

*Times News Service*

**MUSCAT:** Muscat Media Group (MMG), the leading media powerhouse in Oman is all set to unveil its latest offering ‘Gulf Leaders Circle’ (GLC).

Gulf Leaders Circle is an exclusive business platform that aims to create a knowledge database through interviews with the most influential leaders from the region. Joining the league of MMG's market-leading offerings like *Times of Oman* and *Al Shabiba*, GLC has been envisioned as the source of insights about industry trends in the GCC.

GLC will also facilitate creation of new networking opportunities to strengthen the business relationships amongst the Gulf countries, through

conferences, round tables and business symposiums.

On the occasion of the launch of the GLC platform, CEO of MMG, Mr Ahmed Essa Al Zedjali said, “MMG has always led the media-scene in Oman, and with the launch of GLC, we aim to create a platform where business leaders in Oman and other countries in the GCC can exchange views and ideas. It is also aimed to be a showcase for business knowledge and opportunities for readers in the region and across the world.”

### GLC's inaugural round-table

In keeping with its vision to enhance dialogue amongst key decision makers in the region, GLC is organising its very first round-table around the theme of



### ‘Change through Technology’

The panel is set to host reputed names from the industry like, H.E. Omar Al Ismaili, CEO TRA; Mr. Talal Al Mamari, CEO Omantel; Mr. Maqbool Al Wahaibi, CEO ODP; Mr. Asaad Al-Saadi, CEO Data2Cloud; Mr. Mujahid Al Zadjali, GM & CTO Bank Nizwa; and Mr. Tariq Al Atiq, Chief Digital Banking Officer NBO.

The event will take place on May 18, Thursday at the iconic Intercontinental Muscat – Oman's preeminent event venue.

Aligned with Oman's Vision 2040, the panel discussion will focus on technology as the catalyst for ushering a new era of business. The discussion will centre on the technology and knowledge-based aspects of the economy of the future as

the Sultanate of Oman seeks to move away from hydrocarbons towards a more diverse economy. The panel is expected to address the current buzzwords in industry as well as the speculated rise of Artificial Intelligence (AI). Specifically, the first-of-its-kind Round Table will focus on the role of AI in Corporate Governance as well as the changes in Communication Development being driven by innovations, and the future of banking as being shaped by FinTech.

The panel will be moderated by GLC representative and Director of Publishing, Paula Colard. The insights from ‘Change through Technology Round Table’ will be published on the GLC website <https://gulfleaderscircle.com/>.



154TH SESSION

# Status of women in GCC countries discussed

**MUSCAT:** The Sultanate of Oman on Tuesday hosted the first meeting of the GCC Standing Committee for Women Affairs.

The meeting discussed the status of women in GCC countries and the decision of the Ministerial Council in its 154th session on joint GCC action in the field of women's affairs.

**Secretary General**

On the sidelines of the GCC Standing Committee for Women Affairs' meeting, Dr. Laila Ahmed Al Najjar, Minister of Social Development met with Jassim Mohammed Al Budaiwi, Secretary General of the GCC. During this



meeting, the two sides reviewed means of enhancing the role of gulf women and their active participation in the joint GCC action. -ONA

BILATERAL RELATIONS

# Ministry of Defence Secretary General receives French Senate delegation

**MUSCAT:** Dr. Mohammed Nasser Al Za'abi, Secretary General at the Ministry of Defence received in his office at Al Murtafaa Garrison on Tuesday a delegation from the French Senate.

During the meeting, the two sides reviewed bilateral relations and exchanged views on matters of common concern.

The meeting was attended by senior officers of the Sultan's Armed Forces (SAF) and Ambassador of the French Republic to the Sultanate of Oman.

**French Senate delegation visits MSC**

A delegation from the French Senate visited the Maritime Security Centre (MSC).

The delegation was accompanied by some members of the State Council. Commodore Jassim Mohammed Al Balushi, Director of Operations and Plans at the Royal Navy of Oman (RNO) was present during the visit.



**MEETING:** Dr. Mohammed Nasser Al Za'abi, Secretary General at the Ministry of Defence received French Senate delegation at Al Murtafaa Garrison. -ONA

Upon their arrival the centre, the delegation was received by the Acting Head of the MSC.

The members of the visiting delegation toured the centre's facilities and viewed its latest equip-

ment and technologies used in carrying out its national duties. They were also briefed on the tactical roles and tasks carried out by the centre in the safety of the maritime environment. -ONA

# Luxembourg praises Oman's role in the region



Sayyid Badr lauded the role of Luxembourg in the European Union and affirmed the keenness of the Sultanate of Oman to continue developing bilateral relations in all fields

**MUSCAT:** Sayyid Badr Hamad Al Busaidi, Foreign Minister held a session of political talks with Jean Asselborn, Minister of Foreign and European Affairs of the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg, who is currently on an official visit to the Sultanate of Oman.

During the meeting, the two sides reviewed the march of bilateral relations.

They also discussed means of enhancing cooperation, exchange-

ing expertise and striking further agreements and memoranda of understanding during the coming period in the fields of economy, renewable energy and avoidance of double taxation, as well as aviation, banking, finance, science and culture.

The two sides touched on several regional and international matters of mutual interest.

They underscored the importance of tackling issues and

challenges on the basis of justice and respect for the international law, through peaceful means and dialogue. Sayyid Badr lauded the role of Luxembourg in the European Union. He also affirmed the keenness of the Sultanate of Oman to continue developing bilateral relations in all fields.

Sayyid Badr reiterated the importance of exchanging views on various matters of mutual concern.

In his turn, the Minister of Foreign and European Affairs of Luxembourg praised Oman's role in the region. He also expressed the keenness of his country to boost cooperation in various fields.

The meeting was attended by Khalid Hashel Al Muselhi, Head of the Minister's Office Department, Munthir Mahfoudh Al Mantheri, Head of Europe's Department and several officials from both sides. -ONA

EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

# 'Early warning system aims to warn people of calamities'

**< FROM A1** In his remarks to *Times of Oman's* sisterly radio channel Al Shabiba, Ibrahim bin Hamdan Al Maawali, a technical expert with TRA, said: "The early warning broadcast system aims to warn people of natural disasters such as cyclones, hurricanes and tsunamis, or industrial disasters such as fires or gas leaks."

"The early warning broadcast service is a new system which is linked to the Civil Aviation Authority, the body responsible for monitoring, sending early warning and emergency management."

Al Maawali added: "The system can not only be used as a warning signal but can also be used to educate the public on how to respond in emergency situations and debunk rumours."

The TRA expert said that "the Sultanate of Oman is not immune from natural disasters."

"It is imperative to have an effective early warning system for communicating with the public and subscribers quickly. This system will help in saving lives," he said.

Al Maawali said: "During the

time of an emergency situation in an area, the subscribers in the target area who are at risk can receive the warning message to plan their escape quickly."

He stressed that the experiment on Tuesday was to test the challenges faced in such situations and resolve them.

**Coastal areas**

Al Maawali said: "Our first experiment took place in the Wilayat of Al Mussanah earlier this month on May 3. We tested the system in South Al Sharqiyah and Al Wusta governorates on Monday, and on Tuesday, it was our first major experiment that targeted the coastal areas in the Governorate of Muscat."

He said that a similar test will be carried out in Dhofar Governorate soon.

"The trial run will raise awareness among people on the benefits of the system," he added.

The early warning system messages were received by people in four languages: Arabic, English, Hindi and Urdu.

Plans are in place to add more languages and subscribers have

been asked to update their phone systems.

**Warning messages**

Al Maawali said that there was no stats regarding the number of people who received the warning messages in Muscat Governorate on Tuesday and added that those who didn't receive the messages could register on the following link - <https://eqp.datamining.om/estebyan/EarlyWarningBroadcast>

It may be mentioned that Oman has suffered the wrath of tropical cyclones over the past many years and the coastal areas are more vulnerable to extreme weather conditions.

One of the worst disasters to hit Oman was Tropical Cyclone Gonu in 2007 followed by Cyclone Phet in 2010, which resulted in huge losses including several deaths. Cyclone Nilofar struck in 2014 and in 2018 Cyclone Mekunu lashed Oman but one of the strongest in recent times was in 2021, when tropical cyclone Shaheen battered the Sultanate and left a trail of destruction.

SQU

# International Phytoplasmaologist Working Group meeting to be held



**MUSCAT:** The Sultanate of Oman, represented by Sultan Qaboos University (SQU) will host the 5th meeting of the International Phytoplasmaologist Working Group (IPWG) during the period from 21 to 25 May 2023.

The Sultanate of Oman is the first country from the Middle East to host the meeting of the IPWG. The first meeting was held



in Italy, while the second was in Germany; the third in Mauritius and the fourth was held in Spain.

The meeting will be participated by more than 120 scientists, postgraduate students and spe-

cialists from Oman and abroad.

The meeting aims to highlight the developments in agricultural technologies related to detecting phytoplasma-associated plant diseases, among other topics. -ONA



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#MAISARAHWORLD

# Oman to induct EVs to cut down carbon emission

In the first phase of its plan, the ministry seeks to reach 7,000 electric cars—which account for 35 percent of the new light vehicles—and cut down 40 percent of carbon emissions

**MUSCAT:** A special programme has been launched by the Ministry of Transport, Communications and Information for cutting down carbon emissions. The ministry has divided its carbon neutrality plan into three phases: Cutting down 3 percent of carbon emissions by 2030; 34 percent of carbon emissions by 2040; and 100 percent carbon emissions by 2050. In the first phase of its plan, the ministry seeks to reach 7,000 electric cars—which account for 35 percent of the new light vehicles—and cut down 40 percent of carbon emissions from heavy equipment by using dual combustion technology. The technology has been fully developed in Oman. In the second phase, the ministry plans 22,000 new electric cars by 2040, which comprise 65 percent of the new vehicles in Oman. The second phase also envisages upgrading bus stations and buildings, namely by installing



solar panels that contribute to the reduction of emissions. In the third phase, the ministry plans to fully use hydrogen technologies or electricity technologies for trucks and heavy equipment as a measure to cut down carbon emissions by 100 percent, and thereby meet full carbon neutrality for Oman by the year 2050. The ministry also plans to use biofuel in public transport vehicles and transform some port equipment into environment-friendly devices that use electricity. The programme comprises a

number of projects and initiatives to be applied in various sectors, including the transport sector or the communications and information technology sector, which account for nearly 20 percent of the total carbon emissions in Oman. The ministry is also working on a plan to limit the operating age of public transport vehicles in a manner that boosts the reduction of carbon emissions. This is in addition to establishing a regional centre for refueling ships with green fuel. The step will constitute a major development in the region. The ministry has engaged heavily with private sector partners to strengthen the infrastructure in Oman and prepare it for the electric cars on most roads. Towards this end, the ministry set a short-term plan to install more than 140 electric vehicle chargers by the end of 2023, and more than 350 chargers by 2026. The ministry made it a condition that an electric vehicle charger on public roads should have a minimum power capacity of 120 kilowattour (kWh). Fast chargers have already been installed at border posts, with a capacity of 120 kWh, according to the ministry. **-ONA**

## Sayyid Fahd praises Shura

**< FROM A1** On its part, the Shura Council would continue to spread social awareness about all that provides a realistic representation of the joint national action. The Chairman of Shura Council and members of the Shura Council's office underscored the significance of the meeting. They touched on various visions for maintaining joint coordination between the Council of Ministers and the Shura Council. **Constructive cooperation** They also expressed thanks to the government and its enlightened leadership for their keenness on consolidating pillars of constructive cooperation between the two councils. They expressed the confidence that the outcome of the meeting would enhance joint coordination aimed at maintaining Oman's accomplishments made as part of its march of progress and prosperity. **-ONA**



Sultanate of Oman  
Consumer Protection Authority

Campaign Vehicles

2018-2019 CR-V, 2018-2019 ACCORD, 2019 ODYSSEY



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Recall Campaign

Date of the campaign: 17/05/2023

Campaign type: Safety

Campaign section: Seat Belt Buckle False Latch

Product description: Vehicle

| Model   | Type | Model Year | VIN number        |                   | Total number of affected vehicles |
|---------|------|------------|-------------------|-------------------|-----------------------------------|
|         |      |            | From              | To                |                                   |
| ODYSSEY | RL6  | 2019       | 5KBRL6820KB700663 | 5KBRL688XKB700349 | 632                               |
| CRV     | RW6  | 2018       | 5J6RW6850JL701611 | 5J6RW689XJL701408 |                                   |
|         |      | 2019       | 5J6RW6850KL700170 | 5J6RW689XKL700583 |                                   |
| ACCORD  | CV1  | 2018       | 1HGCY1614JA611022 | 1HGCY:66XJA611358 |                                   |
|         |      | 2019       | 1HGCY1610KA600309 | 1HGCY166XKA601253 |                                   |
|         |      | 2018       | 1HGCY263XJA601330 | 1HGCY:630JA600834 |                                   |
|         |      | 2019       | 1HGCY263XKA600020 | 1HGCY2630KA600057 |                                   |

**Description of defect:** Due to the possibility of a defect in the production process of the seat belt on the left side and some of the seat belts on the right side, the buckle tube and the selector button are overlapped, and the button shrinks greatly at low temperatures, increasing friction, and the tube and button stick to each other, and the latch of the buckle on the seat belt fails to work.

**Procedure:** The defective seat belt side will be confirmed, and action will be taken in accordance with the technical instructions received from Honda.

**For more information:** All drivers of the affected vehicles are requested to contact the Honda agency to inquire about more details and to book an appointment.

**Contact data:** Please call us on +968 24665741 / +968 24665742 during official working days from 8AM to 5:30PM, starting from 17/05/2023

## Circular on rules to prepare 2024 budget estimates

**< FROM A1** The circular stresses that all government units must submit the estimated budgets (current and development) for the fiscal year 2024 electronically, and enter the required budget estimates (revenues and expenditures) for existing budgets, the additional budget and the budget set for operating new projects. The budget estimates are required to be sent before the end of July 2023. The circular indicates that it is necessary to submit a list of disbursement (liquidity) estimates expected during the year 2024 and the expected disbursement for the remainder of the

year 2023. These are required for each development project within the context of the ongoing implementation stages and based on the entity's records. The expected date for completing project implementation have to be specified. This is in addition to submitting a list of the progress made in strategic programmes cited within the "Strategic Programmes Folder" of the 10th Five-Year Plan until the date of the report. Also, the percentages of achievement of each programme have to be specified. The required statements are required to be dispatched via the 2024 Development Budget System. **-ONA**

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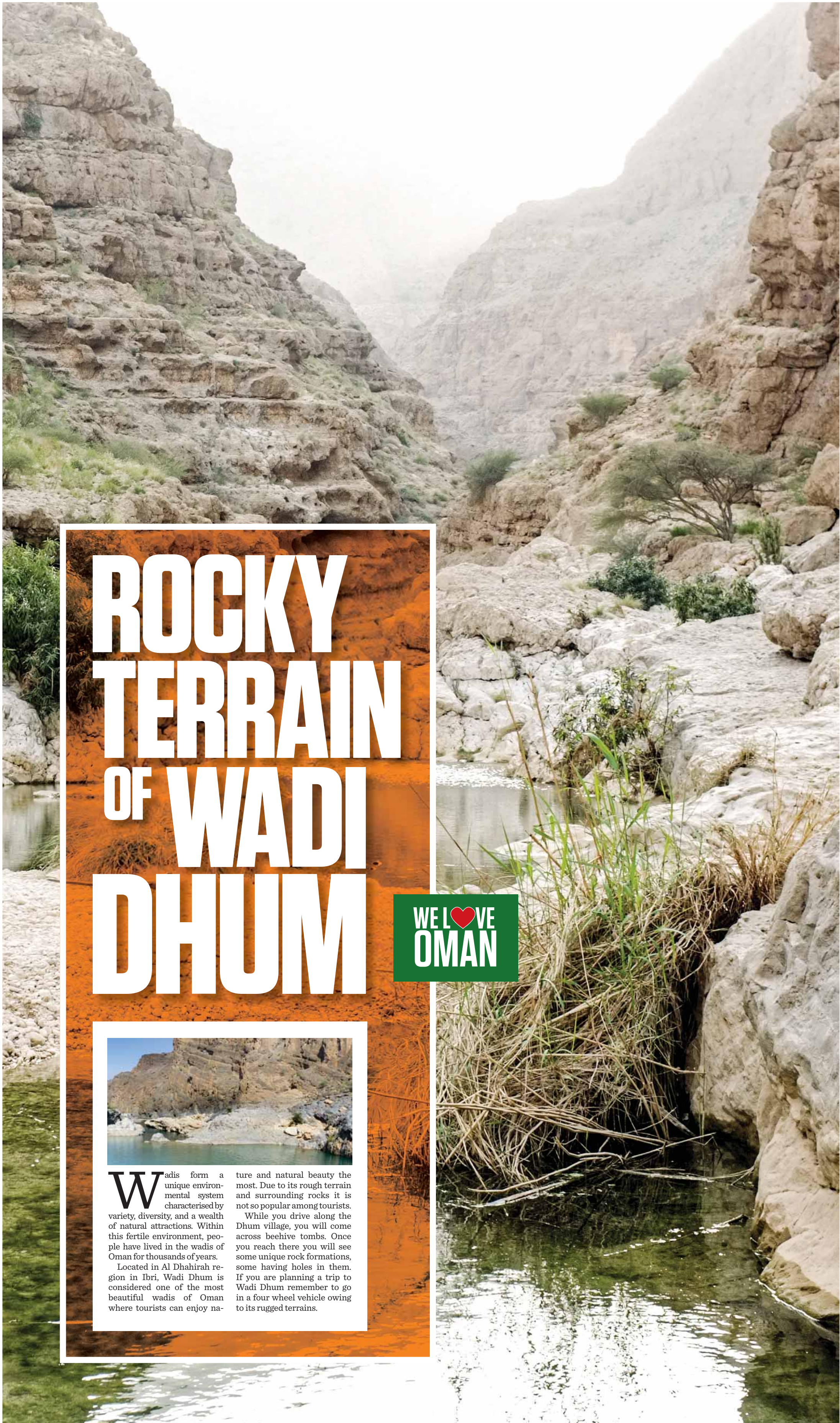
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ture and natural beauty the most. Due to its rough terrain and surrounding rocks it is not so popular among tourists.

While you drive along the Dhum village, you will come across beehive tombs. Once you reach there you will see some unique rock formations, some having holes in them. If you are planning a trip to Wadi Dhum remember to go in a four wheel vehicle owing to its rugged terrains.

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CR No. 1/28349/4

MEETING

State Council, Shura committees conclude debate on social protection and labour laws

**MUSCAT:** Joint committees from the State Council and the Shura Council on Tuesday finalised the study of disputed items on the draft “Social Protection Law” and “Labour Law” that were referred by the Council of Ministers.

The joint committees held a number of meetings on articles that raised disagreement between the two councils. The meetings were held in the presence of the members of the two councils, the Secretary-General of the State Council and the Secretary-Gener

al of the Shura Council.

Sheikh Mohammed Abdullah Al Harthy, Chairman of the Economic Committee at the State Council, affirmed that, through the joint committees, the two councils reached consensus on all articles of disagreement in the abovementioned laws.

The report of those joint committees will be presented to the two councils’ joint session scheduled to be held later this month (May 2023). — **ONA**



ACADEMIC YEAR 2023-2024

47,717 students register under unified admission system

**MUSCAT:** The number of students registered in the unified admission system for the first university level for the academic year 2023-2024 to date has reached 47,717, while the number of students who have selected their options for academic programmes has reached 35,592, of whom 15,601 are males, and 19,991 are females.

The registration indicators show an annual growth of 6 percent in the number of registrants for this year compared to the previous year.

Dr. Hamad Khalfan Al Numani, Director General of the Unified Admission Centre at the Ministry of Higher Education, Scien

tific Research and Innovation, said: “2,283 students have not yet registered in the unified admission system, and the number of registered students whose options have not been specified has reached 12,125, indicating the necessity of registration no later than 2:30 pm. on Thursday, June 1, 2023.”

The Director General of the Unified Admission Centre stated that an indicator has been developed for the lowest competitive rate recommended for applying to study programmes that meet its requirements, based on the results of admission to each programme in addition to arranging the options to which the student

applies, based on clear and logical acceptance indicators.

He noted that the students should ensure the correctness of their personal data received from the Ministry of Education, and in the event of any error, they should contact the Centre for Educational Measurement and Evaluation at the Ministry of Education, and the student must read the details mentioned for each programme in the student’s guide, such as qualifications, privileges, language of study, and confirmation in advance of the student’s entitlement to compete for the internal scholarships allocated to the limited-income category before applying for the programme.

SULTAN’S ARMED FORCES

French military official received

**MUSCAT:** Vice Admiral Abdullah Khamis Al Raisi, Chief of Staff of the Sultan’s Armed Forces (SAF) received in his office at Al Murtafaa Garrison on Rear Admiral Emmanuel Slaars, Commander of the French Forces in the Indian Ocean. The two sides reviewed areas of cooperation and exchanged views on matters of mutual interest.

— **ONA**



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The company invites offers for the following tender:

| Sl. # | Tender ID | Description                                                                     | Tender Fee | Deadline for Purchasing of Tenders | Deadline for Submission of Offers |
|-------|-----------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------|------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 1.    | 36449     | SUPPLY OF QUARRY HEAVY EQUIPMENT                                                | RO. 105    | 1st. June 2023<br>1700 hours       | 13th June 2023<br>2359 hours      |
| 2.    | 36792     | SUPPLY, INSTALLATION, AND COMMISSIONING OF SWITCHGEARS 6.6KV FOR LINE-2 INCOMER | RO. 52,500 | 1st. June 2023<br>1700 hours       | 13th June 2023<br>2359 hours      |
| 3.    | 36298     | HIRING OF WELDERS                                                               | RO. 105    | 1st. June 2023<br>1700 hours       | 13th June 2023<br>2359 hours      |

1. All specialized and interested companies that are registered with the Tender Board participate and get the specifications and conditions of the tender from the website; <https://etendering.tenderboard.gov.om>.

2. Tenders Bond to be applied electronically as per Esnad system procedure on the given website before the specified time of Submission. Electronic Tender Bond will be of not less than (1%) of the Total Tender Value of the highest offer (incase have multiple offers), valid for (120) days from the offers submission date and addressed to Chairman of the Tender Committee. Please note that without Tender Bond will not complete the submission of tender process as per Esnad procedure.

3. The tender clarification and queries will be directly on the on-tender itself on Esnad system.

4. OCC is not bound to accept the lowest or any other bid, and reserves the right to accept or reject any offer without giving reason.

For Clarifications on e-Tendering, you may contact via  
Telephone : 24402200, Email Id: [etenderhd@mtclt.gov.om](mailto:etenderhd@mtclt.gov.om)



وزارة التنمية الاجتماعية  
Ministry of Social Development

**Tender Announcement**

The Internal Tender committee of Ministry of Social Development hereby announces the following tender :-

| Tender No. | Tender Subject                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            | Grade                                                                                                                                                                                      | Last date for obtainment of tender document | Last date for tender submission | Tender Document Price (non-refundable) |
|------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------|---------------------------------|----------------------------------------|
| 125/2023   | Providing general cleaning services for the buildings of Al-Wafa centers for the rehabilitation of persons with disabilities in both (Salalah - Taqa - Mirbat) and the building of the Autism Unit of the Directorate General of Social Development in Dhofar Governorate | Companies specialized in the field of cleaning, washing and pest control services and registered with the General Secretariat of the Tender Board in the excellent, first or second degree | Monday<br>5-6-2023<br>02:00 PM              | Sunday<br>25-6-2023<br>10:00 AM | R.O.<br>25/=                           |

❖ Specialized Companies, registered with the Tender Board may obtain the Tender documents at the Tender Board e-tendering digital portal link (<https://etendering.tenderboard.gov.om>), Wednesday 17/5/2023

❖ For Inquiry , please contact though the e-tendering website ([reg@tenderboard.gov.om](mailto:reg@tenderboard.gov.om)) tel. ( 24402200)

“ The lowest or any other tender shall not be binding to the Ministry”

[www.mosd.gov.om](http://www.mosd.gov.om)

**TENDERS ADVERTISEMENT**

Oman Electricity Transmission Company (OETC) Announce the following Tenders:

| Sr. No | Tender No. | Tender Name                                                                                                              | Last date for documents collection | Bid Submission Date | Grade                                                                                                                                        | Tender Document's Fees (Including VAT) (RO) |
|--------|------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------|---------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------|
| 1      | 38/2023    | Supply & Installation of New Free Maintenance Breather for Power and Earthing Transformer.                               | 31/05/2023                         | 04/07/2023          | Local Companies with Experience in Same Field, Have A Valid Commercial Registration                                                          | 52/500                                      |
| 2      | 40/2023    | Construction of 400/33kV Tapping Grid Stations at Sarab, Khaloof & Wadi Aswad and Modification Works.                    | 31/05/2023                         | 04/07/2023          | Local Companies with Experience in Same Field, Have A Valid Commercial Registration DCRP and OETC Registration Category (A + B) Certificate. | 2,625/-                                     |
| 3      | 41/2023    | Construction of 400/132kV Duqm Industrial Grid Station Along With LILO From Suwaihat To Duqm 400kV OHL                   | 31/05/2023                         | 04/07/2023          | Local Companies with Experience in Same Field, Have A Valid Commercial Registration and OETC Registration Category (A + B) Certificate.      | 2,625/-                                     |
| 4      | 42/2023    | Construction of 132/33kV Khuaimah Grid Station along with Associated 132kV OHL From Al Jawabi To Khuaimah Grid Stations. | 31/05/2023                         | 04/07/2023          | Local Companies with Experience in Same Field, Have A Valid Commercial Registration DCRP and OETC Registration Category (A + B) Certificate. | 2,625/-                                     |

**Participation:** Interested Companies may obtain Tender Document with the necessity Apply on E-Tendering

**Buying the Tender:** By E-Tendering System.

**Fees:** Against non-refundable payment as mentioned above against each set of document. (Payment Through Bank Transfer ) , SMEs are exempted from tender's fees.

**The deadline for clarification:** Before (21) Days from bid submission date.

**Submission:** The submission of hard copy will be only for Bid Bond & other documents by E-Tendering

**Terms and conditions:**

- No other writing or any reference thereto should be mentioned on the envelope.
- The bid should be valid for not less than (90) days from bid submission date.
- The Tenderer should enclose a bank guarantee issued by any bank in the Sultanate of Oman for the value of 1% of the bid value and should be valid for (90) days from bid submission date, addressed to Oman Electricity Transmission Company (SAOC). Small & Medium Enterprises are exempted from the submission of 1% of the bid bond.
- Any bid not comply with the required guarantee, will not be accepted.
- OETC is not bound to accept the lowest or any other offers.

**Offer:** The bid bond should be submitted in Tender Box No. (1) at the company's building before 11:00 am on the assigned date for submission of the Tenders.

**Company Address:** Muscat - Al Mawaleh, Road No: 2153 – Building No. 423 0 Block No: 321 – Contact Details: 92217856 , 91777378 , 99105413 , 93515198

**Email Website:** [tenders@omangrid.com](mailto:tenders@omangrid.com)  
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Oman Electricity Transmission Company S.A.O.C.  
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FREE TRADE AGREEMENT

# India and EU keen on expediting FTA negotiations

**BRUSSELS:** Union Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal and European Commission Executive Vice-President and European Commissioner for Trade Valdis Dombrovskis have emphasised the need for expediting the ongoing India-EU free trade agreement (FTA) negotiations by finding convergence on all issues.

The two leaders held bilateral meeting on the sidelines of the first Ministerial meeting of India-European Union Trade and Technology Council (TTC).

The meeting was also attended by senior officials from both sides. They recalled the long-standing partnership between the two sides and underlined the need of working together to deepen the association given their commitment to democracy and rule-based international systems.

**Finding convergence**

A Ministry of Commerce and Industry release said they “emphasised the need for expediting the ongoing FTA negotiations by finding convergence on all issues” after due consideration to mutual sensitivities including on

market access for balanced and meaningful outcomes that would support the economies and employment on both sides.

The release said both sides also affirmed their commitment to work together on common priorities for WTO reforms including issues pertaining to dispute resolution mechanism, subsidies on agriculture and fisheries, e-commerce moratorium as well as domestic legislations.

Both sides recognised the need to build on their common goals to pursue consensus-based solutions that would support the livelihoods and food security for millions in India as well as in large parts of the developing world. They expressed hope that their joint efforts would enable finding meaningful solutions in the upcoming WTO Ministerial Conference.

This meeting was followed by a meeting of the Working Group 3 Stakeholders co-chaired by Piyush Goyal and Valdis Dombrovskis.

The meeting included stakeholders representing India and the EU. Working Group 3 focuses on trade, investment and resilient supply chains. – ANI

# Unmasking the silent killer: Confronting hypertension on World Hypertension Day

SILENT AND STEALTHY, hypertension lurks within the arteries, a pervasive menace that demands our attention and vigilance.

Hypertension, commonly known as high blood pressure, is a widespread and often undetected health condition affecting millions of people worldwide. As the silent assassin that lurks within our arteries, it poses a significant risk to our overall well-being and quality of life. World Hypertension Day serves as a crucial reminder to raise awareness, educate the general population, and empower individuals to take control of their blood pressure for a healthier future.

Hypertension occurs when the force of blood against the arterial walls is consistently too high. It is often asymptomatic, making it difficult to detect without regular check-ups. This invisible threat silently damages vital organs like the heart, brain, kidneys, and blood vessels, increasing the risk of heart attacks, strokes, kidney disease, and other serious complications.

Despite its prevalence, many people remain unaware of their hypertensive status, and this lack of awareness is a ticking time bomb. By promoting hypertension awareness, we can encourage early detection, timely intervention, and effective man-



**Dr. Nousheen Zia**  
Internal Medicine Specialist

agement. Empowering individuals with knowledge about risk factors, symptoms, and the importance of routine blood pressure monitoring can be a game-changer in reducing the burden of hypertension.

While hypertension is often asymptomatic, there are certain signs and symptoms that can serve as red flags indicating the need for further investigation. It is important for the general population to be aware of these potential symptoms to prompt timely medical attention such as persistent headache, dizziness, lightheadedness, blurred vision, shortness of breath, chest discomfort, chest pain, fatigue and generalised weakness.

Certain factors contribute to the development of hyperten-



sion, including a sedentary lifestyle, unhealthy eating habits, tobacco use, excessive alcohol consumption, obesity, family history, and stress. It is vital for the general population to recognise these risk factors and understand how they influence blood pressure levels. By adopting healthier lifestyle choices and addressing these risk factors, individuals can significantly lower their chances of developing hypertension.

Prevention is always better than cure. Small changes in daily habits can make a big difference. Regular exercise, meditation, maintaining a healthy weight, reducing sodium intake, consuming a balanced diet rich in fruits and vegetables, low fat dairy foods, low in saturated and total fats diet, quitting smoking, moderating alcohol consumption, and managing stress are key steps towards preventing and controlling hypertension. Moreover, seeking medical advice and adhering to prescribed treatments are crucial for those already diagnosed with the condition.

To combat hypertension effectively, it is vital to empower the general population with knowledge and resources. Public health initiatives, educational campaigns, and community outreach programs play a pivotal role in spreading awareness about hypertension. Accessible and affordable blood pressure screenings, workshops on healthy living, and collaborations between healthcare providers, educational institutions, and local communities can help bridge the awareness gap.

Hypertension remains a pervasive health threat that demands immediate attention. By spreading awareness among the general population, we can transform lives and protect future generations from the devastating consequences of uncontrolled high blood pressure. On this World Hypertension Day, let us unite in our efforts to educate, inform, and empower individuals to take charge of their cardiovascular health and pave the way for a hypertensive-free world.



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# STOINIS SIZZLES IN A THRILLER

Marcus Stoinis and bowlers help Lucknow Super Giants edge Mumbai Indians by five runs to climb to third spot; Mumbai down to fourth place

**LUCKNOW:** Marcus Stoinis hammered 89 off 47 balls and the bowlers backed the efforts as Lucknow Super Giants (LSG) eked out a thrilling five-run win over Mumbai Indians (MI) at the Ekana Cricket Stadium in Lucknow on Tuesday night.

Chasing 178 to win, Mumbai Indians needed 11 from the final over with Tim David and Cameron Green in the middle.

Left-arm pacer Mohsin Khan, though, denied Mumbai's big-hitters. Bowling a mix of hard lengths, slower ones and wide yorkers, he conceded only five to take LSG closer to the playoffs.

With the win, LSG climbed to third and Mumbai slid to fourth, with 15 and 14 points respectively. One last match to go for each of them; LSG will play against KKR and Mumbai against SRH as they chase spots in the playoffs.

Earlier, Marcus Stoinis scored an unbeaten 89 off 47 balls - his highest IPL score - to lift LSG to a competitive total of 177/3 on what looked like a difficult pitch to bat on.

After being sent in, they lost three early wickets, but Stoinis and skipper Krunal Pandya revived the innings before Stoinis went berserk at the death. He smashed 44 off his last 12 deliveries.

Mumbai openers - Ishan Kishan and captain Rohit Sharma - started the chase at rapid pace, adding 90 in 9.4 overs, but Ravi Bishnoi dismissed both to give LSG an opening.

With Suryakumar Yadav getting out cheaply - scooping on to his stumps - and Nehal Wadhwa struggling, the home team were suddenly favourites.

Mumbai needed 30 from the last two overs. David hit Naveen-ul-Haq for two sixes to reduce it to 11 from six balls, but Mohsin's excellent over sealed a crucial win for LSG.

Earlier, Stoinis' knock was supported well by skipper Krunal Pandya, who retired hurt for 49.

Mumbai started the game on a strong note as Jason Behrendorff provided the visitors with an ideal start by picking up two wickets in two balls in the third over.

He dismissed the out-of-form

batter Deepak Hooda and Prerak Mankad.

LSG ended the powerplay without losing any further wickets at 35/2.

Piyush Chawla dismissed left-handed batter Quinton de Kock on 16 but Stoinis and Krunal built an 82-run partnership before the latter retired hurt.

Stoinis took up the role of a finisher to accelerate the pace of the innings and smashed Chris Jordan in the 18th over for 24 and then struck two consecutive sixes to get 15 runs in the 19th over before ending LSG's innings with a six.

Speaking after the match, LSG skipper Krunal said: "I was having cramps and I felt like I pulled a muscle. I will do anything for the team, I have been a team player."

"I am really happy about the result. Mohsin [Khan] has a really big heart. When you have a big heart you go a long way."

"He was injured for the last year. He went through a big surgery. But he did well. He has a big heart and the sky is the limit."

Krunal added: "It has not been easy for us. Though we have played some good cricket, the results haven't been in our favour. Fans have supported us and good to give them a win."

**Briefscores:** Lucknow Super Giants 177/3 (Marcus Stoinis 89 n.o., Krunal Pandya 49; Jason Behrendorff 2/30) beat Mumbai Indians 172/5 (Ishan Kishan 59, Rohit Sharma 37, Tim David 32 n.o.; Yash Thakur 2/40, Ravi Bishnoi).

- Agencies

## UNIQUE FEAT

# Kohli lauds Gill after his maiden IPL ton

**NEW DELHI:** Former India skipper Virat Kohli didn't hold back in praising his India teammate and Gujarat Titans' batter Shubman Gill after the latter smashed his maiden century in the IPL on Monday.

Gill's 101 runs off 58 balls spearheaded Gujarat Titans to a 34-run win over Sunrisers Hyderabad at the Narendra Modi Stadium in Ahmedabad.

Kohli took to Instagram to share a story with the caption: "There's potential and then there's Gill. Go on and lead the next generation. God bless you (with a star emoji)."

This is not the first time Kohli has praised Gill, when the opener smashed his maiden T20I ton against New Zealand, earlier this year. "Sitaara (Star). The future is here," Kohli had posted on Instagram.

On Monday, the 22-year-old Gill achieved a unique feat of scoring a century in Tests, ODIs, T20Is and IPL.

Gill, coming off an unbeaten 94 against Lucknow Super Giants two games ago, reached 50



off 22 balls with nine fours.

Gill started his year by adding himself to a prestigious list of a few who have scored double a hundred in ODI. Against New Zealand, he scored 208 off 149 balls in Hyderabad.

Playing in his favourite ground, Gill scored his maiden T20I cen-

tury in Ahmedabad against New Zealand. He scored 126 n.o. off 99 balls with a strike rate of 200.

The Gujarat batter has also scored his century in Test at the same ground against Australia this year. He scored 128 runs in that match.

In the ongoing IPL, he has

smashed 576 with an average of 48.00 and a strike rate of 146.19.

Speaking after the match, Gill said: "My IPL debut was against SRH, now I've my IPL hundred against them. Quite pleased. It's come full circle. Hopefully I'll get more hundreds this season. I'm not the kind of person who

dwells too much about my last innings. The focus is on what's needed at the moment. The most satisfying moment was to hit Abhishek [Sharma] for a six because he is my childhood friend."

Incidentally, it was the only six in Gill's knock of 101 that was studded with 13 boundaries. - ANI

TODAY'S MATCH



VS



Punjab Kings

Delhi Capitals

6pm, Dharamsala

POINTS TABLE

| TEAM | P  | W | L | NR | NRR    | PTS |
|------|----|---|---|----|--------|-----|
| GT   | 13 | 9 | 4 | 0  | +0.835 | 18  |
| CSK  | 13 | 7 | 5 | 1  | +0.381 | 15  |
| LSG  | 13 | 7 | 5 | 1  | +0.304 | 15  |
| MI   | 13 | 7 | 6 | 0  | -0.128 | 14  |
| RCB  | 12 | 6 | 6 | 0  | +0.166 | 12  |
| RR   | 13 | 6 | 7 | 0  | +0.140 | 12  |
| KKR  | 13 | 6 | 7 | 0  | -0.256 | 12  |
| PBKS | 12 | 6 | 6 | 0  | -0.268 | 12  |
| SRH  | 12 | 4 | 8 | 0  | -0.575 | 8   |
| DC   | 12 | 4 | 8 | 0  | -0.686 | 8   |

CSK: Chennai Super Kings; DC: Delhi Capitals; GT: Gujarat Titans; KKR: Kolkata Knight Riders; LSG: Lucknow Super Giants; MI: Mumbai Indians; PBKS: Punjab Kings; RCB: Royal Challengers Bangalore; RR: Rajasthan Royals; SRH: Sunrisers Hyderabad

## GUJARAT TITANS

# Focused on bowling to my strengths: Shami

**AHMEDABAD:** Gujarat Titans pacer Mohammad Shami's four-wicket haul helped his team defeat Sunrisers Hyderabad by 34 runs at the Narendra Modi Stadium in Ahmedabad.

During the post-match presentation, Shami said: "I've been focusing on hitting the ball into the pitch, bowling to my strengths and on good lines."

On bowling during powerplay, Shami said: "I've been trying to hit similar lines and make use of the new ball. That's always given me success. The wicket was the same as that in the last game."

He also praised his partner Mohit Sharma as he provided effective support.

"Mohit coming in has helped go

well in the middle overs, given we have Rashid [Khan] and Noor [Ahmad] as well.

Gujarat Titans captain Hardik

Pandya said: "I am very proud of the boys. Two in two. Last year was different, we knew there'd be a lot of challenges this year. Boys

have put their hands up in different situations. I think we've rightly earned the chance of making the playoffs."

Hardik added: "I spoke about where we stand and that there will be high expectations but we focus within the group. We tick a lot of good boxes, we made errors in our journeys but were very consistent. Even when we lost, we were in the game and made some mistakes. People were focusing on the right thing, that's why we're here. For me, bowlers are very close to my heart. I sometimes feel batters take a lot of credit. A couple of overs are always important. I'm a bowler's captain and will ensure they're well prepared and always get credit."

- Agencies

QUOTE OF THE DAY



"We just lost the game. We didn't play well enough to win. There were moments we didn't win. Unfortunately, but we need to keep our heads high. We assessed the pitch well, it wasn't a pitch like the earlier one. It was good to bat on. But we lost our way in the second half. In hindsight, we gave away too many runs at the back end. The way we had started, we were in a good position to chase that target."

Rohit Sharma

OMAN CRUDE PRICE RISES

The price of Oman oil has increased, with prices for delivery by July 2023 reaching \$74.52, said Dubai Mercantile Exchange (DME). The DME statement said that the price of Oman oil rose by \$1.31 from the price of Monday, which was \$73.21. - **ONA**

MARKET  
BUSINESS & FINANCE



MSX INDEX ENDS LOWER

The MSX index closed at 4,709.72 points, down by 0.13 per cent from the previous close. The Sharia Index ended down by 0.46 per cent at 472.04 points. Oman Arab Bank, up 9.35 per cent, was the top gainer while Al Madina Investments, down 4.17 per cent, was the top loser.

# Treasury bills worth OMR28.4mn issued

Treasury bills are short-term highly secured financial instruments issued by the Ministry of Finance, and they provide licensed commercial banks the opportunity to invest their surplus funds



**Muscat:** The Central Bank of Oman (CBO) raised OMR28.4 million by way of allotting treasury bills on Tuesday.

The value of the allotted treasury bills amounted to OMR400,000, for a maturity period of 28 days. The average accepted price reached OMR99.650 for every OMR100, and the minimum accepted price arrived at OMR99.650 per OMR100. The

average discount rate and the average yield reached 4.56250 per cent and 4.57852 per cent, respectively.

The value of the allotted treasury bills amounted to OMR28 million, for a maturity period of 91 days. The average accepted price reached OMR98.755 for every OMR100, and the minimum accepted price arrived at OMR98.755 per OMR100. The average discount rate and the average yield reached 4.99297 per cent

and 5.05590 per cent, respectively.

Treasury bills are short-term highly secured financial instruments issued by the Ministry of Finance, and they provide licensed commercial banks the opportunity to invest their surplus funds. The Central Bank of Oman (CBO) acts as the Issue Manager and provides the added advantage of ready liquidity through discounting and repurchase facilities (Repo).

It may be noted that the inter-

est rate on the Repo operations with CBO is 5.75 per cent while the discount rate on the Treasury Bills Discounting Facility with CBO is 6.25 per cent.

Furthermore, treasury bills promote the local money market by creating a benchmark yield curve for short-term interest rates. Additionally, the government may also resort to this instrument whenever felt necessary for financing its recurrent expenditures. -**ONA**

OIL PRICE



## Oil gains on US plans to refill reserves, supply concerns

**TOKYO:** Oil prices rose for a second day on Tuesday, supported by US plans to purchase oil for its Strategic Petroleum Reserve (SPR) and by raging wildfires in Canada that fuelled supply worries.

A raft of weaker than expected Chinese data that suggested a soft economy failed to dampen prices, with the market instead focusing on higher refinery throughput in the world's second-biggest oil consumer, Reuters reported.

Brent crude futures climbed 30 cents, or 0.4 per cent, to \$75.53 a barrel, while US West Texas In-

termediate crude was at \$71.38 a barrel, up 27 cents, or 0.38 per cent.

Both benchmarks rose more than 1 per cent on Monday, reversing a 3-session losing streak.

The US Department of Energy said on Monday it would buy 3 million barrels of crude oil for the SPR for delivery in August, and asked that offers be submitted by May 31.

China's oil refinery throughput in April rose 18.9% from a year earlier to the second-highest level on record, data showed on Tuesday. -**BNA**

SURVEY

# Booking data points to strong peak season travel: IATA



**GREATEST GROWTH:** Forward bookings data indicates that greatest growth is expected in the Asia Pacific region (134.7 percent). - **Photo used for illustrative purpose only**

*Times News Service*

**MUSCAT:** The International Air Transport Association (IATA) reported high levels of confidence among travellers for the peak Northern summer travel holiday season. This corresponds with first quarter 2023 forward bookings data for May–September which is tracking at 35 percent above 2022 levels.

The survey covering 4,700 travellers in 11 countries shows that 79 percent of travellers surveyed said that they were planning a trip in the June–August 2023 period while 85 percent said that peak travel season disruptions should not be a surprise, 80 percent said that they expected smooth travel with post-pandemic issues having been resolved

Forward bookings data indicates that greatest growth is expected in the Asia Pacific region (134.7 percent),

Middle East (42.9 percent), Europe (39.9 percent), Africa (36.4 percent), Latin America (21.4 percent) and North America (14.1 percent)

“Expectations are high for this year’s peak Northern summer travel season. For many, this will be their first post-pandemic travel experience. While some disruptions can be expected, there is a clear expectation that the ramping-up issues faced at some key hub airports in 2022 will have been resolved,” said Nick Careen, IATA’s Senior Vice President for Operations, Safety and Security.

“To meet strong demand, airlines are planning schedules based

on the capacity that airports, border control, ground handlers, and air navigation service providers have declared. Over the next months, all industry players now need to deliver,” Careen added.

**Preparing**

Collaboration, sufficient staffing and accurate information sharing are all essential to minimise operational disruptions and their impact on passengers. The key is ensuring that the capacities which have been declared and scheduled are available.

“A lot of work has gone into preparing for the peak Northern summer travel season. Success rests on readiness across all players in the supply chain. If each player delivers on what has been declared, there should be no last-minute re-

quirements to reduce the scale of the schedules that travellers have booked on,” said Careen.

Labour unrest, particularly in France, is cause for concern. Eurocontrol data on the impact of French strikes earlier this year shows that cancellations can spike by over a third.

“We need to keep a very careful eye on Europe where strike actions have caused significant disruptions earlier this year. Governments should have effective contingency plans in place so that the actions of those providing essential services like air traffic control maintain minimum service levels and do not disrupt the hard-earned vacations of those travelling or put at risk the livelihoods of those in the travel and tourism sectors,” said Careen.

IMF

## Sri Lankan economy to grow in 2024 after contracting this year

**COLOMBO:** The Sri Lankan economy is expected to contract by three per cent in 2023, before registering a modest growth of 1.5 per cent in 2024, said Krishna Srinivasan, Director of Asia and Pacific Department, IMF.

The IMF official said the country’s economic prospects hinge quite critically on the implementation of the economic reform program it had agreed in particular for five key areas.

The five key areas were an ambitious revenue-based fiscal consolidation, restoration of public debt sustainability, a multi-pronged strategy to restore price stability and rebuild reserves, policies to safeguard financial sector stability, and structural reforms to address corruption vulnerabilities and enhance growth.

**Crisis-hit**

In March this year, the IMF Executive Board approved a 48-month extended arrangement under the Extended Fund Facility of \$3 billion to support crisis-hit Sri Lanka’s economic policies and reforms. Of the total \$3 billion funds, the country was immediately promised an initial disbursement of about \$330 million. Sri Lanka has been facing a severe economic crisis as a result of past policy missteps and economic shocks.

Krishna Srinivasan, Director of Asia and Pacific Department, IMF said the country’s economic prospects hinge quite critically on the implementation of the economic reform programme it had agreed in particular for five key areas

Srinivasan is in Colombo, his first visit to Sri Lanka, to further strengthen the IMF’s engagement with all stakeholders in the country. In addition to meeting with the President and top leadership of the country, he engaged with members of the opposition, civil society organizations, trade unions, think tanks, and other stakeholders.

**External financing**

“Sri Lanka, as you know, has been facing a severe crisis because of past policy missteps and back-to-back economic shocks. We have been deeply concerned about the impact of the crisis on the Sri Lankan people, particularly the poor and vulnerable groups, and about the economic costs of the delay in the country’s access to external financing,” Srinivasan said, refer-

ring to what challenging global environment mean for Sri Lanka.

The IMF official commended Sri Lanka for having already started implementing many of the challenging policy actions in those five key areas.

It is now essential to continue the reform momentum under strong ownership by the authorities and the Sri Lankan people, more broadly, he added.

“Economic impact of the reforms on the poor and vulnerable needs to be mitigated with appropriate measures. In this regard, we welcome the authorities’ firm commitment to strengthen social safety nets, including through a minimum spending floor, well-targeted spending through the new social registry and establishment of objective eligibility criteria.” -**ANT**

OMAN BANKS ASSOCIATION ACADEMY



## Course on Certified Enterprise Risk Management Practitioner organised

*Times News Service*

**MUSCAT:** The Oman Banks Association (OBA) Academy organised a 3-day Certified Enterprise Risk Management Practitioner (CERMP) Certification Course.

The programme was delivered by Global Risk Clinic, a leading Governance, Risk and Compliance Educators and Consultants based in Copenhagen, Denmark. The course was designed to deliver the fundamentals of Enterprise Risk Management (ERM) and an understanding of advanced ERM topics. A number of bankers par-

ticipated in this course that was held at the OBA office located in Muscat Hills, Muscat.

**Omani banking community**

OBA Academy is part of the Oman Banks Association that focuses on educating the Omani banking community on global trends, recent developments, and best practices by working closely with international and reputable resources to share their knowledge and expertise with senior banking executives and decision makers. Over the last couple of years, OBA Academy delivered a number of

programs such as Environment Social Governance (ESG), commercial law, data protection, consumer protection, cybersecurity, customer service, Value Added Tax, Risk Management, as well as hosting a number of financial and economic experts in the ‘Meet the Expert’ series.

Oman Banks Association is a non-profit professional association created to represent the banking sector, promote Omani banking activities, coordinate with regulators on matters of policy and strategy, and support banking excellence in Oman.

MARKET

MSX index ends lower

Oman Arab Bank, up 9.35 per cent, was the top gainer while Al Madina Investments, down 4.17 per cent, was the top loser



**MUSCAT:** The MSX index closed at 4,709.72 points, down by 0.13 per cent from the previous close. The Sharia Index ended down by 0.46 per cent at 472.04 points. Oman Arab Bank, up 9.35 per cent, was the top gainer while Al Madina Investments, down 4.17 per cent, was the top loser. Shares of Galfar Engineering were the most active in terms of the number of shares traded while Oman Cables Industry were the most active in terms of turnover.

A total number of 486 trades were executed during the day's trading session, generating a turnover of OMR3.81 million, with more than 14.25 million shares changing hands. Out of 46 traded securities, 11 advanced, 14 declined, and 21 remained unchanged. At the session close, domestic investors were net sellers for OMR332,000 while foreign investors were net buyers for OMR327,000, followed by GCC & Arab investors for OMR5,000 worth of shares.

Financial Index closed at 7,630.44 points, down 0.1 per cent. Prices of Oman Arab Bank, Ahli Bank and National Bank Oman were up by 9.35 per cent,

4.05 per cent and 0.71 per cent respectively. Prices of Al Madina Investments, HSBC Bank Oman, Ominvest, Muscat Finance and United Finance were up by 4.17 per cent, 3.09 per cent, 2.05 per cent, 1.70 per cent and 1.67 per cent respectively.

Industrial Index closed at 6,045.51 points, up 0.01 per cent. Prices of Dhofar Cattle Feed, Jazeera Steel Products, A'Saffa Foods and Raysut Cement were up by 4.92 per cent, 3.70 per cent, 3.57 per cent and 0.58 per cent respectively. Prices of Al Anwar Ceramics, Oman Cables Industry, Gulf Mushroom Products and Galfar Engineering were up by 2.67 per cent, 2.26 per cent, 0.87 per cent and 0.53 per cent respectively.

Services Index was down by 0.75 per cent before closing at 1,707.85 points. Prices of Abraj Energy, SMN Power Holding, National Gas and Ooredoo were up by 1.38 per cent, 1.15 per cent, 0.97 per cent and 0.54 per cent respectively. Prices of Majan College, OIFC and Renaissance Services were up by 3.05 per cent, 2.63 per cent and 2.11 per cent respectively. — United Securities

OMAN STOCKS

MUSCAT  
STOCK  
EXCHANGE

INDECIES

| Index             | High     | Low      | Value    | Prev. Value | Diff   | Diff% |
|-------------------|----------|----------|----------|-------------|--------|-------|
| MSX 30 INDEX      | 4,733.24 | 4,709.72 | 4,709.72 | 4,715.84    | -6.12  | -0.13 |
| FINANCIAL INDEX   | 7,681.00 | 7,627.47 | 7,630.44 | 7,638.38    | -7.94  | -0.10 |
| Industry Index    | 6,079.51 | 6,029.43 | 6,045.51 | 6,045.09    | 0.42   | 0.01  |
| Services Index    | 1,720.15 | 1,707.04 | 1,707.85 | 1,720.76    | -12.91 | -0.75 |
| MSX Shariah Index | 475.29   | 472.04   | 472.04   | 474.21      | -2.17  | -0.46 |
| MSX TR INDEX      | 6,222.79 | 6,191.88 | 6,191.88 | 6,199.92    | -8.04  | -0.13 |
| FINANCIAL TR IDX  | 8,367.20 | 8,308.89 | 8,312.13 | 8,320.78    | -8.65  | -0.10 |
| SERVICES TR IDX   | 1,891.00 | 1,876.59 | 1,877.48 | 1,890.08    | -12.59 | -0.67 |
| INDUSTRIAL TR IDX | 6,494.43 | 6,440.93 | 6,458.11 | 6,457.66    | 0.45   | 0.01  |

Trading Summary

| Volume     | Turnover  | Trades | Market Cap     | Up | Down | Equal | Sec. Traded |
|------------|-----------|--------|----------------|----|------|-------|-------------|
| 14,254,527 | 3,810,435 | 486    | 23,815,059,558 | 11 | 14   | 21    | 46          |

SHARE PRICE BULLETIN FOR TUESDAY, MAY 16

| ISIN            | SECURITY NAME                | VOLUME    | TURNOVER  | TRADES | OPEN PRICE | HIGH  | LOW   | CLOSE PR. | PREV. CLOSE | DIFF (BD) | DIFF % | LAST PR. | LAST BD | LAST OFFER | PRE VALUE | MARKET CAP  |
|-----------------|------------------------------|-----------|-----------|--------|------------|-------|-------|-----------|-------------|-----------|--------|----------|---------|------------|-----------|-------------|
| REGULAR MARKET  |                              |           |           |        |            |       |       |           |             |           |        |          |         |            |           |             |
| OM0000002176    | JAZEERA STEEL PROD.          | 1,385,329 | 387,857   | 16     | 0.274      | 0.280 | 0.274 | 0.280     | 0.270       | 0.010     | 3.704  | 0.280    | 0.272   | 0.280      | 0.100     | 34,971,429  |
| OM0000004248    | SMN POWER HOLDING            | 167,101   | 14,705    | 7      | 0.088      | 0.088 | 0.088 | 0.088     | 0.087       | 0.001     | 1.149  | 0.088    | 0.088   | 0.088      | 0.100     | 17,567,933  |
| OM0000001483    | NATIONAL BANK OMAN           | 485,800   | 136,515   | 6      | 0.280      | 0.282 | 0.280 | 0.282     | 0.280       | 0.002     | 0.714  | 0.282    | 0.282   | 0.282      | 0.100     | 458,516,872 |
| OM0000003968    | OOREDOO                      | 86,758    | 32,100    | 6      | 0.370      | 0.370 | 0.370 | 0.370     | 0.368       | 0.002     | 0.543  | 0.370    | 0.404   | 0.370      | 0.100     | 240,848,365 |
| OM0000001087    | OMAN UNITED INSURANCE        | 18,135    | 4,806     | 6      | 0.265      | 0.265 | 0.265 | 0.265     | 0.265       | 0.000     | 0.000  | 0.265    | 0.258   | 0.265      | 0.100     | 26,500,000  |
| OM0000001749    | OMAN CEMENT                  | 13,802    | 4,472     | 2      | 0.324      | 0.324 | 0.324 | 0.324     | 0.324       | 0.000     | 0.000  | 0.324    | 0.000   | 0.328      | 0.100     | 107,202,758 |
| OM0000002226    | ALJAZEERA SERVICES           | 3,000     | 756       | 1      | 0.252      | 0.252 | 0.252 | 0.252     | 0.252       | 0.000     | 0.000  | 0.252    | 0.251   | 0.252      | 0.100     | 15,429,477  |
| OM0000002440    | AL SHARQIA INV.              | 84,221    | 6,317     | 6      | 0.075      | 0.075 | 0.075 | 0.075     | 0.075       | 0.000     | 0.000  | 0.075    | 0.075   | 0.075      | 0.100     | 6,750,000   |
| OM0000002786    | BANK MUSCAT                  | 936,403   | 252,293   | 27     | 0.270      | 0.270 | 0.268 | 0.269     | 0.269       | 0.000     | 0.000  | 0.269    | 0.269   | 0.269      | 0.100     | 219,220,810 |
| OM0000003026    | OMAN TELECOM                 | 333,641   | 329,342   | 31     | 0.988      | 0.988 | 0.984 | 0.984     | 0.984       | 0.000     | 0.000  | 0.984    | 0.984   | 0.984      | 0.100     | 738,000,000 |
| OM0000003125    | GLOBAL INV. H.               | 56,600    | 3,550     | 7      | 0.062      | 0.063 | 0.062 | 0.063     | 0.063       | 0.000     | 0.000  | 0.063    | 0.062   | 0.064      | 0.100     | 12,600,000  |
| OM0000003398    | SOHAR INT. BANK              | 491,359   | 51,102    | 9      | 0.104      | 0.105 | 0.104 | 0.104     | 0.104       | 0.000     | 0.000  | 0.104    | 0.104   | 0.104      | 0.100     | 477,366,478 |
| OM0000004768    | MADINA TAKAFUL               | 91,143    | 7,710     | 12     | 0.085      | 0.085 | 0.084 | 0.084     | 0.084       | 0.000     | 0.000  | 0.084    | 0.084   | 0.085      | 0.100     | 14,700,000  |
| OM0000002374    | UNITED FINANCE               | 20,000    | 1,180     | 1      | 0.059      | 0.059 | 0.059 | 0.059     | 0.060       | -0.001    | -1.667 | 0.059    | 0.058   | 0.059      | 0.100     | 21,011,511  |
| OM0000001533    | OMINVEST                     | 1,170,459 | 455,747   | 21     | 0.390      | 0.396 | 0.382 | 0.382     | 0.390       | -0.008    | -2.051 | 0.382    | 0.382   | 0.388      | 0.100     | 255,153,593 |
| OM0000003224    | RENAISSANCE SER.             | 12,100    | 4,544     | 6      | 0.376      | 0.376 | 0.372 | 0.372     | 0.380       | -0.008    | -2.105 | 0.372    | 0.372   | 0.380      | 0.100     | 87,944,520  |
| OM0000001525    | OMAN INVESTMENT & FINANCE    | 39,722    | 4,414     | 3      | 0.115      | 0.115 | 0.111 | 0.111     | 0.114       | -0.003    | -2.632 | 0.111    | 0.111   | 0.116      | 0.100     | 27,622,350  |
| OM0000002188    | AL ANWAR CERAMIC             | 17,905    | 5,141     | 5      | 0.292      | 0.292 | 0.292 | 0.292     | 0.300       | -0.008    | -2.667 | 0.292    | 0.292   | 0.292      | 0.100     | 64,240,000  |
| OM0000001517    | HSBC BANK OMAN               | 834,602   | 131,433   | 18     | 0.160      | 0.160 | 0.157 | 0.157     | 0.162       | -0.005    | -3.086 | 0.157    | 0.157   | 0.157      | 0.100     | 314,045,106 |
| Total           | 19                           | 6,247,781 | 1,833,994 | 190    |            |       |       |           |             |           |        |          |         |            |           |             |
| Parallel Market |                              |           |           |        |            |       |       |           |             |           |        |          |         |            |           |             |
| OM0000005280    | OMAN ARAB BANK               | 90,012    | 13,652    | 8      | 0.148      | 0.152 | 0.148 | 0.152     | 0.139       | 0.013     | 9.353  | 0.152    | 0.152   | 0.000      | 0.100     | 253,750,320 |
| OM0000001301    | DHOFAH FOODS AND INVESTMENT  | 200       | 13        | 1      | 0.064      | 0.064 | 0.064 | 0.064     | 0.061       | 0.003     | 4.918  | 0.064    | 0.064   | 0.000      | 0.100     | 3,174,400   |
| OM0000002200    | AHLI BANK                    | 5,710     | 1,016     | 4      | 0.176      | 0.180 | 0.176 | 0.180     | 0.173       | 0.007     | 4.046  | 0.180    | 0.176   | 0.183      | 0.100     | 350,938,344 |
| OM0000002804    | ASAFFA FOODS                 | 3,300     | 892       | 3      | 0.270      | 0.290 | 0.270 | 0.290     | 0.280       | 0.010     | 3.571  | 0.290    | 0.280   | 0.290      | 0.100     | 34,800,000  |
| OM0000008934    | ABRAJ ENERGY SERVICES        | 146,849   | 43,019    | 56     | 0.290      | 0.296 | 0.289 | 0.294     | 0.290       | 0.004     | 1.379  | 0.294    | 0.294   | 0.294      | 0.100     | 226,438,800 |
| OM0000001189    | NATIONAL GAS                 | 20,001    | 2,060     | 4      | 0.104      | 0.104 | 0.104 | 0.104     | 0.103       | 0.001     | 0.971  | 0.104    | 0.103   | 0.104      | 0.100     | 8,840,000   |
| OM0000001418    | RAYSUT CEMENT                | 93,807    | 16,328    | 24     | 0.173      | 0.180 | 0.170 | 0.173     | 0.172       | 0.001     | 0.581  | 0.173    | 0.173   | 0.173      | 0.100     | 34,600,000  |
| OM0000001400    | OMAN FLOUR MILLS             | 5,842     | 3,096     | 4      | 0.530      | 0.530 | 0.530 | 0.530     | 0.530       | 0.000     | 0.000  | 0.530    | 0.528   | 0.530      | 0.100     | 83,475,000  |
| OM0000002077    | AL OMANIYA FIN.              | 505,000   | 63,125    | 8      | 0.125      | 0.125 | 0.125 | 0.125     | 0.125       | 0.000     | 0.000  | 0.125    | 0.125   | 0.125      | 0.100     | 38,459,301  |
| OM0000003141    | Barfa Water and Power        | 20,000    | 1,440     | 2      | 0.072      | 0.072 | 0.072 | 0.072     | 0.072       | 0.000     | 0.000  | 0.072    | 0.065   | 0.072      | 0.100     | 11,520,000  |
| OM0000004420    | BANK NIZWA                   | 185,522   | 17,542    | 12     | 0.093      | 0.094 | 0.093 | 0.093     | 0.093       | 0.000     | 0.000  | 0.093    | 0.092   | 0.093      | 0.100     | 208,036,632 |
| OM0000004925    | ALBATINAH POWER              | 83,196    | 2,496     | 6      | 0.030      | 0.031 | 0.030 | 0.031     | 0.031       | 0.000     | 0.000  | 0.031    | 0.030   | 0.031      | 0.100     | 20,921,510  |
| OM0000004833    | AL SUWADI POWER              | 21,221    | 638       | 4      | 0.030      | 0.031 | 0.030 | 0.031     | 0.031       | 0.000     | 0.000  | 0.031    | 0.030   | 0.031      | 0.100     | 22,146,597  |
| OM0000007084    | MCT DESALINATE               | 19,000    | 1,906     | 4      | 0.095      | 0.096 | 0.095 | 0.095     | 0.095       | 0.000     | 0.000  | 0.096    | 0.095   | 0.096      | 0.100     | 14,777,288  |
| OM0000007811    | MUSANDAM POWER               | 455,000   | 136,320   | 10     | 0.300      | 0.300 | 0.300 | 0.300     | 0.300       | 0.000     | 0.000  | 0.300    | 0.300   | 0.300      | 0.100     | 21,117,000  |
| OM0000007910    | AMAN REAL ESTATE             | 38,930    | 3,545     | 5      | 0.096      | 0.096 | 0.096 | 0.096     | 0.096       | 0.000     | 0.000  | 0.096    | 0.096   | 0.096      | 0.100     | 19,200,000  |
| OM0000008447    | OMAN REIT FUND               | 14,600    | 1,110     | 2      | 0.076      | 0.076 | 0.076 | 0.076     | 0.076       | 0.000     | 0.000  | 0.076    | 0.076   | 0.076      | 0.100     | 35,810,165  |
| OM0000008710    | BANKA DESALINATION           | 11,000    | 1,496     | 3      | 0.136      | 0.136 | 0.136 | 0.135     | 0.135       | 0.000     | 0.000  | 0.136    | 0.137   | 0.136      | 0.100     | 10,195,470  |
| OM0000003531    | GALFAR ENGINEER              | 3,797,381 | 717,705   | 23     | 0.189      | 0.189 | 0.189 | 0.189     | 0.190       | -0.001    | -0.526 | 0.189    | 0.182   | 0.189      | 0.100     | 38,388,888  |
| OM0000002267    | GULF MUSHROOM P.             | 10,000    | 2,270     | 1      | 0.227      | 0.227 | 0.227 | 0.227     | 0.229       | -0.002    | -0.873 | 0.227    | 0.225   | 0.229      | 0.100     | 10,388,636  |
| OM0000001772    | ALANWAR INVESTMENT           | 87,599    | 7,796     | 13     | 0.089      | 0.089 | 0.089 | 0.089     | 0.090       | -0.001    | -1.111 | 0.089    | 0.088   | 0.095      | 0.100     | 17,800,000  |
| OM0000001590    | MUSCAT FINANCE               | 24,100    | 1,403     | 2      | 0.059      | 0.059 | 0.058 | 0.058     | 0.059       | -0.001    | -1.695 | 0.058    | 0.058   | 0.060      | 0.100     | 17,814,487  |
| OM0000001707    | OMAN CABLES INDUSTRY         | 379,959   | 740,920   | 40     | 1.950      | 1.950 | 1.950 | 1.950     | 1.955       | -0.005    | -2.565 | 1.950    | 1.950   | 1.950      | 0.100     | 34,160,000  |
| OM0000001897    | MAJAN COLLEGE                | 10,000    | 1,270     | 2      | 0.127      | 0.127 | 0.127 | 0.127     | 0.131       | -0.004    | -3.053 | 0.127    | 0.127   | 0.130      | 0.100     | 11,430,000  |
| OM0000004735    | SEMBROP SALALAH              | 1,900,826 | 190,146   | 40     | 0.101      | 0.103 | 0.100 | 0.100     | 0.104       | -0.004    | -3.846 | 0.100    | 0.100   | 0.104      | 0.100     | 95,457,195  |
| OM0000001962    | AL MADINA INVESTMENT HOLDING | 74,312    | 3,282     | 14     | 0.044      | 0.046 | 0.044 | 0.046     | 0.048       | -0.002    | -4.167 | 0.046    | 0.044   | 0.046      | 0.100     | 3,910,000   |
| Total           | 26                           | 8,004,367 | 1,974,586 | 295    |            |       |       |           |             |           |        |          |         |            |           |             |

SEATRADER MARITIME LOGISTICS MIDDLE EAST

Shipping and maritime supply chain event begins

**DUBAI:** The highly anticipated Seatrade Maritime Logistics Middle East, the leading shipping and maritime supply chain event in the region, commenced yesterday at the Dubai World Trade Centre under the patronage of the UAE Ministry of Energy and Infrastructure (MOEI UAE).

As an integral part of the UAE Maritime Week, the conference and exhibition attracted renowned industry leaders, experts, and policymakers from around the world. They gathered to discuss and showcase the latest advancements and best practices in the maritime industry.

To mark the event's opening, Hassan Mohammed Juma Al Mansouri, Undersecretary for Infrastructure and Transport Affairs at the Ministry of Energy and Infrastructure, delivered an inspiring address on the UAE's vision and strategic plan for the growth and development of its maritime and logistics sectors.

During his speech, Al Mansouri highlighted the remarkable pro-



SPORTS

# Jones’ double as Liverpool trounce Leicester City

Jurgen Klopp's Reds have won their past seven matches to bolster their push for a top-four finish in the Premier League

**LONDON:** Curtis Jones scored a brace as in-form Liverpool brushed aside hapless Leicester City to maintain their recent winning streak and push the Foxes closer to English Premier League relegation.

Jurgen Klopp's side have won their past seven games to bolster their push for a top-four finish and now lie a point behind Newcastle and Manchester United, albeit having played a game more.

Another dismal loss for Leicester leaves the 2016 Premier League champions firmly rooted in danger in 19th position, two points adrift of safety with only two games left.

The Reds scored twice in the space of three first-half minutes through the same combination, Mohamed Salah twice feeding Jones who finished confidently to claim his first Premier League double.

It should have been 3-0 before half-time but home goalkeeper Daniel Iversen made a superb reaction save to deny Cody Gakpo from close range.

Salah claimed his third assist in the second period by laying off



a free-kick for Trent Alexander-Arnold to curl a sublime finish into the top corner. The two Uniteds - Manchester and Newcastle - above them need two wins from their last three games to guarantee a top-four finish but Liverpool are right on their tails and poised to profit from any mishaps.

The Reds started slowly at Leicester, Luis Diaz smashing into the side-netting and Fabinho blazing over the pick of their early openings.

But they clicked into gear on the half-hour mark as midfielder Jones took his tally to three goals in his last four games. His first was a controlled finish at the far post from Salah's deep cross and the second he thumped home following the Egyptian's through ball.

Salah provided a hat-trick of as-



ENGLAND SQUAD

## Bairstow recalled, Foakes dropped for Ireland Test

**LONDON:** Jonny Bairstow has been recalled as England's Test wicketkeeper at the expense of Ben Foakes for next month's one-off Test against Ireland. James Anderson is also included in the 15-man squad, despite suffering a minor groin strain while playing for Lancashire last week.

Jofra Archer, who recently returned from the IPL to assess discomfort in his elbow, was not considered after the recurrence of a stress fracture that has ruled him out for the summer.

Bairstow last played international cricket in September, before suffering a fractured leg in a freak accident while playing golf. He missed all of England's winter programme and only recently returned to action in the County Championship for Yorkshire but now looks set to take the gloves during the Ashes, which begins on June 16.

Rob Key, England managing director of men's cricket, said leaving out Foakes was "a seriously tough decision", after the Surrey keeper had established himself as first-choice under Brendon McCullum and Ben Stokes, during the team's run of 10 wins in 12



Tests. Bairstow last kept in a Test in 2021, standing in for Jos Butler, and has not been the regular gloveman since the end of the 2019 Ashes. "We are looking forward to the summer ahead and getting into the swing of things, starting with a good Test against Ireland," Key said.

The rest of the squad was largely as expected, with Anderson named among six fast-bowling options alongside the spinner, Jack Leach. Chris Woakes, whose last Test came on the tour to the West Indies in 2022, returns, as does Mark Wood after he was rested for

the New Zealand series earlier this year. Matt Potts is also in contention for a spot alongside the front-line pair of Stuart Broad and Ollie Robinson if Anderson is not fit.

Zak Crawley's place at opener remains secure, after he began the summer with 350 runs in nine innings for Kent.

**England squad:** Ben Stokes (capt), James Anderson, Jonathan Bairstow, Stuart Broad, Harry Brook, Zak Crawley, Ben Duckett, Dan Lawrence, Jack Leach, Ollie Pope, Matthew Potts, Ollie Robinson, Joe Root, Chris Woakes, Mark Wood. - *Agencies*

APPOINTMENT



## Bielsa named new Uruguay head coach

**MONTEVIDEO:** Marcelo Bielsa has been appointed head coach of Uruguay's national team on a deal that runs until the 2026 World Cup, the South American nation's football association said on Tuesday.

The 67-year-old replaces Diego Alonso, whose contract was terminated after Uruguay's failure to progress beyond the group stage of the 2022 World Cup in Qatar.

This will be Bielsa's first coaching job since he parted ways with Leeds United in February last year.

He also had spells in charge of the Argentina and Chile national teams over a coaching career that has spanned more than four decades. Bielsa had reportedly attracted the interest of Bournemouth and Everton as well as clubs in Brazil and Argentina before accepting the Uruguay position. - *Xinhua*

THREE ODI MATCHES

## Afghanistan squad for Sri Lanka series named

**KABUL:** Afghanistan men's cricket team preparations are shifting gears for the upcoming World Cup as they prepare to face Sri Lanka in a three-match ODI series next month.

Experienced left-hander Hashmatullah Shahidi will once again lead Afghanistan.

Selectors have named a strong 15-player squad and four reserves on Monday for the three-match series that commences in Hambantota on June 2. Young all-rounder Abdul Rahman has got a recall on the back of some consecutive scintillating performances in Afghanistan's domestic one day Cup competition.

At the same time, Shahidullah Kamal, Yamin Ahmadzai, Zia Ur Rahman Akbar and Gulbadin Naib have been named among the reserves. Afghanistan have already qualified for this year's World Cup courtesy of their seventh-placed finish in the recently-completed ICC Men's Cricket World Cup Super League.

They will be confident of a strong showing against Sri Lanka as well as in the 50-over World Cup which is scheduled for the end of the year. Hashmatullah's side currently has three bowlers ranked inside the top-10 on



the ODI Bowler Rankings, with Rashid Khan (sixth), Mujib ur Rahman (eighth) and Mohammad Nabi (10th).

Their bowling line-up has an imposing attacking presence alongside emerging quick Fazal-haq Farooqi and young spinner Noor Ahmad.

**Afghanistan squad:** Hashmatullah Shahidi (c), Rahmat Shah (vc), Rahmanullah Gurbaz (wk), Ibrahim Zadran, Riaz Hassan, Najibullah Zadran, Mohammad Nabi, Ikram Alikhail (wk), Azmatullah Omarzai, Rashid Khan, Mujib ur Rahman, Noor Ahmad, Abdul Rahman, Fazal Haq Farooqi, Farid Ahmad Malik.

**Reserves:** Gulbadin Naib, Shahidullah Kamal, Yamin Ahmadzai, Zia ur Rahman Akbar. - *ANI*

FUTURE WOMEN LEADERS

## Oman Cricket official selected for 2023 ICC Future Leaders Programme

**MUSCAT:** Oman Cricket official, Richa Sharma, is one of the 25 women leaders, who have been picked by the International Cricket Council (ICC) for the 2023 Future Leaders Programme.

Richa, who is the sponsorship and marketing manager at Oman Cricket (OC), is one of the only two women from the GCC region to be part of the future female leaders in cricket, announced by the world cricket governing body, based in Dubai, UAE.

The other woman selected is Kuwait national women's team captain Amna Tariq, who will have former South African captain Mignon du Preez as mentor.

Richa's mentor will be South African Kass Naidoo, International cricket commentator and founder of GSport4girls in South Africa.



Speaking after her selection, Richa said: "I'm glad to share that I have been selected in the third batch of the 100% Cricket Future Leaders Programme. I am confident that it will be a valuable and enriching experience for me, and certainly it will be an enormous opportunity for me to grow and enjoy

this journey under Kass Naidoo."

She added: "I would like to thank the entire team of Oman Cricket, International Cricket Council and 100% Cricket Future Leaders Programme for encouraging equal participation in sports for women and girls starting from grassroots level."

Kass Naidoo welcomed Richa on board the ICC programme and said: "I am looking forward to working with Richa."

This is the second time that Oman Cricket will be represented in the ICC Future Leaders Programme.

Vaishali Jesrani, Oman women's team captain and advisor to Oman Cricket board, was selected in the inaugural programme that featured 40 women from across the world in 2021.

Vaishali was mentored by Anthony Everard, then Cricket Australia's executive general manager of fan engagement.

The 2023 programme is the third edition of the ICC 100% Cricket Future Leaders Programme and begins on May 18.

It comprises a record-breaking intake of 25 future women leaders in cricket.

According to an ICC media release, the mentees, who have increased from 20 in 2022, will be paired with senior leaders from across global cricket to work on a one-on-one basis over a six-month period and will receive training and support in their areas of expertise in dealing with real-time and real-world issues and projects.

The programme will also include two full online group

workshops and a debrief session with programme guide, Belinda Clark AO as well as smaller mentee peer working group sessions.

The Future Leaders Programme is a mentorship programme for future women leaders in the sport and forms part of the ICC's long-term commitment to accelerate the growth of women's cricket and women in the game.

It falls under the 100% Cricket campaign, the objective of which is to promote gender equity, as well as to empower women and young girls through cricket.

The programme's aim is to address the low percentage of women in leadership positions in global cricket and to promote and support emerging female talent in the cricket landscape from coaching, officiating, administration, and

broadcast, to marketing, digital and technology, journalism, and events.

ICC Chief Executive, Geoff Allardice said: "We have had an overwhelming response to the first two editions of the Future Leaders Programme and are delighted by the continued growth in interest for year three.

"We look forward to another group of talented female leaders in our sport emerging with more tools and knowledge to apply to their respective areas, and hopefully resulting in them spearheading the change we want to see in cricket.

"The programme has been well-supported by our member associations, and we are grateful to our mentors who have volunteered their time and knowledge for this important assignment."

ROUND-UP

# Erkan Karatas appointed as GM of Al Bustan Palace, Ritz-Carlton Hotel

With 25 years of progressive experience in luxury hospitality, Erkan will spearhead the team at this iconic resort, nestled between the Al Hajar mountain range and the Sea of Oman

**MUSCAT:** Al Bustan Palace, a Ritz-Carlton Hotel has announced the appointment of Erkan Karatas as General Manager.

With 25 years of progressive experience in luxury hospitality, Erkan will spearhead the team at this iconic resort, nestled between the Al Hajar mountain range and the Sea of Oman.

Erkan joined The Ritz-Carlton in 2001 and has held different leadership positions in several luxury hotels across the portfolio of

Marriott International such as The Ritz-Carlton Istanbul, The Ritz-Carlton Moscow, The Istanbul EDITION, The Ritz-Carlton Herzliya, The Ritz-Carlton Astana and JW Marriott Hotel Ankara. He has a solid track record in leading and mentoring numerous hotel openings including The Ritz-Carlton Guangzhou, The Ritz-Carlton Vienna, The Ritz-Carlton Abu Dhabi Grand Canal, Bulgari Hotel London, and Bulgari Hotel and Residences Dubai.

Erkan has returned to Turkey



in 2018 and most recently served as General Manager of the The St. Regis Istanbul, where he spent four years, from 2019 to 2023. Be-

I am truly delighted to join this esteemed property and embark on a remarkable journey with the exceptional team of our Ladies and Gentlemen. With great enthusiasm, I am committed to introducing a series of innovative initiatives that will elevate our guest experience to unprecedented heights

**Erkan Karatas**  
General Manager, Al Bustan Palace, a Ritz-Carlton Hotel

ing an advisory board member with Marriott International for EMEA General Managers and EMEA Food and Beverage he was

listed as one of the 100 Power GMs in The Middle East.

He is an experienced leader with a high commitment to service

and quality and strong passion for Food and Beverage. He's a member of Chaîne des Rôtisseurs - Association Mondiale de la Gastronomie and he carries WSET International Advanced Diploma from London.

"I am truly delighted to join this esteemed property and embark on a remarkable journey with the exceptional team of our Ladies and Gentlemen. With great enthusiasm, I am committed to introducing a series of innovative initiatives that will elevate our guest experience to unprecedented heights," says Erkan.

"Our shared goal is to redefine luxury and set a new benchmark that will inspire and captivate our discerning guests. I eagerly look forward to the incredible opportunities that lie ahead as we transform The Palace into an unrivalled haven of opulence and excellence," Erkan added.

During his leisure time, he enjoys spending time with his family, cooking and playing table tennis.

ARAB FEDERATION OF CAPITAL MARKETS

## Sohar International's CEO delivers insightful presentation at AFCM conference

**MUSCAT:** Aligned with Sohar International's commitment to supporting Oman's vision and contributing to the national economy, Ahmed Al Musalmi, Chief Executive Officer of Sohar International, delivered a thought-provoking presentation at the Arab Federation of Capital Markets (AFCM) annual conference.

This prestigious event is the largest gathering of stock exchanges and capital markets in the Arab world and is being hosted by the Muscat Stock Exchange (MSX). The presentation titled "The Future of Business: Oman Investment Destination" offered valuable insights into the numerous advantages that Oman offers to businesses and investors, making it an ideal destination for those looking to capitalize on the country's unique opportunities and potential for growth.

Ahmed Al Musalmi emphasised Oman's distinct investment-friendly landscape, highlighting the country's compelling strengths and benefits that make it an attractive prospect for investors seeking portfolio diversification. Al Musalmi said, "While Oman offers numerous investment avenues, such as the clean energy sector, there are still underexplored areas that present substantial potential for investors. Particularly in light of the global push towards sustainable energy practices, it is crucial to recognise the significance of exploring this sector and the investment opportunities it offers. Given



Oman's readiness to embrace and explore new investment opportunities, investors should consider the country as a destination for their investments.

"By doing so, they can not only benefit from potential returns but also contribute to the country's economic growth and development, especially considering the changing global landscape and challenges faced by the world."

During his insightful presentation, Ahmed Al Musalmi shed light on the various factors that contribute to Oman's uniqueness and attractiveness as a prime destination for business and investment. One of the key points he emphasised was Oman's geo-strategic location, which encompasses a robust

logistical network and multi-faceted infrastructural - physical and digital - capability that uniquely serves as a gateway for connecting with regional and global markets and offers tremendous potential for businesses looking to expand their reach. Additionally, Al Musalmi highlighted the stable environment in Oman, which provides a secure foundation for businesses to operate in and ensures a favourable business climate.

Another crucial aspect of Oman's appeal to investors is its investment-friendly policies that facilitate capital and profit repatriation, making it easier for businesses to maximise their returns. Al Musalmi also touched on the availability of a highly skilled workforce in Oman, which is essential for businesses seeking to establish and grow their operations. The presentation emphasised the importance of economic diversification, as Oman looks to move away from its dependence on oil and gas revenues and develop new industries. This will not only create new opportunities for businesses but also help Oman establish a more sustainable and diversified economy.

"We firmly believe that this conference offers an outstanding platform to showcase Oman's immense investment opportunities and high potential to a wide-ranging audience. We at Sohar International are well positioned to play a proactive and catalytic role to advance Oman's socioeconomic di-

versification program and position Oman as a unique and attractive investment destination," added Ahmed Al Musalmi.

Hosted by Muscat Stock Exchange, the AFCM conference included 11 sessions and over 50 speakers who shed light on various topics related to capital markets, including sustainability, carbon credits, climate change, IR & ESG practices, Islamic capital markets, and Fintech. The conference comes under the framework of the capital market's fiscal sustainability programme launched by the government to devise an annual plan targeting a group of annual listings, enhancing trading and liquidity at the stock exchange and improving financial services provided to investors and encouraging technology and innovation.

Sohar International has demonstrated a steadfast commitment to strengthening the national economy and contributing to the comprehensive development of Oman, exhibiting unwavering dedication to these values. As part of this commitment, the bank has supported various initiatives that embody these principles, consistently demonstrating its resolute efforts to foster growth in the business landscape, promote entrepreneurship and innovation, and advance the cause of sustainable development. In recent times, the bank has extended its support to several forums, providing a clear indication of its continued dedication towards these noble objectives.

LEASING AND RENTAL



## Sayarti hosts handover ceremony to deliver 17 units of Mitsubishi L200

**MUSCAT:** Sayarti, Oman's most trusted leasing and rental company, hosted a handover ceremony for the delivery of 17 units of the Mitsubishi L 200 to a key client. The complete order, consisting of 55 units, will be fulfilled within the months of May and June.

"As a trusted and experienced leasing and rental company in Oman, Sayarti is committed to delivering the highest service standards and innovative solutions to our valued clients. We are delighted to have completed the first phase of delivery for the Mitsubishi L 200 units, and we look forward to delivering the remaining units in the coming months," said Sohraab Hasnain. "At Sayarti, we understand that every client has unique requirements, and

our team of experts is dedicated to providing tailored leasing and rental solutions that meet and exceed their expectations."

Sayarti, launched in 2013, provides a wide range of automobile services to complement vehicle ownership experiences and driving enjoyment in Oman. Today, the brand is responsible for delivering best-in-class car rental, leasing services, and used car sales under one umbrella, with one team and one vision. With roots dating back to 1992, with the establishment of Zubair Leasing, the brand's car rental and leasing division offers competitive, class-leading, cost-effective, and hassle-free leasing and rental services to individuals and corporations.

PARTNERSHIP

## BankDhofar supports OER Business Summit as banking partner



**MUSCAT:** As one of the leading financial institutions in the Sultanate, BankDhofar was the banking partner of OER Business Summit 2023. The high-profile summit was recently held under the auspices of Shaikh Salim bin Mustahail Al Mashani.

The summit brought together business leaders and experts from various business sectors to share knowledge and insights. This year's edition of the summit focused on ways of augmenting revenues from alternative sources and

by way of diversification in areas of strength to achieve the economic growth objective. The discussion panel titled "Business resilience in a fragile global economy" shed light on business areas related to building business resilience, attracting foreign direct investment, technology usage and digitalisation, growth enablers, sustainability and governance, among other areas of concern. Vikesh Mirani, Chief Financial Officer at BankDhofar participated in the panel dis-

cussion and shared his thoughts and experience in this area.

Vikesh Mirani, Chief Financial Officer at BankDhofar said: "On a global scale, the banking sector is one of the important business sectors that help to fund economic operations, create employment opportunities, and maintain financial stability. BankDhofar has been playing a crucial role and has contributed effectively in driving the growth of the national economy, as we have set our strategy to be in

line with Oman Vision 2040. The OER Business Summit 2023 was a good platform to share thoughts and insights with practitioners about this important topic."

BankDhofar has set a clear banking strategy that is in line with Oman Vision 2040, and has effectively contributed to driving the growth of the national economy. Since its inception in 1990, BankDhofar has established itself as one of the leading financial institutions in the Sultanate.



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IN PICTURES



**City view of Dakar, Senegal**  
People visit the African Renaissance Monument in Dakar, Senegal. *Xinhua*



**Event showcasing Romania's traditional costumes held in Bucharest**  
Women pose for photos during an event showcasing Romania's traditional costumes in downtown Bucharest, capital of Romania. *Xinhua*



**Japanese public hold rally against nuke wastewater discharge plan**  
People rally in front of the Second Members' Office Building of the House of Representatives to protest against the Japanese government's plan to discharge nuclear-contaminated water into the sea in Tokyo. *xinhua*



**Mediterranean monk seal seen on seashore at Jaffa beach in Israel**  
A Mediterranean monk seal lies on the seashore at Jaffa beach in Tel Aviv, Israel. The Mediterranean monk seals, listed as one of the world's most endangered marine mammals, are the rarest out of the 33 species of seals that exist in the world. *Xinhua*



**Shah Rukh Khan with his wife Gauri Khan at the book launch of 'My Life in Design'**  
Bollywood actor Shah Rukh Khan with his wife Gauri Khan at the book launch of 'My Life in Design' by Gauri Khan, in Mumbai. *ANI Photo*



**Brown-cheeked laughingthrush bird in Lhasa, Tibet**  
This picture shows a brown-cheeked laughingthrush in Chengguan District of Lhasa, southwest China's Tibet Autonomous Region. In recent years, Lhasa has attached great importance to afforestation and soil and water conservation. The urban and rural ecological environment in Lhasa has been improving year by year. *xinhua*



# BEING OUTSIDE DOESN'T ALWAYS LOWER SMARTPHONE SCREEN TIME

While getting outside is a typical prescription for decreasing screen time, a new study indicates that being outside doesn't always lower smartphone screen time. The new research, which tracked smartphone activity of 700 study participants for two years, reveals that participants' smartphone activity actually increased during visits to city parks and other urban green spaces. With smartphone use rising worldwide, the study clearly identifies a powerful way to reduce screen time: participants who visited nature reserves or forests saw significant declines in screentime over the first three hours, compared to visiting urban locations for the same amount of time.

The study, published in the journal *Environment and Behaviour*, is the first to show that young adults now spend far more time on their smartphone screens than in nature, the researchers say. Given unparalleled access to participants' devices, the team found that young adults in the study spent over twice as much time on their smartphones as they spent outdoors.

"Greentime, or time outdoors, has long been recommended as a way to restore our attention from the demands of daily life, yet before our study, little was known about whether nature pro-

vides a way for people to disconnect from the mobile devices that now follow us into the great outdoors," said lead author Kelton Minor, a Postdoctoral Research Scientist at Columbia University's Data Science Institute. "While past research suggested that short trips to city parks might provide a digital detox, we saw texting and phone calls actually go up. It was really the longer visits to wilder areas, like forests or nature preserves, that helped people get off their screens and wrest back their attention from their smartphones."

A key advance of the study is the novelty of data richness compared to other smartphone studies, where participants typically self-report their smartphone use or environmental behaviours. In this study, participants consented to share their smartphone data — over 2.5 million privacy-preserving logs of activity from texts, calls and screen time — for science.

"Smartphones have an incredibly powerful pull on our attention, which will undoubtedly increase in the future—that's what many technology companies are working on," says University of Vermont (UVM) co-author Chris Danforth, a Gund Fellow who will co-lead a new \$20M big data project on the science of storytelling. "Given the reported connections between mental health

and our digital life, we need more studies like this to help establish ways to encourage a healthier relationship with technology."

Discussing their findings, the researchers theorise that urban greenspace may instead be useful in enhancing remote social ties — hence the increase in texts and phone calls in urban parks — but may interrupt the individual's opportunity to utilise the attention-restoring properties of nature.

Increased smartphone use has been linked to rising cases in anxiety, depression, and sleep problems, especially in younger generations. At the same time, research from UVM and others has shown that nature has restorative benefits for our minds and bodies that deliver a sense of joy comparable to a holiday like Thanksgiving or New Year's. Researchers theorise that the visual and sensory experiences of nature help strengthen individuals' ability to better focus on life beyond their smartphones. The study is the first to compare time spent on smartphone screens to time spent in outdoor green spaces, according to the researchers. They found that even the young adults who typically used their smartphones the most reduced their usage in nature areas, providing evidence that more wild greentime may provide a digital break for even the most connected.

-ANI



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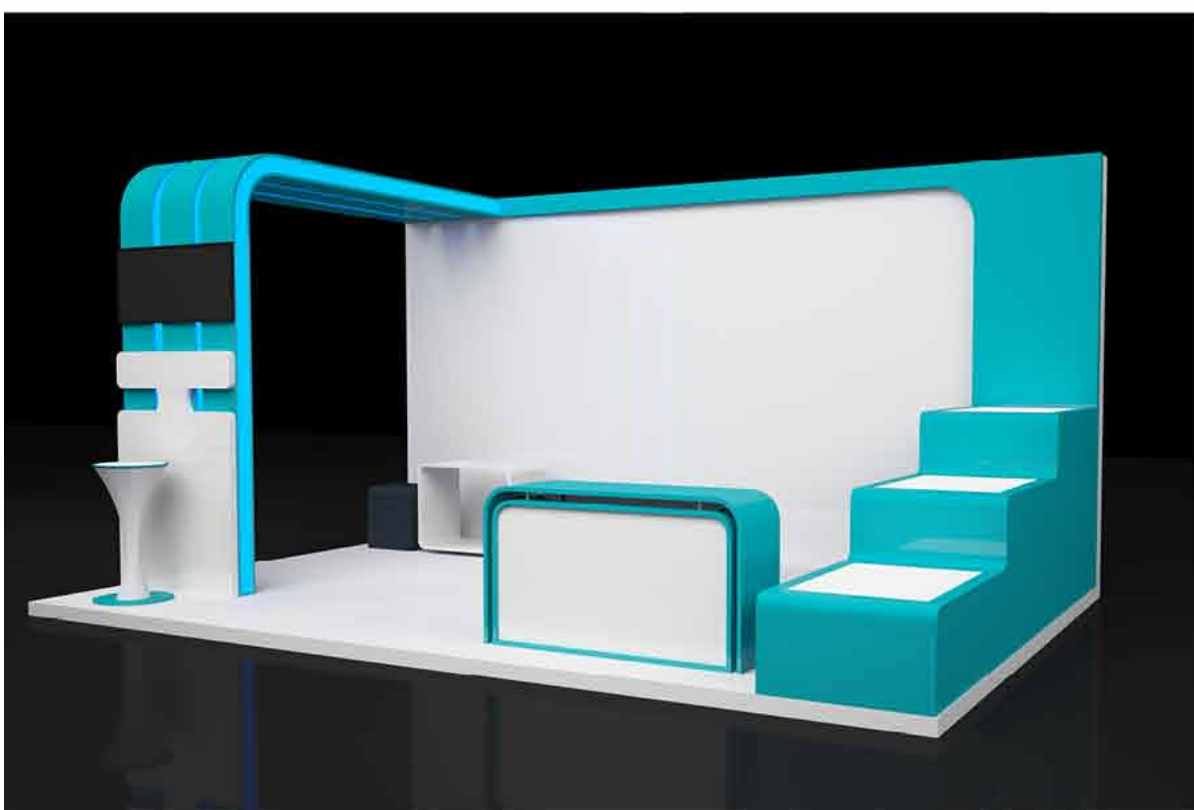
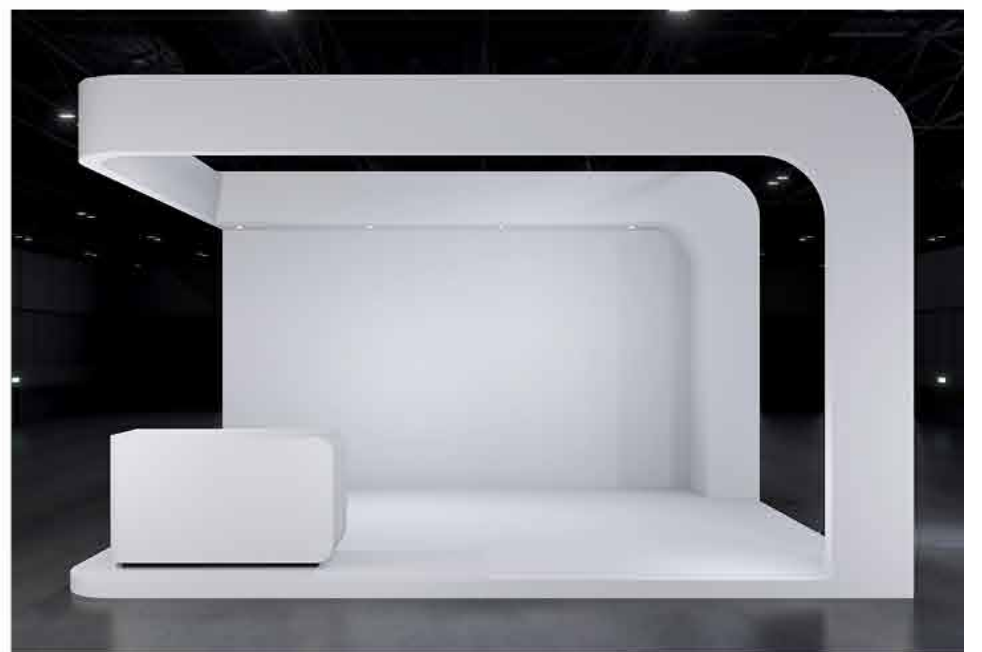
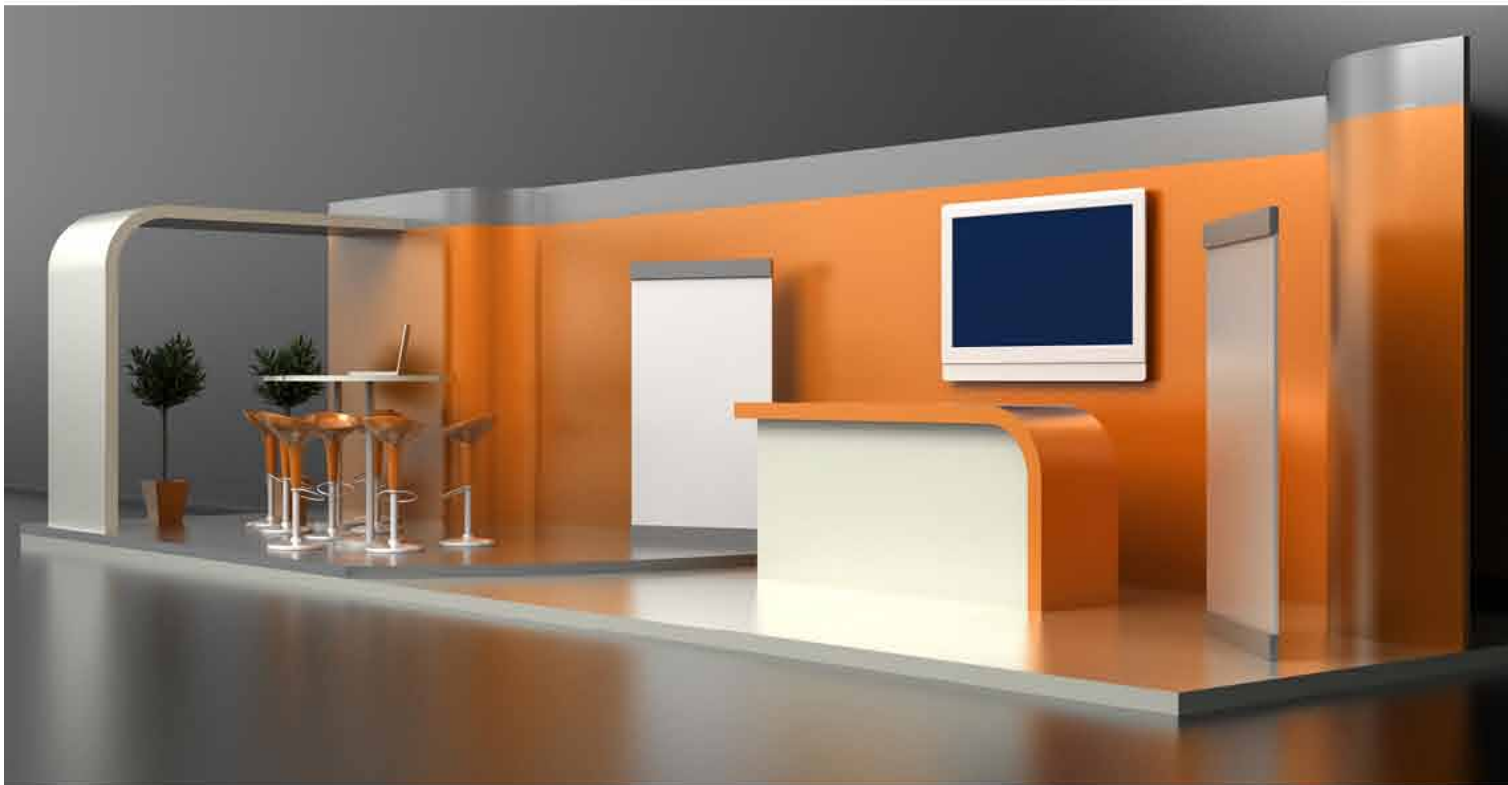


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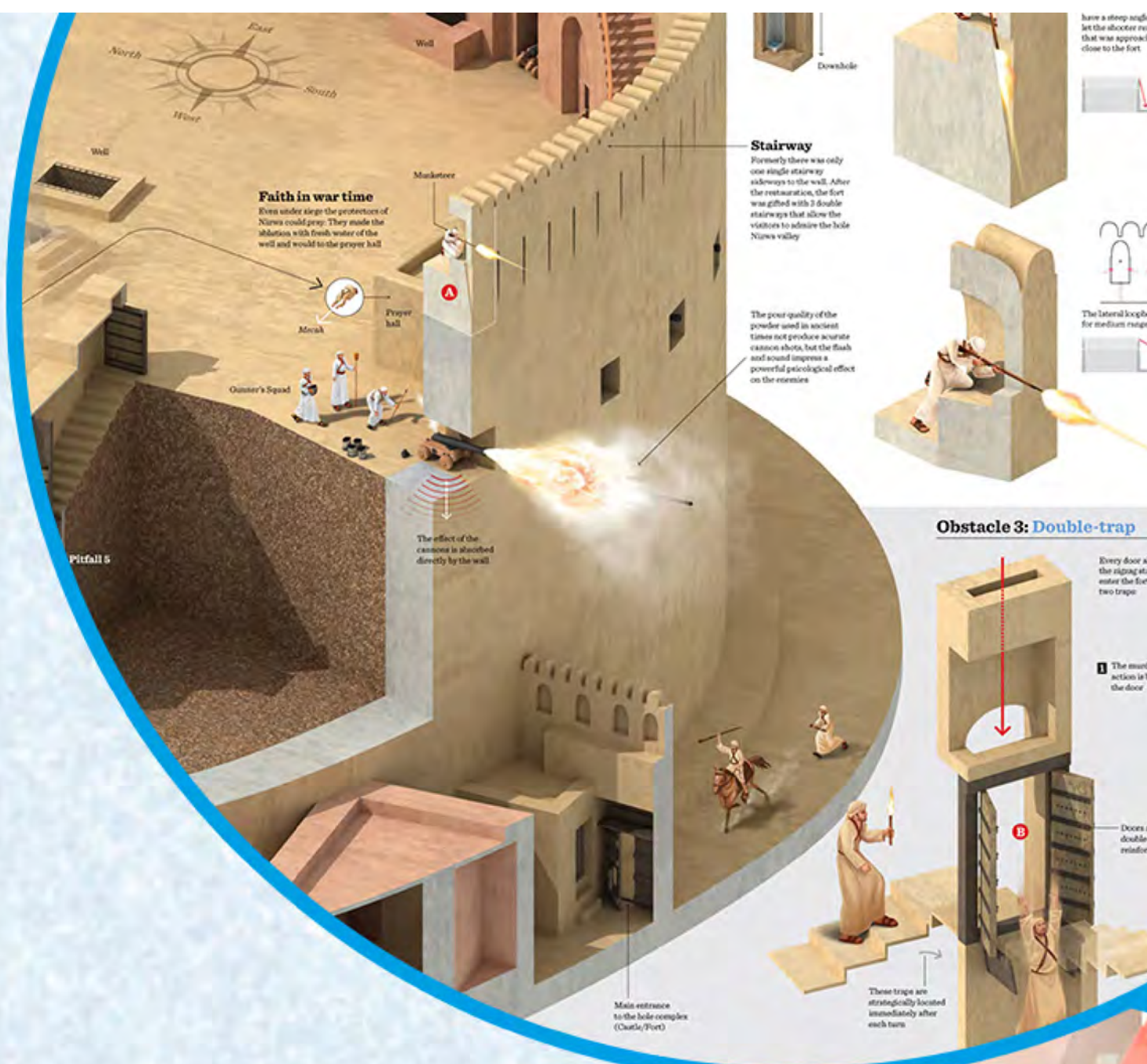


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