



HIS MAJESTY RECEIVES PHONE CALL FROM PRESIDENT OF EGYPT

MUSCAT: His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik received a phone call on Wednesday from President Abdel Fattah El Sisi of the Arab Republic of Egypt. During the phone call, the two leaders reviewed bilateral relations and means of enhancing them in various fields. They also exchanged views on several regional and international matters of mutual interest. — **ONA**



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HM PRESIDES OVER CABINET MEETING



HM gave directives to carry out a project for establishing an integrated Sports City for welfare of youth

MUSCAT: His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik chaired a meeting of the Council of Ministers at Al Barakah Palace on Wednesday.

At the outset of the meeting, His Majesty the Sultan gave thanks and praise to the Almighty Allah for the bounties of prosperity and stability. He prayed to the Almighty to perpetuate these bounties on Oman, to grant all health and to culminate their endeavours in success.

Then, His Majesty the Sultan reviewed domestic affairs. He expressed his satisfaction with Oman's fiscal performance over the past three years. He valued the good outcomes that, he said, strongly contributed to consolidating the growth of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP), upgrading the country's financial and economic indicators and generating some financial surplus that will be utilised in meeting a number economic and social priorities.

To this end, the Council of Ministers reviewed the draft of the

State's Budget 2024 deemed consistent with the goals of the 10th Five-Year Plan.

In affirmation of his Royal attention to the care and welfare of youth— including proper grooming of youth as the best asset for subsequent generations, His Majesty the Sultan gave directives to begin steps to carry out a project for establishing an integrated Sports City capable of hosting regional and international tournaments and competitions.

In this context, His Majesty the Sultan gave directives to develop infrastructure for camel races, serving as one of major sports events to which the activities of a large number of citizens are linked. These include furnishing main racecourses in the governorates of Oman in coordination with offices of governors and Oman Camel Racing Federation. This is envisaged to activate tourism activities in the governorates.

Then, His Majesty the Sultan reviewed the outcomes of assessment of all government units and their rates of performance during the first half of 2023.

He commended the tangible progress in the performance of most government units. He also gave directives to exert more efforts and sustain them over the upcoming period to help raise the standard of government performance, with emphasis on improving the governance of procedures, organising business practice, gaining the confidence of beneficiaries and upgrading services. **>A6**



HM the Sultan reiterates Oman's solidarity with Palestinians

HM stresses the need for international community to assume its responsibilities to protect civilians

HM the Sultan expresses his satisfaction with the country's financial performance

HM the Sultan commends tangible development in government units performance

HM the Sultan underscores the importance of all citizens' serious participation in the Shura Council's elections

HM called for the release of hostages in accordance with the principles of the international humanitarian law

His Majesty the Sultan directs developing infrastructure for camel racing

SAYYID THEYAZIN TAKES PART IN GCC MEETING TO ENHANCE COOPERATION IN CULTURAL FIELD **>A6**



TOP THREE INSIDE STORIES

OMAN 143,960 lawsuits

1 The courts Oman handled 143,960 lawsuits during 2022, an increase of 13,000 lawsuits over 2021 figures. **>A2**

WORLD Israel strikes Gaza

2 Palestinians in the sealed-off Gaza Strip struggled to find any safe area, as Israeli strikes demolished entire neighbourhoods. **>A7**

MARKET Polymer factory pact

3 An agreement has been signed to establish a polymer products factory in Samail Industrial City. **>B1**

'NITAJ'

Oman taking steps for food security

Times News Service

MUSCAT: Oman Food Investment Holding company 'Nitaj', an affiliate of Oman Investment Authority (OIA), is working to promote sustainable agriculture and food security in Oman.

The company has undertaken 11 projects since its establishment in 2012 and generated an overall value of about OMR457 million until the end of September 2023.

Mohammed Al Harthy, CEO of the Oman Food Investment Holding Company 'Nitaj', said: "The company aims to invest in food projects in cooperation with the private sector to achieve self-sufficiency in basic food products and enhance food security in the Sultanate of Oman. This is in line with the Oman 2040 Vision."

The CEO of 'Nitaj', said that the company seeks to promote sustainable agriculture in the Sultanate of Oman in coopera-

tion with Omani farmers and livestock breeders by using modern methods and technologies to produce diverse and sustainable food while preserving the environment and protecting natural resources.

"The company seeks to expand further into regional and international markets, in addition to innovation in food products and services to maximise the benefits of its food products and provide more diverse and healthier options to customers," he added.

Al Harthy pointed out that among the strategic initiatives launched by 'Nitaj' during the last period is the "Janain" project, in cooperation with the Omran Group in the state of Jabal Al-Akhdar in the Al-Dakhiliyah Governorate. It is an initiative that aims to integrate agriculture and tourism to create a distinctive tourism experience in harmony with the state's picturesque nature.



Dhuhr.....	11:59pm
Asr.....	3:20pm
Maghrib.....	5:50pm
Isha.....	7:00pm
Fajr (Tomorrow).....	4:48am



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CASES

Oman courts handle over 143,900 lawsuits in 2022

MUSCAT: The courts of the Sultanate of Oman handled 143,900 lawsuits during 2022, an increase of 13,000 lawsuits over 2021 figures.

The lawsuits were undertaken by 59 courts, among them 45 courts of first instance, 13 courts of appeal and one Supreme Court.

As many as 8,824 cases were adjudicated by the Supreme Court, where 75 percent of them were settled.

The courts of appeal undertook 42,845 cases, with a final decision rate of 64 percent, while the courts of first instance adjudicated and sealed 67 percent of the lawsuits filed to them.

A report issued by the Supreme Judicial Council stated the council's keenness to expand the scope of judicial competencies.

Accordingly, the number of



judges during 2022 was increased to 324 judges, from 293 in 2021.

The report showed that the number of notary public departments in the governorates of

Oman stood at 61.

Notary public departments registered 194,717 new contracts by 2022, in addition to non-marriage or widowhood attestations. -ONA

EARLY WARNING SYSTEM

Oman takes part in regional exercise 'IOWave23'

MUSCAT: Oman took part on Wednesday in the regional exercise "IOWave23" which aims to evaluate and enhance the effectiveness of the early warning system against the danger of tsunamis in the Indian Ocean.

The drill was held at regional and national centres in countries adjoining the Indian Ocean rim.

The Sultanate of Oman was represented in the drill by the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA), the Ministry of Information, Royal Oman Police (ROP).

Further, the drill is considered an opportunity to test readiness



in receiving tsunami warnings and assuring that all people in society are warned, as well as con-

ducting tsunami scenarios. Further, the drill is conducted once every two years. -ONA

Pact inked for sustainable jet fuel production

The memorandum of cooperation reflects the joint vision to position Oman in a vital role in the production and use of green energy

MUSCAT: The Civil Aviation juthority (CAA) signed a memorandum of cooperation (MoC) with OQ Group and Sky Energy to study the possibility of developing a unit to produce sustainable jet fuel in the Sultanate of Oman.

As per the MoC, the three parties will identify the requirements of setting up a unit in the field of producing sustainable jet



FACT: The CAA, OQ Group and Sky Energy will identify the requirements of setting up a unit in the field of producing sustainable jet fuel. -ONA

fuel, building capacities and researching technologies used in producing green and sustainable jet fuel. This strategic cooperation reflects the joint vision to po-

sition Oman in a vital role in the production and use of green energy by implementing joint plans that aims to achieve net zero carbon emissions by 2050. -ONA

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MEETING

Commander of Chinese navy fleet received

MUSCAT: Commodore Mohammed Hamoud Al Zedjali, Acting Commander of the Royal Navy of Oman (RNO) received at Al Murtafaa garrison (MAM) on Wednesday the Commander of the Chinese navy fleet (156) and his accompanying military delegation.

During the meeting, the two sides exchanged views on several naval matters of mutual interest. -ONA



Commodore Mohammed Hamoud Al Zedjali, Acting Commander of the Royal Navy of Oman with the Chinese navy fleet (156) commander.



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ON 10/10/2023

Introducing the world-famous Japanese ISE Model to the GCC



Arabian Food Production Company

stands as a beacon of excellence in the field of egg production within the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC). With an impressive capacity of 2 million layer birds, yielding a remarkable 600 million eggs annually, this company leads the way in the region's food production industry. Under the renowned brands Dana, Khaleej, and Baledi Fresh Eggs, they have become synonymous with quality and innovation.

One of their most notable achievements is Gulf International Poultry Farm (GIPF) in Ibri, Oman, the latest addition to Arabian Food Production Company. This state-of-the-art facility represents a marvel of modern technology and environmental stewardship. Built in collaboration with Japanese technical partners and shareholders, GIPF spans 18 square kilometres, featuring environmentally controlled houses, cutting-edge grading and packing facility, and stringent biosecurity measures. The implementation of the Japanese "ISE Model" ensures standards of safety, health, efficiency, and quality that are second to none.

"Innovation is the key to differentiation, and by adopting the world-famous Japanese 'ISE Model' to produce Dana and Khaleej eggs, we aim to become the leading Egg Producing group in the GCC," says Dr. Suheel Ahmed, Group CEO of Arabian Food Production Company.

Furthermore, their commitment to sustainability is evident in their measures to reduce their environmental footprint. Inside the Modern Poultry Farm (MPF) premises, they have introduced the use of bi/tricycles wherever possible to minimize the usage of fuel-consuming vehicles. Additionally, their dedication to food safety is unwavering as well-qualified and experienced professionals manage



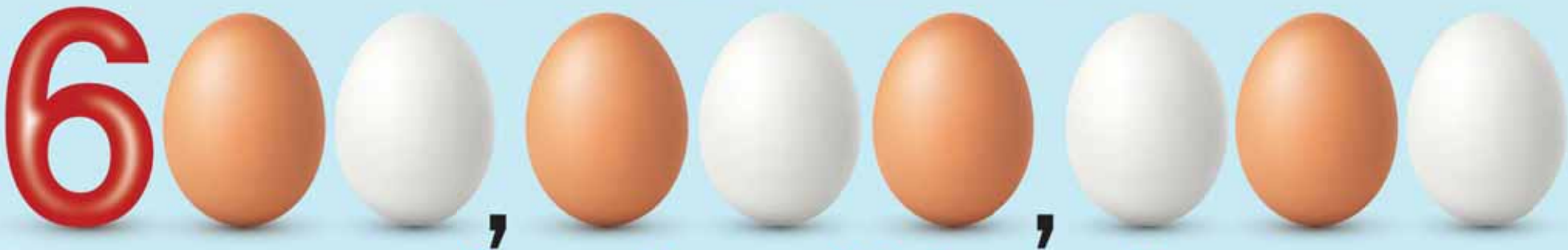
Innovation is the key to differentiation, and by adopting the world-famous Japanese 'ISE Model' to produce Dana and Khaleej eggs, we aim to become the leading Egg Producing group in the GCC

the health of the chickens 24/7 to enhance the safety of the products and have implemented state-of-the-art egg grading machines, with UV disinfection ensuring that the shell of every egg is disinfected for added food safety.

Arabian Food Production Company has not only set a high standard but has also demonstrated unwavering dedication to the well-being of their consumers and the environment. Consumer safety being a topmost priority; the group complies to many International standards and their production companies are certified with ISO 22000, ISO 14000, HACCP and Halal standards. In their pursuit of becoming the premier egg producer in the GCC, they spare no effort in elevating the standard of excellence in food production for all.



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FIRAS AL ABDUWANI,
Director General of Renewable
Energy and Hydrogen, Ministry
of Energy and Minerals



ABDUL RAHMAN AL YAHYAEI,
CEO of OPAL



HARITH AL SULEIMANY,
Executive Director of Seven
Seas Petroleum



NASSER AL MAQBALI,
CEO of MDO



SAIF AL HOSNI,
Vice-President of Gas Network
Management at OQGN

Leading experts deliberate energy sector
at the inaugural Gulf Business Summit,
organised by Gulf Leaders Circle

MUSCAT: Buoyed by the oversubscription of initial public offering (IPO) of OQ Gas Networks (OQGN), the sole operator of Oman's gas transportation system, a senior OQGN official said that "exciting times lie ahead in the renewable energy sectors and there is a piece of pie for every player."

The IPO received a good response from local, regional, and international investors and was oversubscribed by nearly 14 times, making it the largest IPO in the sultanate. Total demand for the OMR 288mn IPO surpassed OMR 4bn, resulting in an oversubscription level of 13.9 times, for all tranches combined.

While the data was released by OQGN on X, formerly Twitter, on Wednesday, Saif Al Hosni, Vice-President of Gas Network Management at OQGN, predicted that the IPO has "surpassed the expectations". The OQGN IPO opened for public subscription on September 26 and closed on October 9.

Speaking in a panel discussion on energy sector at the summit, titled Building Bridges: Exploring the Economic and Strategic Implications of Saudi Arabia-Oman MoUs and Vision Plans, Al Hosni said: "OQGN

subscription was a huge success. We have a growth strategy that focuses on our core business – transporting natural gas – but it also involves clean energy, renewables and decarbonisation. This is why we are here to talk about energy, technology and sustainability.

"We have great aspirations for transporting hydrogen and also CO2 to support CCUS initiatives in the country. We know that the government is paying detailed attention to the sector. If hydrogen is there to replace natural gas then we are also keen to be a critical player in transporting hydrogen."

On Oman's Net Zero 2050 goals, Al Hosni said: "The country is trying to take the best practices and best learning from other countries. It is an ambitious goal but it is doable. It is phased out and gradually we can achieve it but every sector in the value chain has a role to play to achieve it."

Plans for two blue hydrogen projects

The senior OQGN official said: "There is still demand for fossilised fuel. It will be a gradual transition and blue hydrogen presents the stepping stone

between conventional oil and gas and green hydrogen. There are plans for two blue hydrogen projects in Oman."

He added: "OQGN was the first company to sign a MoU with Hydrom, the national orchestrator for green hydrogen. We set this goal of transporting green hydrogen. We have signed a MoU with Fluxys Belgium, Belgium's independent operator of the high-pressure natural gas transmission network, the natural gas storage infrastructure and the liquefied natural gas (LNG) terminal. They share similar goals and aspirations with us and we believe this partnership will help us strengthen our position to be the national partner of choice for transporting hydrogen in the country."

"We are also partnering with other conventional oil and gas companies, either upstream or downstream, who want to capture CO2. We are thinking of ways to transport captured CO2 to areas for storage and utilisation."

He said: "Hydrom will be responsible for exporting Hydrogen from Duqm Port and Port of Salalah. At the port, the hydrogen will be transformed into green ammonia and then transported through tankers. At the destination the green ammonia would again be fragmented into hydrogen and nitrogen."

The panel discussion was moderated by well-known Shabiba TV presenter Abdullah Al Saidi, and the panel featured Abdul Rahman Al Yahyai (CEO of OPAL), Harith Al

Suleimany (Executive Director of Seven Seas Petroleum), Saif Al Hosni, Firas Al Abduwani (Director General of Renewable Energy and Hydrogen at Ministry of Energy and Minerals) and Nasser Al Maqbali (CEO of MDO).

Harith Al Suleimany, Executive Director of Seven Seas Petroleum LLC, said: "We are an integrated solutions provider and we are involved in various energy sectors. Among the verticals we have is manufacturing. The first focuses on well services and exploration production. In manufacturing, we have acquired an American company, Versa Tech, with a unit in Jebel Ali, Dubai. It specialises in manufacturing derivatives of wellhead control panels, chemical injection skids, hips systems and ESD systems."

Fully-owned Omani company

Al Suleimany added: "One of the latest equipment is going towards green energy which is an electrolyser. Today as a fully-owned Omani company, we manufacture electrolysers that will be used in the hydrogen industry. We work with strategic partnerships and we plan to expand our business in Saudi Arabia."

The inaugural Gulf Business Summit met with results and success as companies of Oman and Saudi Arabia signed MoUs to discuss ways to bolster trade relationships.

Seven Seas Petroleum signed a strategic agreement with

Saudi Arabia's Al Mulhem Petroleum Services Company KSA on nano-based technology that will be used in the energy industry.

Dr. Abdullah Al Dhafeeri of Al Mulhem Petroleum Services later addressed the gathering and spoke on the robust trade relationship between Oman and Saudi Arabia.

Al Suleimany said: "The agreement will open new doors of cooperation between Oman and Saudi Arabia and there is a great potential to do trade and business between the Gulf neighbours."

Firas Al Abduwani, Director-General of Renewable Energy and Hydrogen at Ministry of Energy and Minerals said: "We [Gulf nations] are endowed with both fossil and renewable energy, and have to plan to save renewable energy. There is a clear vision, and cooperation between the GCC countries in the field of energy and the Gulf countries hope to meet Net Zero commitments by 2050."

Human resources for alternative energies

Abdul Rahman Al Yahyai, CEO of OPAL, said: "We welcome our brothers from the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, and look forward to forging key partnerships with them, with regard to human resources for the renewable energy sector. The Oman Energy Association, since its establishment, has considered development of human resources as one of the most important pillars. Previously, the focus was on the oil

and gas sector, but now it has shifted to alternative energy."

Al Yahyai emphasised that the Omani Energy Association works in close coordination with the Ministry of Labour and the Ministry of Energy and Minerals. "Currently, more than 800 Omanis are looking for work in training institutes where the training is supervised by the Omani Energy Association. In addition to that the efficiency of the required programmes, be at the level of universities, vocational colleges, or even private training institutes is also monitored," said Al Yahyai.

Nasser Al Maqbali, CEO of Minerals Development of Oman (MDO), underlined the growth of the mining sector and said that "Oman's rich mineral wealth can help in the energy transformation."

He added: "We have noticed that market prices for metals are dynamic, but copper, which is found in good quantities in Oman, has high demand and prices."

In his welcome speech, Ali bin Hamad Al Rahbi, Assistant CEO of Development at Muscat Media Group, said: "The first Gulf Business Summit provides a platform to explore economic opportunities in the areas of the energy and technology sectors and sustainability."

"Muscat Media Group's venture to hold the summit coincides with the growing strong Omani-Saudi Arabia trade relations in all fields, in particular, economic, commercial and tourism fields," he added.



Fish farms add to food security in North Al Batinah

Five fish farming projects in the governorate are supported by the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Water Resources

Times News Service

MUSCAT: Fish farming projects are one of the food security projects in the North Al Batinah Governorate. Five fish farming projects in the governorate are supported by the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Water Resources. There are also other private projects owned by citizens, distributed across the various wilayats of the governorate. Engineer Abdullah bin Mohammed Al Haddabi, Director General of the General Directorate of Agriculture, Fisheries and Water Resources in North Al Batinah, said: "Investment in fish farming projects is one of the sources of food security, as



these projects receive technical follow-up by specialists in the Directorate's Department of Fisheries Wealth and specialists in the Ministry." "There are five fish farming projects in the governorate, some of which are licenced and others are being licenced in accordance with the requirements specified in the aquaculture and quality control regulations, distributed among the wilayats of the governorate, so that the area of the farming project does not exceed 10 percent of the total area of farmed agricultural land, based on what was stipulated in the regulations governing fish farming, with the availability of 15 culture tanks in each fish farm, and the presence of other facilities in each project that contribute to improving the farming process according to sound scientific foundations," Al Haddabi added. Al Haddabi pointed out that specialists in the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Wa-

ter Resources are following up on these projects and providing technical support, in addition to carrying out periodic visits to these farms and following up aspects of nutrition, and the extent to which the aquaculture ponds meet the specifications compatible with the safety of the fish and their freedom from diseases and pests, and conducting water tests, taking samples of farmed fish, examining them, and ensuring their suitability for human use. Al Haddabi explained that there are other methods in fish farming projects in terms of the components of the culture ponds, as there is a special project in one of the culture farms in the state of Sohar based on lined earthen ponds, which is an inexpensive type, with a method for draining the ponds' water and replacing it according to a working methodology that helps reduce the cost of production and other expenses in preparing fish farming ponds.



Strengthening Logistics Sohar Freezone inks agreement to expand open yard car storage hub

SOHAR: Sohar Port and Freezone signed an expansion agreement with the Middle East Group (SFZ) for the expansion of their open yard car storage hub in Sohar Freezone. This expansion demonstrates Sohar Port and Freezone's commitment to strengthening logistics capabilities and enhancing import and re-export operations. Originally established as a dedicated hub for automotive brands, this project has evolved to prioritise logistics excellence. By importing vehicles from renowned manufacturers from countries such as Thailand, Japan, Mexico, China, Egypt and South Africa, and subsequently re-exporting them to international markets in North Africa. Sohar Port and Freezone is positioned to play a pivotal role in facilitating global trade. Commenting on this milestone achievement, Omar Al Mahrizi, CEO of Sohar Freezone and Deputy CEO of Sohar Port, highlighted the project's contribution



to the integrated logistics system. He stated, "This expansion significantly enhances our ability to meet the growing demand for top-notch logistics solutions within Sohar Port and Freezone ecosystem. Our ability to attract more tenant companies reflects investor confidence in our logistics capabilities. "Our commitment to industry diversification and strategic collaborations reinforces Sohar Freezone's competitiveness and

further contributes to Oman's ongoing economic diversification." Mohamed Abdulla Aghil, Chairman of the Middle East Group, emphasised the significance of this expansion, stating, "Our partnership with Sohar Freezone has been instrumental in our journey to enhance our automotive logistics operations. We believe that this expansion will attract a broader customer base and foster valuable business relationships."

-ONA

CBO

Oman takes part in annual joint meetings of WB, IMF

MARRAKESH: The Sultanate of Oman, represented by the Central Bank of Oman (CBO) and the Ministry of Finance, takes part in the joint annual meetings of the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) for 2023. The meetings, held in Marrakesh, Morocco, will run till 15 October 2023. The meetings discuss a spectrum of topics, namely sustainable development, combating poverty and global economy forecasts, among other financial, economic and social topics.



Moreover, the activities held on the sidelines of the meetings will explore effective solutions to

global challenges. Oman will also take part in the annual meetings of Arab finance ministers. -ONA



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)	
					Small and Medium companies	Local companies
re- announces (273/2023)	supply and installation of air conditioners for the Omani Women's Association building in the Wilayat of Madha	Companies specialized in the field of supplying electrical, mechanical and industrial machinery and equipment and spare parts registered with the General Secretariat of the Tender Board in the first, second, third or fourth degree	Tuesday 31-10-2023 02:30 PM	Monday 20-11-2023 10:00 AM	R.O. 10/=	R.O. 25/=
381/2023	Preparing a draft business continuity policy for the Ministry of Social Development	Companies specialized in the field of information technology services / design, installation and maintenance of information programs and systems and registered with the General Secretariat of the Tender Board with excellent or first degree	Tuesday 31-10-2023 02:30 PM	Monday 20-11-2023 10:00 AM	R.O. 10/=	R.O. 25/=

❖

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HM reaffirms solidarity with Palestinian people



< FROM A1 The Council of Ministers hailed preparations for the Shura Council's elections that were undertaken by the Ministry of Interior and all departments concerned, to elect members for the Council's 10th Term.

In this context, His Majesty the Sultan underscored the need for all citizens' dedicated participation in the elections and the selection of competent members who are capable of imparting their expertise, since the power of the Shura Council is strongly linked to those who would be elected by the voters.

This approach assumes significance because the upcoming stage of national action calls for combining all efforts and utilising innovative and modern methods in order to safeguard the country's gains and accomplishments, contribute to strategic planning and push the march of progress forward.

In line with rapid growth seen in all segments of the media sector, notably the updates to modern media platforms, the Council of Ministers underlined the importance of developing this sector and devising active plans to take advantage of its developments in a manner that contributes to realising the national objectives of Omani media.

The Council of Ministers approved the promotion of Omani employees at units of the State's Administrative Apparatus (seniors of 2013 to 2016), so that the employees could access higher grades during 2024 and 2025, in accordance with the scheduled programme.

This was pursuant to the attention accorded by His Majesty the Sultan to social affairs and in complementation of the system of assessment of individual performance of employees and institutional achievement with a view to upgrading the overall government performance, disseminating the 'culture of performance' and developing the spirit of innovation and excellence.

After the Council of Ministers' reviewing a progress report about the Al Batinah Coastal Road project, His Majesty the Sultan gave directives to accelerate the steps undertaken by the Council of Ministers to address the challenges and difficulties facing the implementation of the project. The Royal directives also point to finalising related cash compensations before the end of 2023.

Speaking about regional and international affairs, His Majesty the Sultan reviewed the critical developments and the violence



taking place in the Palestinian arena. In this context, His Majesty the Sultan reaffirmed the Sultanate of Oman's solidarity with the Palestinian people. He reiterated Oman's support for all efforts calling for de-escalation, notably cessation of attacks on children and innocent civilians.

His Majesty the Sultan also called for releasing hostages in accordance with the principles of international humanitarian law. He urged the international community to shoulder its responsibilities by protecting civilians and lifting the illegal siege on Gaza and the rest of the Palestinian territories.

His Majesty the Sultan called for a resumption of the peace process to enable the Palestinian people to regain all their legitimate rights, notably the establishment of their independent state on the 1967 borders, with Al Quds Al Sharqiyyah (East Jerusalem) as its capital, as per the principle of the Two-state Solution, the Arab Peace Initiative and all relevant UN resolutions.

At the conclusion of the meeting, His Majesty the Sultan gave directives to address various matters of interest to the country and citizens. He wished all success in realising the good of the nation and its loyal people. -ONA



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CABLE OF GREETINGS

HM greets King of Spain

MUSCAT: His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik has sent a cable of greetings to King Felipe VI of the Kingdom of Spain on his country's National Day.

In the cable, His Majesty expressed his heartfelt sentiments and best wishes to King Felipe VI and the people of Spain.

- ONA

AT AL BUSTAN PALACE HOTEL



Sayyid Theyazin takes part in meeting of GCC ministers of culture

MUSCAT: The Ministers of Culture at the GCC States held yesterday their 27th meeting at Al Bustan Palace Hotel under the chairmanship of His Highness Sayyid Theyazin bin Haitham Al Said, Minister of Culture, Sports and Youth.

Jassem Mohamed Albudaiwi, Secretary General of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) said that the cultural march of the GCC Cooperation Council in the past secured historic achievements for the GCC states at the world level as they have got high ranking in the competitiveness rating index for 2023.

He also reviewed in his speech a number of GCC cultural events jointly organised by the GCC member states in 2022 besides the cooperation among the GCC

states in the field of training and honouring of talents. The speech of the GCC Secretary General also tackled a number of joint cultural meetings.

The meeting dealt with a number of issues aimed to enhance cooperation in the cultural field among the GCC States, notably the cultural strategy for the GCC states for 2020- 2030 and the vision for development of joint cultural work in the sectors of culture and tourism and the book fairs in the GCC states.

The meeting also dealt with protection of moral, religious and family values in the GCC and the support of the candidacy of Bahrain for the membership of the executive council of the UNESCO for 2023-2027 among other issues. - ONA



CULTURAL EVENT

ISC-Rajasthani Wing celebrates re-inaugural event

Times News Service

MUSCAT: The Indian Social Club Oman - Rajasthani Wing celebrated their re-inaugural event at Indian Social Club multipurpose hall on October 6, 2023.

While addressing the gathering, Amit Narang, Ambassador of India to the Sultanate of Oman, congratulated the Rajasthani Wing members for taking up the initiative of re-registration of the wing.

He mentioned that Rajasthan as the name suggests is land of Royals, is heart of India. Rajasthan's heritage and culture are rich and vibrant with ancient forts, palaces and its cuisine. He also praised the value of Rajasthan in the campaign of Incredible India.



The Ambassador of India said that he spent a few years of his childhood at a place on the borders of Rajasthan and shared his personal connection with the

state mentioning names of some monuments and dishes from Rajasthan, which filled the audience with a feeling of pride. He wished Rajasthani wing a great



success and a bright future. The convenor, Pankaj Phophaliya, welcomed the audience at the event 'Shubharambh'. He also thanked ISC Chairman P Babu

Rajendaran and ISC Vice chairman C M Sardar for their constant support. The crowd was overwhelmed when the Indian Social Club Chairman, Babu Raj-

endaran addressed the gathering congratulating Rajasthani wing and its members.

Among the dignitaries present were Amit Narang, Ambassador of India, Sheikh Anil Bhai Khimji, Director Khimji Ramdas Group, Ajay bhai Khimji, Director Khimji Ramdas Group, Dinesh Kumar Saraogi, Jindal Group, Pardeep Kumar, First Secretary Community Welfare Indian Embassy, Indian Social Club's, ISC General Secretary Shakeel.K.M, Pravashi Bhartiya award winner R.M.Parekh. Dignitaries also distributed certificates to the participants.

People also enjoyed Rajasthani songs, folk dances and cultural programmes.

Israel airstrikes demolish Gaza neighbourhoods, power goes out

Airstrikes smashed entire city blocks to rubble in the tiny coastal enclave and left unknown numbers of bodies beneath mounds of debris

GAZA: Palestinians in the sealed-off Gaza Strip struggled to find any safe area, as Israeli strikes demolished entire neighbourhoods. Hospitals ran low on supplies and a power blackout occurred, deepening the misery in Gaza Strip.

Airstrikes smashed entire city blocks to rubble in the tiny coastal enclave and left unknown numbers of bodies beneath mounds of debris.

Israel has vowed unprecedented retaliation against the Hamas militant group ruling the Palestinian territory after its fighters stormed through the border fence Saturday and gunned down hundreds of Israelis. Since then, militants



have continued to fire rockets at Israel, including a heavy barrage at the southern town of Ashkelon on Wednesday.

The war, which has already claimed at least 2,200 lives on both sides, is expected to escalate and compound the misery of people living in Gaza, where basic necessities and electricity were already in short supply.

Death toll rises

The death toll from the ongoing Israeli aggression on Gaza Strip and

the West Bank has surged to 974, with over 5,000 injured, the Palestinian Health Ministry announced on Wednesday.

According to a statement by the Health Ministry, 950 were martyred in Gaza Strip and more than 5,000 were injured in the ongoing violent airstrikes targeting the whole strip since Saturday.

The occupied West Bank was not spared from the ongoing Israeli aggression against Gaza Strip for the fifth day in a row. The number of martyrs climbed

to 24, after two Palestinians were shot by the occupation forces in the town of Silwan as the occupation forces continue targeting the Palestinian people using live fire in various areas of the occupied West Bank, including the city of Jerusalem. Nearly 150 were injured.

On Saturday, the Palestinian resistance launched the surprise “Operation Al Aqsa Flood” on Gaza Envelop settlements in retaliation of the continuous Israeli

violations against the Palestinian people.

UNRWA statement

Meanwhile, in New York, the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees (UNRWA) reaffirmed that the agency has been unable to bring any aid into the Gaza Strip since Saturday.

It added that UNRWA employees continue their humanitarian work despite the risks and difficult circumstances. Juliette Touma,

UNRWA Director of Communications said that the agency lost four of its employees as a result of the air strikes on Gaza and that at least 14 of its facilities were damaged directly and indirectly.

The UNRWA headquarters were subjected to collateral damage on Tuesday due to airstrikes in the surrounding neighbourhoods, she added.

Some of UNRWAs employees were taking shelter in the same compound in a nearby building during the strikes, she said. — **ONA**

PACIFIC COAST

Mexico hit by ‘extremely dangerous’ hurricane



JALISCO: Hurricane Lidia on Tuesday swept through Mexico's Pacific coast with winds gusting at 220 kph (140 mph).

The hurricane made landfall as an “extremely dangerous” Category 4 storm that is feared to bring heavy rainfall and lead to flooding and mudslides.

The eye of the storm appears to be near the small beach town of Las Penitas in the western state of Jalisco, according to the US National Hurricane Center (NHC). The hurricane appears to be moving south of Puerto Vallarta which is a popular tourist destination.

The forecasts suggest Lidia will bring rainfall of up to 12 inches (30 centimetres) to the states of Nayarit, Sinaloa and Jalisco.

Even though the storm is expected to weaken quickly while crossing mountains it still threatens to lash the region with heavy rainfall.

“A dangerous storm surge is

expected to produce significant coastal flooding near and to the south of where the center makes landfall. Near the coast, the surge will be accompanied by large and dangerous waves,” the NHC said.

Authorities have issued a hurricane warning for areas such as the Pacific archipelago of Islas Marias, the inland town of El Robito in Nayarit state, and the port city of Manzanillo.

President Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador said earlier that emergency workers were on alert and around 6,000 army personnel had been deployed to help residents.

Schools have been shut in certain areas and authorities have instructed people to take shelter.

Authorities near Puerto Vallarta have announced the airport will remain closed until 8 a.m. (1400 GMT) on Wednesday. Anticipating flooding, shop owners in the city also safeguarded their shops using sandbags. — **DW**

HERAT PROVINCE

Afghanistan hit by another strong quake

HERAT: A strong, 6.3 magnitude earthquake hit Afghanistan's Herat province on Wednesday just a few days after an earlier quake in the same northwestern region of the country had killed more than 1,000 people.

Wednesday's earthquake occurred early morning at a shallow depth of 9.6 kilometres (6 miles) with its epicenter about 29 kilometers north of Herat, according to the US Geological Survey.

The strong tremors forced authorities again to deploy emergency services and rescue teams. At least 80 people were injured in Wednesday's earthquake.

The latest quake led to a landslide that has blocked the main Herat-Torghondi highway, Information Ministry spokesman Abdul Wahid Rayan said.

In Chahak village, at least 700 houses have turned to rubble. Official data on casualties due to the latest earthquake was not available immediately.

“Mobile medical teams and officials have been working together and have transferred several injured people to hospital,” Herat's governor's office said in a statement.

The series of deadly earthquakes has left Afghanistan's population reeling from acute humanitarian crises.

Afghanistan's Taliban-run gov-



ernment has said that at least 2,400 people were killed and more than 2,000 were injured when repeated tremors rocked Herat on Saturday.

Afghan Public Health Minister Qalandar Ebad on Wednesday lowered the toll to around 1,000, attributing the confusion to the remoteness of the area and double reporting by agencies involved in the rescue effort.

Saturday's quake destroyed at least 11 villages in Herat province's Zenda Jan district, according to the UN.

Local media reported that residents in Herat, fearing more earth-

quakes, have resorted to sleeping in tents at night.

Severe earthquakes are common in Afghanistan, however, Saturday's earthquake was the worst to hit the war-torn country in 25 years.

EU, UN pledge aid to Afghanistan

The Taliban is facing a big challenge in providing emergency shelter and relief to the survivors of the earthquake. The European Union has pledged \$3.71 million in emergency humanitarian aid funding. The aid package adds to the 2.5 million euros that are for

organizations already carrying out relief work on the ground.

The new funding aid is in addition to the 89 million euros already allocated for humanitarian organizations in Afghanistan, the EU said in a statement.

The UN humanitarian coordinator is also going to provide a \$5 million emergency reserve allocation from the Afghanistan Humanitarian Fund (AHF).

Pakistan, Iran and China have agreed to send relief items such as food, blankets, medicines, tents and funds. Turkey, Iran and Abu Dhabi has also pledged to provide humanitarian aid to Afghanistan. — **DW**

UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY

India's G20 marked a historic milestone: UNGA President

NEW YORK: United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) President, Dennis Francis on Wednesday appreciated India's G20 presidency this year and said that India under its leadership has reminded the countries of their responsibility to save the world.

“India's recent G-20 presidency centred around the theme of Vasudeva Kutumbhakam, marked a historic milestone and echoed the message of one earth, one family, one future. It was under this theme that India has reminded us of the one very singular world that we call home and of our responsibility nay of the necessity to protect it,” he said.

While speaking at the ‘International Conference on Vasudhaiva Kutumbhakam’ in UN headquarters, UNGA President Francis also condemned the ongoing conflict between Israel and Hamas which claimed hundreds of civilian lives and left thousands wounded.

President Francis added, “I have spoken clearly in condemn-



world people are suffering and increasingly wary of conflict strife and vulnerability from the impacts of conflict to the climate emergency from pandemics to supply chain disruptions. Our era is becoming more volatile by the hour, and as always it is the weak and the vulnerable who are most impacted.”

President Francis stated the importance of unity & solidarity in these challenging times and highlighted that this theme of “One World, One Family” resonates with the need for global support.

Great alarm and distress

He further added, “It is in times like these of great alarm and distress that we often find it within ourselves to come together, whether out of the need for solidarity or for solace or both. It is entirely human to seek out community of support. I therefore deeply appreciate the leadership of India in reminding us of this important truth.” — **ANI**

ing the escalation of violence in the Middle East and the associated alarming deaths of innocent civilians on both sides. Clearly, the deteriorating security situation runs contrary in any shape or form to the concept of One World. One Family and indeed to the cherished principles of unity and solidarity.”

He said further, “Around the

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University of Technology and Applied Sciences

Local Online Tender Announcement

The Internal Tender Committee at the University of Technology and Applied Sciences announces the tenders shown in the following table:

S.N.	Tender No.	Tender Subject	Establishments eligible to bid	Document's Price	Last date for bid purchase online	Last date for bid submission
1	54/2023	Provide employment service for the building of University of Technology and Applied Sciences, Sohar branch	Companies specialized in this field and registered with the Tender Board at the Third Grade	RO 25/- (Twenty Five Omani Riyals)	12/11/2023 at 02:30 pm	20/11/2023 at 10:00 am
2	55/2023	Provide cleaning service for the building of University of Technology and Applied Sciences, Sohar branch	Companies specialized in this field and registered with the Tender Board at the Excellent, First, Second, Third & Fourth Grade	RO 25/- (Twenty Five Omani Riyals)	12/11/2023 at 02:30 pm	20/11/2023 at 10:00 am

- Tender documents may be purchased online starting from Sunday 12/10/2023 at 07:30 am through the following link: <https://etendering.tenderboard.gov.om>
- All bidding companies must attach with their bids the document acknowledging commitment to the bid, which is attached to the tender documents. The bid shall be sealed and signed by the authorized person, and shall be uploaded in the electronic tender system of the University of Technology and Applied Sciences with the tender name and number only.
- Preference in awarding will be given to small and medium enterprises registered with the Authority for SME development and whose bid includes the biggest percentage of Omanisation and a biggest purchase percentage of national products.
- The University shall not be bound to accept the lowest or any other bid.

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SPORTS

ROHIT'S TON GUIDES INDIA TO 8-WICKET WIN OVER AFGHANISTAN

Afghanistan's star-studded spin squadron failed to test the Indian batters as Rohit smashed them for boundaries all over the field



NEW DELHI: Indian skipper Rohit Sharma's explosive 131 guided the 'Men in Blue' to a comfortable 8-wicket victory over Afghanistan at the Arun Jaitley Stadium on Wednesday.

Afghanistan's star-studded spin squadron failed to test the Indian batters as Rohit smashed them for boundaries all over the field.

While chasing a target of 273, India got off to a flying start with the opening duo of Rohit and Ishan Kishan taking the fight to the Afghanistan bowlers.

India seemed to have adopted a T20I approach after adopting a careful approach for the initial overs. After the Indian captain struck a

boundary in Fazalhaq Farooqi's over, there was no looking back.

Rohit lifted his bat in the eighth over completing his half-century in just 30 balls, as the end of the powerplay approached India were enjoying a run rate of well above nine.

Rohit's onslaught allowed him to finish the powerplay with a score of 76* with Kishan standing on the other end merely as a spectator with a score of 11*.

In the 11th over, Kishan decided to pick up the pace of his innings while Rohit continued to score runs at his pace and scored a ton in the 18th over. His 63-ball hundred was the fastest-ever century scored by an Indian batter in a World Cup match.

India stumbled in the next over after Rashid Khan dismissed Kishan for 47. Kohli joined the skipper at the crease driving India towards a comfortable victory.

Rohit's glorious night came to an end with Rashid picking up his second wicket of the night. Shreyas Iyer came to join hands with Kohli who won the game with a beautiful boundary.

Kohli and Iyer remained unbeaten with scores of 55* and 25* respectively finishing the game with 15 overs to spare.

Earlier in the innings, Afghanistan skipper Hashmatullah Shahidi won the toss and opted to bat.

Afghanistan struggled early in their innings as they lost three wickets in the first 15 overs, Shahidi and Azmatullah Omarzai joined hands and stitched up a crucial 121-run partnership to bring Afghanistan back in the game.

After Omarzai's wicket, Shahidi stayed on the pitch as Afghanistan passed the 200-run mark inside 40 overs, Bumrah came into the attack and a flurry of wickets followed as Afghanistan finished the game on 272/8.

Brief Score: Afghanistan 272/8 (Shahidi 80, Azmatullah 62; Bumrah 4-39) vs India 273-2 (Rohit Sharma 131, Virat Kohli 55*; Rashid Khan 2-57). -ANI



TABLE TENNIS

Easy for top seeded players at WTT Contender Muscat 2023

MUSCAT: Japan's top seeded men's player and world No.4 Tomokazu Harimoto stormed into the last-16 round of the men's singles event of the WTT Contender Muscat 2023 at the Sultan Qaboos Sports Complex on Wednesday.

The talented paddler outplayed Belgium's Martin Allegro 3-1 (12-10, 11-9, 7-11, 11-2) and then teamed up with Japan's women top-seed and world No.8 Hina Hayata to march into the quarter-finals of the mixed doubles event.

Action on Wednesday featured the main round in the five events with Tomokazu sending strong signals to his rivals on his form.

Tomokazu and Hina beat Puerto Rico's pair of Daniel Gonzalez and Adriana Diaz 3-0 (11-3, 11-5, 11-3) in the mixed doubles to set up a mouth-watering last eight clash against fellow teammates Miwa Harimoto and Sora Matsushima.

The Japanese duo of Miwa and Sora beat Hong Kong's pair of Zhu Chengzhu and Lam Siu Hang 3-1 (13-11, 11-7, 7-11, 11-5).

In the women's singles, Hina progressed to the last 16 with an easy win over Tatiana Kulkova 3-0.

Also, Spain's mixed team duo of Maria Xia and Alvaro Robles secured a place in the quarters after



they upset Hong Kong's duo of Ng Wing Lam and Wong Chun Ting 3-2. The Spain pair next faces Singapore's Wong Xin Ru and Pang Yew En Koen after the Singapore pair beat Anna Hursey and Liam Pitchford 3-1.

Oman's doubles team of Muhanad al Balushi and Asad al Raisi suffered a 3-0 loss at the hands of Hungary's Bence Majoros and Avatar Nandor Ecseki, who moved into the last-eight round.

Sweden's doubles team of Anton Kallberg and Kristian Karlsson registered a 3-1 win over Korean pair of Lim Jonghoon and An Jaehyun to move into quarters.

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SAOG

OPENING BATTER

Gill to rejoin Indian team in Ahmedabad

MUMBAI: India's opening batter Shubman Gill will re-join the Indian team in Ahmedabad but remains doubtful for their World Cup fixture against Pakistan on October 14 as he recovers from dengue.

Gill did not travel with the team to Delhi for their second fixture against Afghanistan on Wednesday, after missing India's opening game of the World Cup against Australia on October 8. He was taken to hospital in Chennai for treatment but was subsequently discharged after his health improved.

"Gill is doing absolutely fine and is set to leave Chennai for Ahmedabad today," a BCCI official told an Indian news agency. "It is still not clear whether Gill will have a light training session at Motera on Thursday. His recovery has been fine but can't re-

ally be sure if he can play against Pakistan."

In Gill's absence, Ishan Kishan opened the innings against Australia along with skipper Rohit Sharma.

Gill is the leading run-getter in ODIs this year with 1230 runs at an average of 72.35 and a strike rate of 105.03. In his last four ODIs, he has hit two centuries and a half-century.

OMAN CRUDE PRICE FALLS

The price of Oman oil has decreased, with prices for delivery by December 2023 reaching \$88.18, said Dubai Mercantile Exchange (DME). The DME statement said that the price of Oman oil fell by 32 cents from the price of Tuesday, which was \$88.50. - **OMA**

MARKET

BUSINESS & FINANCE



MSX INDEX ENDS HIGHER

The MSX index closed at 4,778.48 points, up by 0.21 per cent from previous close. The Sharia Index ended up by 1.41 per cent at 468.60 points. Oman Cables Industry, up 9.86 per cent, was the top gainer while Dhofar Beverages, down 8.26 per cent, was the top loser.



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Standard Chartered working on developing ESG frameworks



Two of such frameworks have already been completed and six more are currently at various stages of completion across a number of sectors



Times News Service

MUSCAT: Standard Chartered Oman is currently working with several clients on developing environmental, social and governance (ESG) Frameworks, according to Hussain Al Yafai, CEO of Standard Chartered Oman.

In an exclusive interview with the *Times of Oman* he further said, "Two of such frameworks have already been completed in the electricity and telecommunications sectors. There are an additional six more currently at various stages of completion across a number of sectors including logistics, tourism and hospitality, mining and natural resources."

Elaborating about Standard

Chartered's first-ever green guarantee for a solar project in Oman, he said that in September 2023, Standard Chartered issued its first-ever green guarantee for China Energy Engineering Shanxi Electric Power Engineering Company (CEEC-SEPEC) in Oman. The green guarantee is for a solar project in Oman, where CEEC-SEPEC is the main EPC contractor. The project aims to develop and operate a state-of-the-art solar power plant, contributing to Oman's renewable energy targets and reducing carbon emissions. "Standard Chartered's guarantee not only demonstrates its confidence in CEEC-SEPEC's project but also reinforces its commitment to fostering a greener and more sustainable future," he added.

When asked whether this was

Oman's first green guarantee issued for a solar project, Hussain Al Yafai said, "Yes, this is a first-of-its-kind deal for the Sultanate of Oman. We are proud to have forged this deal in support of Oman's green agenda and as part of Standard Chartered's wider commitment to continuously provide clients with innovative solutions that meet their sustainability objectives."

"That said, this isn't the first green deal we've worked on in Oman. We've supported Oman Shipping Company on a sustainable finance deal worth \$35 million in 2020," he further added.

Hussain Al Yafai said that Standard Chartered has played a pivotal role in several notable deals in Oman.

"Earlier in 2023, the Bank served as the Sole Ratings Advisor and

Global Coordinator for Energy Development Oman (EDO) during its inaugural \$1 billion Sukuk Issuance. This transaction marked a historic milestone for EDO as it ventured into capital markets with its first benchmark USD Sukuk issuance.

"Moreover, it represented the first issuance from Oman in that year and the first USD-denominated transaction for an Omani Government-Related Entity since 2021," he added.

Standard Chartered was also appointed as Deal Manager by the Oman Government, through the Ministry of Finance, as part of a liability management exercise in which the Government sought to repurchase outstanding securities, potentially totalling up to \$1 billion. The exercise sought to support the Oman Government's

strategic objective of reducing its debt burden and enhancing its debt-to-GDP ratio, a critical metric in its pursuit of attaining an investment-grade rating.

Speaking about the advantages of issuing green guarantees, Hussain Al Yafai said, "The biggest advantage of green guarantees is that they de-risk the financing of the underlying project. By providing a guarantee, the risks to the funders of the solar project are reduced, meaning they accept a lower rate of interest on their funding, ultimately reducing the cost of the project."

"Lowering the costs of renewable energy projects is vital in increasing the flow of climate finance to developing countries like Oman," he pointed out.

Green guarantees are an important financial innovation that are playing a prominent role in financing the energy transition in developing countries.

"They encourage investors to move into new markets that may have traditionally been seen as more challenging. As such, green guarantees can accelerate the inflow of more private capital into these markets," he added.

Hussain Al Yafai further elaborated on such guarantees and said, "Credit guarantees are established financial instruments used to lower credit risk and the price of credit. In recent years, these guarantees have incorporated criteria linked to sustainable finance. A

green guarantee is linked to projects that meet climate goals such as renewable energy projects."

"However, there can also be 'blue guarantees' linked to projects that provide access to water and water-related infrastructure. There can also be guarantees linked to other sustainability objectives like access to housing, small enterprise development, or women's economic empowerment," he added.

Speaking about the beginnings of green guarantees, Hussain Al Yafai said, "While there has been a significant increase in the combined global market for green, social and sustainability bonds over the last five years, the developing world has not been the beneficiary of these financial flows."

This is despite the urgent need for these countries to invest in the energy transition, climate adaptation and resilience. Reasons for this are varied but include investor concerns about the risks of investments in developing countries and emerging markets.

"Green guarantees have been introduced to lower this risk for investors. Initially, led by Development Finance Institutions, they are increasingly being issued by commercial banks," he added.

Standard Chartered has been a proponent of this instrument in support of the region's climate transition, having recently issued a green guarantee with Siemens Energy in Qatar to reduce the State's carbon footprint.

CMA



CMA tells entities offering health insurance to register on Dhamani ePlatform

Times News Service

MUSCAT: The Capital Market Authority (CMA) issued a decision approving the regulation for health insurance electronic link (Dhamani ePlatform) to regulate and govern the linking process between the parties of health insurance relation based on an adequate legal framework.

The provisions of this regulation oblige entities offering health insurance services to register on Dhamani ePlatform. All the health insurance transactions and exchange of information will be done via the platform from the effective date of the health insurance policy to its expiry. Additionally, institutions of the insurance sector and private health institutions have started registration and linking with Dhamani to exchange claims and policyholders' data; which later will enable the transfer of all their processes to the platform.

Moreover, the regulation includes provisions on the registration mechanism and uses of the platform. It specifies the obligations of entities registered in the

platform to ensure that they benefit from its services. These entities are insurance companies, health Insurance claims administrators and health insurance claims revenue cycle managers and public and private health institutions. Also, it includes provisions ensuring proper regulation of this vital project and the necessary procedures followed by the CMA in cases of violating legislation regulating health insurance or misuse of the platform.

The Regulation contains a chapter specifying the fees for services offered by Dhamani which makes it an integrated regulatory platform that includes all regulatory, administrative, technical and financial aspects of health insurance processes. It saves effort and money by automating all processes of the health insurance sector and eliminating paper transactions.

It is worth mentioning that the Dhamani Platform represents a breakthrough in the regulation of the health insurance market in the Sultanate of Oman since it links insurance companies and private health institutions.

PARTNERSHIP

Agreement inked to establish polymer products factory in Samail Industrial City

Times News Service

MUSCAT: Oranss Technology Company and Mobel Polymers have signed an agreement to establish a polymer products manufacturing factory in Samail Industrial City, with an investment value of \$7 million for its initial phase.

The signing ceremony, attended by Eng. Dawood bin Salim Al Hadabi, CEO of the Public Establishment for Industrial Estates (Madayn), took place on the sidelines of the two companies' participation at the ongoing Home and Building Expo at the Oman Convention and Exhibition Centre.

The agreement was signed by Sharifa Al Naamani, Chairperson of Oranss Technology Board of



Directors and Dr Hany Makary, Chairman of Mobel Polymers Board of Directors.

Commenting on this agreement,

Sharifa Al Naamani pointed out that the factory's output will serve as a pivotal source of raw materials for various manufacturing sec-

EXPANSION

Oman Oil opens 3 service stations in Saudi Arabia

Times News Service

MUSCAT: Marking the occasion of Saudi Arabia's 93rd National Day, Oman Oil Marketing Company (OOMCO) recently celebrated opening three additional service stations in the Western Region.

The company's network in KSA expanded this year by 10 sites bringing the total number of operational service stations to 26. The Oman-based fuel marketer announced that it aims to operate 30 stations across Saudi Arabia by the end of 2023, which aligns with its aim to become one of the top five fuel marketers in the Gulf Cooperation Council by 2026. OOMCO celebrated Saudi National Day at select service



stations across the rapidly developing Kingdom. It hosted festive and family-friendly activities at three of its sites in Jeddah in the West and at four stations in Al Ahsa, Dammam, and Al Qatif in the East.

"The International Monetary Fund recently confirmed that the

Kingdom of Saudi Arabia was the fastest-growing G20 economy in 2022. By further expanding our operations, we are not only serving a vast market with a multitude of opportunities, but we are also allowing our business to grow. We are pleased an Omani has successfully travelled across borders," said

Jaber Mansour Al Wahaibi, General Manager of International Retail, Business Development, Strategic Planning, Marketing and Digital at Oman Oil Marketing Company.

Serving a wide variety of customer segments and as part of its non-fuel growth and retail transformation process, OOMCO service stations have developed into welcoming one-stop destinations where customers can buy quality fuel, lubricants, and other products and services. OOMCO's successful business model is a source of competitive advantage transferable across the region and Africa, including Tanzania and Egypt, among the other key growth markets for the Oman-based fuel marketer.

MARKET

MSX index ends higher

Oman Cables Industry, up 9.86 per cent, was the top gainer while Dhofar Beverages, down 8.26 per cent, was the top loser

MUSCAT: The MSX index closed at 4,778.48 points, up by 0.21 per cent from previous close. The Sharia Index ended up by 1.41 per cent at 468.60 points. Oman Cables Industry, up 9.86 per cent, was the top gainer while Dhofar Beverages, down 8.26 per cent, was the top loser. Shares of Renaissance Services were the most active in terms of number of shares traded while Oman Cables Industry were the most active in terms of turnover.

A total number of 339 trades were executed during the day's trading session, generating turnover of OMR1.91 million, with more than 5.36 million shares changing hands. Out of 40 traded securities, 16 advanced, 10 declined, and 14 remained unchanged. At the session close, GCC & Arab investors were net sellers for OMR162,000 while foreign investors were net buyers for OMR136,000, followed by domestic investors for

OMR26,000 worth of shares. Financial Index closed at 7,837.23 points, up 0.18 per cent. Prices of Ominvest, Al Madina Takaful, Oman & Emirates Investment, Dhofar Insurance, Bank Nizwa were up by 2.44 per cent, 2.35 per cent, 1.64 per cent, 1.08 per cent, 1.01 per cent respectively. Prices of United Finance, Muscat Finance, Bank Muscat, Ahli Bank were up by 3.39 per cent, 1.85 per cent, 0.70 per cent, 0.60 per cent respectively.

Industrial Index closed at 5,599.24 points, up 0.57 per cent. Prices of Oman Cables Industry, Voltamp Energy were up by 9.86 per cent, 4.35 per cent respectively. Prices of Dhofar Beverages, Oman Flour Mills, Jazeera Steel Products, Raysut Cement were up by 8.26 per cent, 4.43 per cent, 0.83 per cent, 0.77 per cent respectively. Services Index was up by 0.12 per cent before closing at 1,659.47 points. — **United Securities**

EXCHANGE KNOWLEDGE



Muscat Clearing and Depository signs MoU with Qatar CDC

MUSCAT: Muscat Clearing and Depository (MCD) today signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with Edaa (Qatar CDC) dealing with cooperation and coordination among central depository units in the Sultanate of Oman and the State of Qatar.

The MoU was signed by Mohammed Said Al Abri, CEO of MCD and Sheikh Saif Abdullah Al Thani, CEO of Edaa.

The MoU aims to exchange knowledge and expertise in all fields related to central clearing and depository and settlements in a bid to keep pace with international standards. — **ONA**

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INDICES

Index	High	Low	Value	Prev. Value	Diff	Diff %
MSX 30 INDEX	4,790.205	4,768.276	4,778.475	4,768.276	10.199	0.21
FINANCIAL INDEX	7,867.971	7,823.294	7,837.232	7,823.294	13.938	0.18
Industry Index	5,630.912	5,557.642	5,599.243	5,567.628	31.615	0.57
Services Index	1,661.693	1,656.756	1,659.468	1,657.440	2.028	0.12
MSX Shariah Index	468.598	462.089	468.598	462.089	6.509	1.41
MSX TR INDEX	6,306.881	6,278.009	6,291.436	6,278.009	13.427	0.21
FINANCIAL TR IDX	8,585.402	8,536.651	8,551.860	8,536.651	15.209	0.18
INDUSTRIAL TR IDX	6,015.215	5,936.945	5,981.384	5,947.612	33.772	0.57
SERVICES TR IDX	1,835.252	1,829.800	1,832.795	1,830.555	2.240	0.12

Trading Summary

Volume	Turnover	Trades	Market Cap	Up	Down	Equal	Sec. Traded
5,368,451	1,908,045	339	23,671,586,684	16	10	14	40

SHARE PRICE BULLETIN FOR WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 11

IDN	SECURITY NAME	VOLUME	TURNOVER	TRADES	OPEN PRICE	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE PR	PREV. CLOSE	DIFF (RD)	DIFF %	LAST PD	LAST PD	LAST OFFER	PAR VALUE	SECURITY SYMBOL	MARKET CAP
REGULAR MARKET																	
OM0000001533	OMINVEST	36,000	15,125	3	0.420	0.422	0.420	0.420	0.410	-0.010	-2.439	0.420	0.421	0.422	-0.000	OMVS	280,713,479
OM0000001681	OMAN EMIRATES HO.	60,000	3,720	3	0.062	0.062	0.062	0.062	0.061	-0.001	-1.639	0.062	0.062	0.062	-0.000	OEIO	7,556,250
OM0000002168	AL ANWAR CERAMIC	38,200	6,509	8	0.178	0.182	0.178	0.180	0.180	0.000	0.000	0.179	0.179	0.182	-0.000	AACT	39,600,000
OM0000002176	JAZEERA STEEL PRODUCTS	187,000	44,596	3	0.240	0.240	0.238	0.238	0.240	-0.002	-0.833	0.238	0.238	0.246	-0.000	ATMI	29,725,714
OM0000002226	ALJAZEERA SERVICES	5,059	1,083	1	0.214	0.214	0.214	0.214	0.210	-0.004	-1.905	0.214	0.214	0.231	-0.000	AJSS	13,097,714
OM0000002374	UNITED FINANCE	256,000	14,593	15	0.058	0.058	0.057	0.057	0.059	-0.002	-3.390	0.057	0.057	0.064	-0.000	UFCI	20,299,256
OM0000002796	BANK MUSCAT	641,119	183,574	37	0.288	0.288	0.285	0.285	0.287	-0.002	-0.697	0.286	0.282	0.286	-0.000	BKMB	2,139,323,163
OM0000003026	OMAN TELECOM	133,500	136,037	13	1.019	1.019	1.019	1.019	1.019	0.000	0.000	1.019	0.918	1.019	-0.000	OTEL	764,250,000
OM0000003125	GLOBAL FINANCIAL INVESTMENT HO.	93,000	5,678	5	0.061	0.062	0.061	0.061	0.061	0.000	0.000	0.061	0.060	0.061	-0.000	GFIC	12,200,000
OM0000003224	RENAISSANCE SERVICES	1,018,840	428,759	66	0.420	0.421	0.420	0.420	0.420	0.000	0.000	0.420	0.420	0.421	-0.000	RNSS	99,292,200
OM0000003398	SOHAR INTERNATIONAL BANK	554,036	58,803	10	0.106	0.106	0.105	0.105	0.105	0.000	0.000	0.105	0.105	0.115	-0.000	BKSB	574,128,293
OM0000003968	OOREDOO	557,000	214,661	12	0.384	0.386	0.384	0.386	0.381	-0.005	-1.312	0.386	0.386	0.391	-0.000	ORDS	251,264,473
OM0000004248	SMN POWER HOLDING	48,760	3,657	5	0.075	0.075	0.075	0.075	0.075	0.000	0.000	0.075	0.074	0.075	-0.000	SMNP	14,972,670
OM0000004768	MADINA TAKAFUL	20,000	1,700	4	0.085	0.087	0.085	0.087	0.085	-0.002	-2.353	0.087	0.085	0.087	-0.000	AMAT	15,225,000
OM0000005005	ALMAHA CERAMICS	3,494	874	1	0.250	0.250	0.250	0.250	0.250	0.000	0.000	0.250	0.250	0.275	-0.000	AMCI	13,750,000
Total	15	3,647,908	1,117,368	186													

Parallel Market

OM0000001095.....	DHOFAR INSURANCE	112,000	20,948	5	0.189	0.189	0.187	0.187	0.185	-0.002	1.081	0.187	0.186	0.000	-0.000	DIGS	20,413,830
OM0000001180.....	NATIONAL GAS	10,000	910	1	0.091	0.091	0.091	0.091	0.090	-0.001	1.111	0.091	0.090	0.091	0.000	NGCI	7,735,000
OM0000001178.....	MUSCAT GASES	10,000	1,120	1	0.112	0.112	0.112	0.112	0.112	0.000	0.000	0.112	0.106	0.112	0.000	MGMC	3,360,000
OM0000001251.....	DHOFAR BEVERAGES	1,000	200	1	0.200	0.200	0.200	0.200	0.218	-0.018	-8.257	0.200	0.000	0.200	0.000	DBCI	4,000,000
OM0000001400.....	OMAN FLOUR MILLS	15,000	8,100	4	0.540	0.540	0.540	0.540	0.565	-0.025	-4.425	0.540	0.509	0.560	0.000	OFMI	85,050,000
OM0000001418.....	RAYSUT CEMENT	53,620	6,914	8	0.129	0.129	0.128	0.129	0.130	-0.001	-0.769	0.129	0.129	0.129	0.000	RCCT	25,800,000
OM0000001590.....	MUSCAT FINANCE	30,000	1,600	2	0.054	0.054	0.053	0.053	0.054	-0.001	-1.852	0.053	0.049	0.054	0.000	MFCFI	16,278,755
OM0000001707.....	OMAN CABLES INDUSTRY	284,069	580,932	46	1.948	2.142	1.948	2.140	1.948	-0.192	-9.856	2.140	1.960	2.140	0.000	OCAI	191,958,000
OM0000001897.....	MAJAN COLLEGE	1,665	160	1	0.096	0.096	0.096	0.096	0.095	-0.001	-1.053	0.096	0.096	0.100	0.000	BACS	8,640,000
OM0000001962.....	AL MADINA INVESTMENT HOLDING	20,631	822	6	0.040	0.041	0.038	0.038	0.038	0.000	0.000	0.038	0.037	0.041	0.000	AMII	3,230,000
OM0000002077.....	AL OMANIYA FINANCIAL SERVICES	437,500	65,275	3	0.149	0.150	0.149	0.150	0.149	-0.001	-0.671	0.150	0.145	0.150	0.000	AQFS	46,151,161
OM0000002200.....	AHLI BANK	176,774	29,346	8	0.170	0.170	0.165	0.165	0.166	-0.001	-0.602	0.165	0.160	0.170	0.000	ABOB	387,693,482
OM0000002572.....	OMAN OIL MARKETING	10,000	8,100	1	0.810	0.810	0.810	0.810	0.805	-0.005	-1.622	0.810	0.800	0.800	0.000	OCMS	55,760,250
OM0000003531.....	GALFAR ENGINEERING & CONTRACTING	3,650	584	1	0.160	0.160	0.160	0.160	0.160	0.000	0.000	0.160	0.157	0.160	0.000	GECS	32,477,831
OM0000003661.....	VOLTAMP ENERGY	3,883	466	3	0.120	0.120	0.120	0.120	0.115	-0.005	-4.348	0.120	0.120	0.124	0.000	VOES	9,768,330
OM0000004420.....	BANK NIZWA	197,905	18,703	14	0.099	0.100	0.099	0.100	0.099	-0.001	-1.010	0.099	0.099	0.099	0.000	BKNZ	223,685,303
OM0000004925.....	ALBATINAH POWER	105,334	2,413	5	0.022	0.023	0.022	0.023	0.023	0.000	0.000	0.023	0.022	0.023	0.000	BATP	15,522,411
OM0000004933.....	AL SUWADI POWER	43,600	1,006	6	0.023	0.024	0.023	0.024	0.024	0.000	0.000	0.024	0.022	0.024	0.000	SUWP	17,145,572
OM0000007084.....	MUSCAT CITY DESALINATION	30,740	2,531	4	0.083	0.083	0.082	0.082	0.082	0.000	0.000	0.082	0.081	0.085	0.000	MCDE	12,735,133
OM0000007811.....	MUSANDAM POWER	25,500	6,936	3	0.267	0.282	0.267	0.282	0.267	-0.015	-5.618	0.282	0.267	0.282	0.000	MSPD	19,849,980
OM0000008868.....	THE PEARL REIF	8,500	1,020	1	0.120	0.120	0.120	0.120	0.121	-0.001	-0.826	0.120	0.120	0.127	0.000	PRPD	60,972,426
OM0000008934.....	ABRAJ ENERGY SERVICES	57,712	17,154	20	0.297	0.299	0.297	0.298	0.297	-0.001	-0.337	0.299	0.299	0.299	0.000	ABRJ	229,519,600
Total	22	1,639,083	777,239	144													

STATE-OF-THE-ART CEMENTING SOLUTIONS

Abraj implements innovative cementing technologies for ARA Petroleum project

MUSCAT: Abraj Energy Services, a leading provider of oil and gas services, recently announced the successful implementation of innovative cementing solutions for its client ARA Petroleum, adding yet another accomplishment to its impressive portfolio.

With superior sealing properties and resistance to fluid migration, Abraj's trailblazing cementing technologies demonstrated outstanding efficiency in mitigating loss issues saving ARA Petroleum considerable days of rig time. Abraj had also deployed a robust project-tailored design to execute the deep liner cementing process, ensuring superior wellbore stability throughout drilling operations, as verified by the cement bond log testing. The results were exceptional even in the slim liner designs where clearance did not exceed 1.7 cm.

Furthermore, Abraj utilised their premium high-pressure,



high-temperature (HPHT) concrete cementing solution to ensure stability during drilling operations and reduce risks associated with pressure surges that may occur when using traditional cementing methods under HPHT conditions, thereby strengthening the wellbore and ensuring its integrity throughout the well's lifetime.

This remarkable success stems from the collaboration between

Abraj and ARA Petroleum to innovate strategies tackling different challenges, including but not limited to total loss scenarios.

Eng. Saif Al Hamhami, CEO of Abraj Energy Services, said, "Clients capitalising on our state-of-the-art cementing solutions will benefit from improved accuracy and faster loss curing times compared to conventional solutions, significantly reducing their opera-

tional time. Better yet, with our cementing solutions requiring fewer resources than other technologies on the market today, Abraj's customers will be better equipped to optimise long-term operational expenditure."

ARA Petroleum acknowledged the success of the newly developed cementing technologies, highlighting Abraj Energy Services' proven operational excellence in powering critical operations for ARA Petroleum.

"Receiving such positive feedback is invaluable to us. We constantly strive to provide our partners with cutting-edge solutions that cater to their specific needs while maintaining the highest safety standards. Our newly developed cementing technologies accomplish precisely that, offering an efficient way to complete projects swiftly without compromising quality or performance," Eng. Saif Al Hamhami added.

BOOSTING ENVIRONMENTAL AND ECONOMIC BENEFITS

Oman introduces state-of-the-art unit for processing slaughter waste

Times News Service

MUSCAT: In a groundbreaking development for the GCC region, the Sawari Rendering Unit has become the first scientific processing facility dedicated to collecting and processing slaughter waste. This significant initiative is set to bring about numerous advantages for Oman, with far-reaching implications for the environment and the economy.

The unit was inaugurated by Engineer Yasir Bin Ibrahim Al Ajmi, Director General of Madyan (The Public Establishment for Industrial Estates).

Abdul Latheef, Chairman – Sawari, who is the Board Member of Oman Chamber of Commerce and Industry and Managing Director of Badr Al Samaa Group of Hospitals as well said, "One of the primary benefits of this new unit is the proper processing of slaughter waste, which will significantly reduce dumping and pollution.

"By ensuring that waste is handled in a scientific and responsible manner, the Sawari Rendering Unit is contributing to a safer and more sustainable environment, not only for the present but also for future generations."

Moreover, the introduction of this facility will enable slaughter units to save on waste disposal expenses. This cost reduction will stimulate business growth in the



farming, slaughter, and rendering sectors. As a result, the food industry in Oman will become more self-sufficient, leading to increased employment opportunities and bolstering the country's overall economic growth.

Currently, the Sawari Rendering Unit has a daily capacity to handle 30 tons of waste, covering a distance of approximately 300 km. However, with plans for expansion, the unit aims to increase its capacity to handle up to 50 tonnes of slaughter waste in the near future, adapting to the growing demand.

Setting itself apart, the Sawari Rendering Unit boasts unique features, such as enhanced efficiency in odour control and the continuous utilisation of treated water.

These innovative practices not only contribute to water conservation but also ensure the smooth operation of the factory with minimal water consumption.

Employing state-of-the-art technology and drawing on global expertise, this scientifically advanced rendering unit represents a significant achievement for Oman. Beyond its local impact, the establishment of the Sawari Rendering Unit is expected to contribute to the country's economic growth by strengthening its position in the food industry.

With its numerous environmental and economic benefits, the Sawari Rendering Unit stands as a testament to Oman's commitment to sustainability, innovation, and progress.

ECONOMIC GROWTH

India to account for 25% of global energy demand in two decades

NEW DELHI: India is likely to account for 25 per cent of global energy demand growth over the next two decades, Union Minister for Petroleum and Natural Gas Hardeep Singh Puri said and asserted the demand for energy will continue to provide fuel for future economic growth.

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HOW YOU CAN DONATE PLASMA AND SAVE A LIFE

MILLIONS of people around the world rely on plasma to treat a range of conditions, including rare inherited diseases, severe burns and trauma, liver disorders, and for cancer supportive care.

“Plasma-derived medicines are often the only therapies available for patients with many rare, chronic and potentially debilitating and life-threatening diseases,” says Anita Brikman, president and chief executive officer of the Plasma Protein Therapeutics Association. “In short, donating plasma helps save lives.”

To encourage individuals to learn more and to donate plasma, if they are eligible, the Plasma Protein Therapeutics Association is sharing patient insights, along with answers to some frequently asked questions about the uses of plasma in healthcare and why we need more of it:

Q: What is plasma and why is it so useful in treating such a broad range of health conditions?

A: Plasma is the single largest component of human blood, making up about 55% of blood volume. Plasma proteins help the body fight infection, clot blood and regulate blood pressure. Patients with certain genetic disorders are unable to make some of those critical proteins and antibodies, but they can be isolated from donated plasma and help compensate for that shortfall. Plasma-derived medicines can also be beneficial for individuals with a compromised immune system due to treatment for cancer or an organ transplant.

Who benefits from plasma donations?

Medicines made from donated plasma help those with certain neurological, lung, bleeding and immune system disorders lead healthy, productive lives. Some of these rare conditions can be life-threatening without the right treatment.

After noticing that it was hard to breathe during tasks such as shoveling snow and mowing the lawn, military veteran Dan Coffin was tested for and diagnosed with Alpha-1 antitrypsin

deficiency, an incurable, inherited disorder that may cause lung disease and liver disease.

“I went from being extremely physically fit to having trouble with simple tasks in the yard. The plasma protein therapy infusions I receive, thanks to the generosity of donors, make it possible for me to live an active and healthy life again,” says Coffin.

Many others also benefit from plasma-derived therapies, such as trauma patients, organ transplant recipients, children with HIV, and anyone who has ever received a rabies or tetanus shot. Both treatments, which are often delivered after incidents such as being bitten by a wild animal or stepping on a rusty nail, are made from plasma that contains antibodies to those pathogens. Additionally, for some mothers and babies, an incompatibility in blood type can result in severe anemia and jaundice in newborns unless the mother receives Rho(D) immune globulin made from plasma.

Why are plasma-derived medicines unique?

Plasma-derived medicines are not like other pharmaceuticals. Plasma can’t be made in a lab and it is not an infinite resource. It often takes hundreds of individual donations to collect enough plasma to create the medicine needed for a single patient each year. That’s why patients who rely on these therapies are so dependent on donors.

How can people donate plasma?

To learn more about donor eligibility and the donation process, and to find a local licensed and certified plasma donation center, visit donatingplasma.org.

“So many people know about donating blood, but they don’t know about the need for donated plasma,” says Brikman. “Plasma donations are vital in helping patients who rely on plasma-derived medicines to improve or save their lives. Donate plasma today and give someone the chance to live a happier and healthier life.” -StatePoint

SPORTS

Ruwi Rangers crowned D20 champions for second time

Bousher Busters lose by seven wickets in the final played at Al Amerat on Tuesday

MUSCAT: Ruwi Rangers clinched the first title of the 2023-24 Oman domestic season in style as they cruised to a seven-wicket victory over Bousher Busters in the Oman D20 final at the Oman Cricket Academy ground in Al Amerat on Tuesday night.

The T20 tournament pitted the eight top-flight teams vying for the coveted crown over 14 days with a total of 32 matches being played.

It was the second time in the three-year D20 tournament history that Ruwi Rangers emerged as champions, having won the inaugural title in 2021.

Defending champions Darsait Titans bowed out in the Eliminator stage.

The final was expected to be a closely-fought match with both the teams reaching the summit clash, recording the maximum number of wins as compared to the other participating teams in the group stage.

Ruwi Rangers won six of the seven games while Bousher Busters claimed five wins from seven.

In fact, Ruwi Rangers had an upper hand going into the final as



they had defeated Bousher Busters in Qualifier 1.

Bousher Busters booked a place in the final after they defeated Amerat Royals in Qualifier 2. Amerat



Royals had won the Eliminator against Darsait Titans.

Put to bat, Bousher Busters failed to get off to an explosive start as Mohammed Adeb Usma-



ni played a sedate innings of 69 off 61 balls. Busters were restricted to 133, with Rangers' pace duo of Bilal Khan and Kaleemullah picking two wickets each. Sanju Sajeev

was the most successful bowler with three wickets for 15.

Chasing a modest target, Hannan Rizwan's 60 off 57 and a fiery knock by Khalid Kail, who

smashed 35 off 20, powered Rangers to victory. Wasim Ali, Aqib Ilyas and Sufyan Mahmood picked a wicket each. Rizwan was adjudged player of the final.

Busters' Aqib Ilyas was adjudged the player of the tournament for his allround performance. Ilyas smashed a total of 405 runs at a strike rate of 162+ and took nine wickets in nine matches.

Paul Sheridan, Oman Cricket (OC) vice-chairman, handed the champions trophy to Rangers' skipper Mohammed Nadeem.

Speaking after the title win, Nadeem said, "It was absolutely a terrific tournament for us. We displayed collective team effort in all departments."

"We have a good bunch of experienced players in Mohammed Naseem, Bilal Khan, Kaleemullah, Karan Sonavale and myself, but also have some young talent like Adeb Usmani and Khalid Kail. I thank our team management, co-owner Chaitanya Khimji, team manager Vinu Mathew and our coach Prashant Chandran. We also thank Oman Cricket and the ground staff for providing us with excellent playing facilities."

Duleep Mendis, OC chief development officer handed the runners-up trophy to Busters skipper Sufyan Mahmood while Ashley Fernandes, ITW, presented the player of the final trophy to Hannan Rizwan.

Brief scores: Bousher Busters 133/9 in 20 overs (Mohd Adeb Usmani 69; Sanju Sajeev 3/15) lost to Ruwi Rangers 135/3 in 17.5 overs (Hannan Rizwan 60).

U19 ASIA CUP QUALIFIERS

Aditya named Oman skipper for ACC U19 Premier Cup



MUSCAT: Aditya Gurumukhi will lead a bunch of talented Oman U19 cricketers at the forthcoming ACC U19 Premier Cup Malaysia 2023, which will be played from October 13-24.

The U19 50-over tournament, organised by the Asian Cricket Council (ACC), is a qualifying event for the ACC Men's U19 Asia Cup to be held in Pakistan in December this year.

Oman have been placed in Group B in the 16-team tournament along with Qatar, China and fancied UAE.

The other three groups comprise Nepal, Bahrain, Saudi Arabia, and Iran in Group A, Singapore, Kuwait, Thailand, and Maldives in Group C and Hong Kong, Malaysia, Japan, and In-

donesia in Group D. The matches will be staged at three venues.

The top teams from each group will qualify for the semi-finals.

Speaking ahead of the team's departure, Oman coach Syed Aamir Kaleem said: "The squad is balanced with a combination of experienced and newcomers. The team has been training hard from the past two months, which included a few practice games with quality senior sides and inter-squad games to work on match situations."

"The boys are confident and positive. We are looking forward to playing quality cricket in the coming few days. We certainly aim to do well and bring glory, more importantly, qualify for the Asia Cup."

The top three teams from the

tournament will qualify for the ACC Men's U19 Asia Cup.

Squad: Aditya Gurumukhi (captain), Aryan Bisht (vice-captain), Narayana Satish, Mustaqeem Asif, Ashish Valappil, Rahil Habibulla, Varshith Sai, Prathish HR, Arafat Islam, Giriharan K, Aditya Girish, Saumya Sampat, Adharsh Srinivasan, Wajih Abbas.

Officials: Coach: Syed Aamir Kaleem, assistant coach: Amir Ali, manager: Sher Mohammed, and physio: Sarvanan T.

Oman's schedule (all matches begin at 5.30am, Oman time): October 13: Oman vs Qatar, October 16: Oman vs UAE, October 18: Oman vs China, October 22: Semi-finals; October 24: Final and 3/4th place.

PREMIER LEAGUE

Adebayo 'tired' of racist abuse after fresh incident: Luton

LONDON: Luton Town say striker Elijah Adebayo is "tired" of the racist abuse aimed at him after suffering it again following his side's defeat by Tottenham.

The Hatters were beaten 1-0 by Spurs on Saturday during a weekend of matches to highlight the Premier League's No Room For Racism campaign.

Luton say the "vile, cowardly act of online abuse" was posted on Instagram.

The club has reported the post to Bedfordshire Police, the Premier League and Instagram's parent company, Meta.

"We have spoken to Elijah to offer him our support," said a Luton statement.

"But do you know what the sad thing is? He said it's happened so many times now that he can't be bothered to report or respond to discrimination anymore. He's tired of it."

Players at all 10 Premier League games last weekend took the knee to show unity against all forms of discrimination and they will also do so for the next round of top-flight matches. - Agencies



APPOINTMENT



Rooney appointed Birmingham boss

LONDON: Birmingham City have appointed Wayne Rooney as their new manager on Wednesday.

The 37-year-old former England captain has joined the Championship club on a three-and-a-half-year deal, *BBC Sport* reported.

Rooney succeeds Blues head coach John Eustace, who was sacked on Monday after 15 months in charge.

The ex-Everton and Manchester United striker's appointment is the first managerial change made by Blues' new American owners Shelby Companies Limited since they took over in July. Rooney will be supported by his former England team-mate and current England Under-21 assistant Ashley Cole and his old United colleague John O'Shea, the assistant coach of the Republic of Ireland men's national team.

Carl Robinson and Pete Shutleworth will also be part of Rooney's backroom staff after

both assisted him at DC United.

It will be Rooney's third job in management following spells at the MLS club and Derby County and his first game will be at Middlesbrough on 21 October.

Rooney retired from playing and was appointed Derby boss in January 2021, following a spell in caretaker charge. His time at Pride Park was marred by off-field troubles. He saved them from relegation from the Championship by a single point four months after taking on the role.

But during his first full season in charge in 2021-22, the Rams were given a 21-point deduction for being in administration and EFL breaches, alongside a transfer embargo. Derby were relegated to League One and Rooney left in June 2022 with the club still in administration.

He returns to England after just over a year with Washington-based DC United. - Agencies

AUSTRALIAN OPEN



Nadal to make Grand Slam return at Australian Open

MELBOURNE: Rafael Nadal will make his return to Grand Slam tennis following hip surgery at the 2024 Australian Open, tournament chief Craig Tiley said on Wednesday.

Spain's 22-time Grand Slam champion has been out of action since January and underwent surgery in June.

Nadal, 37, has said he plans to retire at the end of the 2024 season.

According to Tiley, former women's champions Naomi Osaka, Angelique Kerber and Caroline Wozniacki also plan to return after maternity breaks.

Nadal has been sidelined since injuring his hip flexor in a second-round defeat by Mackenzie McDonald at January's Australian Open.

In announcing he would miss the French Open for the first time in 19 years - the tournament where he has won 14 of his majors - Nadal said next year will "probably" be the last year of his career.

"We can reveal exclusively here that Rafa will be back," Tiley said.

"He's been off for most of the year and in talking to him over the last few days he confirmed he will be back, which we're really excit-

ed about, the champion of 2022. That's awesome."

While Nadal is back on court, those close to him say that it is too early to confirm whether he will be in Melbourne in January.

His representative Benito Perez-Barbadillo confirmed Nadal is back practising but added "there is no date confirmed, scheduled or programmed yet for his comeback".

Two-time Australian Open champion Nadal claimed his most recent Slam at Roland Garros in 2022. Novak Djokovic has since taken his leading men's tally to 24.

On the expected return of Osaka, Kerber and Wozniacki, Tiley added: "We'll welcome them - and their families - back to Melbourne with open arms and can't wait to see what their next chapter brings."

The Australian Open will become a 15-day event for the first time in 2024 in an attempt to reduce the number of late-night finishes at Melbourne Park.

At the 2023 tournament, Novak Djokovic won a record-extending 10th title and Aryna Sabalenka won her first Grand Slam singles title. - Agencies

ROUND-UP

Bank Muscat celebrates winning teams in Green Sports programme

These sports teams attract a large number of young people in Oman, helping them showcase their talents and providing them with opportunities for physical, emotional, and mental development

MUSCAT: In emphasis of its pioneering role in corporate social responsibility, community development and the youth, Bank Muscat, the leading financial service provider in the Sultanate of Oman, recently organised an event celebrating the 20 winning teams for this year's 12th edition of the Green Sports programme, with the attendance of Sheikh Waleed Khamis Al Hashar, the bank's chief executive officer, in addition to other executives from the bank, representatives of the winning sports teams, and journalists from leading media houses in the country.

Since its inauguration in 2012, the programme has benefitted 183 teams with over 50,000 members across the Sultanate of Oman. These sports teams attract a large number of young people in Oman, helping them showcase their talents and providing them with opportunities for physical, emotional, and mental development.

The Green Sports programme is one of the Bank's flagship CSR programs aiming at sporting skills of the Omani talented youth in the sports and cultural domains. The support provided by the program includes greening of football pitches, water desalination and lighting. In addition, the pro-



gramme annually receives excellent participation by sports teams from across the governorates desiring to enhance green spaces for the Omani youth to improve their sporting skills by equipping these spaces with sports facilities.

This year, 124 teams have competed, thereby asserting the programme's success and popularity among Omani youth.

During the celebration, Sami Bait Rashid, Assistant General Manager, Meethaq Personal Banking, Bank Muscat, delivered a speech where he said that year after year, the programme sees excellent participation by sports teams from across the Sultanate confirming the bank's tremendous support in making the program a great success among the Omani youth.

Considering that Bank Muscat plays a pioneering role in the CSR

programmes, he further added that it will continue its commitment to providing ample opportunities for young Omanis to develop their talents, thanking the teams for their cooperation in making the program a grand success and wishing them all the best in their coming journey.

During the delivery of the speech, he also emphasised that Bank Muscat will continue supporting and developing the "Green Sports" programme to keep pace with the recent developments in this prominent sector, especially when it comes to equipping the green spaces with modern infrastructure facilities necessary to create an ideal platform for social engagement among the youth, encouraging the winning sports teams to continue their efforts to serve the community better at the sports, social, and cultural levels.

Expressing his happiness and pride in the Kamazar Sports Team from Khasab Musandam, Sheikh Zaid Bin Mohammed Al Kamzari, the winning sports team manager, said that the "Green Sports" programme represents an important initiative for developing the sporting skills and talents of the Omani youth. Al Kamzari also emphasised that the winning sports team will successfully complete developing the green fields partnering with the bank, thanking Bank Muscat for this one-of-a-kind communal and societal initiative that contributes to the achievement of direct and indirect objectives.

From his side, Juma Bin Abdullah Al Suleimi, the manager of the Itihad Imti Sports and Cultural Team from Izki, also said that the programme plays a vital role in enhancing the sports teams' contribution to developing the Omani

community and enhancing the infrastructure needed to improve the football green fields. Expressing his pride in being one of the winning teams and happiness with the support provided by the programme, Al Suleimi further added that this programme is of huge importance in terms of improving the Omani youth's sporting skills and equipping them with convenient space to practice various cultural and sporting activities.

Bank Muscat has recently announced the winning sports teams across the Sultanate who benefited from the support provided by the program. The winners include: Suwaiq Sports Team from Suwaiq, Al Marsa Sports and Cultural Team from Sohar, al Tawun Sports and Cultural Team from Saham, Al Tadamon Sports and Cultural Team from Jalan Bani Bu Hassan, Al Wahra Sports and Cul-

tural Team from Ibri, Al Shubaika Sports and Cultural Team from Al Rustaq, Al Falaj Sports and Cultural Team from Al Khaboora, Al Samoud Sports and Cultural Team from Bidiya, Itihad Imti Sports and Cultural Team from Izki, Al-Baz Sports Team from Samail, Al Hazm Sports Team from Bahla, Blida Sports and Cultural Team from Shinas and Al Shati Sports Team from Al Musanaah for Lighting System. In addition, Al Itihad algharbi Sports team from Jalan Bani Bu Ali, Al Sadd Cultural and Sports Team from Wadi Bani Khalid, Al Ettifaq Sports Team from Quriyat, Wadi Al-Tayyeen Sports and Cultural Team from Dema wal taean, Al Raheeb Sports Team from Sur, Kamazar Sport Team from Khasab and Hayy Sports Team from Mahoot who shall receive support for artificial or natural turf.

MODERN COLLEGE OF BUSINESS AND SCIENCE



MCBS signs pact with Ministry of Education

MUSCAT: As part of the implementation of its strategy (2021-2025) aimed at expanding its operations and extending its services to additional social segments, the Modern College of Business and Science signed with the Ministry of Education an agreement to implement two academic specialisations from the BTEC system in a number of government schools, namely: BTEC Business and BTEC Information. The agreement was signed by Dr Munir bin Mohammed Al Maskari, CEO of the college, and by Dr Madiha bint Ahmed Al Shaibaniya, Minister of Education.

The Ministry of Education's decision to enter into this agreement with the college comes as a result of evaluating several proposals submitted by various educational and training institutions providing specialized technical education at the post-basic education level in the Sultanate. MCBS's proposal received the ministry's approval due to its relatively long experience in offering (BTEC) programmes, due to the maturity of its practices in this aspect, due to the increasing

body of its BTEC graduates since 2014, and due to the level of its technical team and its logistical capabilities, in addition to other criteria that the Ministry took into account in its decision.

Under this agreement, the college team for the (BTEC) program will work side by side with the Ministry of Education team, starting from the current academic year, to implement the two specialisations of the (BTEC) system in four government schools in the governorates of Muscat and North Al Batinah for males and females. The initiative comes as part of a project to diversify post-basic education paths in the Sultanate and to focus on the practical component of school education.

The ultimate goal is to expand students' opportunities and prospects after school education. As is known, the international (BTEC) system is based on achieving a balance between preparing students to continue their studies and preparing them to join the labour market at the same time, which is the principle that Oman's government seeks fulfil according to its future vision, Oman 2040.

LIMITED-TIME OFFER

Make your marque by enjoying Certified Pre-Owned Mercedes-Benz at exclusive price

MUSCAT: Experience the luxury of owning and driving one of the latest Certified Pre-Owned vehicles from Mercedes-Benz Oman by benefitting from an exclusive offer. Valid until December 31, the limited-time offer includes a selection of luxury Certified Pre-Owned vehicles, with prices ranging from OMR17,845 to OMR65,095 including VAT.

All Certified Pre-Owned vehicles included in this exclusive offer were manufactured in 2023, except for the Mercedes-Benz GLE 450 4MATIC, made in 2022. The luxurious vehicles have been meticulously cared for and are well-maintained - undergoing one of the most demanding certification processes in the industry. The vehicles all have relatively low mileages, starting from 3,701km up to 10,255km.

The fleet includes a range of sedans, including the A 200 in digital white metallic with leather in two-tone classic red and black; the CLA



200 Coupé in mountain grey with leather in two-tone classic red and black; and the C 200 in mojavé silver metallic with leather in two-tone power red and black. It also includes a range of SUV's, such as the GLE 450 4MATIC in high-tech silver metallic with leather two-tone macchiato beige; the Mercedes-AMG GLE 53 4MATIC+ Coupé in emerald green metallic with two-tone AMG Nappa

leather truffle brown, and an S 450 4MATIC in designo diamond white bright with exclusive Nappa leather carmine red/black.

All vehicles underwent the rigorous 150-point vehicle inspection performed by Mercedes-Benz technicians. The vehicle inspection includes a thorough engine and fluid checks, and on-road driving evaluations - while all maintenance is performed using Mer-

cedes-Benz Genuine Parts.

Being part of the exclusive Certified Pre-Owned Mercedes-Benz family entitles customers to many complimentary benefits and rewards, such as an unlimited-mileage warranty of one year with an option to extend up to two years, 24/7 roadside assistance for certain vehicles, and a history of all services performed. There are also a number of service packages available.

REMITTANCE AND FOREIGN EXCHANGE

Unimoni Exchange opens its remodelled branch in Oman Avenues Mall

MUSCAT: Unimoni Exchange, a leading remittance and foreign exchange brand in the Sultanate of Oman, has opened its refurbished branch in Oman Avenues Mall, with a fresh look and feel, the new location is spacious and bright with modern fitout and technology, which makes it more convenient for our valued customers.

"In our constant endeavour to provide the best customer experience we are glad to open our

refurbished outlet in the Oman Avenues Mall, Al Ghubra. With more space and new look, it gives a fresh feel to our customers with same commitment of unmatched customer service.

"Our remodelled branch is well equipped to provide greater experiences and enhanced convenience to the customers. We look forward to welcoming our existing and new customers," said Boban MP, CEO Unimoni Oman.



ROUND-UP

Ford unveils next-gen Everest at GCC distributor meet in Oman

The next-gen Ford Everest made its Middle East debut for the first time ever, blending adventure-ready capability with exceptional comfort and customer-focused technology in a rugged, refined, and fun-to-drive SUV

MUSCAT: Recently Ford Motor Company unveiled the all-new Ford Everest 4x4 SUV at an exclusive GCC distributor meet in Oman. Providing on-ground support was Ford's Oman distributor – Arabian Car Marketing Company. The next-gen Ford Everest made its Middle East debut for the first time ever, blending adventure-ready capability with exceptional comfort and customer-focused technology in a rugged, refined, and fun-to-drive SUV. Engineered to excite, the Next-Gen Ford Everest has been built for the adventurous – with capability at its core. Inside, premium levels of craftsmanship have created a quiet and refined sanctuary for up



to seven, while class-leading technology and safety features offer driver and passengers comfort and peace of mind on every journey. To showcase this, three trims of the Next-Gen Ford Everest were presented at the reveal; XLS, XLT and Limited. A range of different variants and models will be available, depending on the market, to meet the needs of Ford customers. Everest's wider track and longer wheelbase enabled designers to create a more progressive, muscular appearance. Designers also put a lot of thought into the function and feel of the interior, taking inspiration from modern homes and bringing in plush materials, premium finishes, and ambient lighting in areas customers will appreciate them best. The XLT and Limited

trims are equipped with integrated wireless charging, while all series receive a svelte new leather trimmed e-Shifter, and an electric parking brake. Access to the third row is much easier thanks to second-row seats that slide further forward than before. Additionally, all occupants now have places to store their things and depending on the model, charge their devices with power outlets in all three rows. The Everest Limited trim further elevates the interior and exterior experience with a best-in-class Bang & Olufsen 12-speaker system delivering premium audio ambient lighting and a dual-panel sunroof. On the outside, the Limited comes with exclusive 21-inch alloy wheels and a variety of

chrome accents. The Next-Gen Ford Everest is also equipped with an 8-inch digital instrument panel in addition to large, high-resolution portrait 10.1-inch or best-in-class 12-inch touchscreens. Next-Gen Ford Everest is loaded with Ford's latest SYNC® 4A system, which comes customer-ready with its voice-activated communications, entertainment, and information systems. The portrait-orientated 12-inch screen is linked to a 360-degree camera with split-view display to make parking a breeze in tight urban spaces or to assist when negotiating particularly tricky terrain while out exploring. The XLT and Limited series include a wireless charging dock,

allowing for cable-free top-ups of device batteries and a windscreen mounted USB port to keep your camera charged while videoing your adventures. For drivers of the Limited series, the Advanced Automated Parking System makes it easier than ever to fit their Everest into even the tightest of spots. Depending on the market, the Next-Gen Ford Everest gives customers a choice of two engines to suit their lifestyles. Starting with Ford's proven, 2.3L EcoBoost® Turbo petrol engine, mated to an efficient 10-speed SelectShift automatic transmission which delivers Best-in-Class 296HP power and 420Nm of torque (more than any competitor V6). Additionally, a 2.0L Single-Turbo diesel comes standard with a 6-speed automatic transmission, supplying 168HP and 405Nm of torque providing strong low speed torque, great low speed throttle response and optimum fuel economy to meet the needs of the simplest to the toughest customer. The Next-Gen Ford Everest is ready for adventures, with a 4x4 system utilizing a 2-speed Electronic Shift On the Fly (ESOF) transfer case, underbody skid plates, a rear locking differential and off-road selectable drive modes plus two functional tow hooks upfront. Where available, Everest's dedicated off-road screens display vehicle information and a front camera view of the terrain ahead, with predictive overlay guidelines designed to help the driver negotiate obstacles. With a single button press, the driver can view their driveline and diff-lock indicators, steering angle

and guides as well as vehicle roll and pitch angles. Everest comes loaded with new and enhanced driver assist technologies and safety features. A new far-side airbag positioned between driver and front passenger provides additional protection in the event of a side impact. The addition of the far-side airbag and driver knee airbag brings the number of airbags up to six, including front driver and passenger and dual side curtain airbags that cover all three rows. While all three trims of the Next-Gen Ford Everest have cruise control, Adaptive Cruise Control with Stop-and-Go and Lane Centering, which is able to detect lane markings and helps keep the vehicle centered in the lane, comes standard on the Everest Limited. Other driver assist and safety features available in every trim of the Next-Gen Ford Everest include Reverse Parking Aid, Rearview Camera and Auto Headlamps. While the Everest XLT features Front Parking Sensors, the Everest Limited offers a wealth of additional convenience and safety technologies. The Ford Everest will soon be available at Ford showrooms in Oman. Arabian Car Marketing Company has been bringing smiles to customers with Ford's spectacular range of vehicles for more than three decades. With its team of talented professionals, easy availability of spare parts and full-fledged service facilities, Arabian Car Marketing Company enhanced experiences for Ford customers, giving them several opportunities to enjoy a fulfilling ownership period.

FAST-CASUAL RESTAURANT



Mall of Muscat adds new eatery Fatty Patty to its lineup

MUSCAT: Oman's leading shopping destination Mall of Muscat just added a new fast-casual restaurant/eatery to its lineup recently. Fatty Patty, a brand renowned in the region for its excellent cuisine located on the mall's second floor offers patrons a wide range of delectable food options. The new location promises to further solidify Fatty Patty's reputation for culinary excellence. The restaurant, launched by Bahrain-based Chef Mahdi Taheri, focuses its menu on its homemade patty, along with a variety of signature sandwiches, hot dogs, sliders, juices, shakes and more. Interestingly, food enthusiasts also have the option to build their own sandwiches at this diner. A spokesperson for Fatty Patty said, "Mall of Muscat is a great location for our brand. Its buzzing atmosphere and emphasis on leisure and entertainment, perfectly encapsulates the vibrant energy

we envision for Fatty Patty. Our goal is to offer an extensive range of dishes, with a strong emphasis on innovation and creativity, to bring the finest in international cuisine to Oman. We aim to provide top-quality food experience while meeting customer needs for healthy choices. We have ambitious plans for local and global expansion, aspiring to be a brand emulated across different markets." A spokesperson for Mall of Muscat said, "We are delighted to welcome Fatty Patty, a definite favourite among food enthusiasts. We are confident that its presence will significantly enhance our portfolio. This branch at the Mall of Muscat further solidifies Fatty Patty's promise to deliver high-quality food while adhering to the highest standards of service. A constant focus on superior offerings ensures that Fatty Patty will continue to be a name synonymous with culinary excellence."

MILESTONE EVENT

BankDhofar expands reach with more than 100 branches

MUSCAT: BankDhofar, a leading financial institution in Oman, announced the official inauguration of its branch at Knowledge Oasis, Muscat. The milestone event took place on October 10, with the presence of Shaikh Faisal Abdullah Al Rawas, Chairman of the Oman Chamber of Commerce and Industry and other senior officials of BankDhofar. BankDhofar has witnessed a rapid expansion of its branch network recently, and the new bank branches are located in strategic locations in all governorates of the Sultanate of Oman, including major cities and even rural areas. This expansion has helped BankDhofar reach a wider range of customers and provide them with the banking services they need. Faisal Hamed Al Wahaibi, Chief Government Banking & Invest-



ment Banking Officer of BankDhofar, expressed his gratitude on this momentous occasion: "The opening of more than 100 branches is an evidence to our commitment to the Sultanate of Oman's

economic growth. BankDhofar remains steadfast in its mission to support and empower the business community in Oman, particularly SMEs. This new branch is another step toward fostering

financial growth, innovation, and prosperity in the Sultanate." Located strategically at Knowledge Oasis, Muscat, this new branch serves as a financial center for the business community in the area, which comprises over 200 companies. The primary objective of this branch is to cater to the personal needs of the companies and their workforce by providing tailored financial solutions and expert guidance. BankDhofar looks forward to continuing its journey of excellence, supporting businesses, and serving the financial needs of the community and has ambitious plans to open branches across Oman to be closer to customers. The bank continues to invest in technology and training its customer facing workforce to offer accessible and personalised banking services.

INCREDIBLE DEAL

Remarkable starting prices on GMC Yukon, Sierra

MUSCAT: In an effort to make luxury and performance accessible to all, Moosa Abdul Rahman Hassan & Co. is offering the GMC Yukon and Sierra at remarkable starting prices. With these incredible deals, now is the perfect time to bring home the vehicle you've always desired. The GMC Yukon and Sierra have long been celebrated for their bold design, cutting-edge technology, and unparalleled performance. These vehicles are engineered to elevate your driving experience with every mile. From the striking exterior to the meticulously designed interiors, both models offer an impressive blend of style and functionality. "We're excited to bring these



outstanding starting prices to our valued customers. The GMC Yukon and Sierra are renowned for their capability and sophistication. With these offers, we aim to make these

incredible vehicles more accessible to our community. It's all about delivering exceptional value and enhancing the driving experience," said Muhammad Faisal Nawaz,

Marketing Manager at Moosa Abdul Rahman Hassan & Co. Nawaz further added, "At Moosa Abdul Rahman Hassan & Co., we are driven by a passion for excellence in the automotive industry. With a legacy of delivering exceptional vehicles and unparalleled customer service spanning over decades, our commitment to providing the finest vehicles and unbeatable value remains unwavering. As we invite you to rediscover power and performance with the GMC Yukon and Sierra, we extend our heartfelt gratitude to our valued community of drivers who have placed their trust in us. Visit our showrooms today, and let's embark on a journey of driving excellence together."





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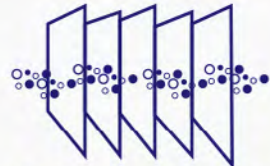
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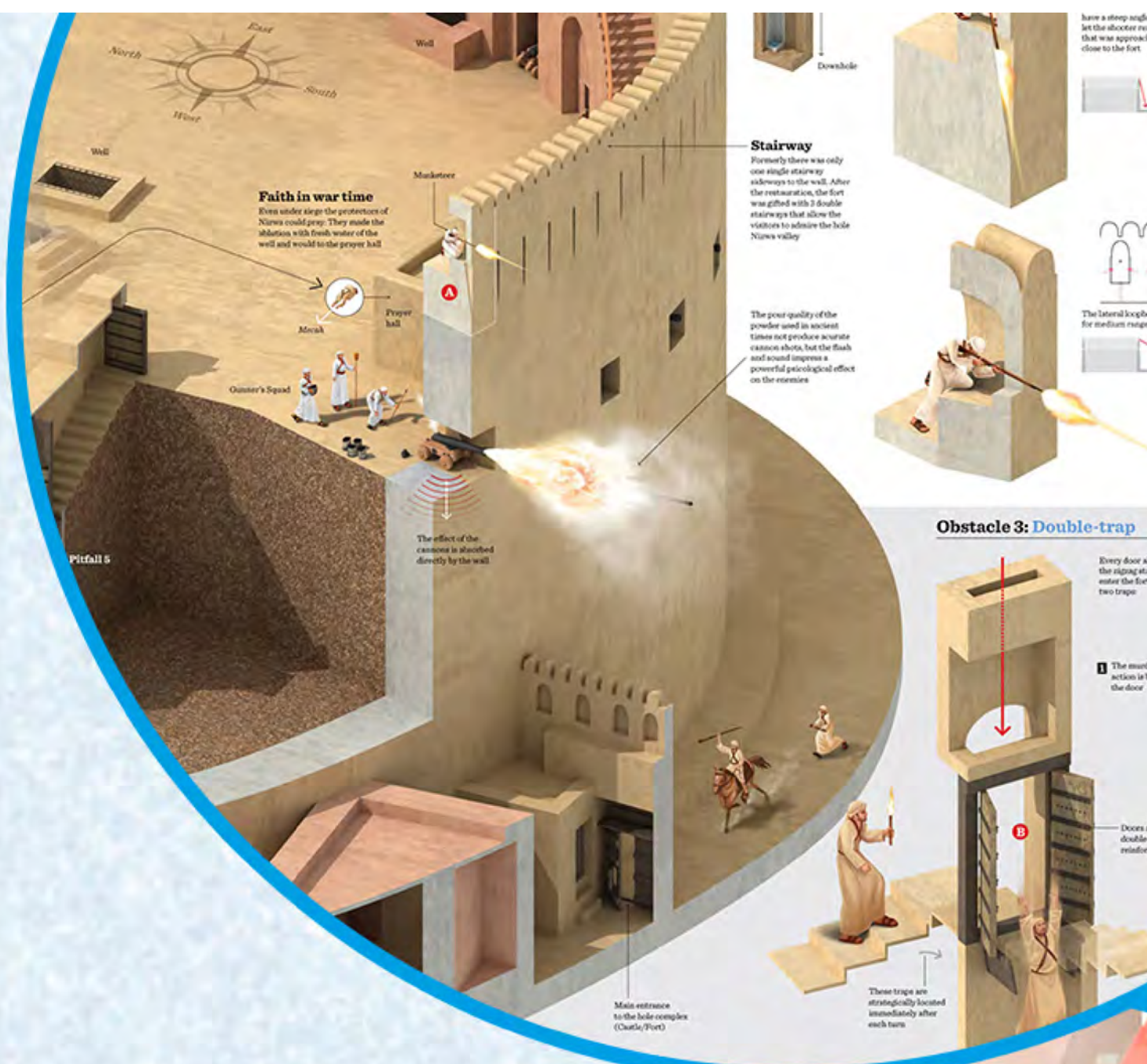


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