

HOLIDAY NOTICE

The next edition of Times of Oman and Al Shabiba will be on Sunday, July 23, 2023 due to New Hijri Year 1445 holiday.



6 085010 120010

HM RECEIVES WRITTEN MESSAGE FROM MAURITANIAN PRESIDENT

His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik received a written message from President Mohamed Ould Cheikh Ghazouani of the Islamic Republic of Mauritania, dealing with bilateral relations between the two countries. **>A2**



Founded 1975 · Volume 48 No. 99 | 16 Pages · Baisas 200 · Subscription OMR63 | ISO 9001:2008 Certified Company | Chairman/Editor-in-Chief: Mohamed Issa Al Zadjali | Printed & Published by Muscat Media Group

[TIMESOFOMAN.COM](https://timesofoman.com) [FACEBOOK.COM/TIMESOFOMAN](https://facebook.com/timesofoman) [TWITTER.COM/TIMESOFOMAN](https://twitter.com/timesofoman) [YOUTUBE.COM/USER/TIMESOFOMANONLINE](https://youtube.com/user/timesofomanonline) [TIMESOFOMAN.COM/WHATSAPP](https://timesofoman.com/whatsapp) [TIMESOFOMAN.COM/RSS](https://timesofoman.com/rss) [LINKEDIN.COM/COMPANY/TIMES-OF-OMAN](https://linkedin.com/company/times-of-oman) [INSTAGRAM.COM/TIMESOFOMAN](https://instagram.com/timesofoman)



Apply now

T & C Apply: bankmuscat.com



Apply for a credit card today and get **zero** annual fee for the first year



Bank Muscat. Better Everyday.

DELEGATED BY HM, SAYYID ASA'AD ARRIVES IN SAUDI ARABIA

Delegated by His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik, HH Sayyid Asa'ad bin Tarik Al Said, Deputy Prime Minister for International Relations and Cooperation Affairs, Personal Representative of His Majesty the Sultan, arrived in Saudi Arabia to take part in the 18th consultative meeting of leaders of GCC countries. **See also >A6**



TOP THREE INSIDE STORIES

OMAN

Shura agrees to hike wages of Omanis

1 Shura Council has approved the report of the Youth and Human Resources Committee on the desire to raise the wages of Omanis workers in the private sector. **>A2**

WORLD

EU-Latin America meet off to a rocky start

2 European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen said Europe aspires to be 'the partner of choice for Latin America and the Caribbean'. **>A7**

SPORTS

Ronaldo rules out Europe return

3 Cristiano Ronaldo has ruled out returning to play in Europe, while insisting that the Saudi Pro League is stronger than the United States' Major League Soccer (MLS). Ronaldo joined Al Nassr in January. **>B6**

HENLEY PASSPORT INDEX

Oman rises in world's passport ranking

Times News Service

MUSCAT: Oman has made a jump in the latest Henley Passport Index, jumping eight places from last year's rankings to be placed 60th in the world.

According to Henley & Partners who conducted the rankings, Oman has now access to 85 countries, an increase of four more countries than in 2022.

Singapore has the world's most powerful passport, according to the latest Henley Passport Index.

The Asian city-state knocked Japan off the top spot after five years at the summit with Singapore citizens able to visit 193 destinations out of the world's 227 visa-free. Japan slid down to 3rd place. The UAE, has climbed three places from last year to rank as the 12th most powerful passport. Holders of Emirati passports can now visit 179 destinations visa-free.

Over the past 10 years, Oman passport has climbed five places from 65 in 2013 to 60, but has now much more access to countries, 22 more than in 2013.

The study, which ranks the world's passports according to the number of destinations their holders can access without



obtaining a prior visa, is compiled using official data from the International Air Transport Association.

The latest report puts Germany, Italy and Spain in second place, with holders able to travel to 190 destinations visa-free.

The UK has turned the table on a six-year decline, jumping two places from sixth to fourth. The US does not fare so well, plummeting a further two places to eighth. Both the UK and the US jointly held 1st place on the index in 2014.

India is also showing signs of strength, climbing to 80th, up five places from the previous list. **>A5**

EJADA IMPACT

17,000 EMPLOYEES TO RECEIVE CASH AWARDS

Following its launch in January 2022, the Ministry of Labour's appraisal system for government employees, covering 175,000, has borne fruit, according to a top ministry official

Times News Service

MUSCAT: The appraisal system for public sector employees, now in the second year of running, has borne fruit with the Ministry of Labour declaring 17,000 government employees eligible for monetary benefits after achieving excellent grades in Ejada system.

Rolled out by the Ministry of Labour (MoL) in January 2022, the Individual Performance Measurement and Institutional Proficiency System, also known as Ejada, covers more than 175,000 employees in 57 units of the state administrative apparatus.

Speaking to Al Shabiba Radio, Mohammed bin Al Waleed Al Hinai, Director of the Ejada System Project at the labour ministry, said, "The system has been one of the key projects in line with Oman Vision 2040, and it aims to improve the quality of services provided to citizens, enhance the community's confidence in government performance, in addition to clarifying the employee's duties and responsibilities. Following the completion of the first year, our first results found 17,000 employees with excellent grades. They will be awarded with a bonus of



half of their basic salary for their excellent performance."

Ejada is helping units to complete their annual operational plans, enhancing employee affiliation with the unit, and maintaining competencies.

Return on investment

The system is further enhancing the return on investment for human capital. It is also evaluating the performance of employees, defining their tasks clearly, and establishing harmony between the organisation's plan and the employee's plan.

Furthermore, the system enhances the level of transparency in employees' distribution of tasks as well linking the entitlement of incentives and rewards to the level of productivity.

Al Hinai said that the Ejada system combines three projects in one to measure 'individual performance, annual plans, and institutional proficiency'.

"It is a system for human capital governance, improving performance evaluation systems and linking productivity with incentives," he said.

Al Hinai said: "The cycle of the individual performance measurement system and institutional proficiency has to go through several stages, namely: Determining the annual goals of the unit or institution, setting goals for employees, direct supervision by managers, reviewing the results of the end-of-year evaluation for all employees and determining the employee's rank, approving and publishing the results of performance evaluation." **>A5**

TheGuide
A unique experience
theguideoman.com @guideoman



39°
MUSCAT



STAYCATION

Extended weekend: It's time to explore beautiful Oman

Times News Service

MUSCAT: Oman's three-day weekend for the Holy Prophet Hijra Anniversary and the advent of the new Hijri year 1445 AH on July 20 has led to a 'staycation' boom.

The official holiday for employees of the public and private sectors has been declared on Thursday.

With the Sultanate having a Friday-Saturday weekend, it would give an opportunity to people to enjoy a three-day weekend starting from tomorrow.

A staycation refers to a holiday spent in one's country of residence or one spent on day trips to local attractions, rather than abroad.

Many expats and locals are opting to spend their holidays in the Sultanate, instead of going abroad, providing a welcome boost to domestic tourism sector.

With clouds and light drizzle gathering over the mountains of Dhofar, Salalah remains a top choice for travellers in Oman. "It's perfect time to visit Salalah," commented a leading



hotelier of Salalah.

The first activities of the Khareef Dhofar season 2023 were launched on Saturday evening.

Organised by the Dhofar Municipality, several activities have been planned at Salalah Park, Awqad and Al Saada Parks, as well as the Return of the Past in Al Hafah area and Attin Square in the Attin Plain for the citizens and the

residents of Oman.

Indian expat Prakash said that he was leaving for Salalah on Thursday morning. "It's Khareef season so Salalah remains a top choice for us. The city's greenery and nature forces you to visit the place time and again," he said.

Besides Salalah, the mountain range of Al Hajar Range, Jabal Akhtar is seeing an influx



of occupancy rates at the hotels.

Arup Singh Deo, Director of Operations and Projects, Al Nahda Hotels & Resorts, said long weekends in Oman are always a blessing for the hotels as they boost domestic tourism. "The Wilayat of Al Jabal Al Akhdar is one of the important tourist destinations in the Sultanate of Oman throughout the year, due to its mild climate in

summer and very cold in winter, and the availability of many hotels," he said.

Oman's geological diversity, rich landscapes, and unique heritage offer residents and visitors a wealth of variety to choose from.

Topping the list for many is certainly the pristine coastline, extending from the beaches of Musandam to Dhofar. There are plenty of resorts waiting to welcome travellers throughout the festive period. Earning a special place on the list of many beachgoers is the coast of Ras Al Jinz, where the rare Green Turtle is known to nest seasonally.

Joining the long list of coastal favourites are the historic strongholds dotting the Sultanate, which have continued to inspire people from around the world.

Chief among them are the stunning Bahla Fort, the largest in the country and a United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) World Heritage Site, as well as Barka Fort.



Dhuhr.....	12:18pm
Asr.....	3:39pm
Maghrib.....	7:01pm
Isha.....	8:21pm
Fajr (Tomorrow).....	4:06am

Documents Attestation Service in partnership with Ministry of Foreign

Enjoy fast and easy attestation process:

- 40+ types of official documents accepted: educational, commercial, and marriage certificates.
- Available at Airport Heights, Sur, Salalah, Nizwa, Al Buraimi, Suhar, Daba, and Khasab branches and via our website: www.omanpost.om

For more information 1001

MEETING

DISCUSSION

HM receives written message from Mauritanian President

MUSCAT: His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik on Tuesday received a written message from President Mohamed Ould Cheikh Ghazouani of the Islamic Republic of Mauritania, dealing with bilateral relations between the two countries.

The message was received by Foreign Minister Sayyid Badr Hamad Al Busaidi during his meeting with the Mauritanian President's envoy Mohamed Salem Ould Merzoug, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Cooperation and Mauritanians Abroad.

During the meeting, Sayyid Badr and the Mauritanian envoy discussed ways of enhancing bilateral cooperation in a manner that serves the common interests of the two countries' peoples.



They also exchanged views about regional and international issues. The meeting was attended by

Sheikh Faisal Omar Al Marhoon, Head of the Arab Department, Mohamed Vall Ould Ahmed, Mauritanian Ambassador to the Sultanate of Oman, and officials from both sides. -ONA



Royal Office Minister meets Iran ambassador

MUSCAT: Gen. Sultan Mohamed Al Nu'amani, Minister of the Royal Office received in his office on Tuesday Ali Najafi Khoshroudi, Ambassador of the Islamic Republic of Iran to the Sultanate of Oman.

The ambassador expressed his

appreciation for the Sultanate of Oman's stances regarding various regional and international issues.

During the meeting, the two sides discussed several matters of mutual interest. They also reviewed the march of bilateral relations. -ONA

MEETING

RAISING PER CAPITA INCOME

Oman, Iran discuss ways to boost ties

TEHRAN: Foreign Minister Sayyid Badr Hamad Al Busaidi met Dr. Hossein Amir Abdollahian, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Iran, in Tehran on Monday.

The meeting dealt with a set of topics related to the bilateral relations and means of promoting them to serve interests of the Omani and Iranian people.

The two sides also discussed the latest developments in the regional and international arenas. They stressed their determination to continue consultation and make efforts for maintaining security and stability. The meeting was attended by Ibrahim bin Ahmed Al Muaini, Ambassador of Oman to Iran, and a number of officials from the foreign ministries of the two countries. -ONA



Times News Service

MUSCAT: Shura Council has approved the report of the Youth and Human Resources Committee on the desire to raise the wages of Omanis workers in the private sector.

The committee has adopted this measure as it will contribute to increasing per capita income, the purchasing power and boost the money circulation in the local market.

This is in addition to a number of recommendations, the most important of which is the keenness to raise the standard of living for a large segment of workers in the private sector, and the approach of some countries to adopt a mechanism to determine the minimum wage - which takes



place automatically every year - according to inflation indicators and their purchasing power, in addition to the noticeable increase in the inflation rate (consumer prices) during the period from 2021 to July 2022.

The Council stated that the decision aims to enhance the sector's contribution to per capita income.

Younis bin Ali Al Mandhari, the head of the Youth and Human Resources Committee at the Majlis

Al Shura, said that we expressed a desire to raise the minimum wage after reviewing the data related to economic improvement in Oman with regard to inflation and the end of the Covid-19 pandemic.

Al Mandhari said: "We have decided that the minimum wage should be raised from OMR325 to OMR450, linking to the educational qualifications of an employee in the private sector. Higher the educational certificate, the monthly salary should also be higher than the minimum wage to improve the level of salaries in the private sector."

The meeting was chaired by Khalid bin Hilal Al-Ma'awali, Chairman of the Council, in the presence of Sheikh Ahmed bin Mohammed Al-Nadabi, Secretary General of the Council.

MUSCAT AIRPORT

4TH ANNUAL SITTING

Oman Airports carries out ICV campaign



ICV PROGRAMMES: The campaign was also aimed at encouraging the purchase of local products and the recruitment of local service providers. -ONA

MUSCAT: Acting in cooperation with Oman Investment Authority, Oman Airports carried out, yesterday a public awareness campaign about in-country value (ICV). The event, held at Muscat International Airport, highlighted benefits to be gained from applying ICV programmes in contracts

and procurement deals by local companies, small and medium enterprises (SMEs) and the community at large.

The campaign was also aimed at encouraging the purchase of local products and the recruitment of local service providers.

-ONA

Shura Council studies economic proposals, draft agreements with other countries

MUSCAT: The Shura Council yesterday held its 16th regular session for the 4th annual sitting (2022-2023) of the 9th Term (2019-2023) during which six urgent statements were delivered on various economic and social issues.

The session discussed a report by the Economic and Financial Committee on the efficiency of the Tax Authority's taxation scheme.

It endorsed a report by the Youth and Human Resources Committee on a proposal to raise the wages of Omani private sector's workers.

The session looked into the Media and Culture Committee's report on initiating a 10-year 'cultural visa' to help benefit from the contribution of innovators and specialists in intellectual fields and enrich the cultural scene in Oman.

Further, the session exchanged views about the Economic and Financial Committee's report on strategic projects proposed to be implemented in governorates of Oman.



It also approved a report by the Food and Water Security Committee on a study about the future of frankincense trees in the Dhofar Governorate.

Additionally, the session elaborated on draft agreements with other countries. It endorsed the vision of the Services and Social Development Committee on a draft cooperation agreement in the field of maritime transport

rated on draft agreements with other countries. It endorsed the vision of the Services and Social Development Committee on a draft cooperation agreement in the field of maritime transport

and ports between the governments of Oman and Egypt.

The session also endorsed draft air services agreements between Oman and a number of countries, including Tanzania, Guyana, Belize and Egypt.

It also endorsed the vision of the Economic and Financial Committee about a draft agreement on the avoidance of double taxation and prevention of financial evasion—with regard to capital and income tax—between governments of Oman and Kazakhstan.

In addition, the session approved a draft agreement on the encouragement and mutual protection of investments between the governments of Oman and Iran.

The meeting was the last regular session during the 9th Term. The Shura Council has received Royal orders to adjourn the 4th annual convening of the 9th Term on 20 July 2023.

The session was chaired by Khalid Hilal Al Ma'awali, Chairman of the Shura Council. -ONA



Need cash?

Transfer money easily from your credit card to your account

2477 5777 | www.maisarah-oman.com | [f/MaisarahOman](#) | [@MaisarahIslamic](#) | [@Maisarah.Islamic](#)

MAISARAH
بنك إسلامي
Islamic Banking Services

10TH TERM

Interior ministry to unveil list of Shura candidates today



MUSCAT: The Ministry of Interior will on Wednesday announce the final list of candidates to the Shura Council 10th Term membership. The names of candidates will be circulated via the digital app

“Intikhab” and published in the elections’ website (elections.om). **Electoral campaigns** As per Article 44 of the Shura Council Elections Law, candidates

may stage electoral campaigns to introduce themselves, right from the date of announcement of final lists until the penultimate day of voting. The deadline for withdrawing candidacy will be Sunday, 3 September 2023.

Numbers rise The list included more than 883 candidates, including 33 women. There has been an increase in the number of candidates for the tenth term by about 116 candidates, compared to the number for the

ninth term, with 767 candidates. The number of women decreased by about 10 candidates, bringing their number in the tenth elections to 33 candidates, compared to 43 for the ninth term.

-ONA

Asyad Drydock applies high quality nano-epoxy silicone coating on ships

The abrasion-resistant nano-epoxy silicone coating, which promises to be the future of coating solutions, features many economic and environment-friendly advantages



ECO-FRIENDLY: The smooth nano-epoxy silicone coating is resistant to fouling without the need to use biocides, thereby reducing impact on the marine environment. - ONA



DUQM: Asyad Drydock, part of Asyad Group, announced the successful application of high-quality nano-epoxy silicone coating on Asyad Shipping’s Ultramax bulk carrier Jabal Al Kawr’. The brand-new coating technology was first applied by Asyad Drydock on Mino Marine’s ‘MV Julia’ earlier this year. Capitalising on Asyad Drydock’s premium ship-servicing capabilities and state-of-the-art technologies, Asyad Shipping commissioned the application of the ecofriendly nano-epoxy silicone

coating solution on its Ultramax bulk carrier ‘Jabal Al Kawr’. This undertaking highlights Asyad Shipping’s commitment to developing a modern shipping fleet that adheres to the highest international standards of efficiency and sustainability. The successful engagement also showcases Asyad Drydock’s ability to execute tailored projects in line with customers’ strict requirements and deadlines. Asyad Drydock spearheaded the regional application of the revolu-

tionary coating solution, successfully premiering the novel coating solution on Mino Marine’s MV Julia earlier this year. The coating was applied following a full Sa 2.0 abrasive blasting surface treatment. The abrasion-resistant nano-epoxy silicone coating, which promises to be the future of coating solutions, features many economic and environment-friendly advantages, significantly reducing drag, increasing fuel efficiency and lowering carbon emissions, all

while ensuring that less maintenance work is required during subsequent dockings. Additionally, the smooth nano-epoxy silicone coating is resistant to fouling without the need to use biocides, thereby reducing impact on the marine environment. Dr. Abdulsalam Omar Al Rabaani, Acting COO of Asyad Drydock, underlined the shipyard’s role in introducing the new coating solution to the Middle East maritime sector: “Being the first drydock to apply nano-epoxy silicone

coating in the MENA region is a testament to our advanced ship-servicing capacities and ability to integrate the latest innovations in the industry, as we forge ahead in our pursuit of partnerships with top green solution providers.” “We are extremely excited to add this novel technology to our host of offerings, allowing us to better serve our clients and cater to their various requirements. Our collaboration with Asyad Shipping also shows both of our companies’ synergy and commitment to

sustainability, in line with Asyad Group’s strategy of enabling the transition to a sustainable maritime future,” Dr. Al Rabaani added. With the addition of nano-epoxy silicone coating, Asyad Drydock now boasts a wide array of top coating solutions within its inclusive offering of ship building and repair services. Simultaneously, Asyad Shipping is maintaining its drive towards developing a modern fleet that meets the highest standards of efficiency.

-ONA





MUSEUM OF MISFAT AL ABRIYEEN

A MOUNTAIN VILLAGE STEEPED IN HISTORY

AL HAMRA: ‘Museum of Misfat Al Abriyeen’, the house for heritage collections in the Wilayat of Al Hamra in Al-Dakhiliyah Governorate was inaugurated in March 2018.

It is considered a comprehensive museum that tells in detail the life of Omani villagers in the mountains with small holdings, customs and traditions.

Also the ‘Museum of Misfat Al Abriyeen’ is considered as a heritage tourism project aimed at preserving the culture of the past and attracting tourists from inside and outside the Sultanate of Oman who want to know about the Omani life across the ages.

With the government support for heritage tourism projects, the Ministry of Heritage and tourism plans to carry out some restoration works of this museum for displaying its contents.

The work is expected to start soon with a hope to be completed at the beginning of the next tourism season in October 2023.

Abdullah Zahir Al Abri, the owner of ‘Museum of Misfat Al Abriyeen’ said: “The museum is one of the distinctive and growing tourism activities in this village which was listed with the International Tourism Organisation in 2021 as one of the best international tourism villages.

He added that the museum allows tourists to know and discover the life of Omani villagers in detail, and get detailed explanations from the villagers. Foreign tourists can get an experience of wearing the traditional Omani dress as well.” He pointed out that the project has gained admiration and appreciation of the visitors in view of the efforts made to showcase the traditional culture.

He stated that this museum is unique as it is completely under Omani management and established in an ancient heritage house in the middle of the ancient village of ‘Museum of Misfat Al Abriyeen’.

The village was constructed 600 years ago and the museum includes many rooms. Each one tells a different aspect of Omani village life. There is a living



“The museum is one of the distinctive and growing tourism activities in this village which was listed with the International Tourism Organisation in 2021 as one of the best international tourism villages.

room with traditional Omani clothes, traditional weapons, including Omani swords and other weapons used for hunting or for protection. It also contains bows and arrows, guns, spinning and textile tools, leathers, palm fronds products, ancient coins and some ancient books and documentations.

The room of agricultural tools includes farm equipment used by the mountain villagers such as the manual ploughs, axes, ropes, digging tools, stone crushing, soil transport, sarooj manufacturing, drying of agricultural crops and dates, methods for extracting date molasses and other products.

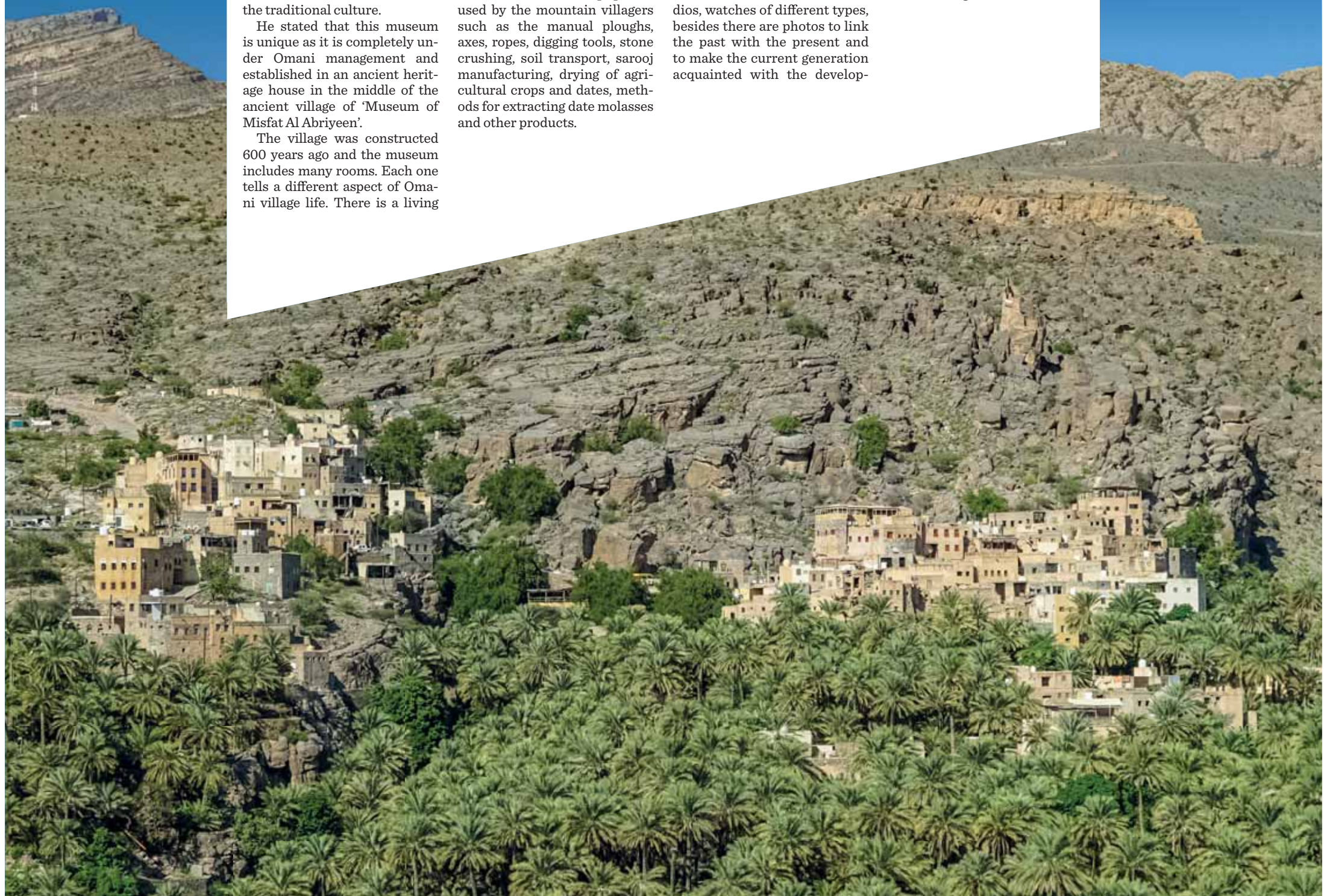
Tools used in the high mountains for searching local honey or bee-keeping as well as for harvesting mountain fruits are also on display.

Al Abri pointed out that the Omani kitchen displays traditional utensils, pots, copper pots, leather, tools for preserving oils and honey, stone mills for grinding grains.

Another room contains radios, watches of different types, besides there are photos to link the past with the present and to make the current generation acquainted with the develop-

ments and changes witnessed by arrows and.

He confirmed that this work culminated in the issuance of the book Misfat Al Abriyeen (Man, Venue and Time) by the owner of the museum in October 2022 to be a significant continuation in the process of documenting and narrating the history of this ancient Omani village.





امتلئوها بثقة
Reliably Yours

THE
BIG

COMPRESSOR
IS BACK



Follow us on
f t i @hommeroman
MyHommer.com

FOR ANY ENQUIRIES,
PLEASE CONTACT :
24818018 / 24818039,
WHATSAPP ONLY : 99316742

AVAILABLE AT LEADING
DEALER OUTLETS



MUSTAFA SULTAN ELECTRONICS CO. LLC

 @MustafaSultanElectronics

 @MustafaSultanElectronics

 @mustafa_sultanE

 @mustafa_sultanE

CR No. 1/25249/14

UNIQUE JOURNEY

Oman Air celebrates country’s legacy in skies with exhibition at Stal Gallery



Times News Service

MUSCAT: Celebrating the history of civil aviation in Oman and its own unique journey, Oman Air has opened a first-of-its-kind exhibition at Stal Gallery in Muscat. ‘Oman Air: A Legacy in the Skies’ combines state-of-the-art multimedia, immersive displays, and an array of compelling artifacts that bring to life Oman’s illustrious aviation past and cele-

brate the key milestones that have shaped Oman Air into the globally recognised and esteemed brand it is today. Amouage, the Oman-based international fragrance house, is also present at the exhibition, unveiling the signature scent for Oman Air’s new on-board amenity kits. This captivating journey through time, spanning from the reign of Sultan Taimur bin Faisal



to the present day, promises a truly immersive and enlightening experience for visitors of all ages. Having celebrated its 30th anniversary earlier this year, Oman Air continues to invest in its award-winning products, while redefining the art of hospitality in the skies. Most recently the airline earned the award for Best Airline Staff in the Middle East at the Skytrax 2023 World Airline

Awards. Oman Air has also been announced as global airline partner for English football club, Chelsea FC, further cementing it as a leading international carrier with worldwide appeal. Entry to ‘Oman Air: A Legacy in the Skies’ at Stal Gallery (located in Madinat Qaboos) is free and visitors are welcome to explore the exhibition from Sunday to Saturday between 10 a.m. and 7 p.m.



SEND US YOUR VIEWS AND COMMENTS
www.facebook.com/timesofoman

RAISING PERFORMANCE

Steps taken to implement Ejada

<FROM A1 He said the new system will not punish under-performing employees but will work to raise their efficiency, develop their capabilities, and address the challenges facing them. Various measures were taken to implement Ejada and among them were preparing hundreds of trainers for building job plans in government institutions to achieve the goals of the system and raising the performance of employees. Over 2,500 training workshops have been organised, benefiting more than 130,000 employees. As for measuring institutional proficiency, the criteria are leadership, strategic planning, human capital, institutional culture, partnership, resources, innovation, customer

satisfaction, governance, environment, and society. Many factors are taken into account and those include job satisfaction survey, beneficiary satisfaction assessment platform and reports of other government units. Talal bin Abdullah Al Balushi, Head of the Training and Change Management Team at Ejada said: “The feedback on Ejada has been positive. There has been a change and a qualitative shift at the government level on how to evaluate the performance of employees. The announcement of cash awards comes in the context of providing incentives and drawing attention of other employees to pay more attention to the appraisal system.” Al Hinai said: The 17,000 employees eligible for financial awards are 10 percent of the em-

ployees in the Ejada system. To have 10 percent qualify for the awards is good progress after a year. This is bound to increase in the times ahead as work culture and environment in the government sector will get better and better.” He added: “At the end of each year, the average performance of each employee is collected for all individual performance measurement courses specified in the government unit for evaluation.” The top ministry official said: “At the end of 2022, 45 percent of the total government sector employees obtained a good rank based on their efforts throughout the year. The 45 percent of employees then went for further evaluation before the final 17,000 with excellent grades were short-listed for financial awards.

HENLEY PASSPORT INDEX

Sultanate’s openness score leaps

<FROM A1 While the UAE is the only Gulf country to rank in the index’s top 50, Middle Eastern destinations are becoming more open to other travellers. Henley & Partners has conducted exclusive new research into the relationship between a country’s openness to foreigners — how many nations it allows to cross its borders visa-free — and its own citizens’ travel freedom, gauged using the Henley Passport Index. Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries have generally displayed higher-than-average shifts towards increased openness, in particular, Oman’s openness score leapt from 71 to 106 (35 points) since 2018 to put the Sultanate 33rd, the highest in the region, while the UAE’s score increased from 58 to 80 since 2018 (22 points) over the same period, with the Emirates ranking in 55th.

TECHNO

Announcing the call to convene the Ordinary General Assembly
Plastic Technology Industry Company SAOC
(under transformation)

The supervising committee Who looks after the procedures for transforming the company Plastic Technology Industry SAOC (under transformation), is honored to invite all the honorable founders to attend the company's Ordinary General Assembly meeting to be held at 11:00 am on Thursday 3/8/2023 at the company's headquarters in Ghala. In the event that the quorum is not complete, the second Ordinary General Assembly will be held on Wednesday 9/8/2023 at the same time and place in order to discuss and take the appropriate decision regarding the following agenda:

- 1- Studying the report of the supervising committee on the measures taken to transform the company.
- 2- Studying and approving the expenses related to the transformation of the company.
- 3- Electing the members of the first board of directors of the company, those who wish to nominate themselves must fill out the nomination form and submit it to Mr. Marwan bin Ali bin Nasser Al-Mahrouqi, two working days before the date of the meeting, no later than the end of work on Monday corresponding to: 7/31/2023.
- 4- Appointing the auditor for the fiscal year and determining his fees.

According to the articles of association of the company, each founder may authorize any other person in writing to attend the meeting and vote on the decisions taken on his behalf.

Please kindly come to the meeting location at least half an hour before the scheduled time.

In the event of any inquiries, please contact
Mr. Marwan Ali Nasser Al-Mahrouqi, phone number 99780202.

SALALAH BEACH RESORT SAOG

(C.R. NO.: 2134462)

P.O. Box. 699, P.C. 211, Salalah, Sultanate of Oman. Tel: 23133333, Fax: 23133336 E-mail: salalah@hilton.com

DIRECTORS' REPORT

Dear Shareholders,

Your Company's Revenue was RO 560,219 for 6 months' ended 30th June, 2023 (2022 : RO 484,706).

Net Loss for the period was RO 406,682 (2022 : RO 386,245)

The hotel witnessed an increase of 15% in revenue during the period, but the loss is higher due to higher operating cost.

The management is actively working on progressively renovating the various facilities of the hotel in due course to complete the same.

Acknowledgements

We express our deep appreciation and gratitude to His Majesty Sultan Haiham bin Tariq Al Said for His Majesty's wise leadership and policies to generate growth and prosperity in the Sultanate of Oman. We also thank the Ministry of Heritage and Tourism for implementing various initiatives to encourage growth in tourism sector.

For and on Behalf of the Board of Directors of
SALALAH BEACH RESORT SAOG

Mohammad Ghuloom Ahmad Khoori
Chairman

Date : 17th July 2023

Note: The complete accounts either in Arabic or English as requested will be sent by mail within 7 days on request to any shareholder. The complete accounts has already been uploaded and available for public view on MSX website.

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION AS AT 30 JUNE 2023

	30 June 2023 RO	30 June 2022 RO
ASSETS		
Non-current assets:		
Property, plant and equipment	8,062,512	8,254,852
Current assets		
Inventories	34,398	29,248
Trade and other receivables	390,210	435,008
Cash and Bank Balances	119,684	139,728
Total Current assets	544,292	603,984
Total assets	8,606,804	8,858,836
EQUITY AND LIABILITIES		
Capital and reserves		
Share capital	6,250,000	6,250,000
Special reserve	39,800	39,800
Statutory reserve	793,132	793,132
Revaluation reserve	2,371,647	2,371,647
Accumulated losses	(2,834,210)	(2,256,061)
Total Equity	6,620,369	7,198,518
Non-current liabilities		
Deferred Tax Liability	62,038	242,797
Staff Terminal Benefits	107,783	84,330
Long Term Loans	730,000	523,379
Total non-current liabilities	899,821	850,506
Current liabilities		
Trade and other payables	746,701	809,812
Current Portion of Loans	240,000	-
Bank Overdraft	99,913	-
Total current liabilities	1,086,613	809,812
Total liabilities	1,986,434	1,660,318
Total equity and liabilities	8,606,804	8,858,836
Net assets per share	1.059	1.152

STATEMENT OF PROFIT OR LOSS AND OTHER COMPREHENSIVE INCOME
FOR THE PERIOD 01 JANUARY 2023 TO 30 JUNE 2023

	2023 RO	2022 RO
Revenue from Operations	560,219	484,706
Direct cost	(685,004)	(555,501)
Gross (loss) / profit	(124,785)	(70,795)
Administrative and general expenses	(340,330)	(319,252)
Other (expenses) / income - net	15,721	8,597
Loss from Operations	(449,393)	(381,450)
Finance (expenses) / income - net	(35,550)	247
Loss before tax	(484,943)	(381,203)
Income tax	78,261	(5,042)
Loss for the period	(406,682)	(386,245)
Loss per share - basic and diluted	(0.065)	(0.062)

Delegated by HM, Sayyid Asa’ad heads to KSA

His Highness is leading the Sultanate of Oman’s delegation during the 18th consultative meeting of leaders of GCC countries, as well as the GCC-Central Asia Summit

MUSCAT: Delegated by His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik, His Highness Sayyid Asa’ad bin Tarik Al Said, Deputy Prime Minister for International Relations and Cooperation Affairs, Personal Representative of His Majesty the Sultan left here on Tuesday heading to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA) to lead the Sultanate of Oman’s delegation during the 18th consultative meeting of leaders of GCC countries, as well as the GCC-Central Asia Summit.

The meeting and the summit will be held in Jeddah on Wednesday.

HH Sayyid Asa’ad and his accompanying delegation were seen off upon their departure by Dr. Abdullah Nasser Al Harrasi, Minister of Information, Dr. Saud Hamoud Al Habsi, Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Water Resources, Dr. Rahma Ibrahim Al Mahrouqi, Minister of Higher Education,



Research and Innovation, Qais Mohammed Al Yousef, Minister of Commerce, Industry and Investment Promotion, the Secretary General at HH Sayyid Asa’ad’s office and the Chargé d’affaires of the Embassy of Saudi Arabia.

HH Sayyid Asa’ad is accompanied by an official delegation comprising Sayyid Badr Hamad Al Buisaidi, Foreign Minister, Eng. Said Hamoud Al Ma’awali, Minister of Transport, Communications and Information Technology, Dr. Said Mohammed Al Sagri, Minister of Economy, HH Sayyid Faisal Turki Al Said, Ambassador of the Sultanate of Oman to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and the two advisors at HH Sayyid Asa’ad’s office.



WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION

WHO lauds South-East Asia countries for scaling up routine immunisation

NEW DELHI: While lauding member countries for scaling up immunisation coverage, the World Health Organization (WHO) South-East Asia Region, on Tuesday, said that they should continue their efforts in identifying the unvaccinated children.

Poonam Khetrapal Singh, Regional Director of WHO South-East Asia, in a press statement, said, “The countries and partners agencies must continue to and scale up efforts to identify the unvaccinated children, strengthen capacities of the health workforce,

better understand and engage with vulnerable populations and roll out tailored strategies to reach each and every child with the life-saving routine immunisation vaccines.” The Organization called for continued intensified efforts with a focus to target the 2.3 million unvaccinated and 650,000 partially vaccinated children.

“Every child deserves to be protected against life-threatening diseases with routine immunisation vaccines. The momentum built with impressive efforts and immunisation service recoveries must

continue to benefit every child for a healthy and productive life,” she added. The WHO and UNICEF estimates of national immunisation coverage for 2022, released earlier on Tuesday, show that in WHO South-East Asia Region the coverage rate for DPT3, third dose of diphtheria, pertussis and tetanus vaccines which is used globally to assess vaccination rates, recovered to pre-pandemic 91 per cent, a sharp increase from 82 per cent recorded in 2021.

The region has also shown a 6 per cent improvement in coverage

of the measles-containing vaccine in 2022 compared to 2021, moving from 86 per cent to 92 per cent.

The number of zero-dose children i.e. those that have not received even the first dose of the DPT vaccine halved from 4.6 million in 2021 to 2.3 million in 2022. Similarly, the number of partially vaccinated children, those that had received at least one dose of DPT vaccine but did not complete the primary series of 3 doses, reduced from 1.3 million in 2021 to 650 000 in 2022 – a 50 per cent decline. – ANI

INTERNATIONAL CRIMINAL COURT

African countries’ fractured relationship with the ICC

THE HAGUE: Since its inception 25 years ago, 33 African states have joined the International Criminal Court (ICC) with Ivory Coast the most recent to do so in 2013. They were all expecting justice for victims of crimes.

“I think that generally it has done well in its effort to provide some justice for victims in Africa,” Ghanaian legal expert Alhassan Yahaya Seini told DW.

But what started as a good relationship between Africa and the ICC is now fractured. In recent years, some Africa countries have complained about unfair targeting.

While the ICC seems to enjoy strong support among civil society groups in Africa, it’s a different story when it comes to some African leaders.



‘Against Africans, against African leaders’

Rwandan President Paul Kagame for instance suggested that Africans have become the scapegoat in the ICC’s push to execute its mandate.

“The ICC was supposed to address the whole world, but it ended up covering only Africa,” Kagame told British-Sudanese telecoms tycoon and philanthropist Mo Ibrahim in 2018.

“From the time of its inception, I said there was a fraud basis on which it was set up and how it was going to be used,” Kagame said. “I told people that this would be a court to try Africans, not people from across the world. And I don’t

believe I have been proven wrong,” Magdalene Mutheu, a filmmaker from Kenya told DW that she thought Kagame’s position was justified.

“The court seems to have been designed to work against Africans and against African leaders,” she said. “There are so many leaders in the Western world who have committed crimes against humanity in different countries like Afghanistan, Yemen, Syria and none of them have ever been taken to the International Criminal Court.”

Legal scholar Seini though disagrees

“I wouldn’t say it is targeting Africa as such because it is not like ICC

is looking out for African leaders,” Seini said “I don’t think anyone is saying that.”

About 30 cases before the ICC involve individuals from the Central African Republic, Ivory Coast, Sudan, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Kenya, Libya, Mali and Uganda.

These countries invited the ICC prosecutor to investigate crimes allegedly committed in their territories.

“It was the states themselves who went to court and not the other way around,” Mamadou Diallo, a public international law expert at Cheick Anta Diop University in Dakar, Senegal told DW.

“From this point of view

there is no problem. Because the crimes there have been in Africa, many in Africa and the states concerned have decided to refer the matter to the court, the court exercises its criminal jurisdiction.”

Seini agreed with Diallo that African leaders must stop playing victims when it comes to prosecution of cases.

“If Africa did a lot more for itself and its citizens, the ICC would not be required for them. I’ve heard complaints about victimization of African leaders but quite often it is because the systems in the countries themselves have not provided avenues for the victims of injustice,” Seini said.

Fertile grounds for ICC prosecutions

The ICC investigates whoever engages in conduct that violates the Rome Statute, the court’s founding treaty which grants jurisdiction over four main crimes – the crime of genocide, crimes against humanity, war crimes and crime of aggression.

Africa has experienced a lot of wars and conflicts over the past decades with often serious atrocities committed against civilians.

The ICC prosecutor, Karim Khan last week told the UN Security council that there was for instance an ongoing probe into the fighting between the Sudanese Armed Forces and the opposing paramilitary Rapid Support Forces (RSF).

Both the paramilitary group and government forces could come within the ICC’s sights.

“We have already started investigating....I do want to be clear and send a clear message to every belligerent, every commander, every foot soldier who has a gun or believes that they have power to do what they want that targeting civilians, particularly targeting children and women, are crimes prohibited by the Rome Statute,” Khan said.

Africa-ICC ties need reformation

Senegalese Macky Sall last September led an African delegation to hold talks with the ICC president, judge Piotr Hofmanski, to

improve relations.

Seini though thinks that what matters most is actually seeking help to strengthen the domestic legal and justice systems in African countries so that victims can find justice there.

“So, what I would rather recommend is that we do what we can to strengthen our systems to make them more justice oriented, more law oriented and not person worship oriented. Basically, that’s where we have our problem,” he said.

The ICC still faces many challenges, something its chief prosecutor Karim Khan concedes on the 25th anniversary commemoration this year.

“Our willingness to evolve, our focus on improving our work, and our determination to deliver results, will be central to deepening the impact of international criminal justice in the next quarter-century,” Khan said in a statement to mark the July 17 anniversary.

Atilla Kislá, International Justice Cluster lead at the Southern Africa Litigation Centre told DW that the ICC shouldn’t shy away from improving to win the support of its member countries.

“Did the ICC make mistakes? I’m sure they did. And does the ICC need improvement and reform? Most definitely. And the ICC is currently undergoing a reform process, and one can only encourage state parties like South Africa to actively engage in that reform process,” Kislá said. – DW



Printed and published by:
Muscat Media Group
Post Box: 770,
Postal Code: 112

Founder: Essa bin Mohammed Al Zedjali
Chairman / Editor-in-Chief: Mohamed Issa Al Zadjali
Deputy Editor-in-Chief: Anees bin Essa Al Zedjali
Chief Executive Officer: Ahmed Essa Al Zedjali

EDITORIAL: Telephone: 24726666, Fax: 24813153, E-mail: editor@timesofoman.com
ADVERTISING: Telephone: 24726666, Fax: 24812624, E-mail: advertising@timesofoman.com
CIRCULATION: Telephone: 24726666, Fax: 24818270, E-mail: circulation@timesofoman.com

POLITICS

Opposition parties form alliance called ‘INDIA’

BENGALURU: Leaders of twenty-six opposition parties, who met in Bengaluru on Tuesday, accused the BJP of systematically assaulting the “character of our republic” and expressed their steadfast resolve to “safeguard the idea of India”.

The Samuhik Sankalp of 26 political parties belonging to I.N.D.I.A alleged that the pillars of the Indian Constitution “are being methodically and menacingly undermined”. The leaders decided to have a new name of the group I.N.D.I.A - India National Developmental Inclusive Alliance.

“We, the leaders of India’s 26 progressive parties, express our steadfast resolve to safeguard the idea of India as enshrined in the Constitution. The character of our republic is being severely assaulted in a systematic manner by the BJP. We are at a most crucial juncture in our nation’s history. The foundational pillars of the Indian Constitution – secular democracy, economic sovereignty, social justice and federalism – are being methodically and menacingly undermined,” the Samuhik Sankalp statement said.

The opposition leaders alleged that BJP was “brazenly misusing agencies” against political rivals and was undermining democracy.

They expressed grave concern over the humanitarian tragedy that has destroyed in Manipur.

“The silence of Prime Minister is shocking and unprecedented.

There is an urgent need to bring Manipur back on the path of peace and reconciliation,” the statement said.

They also demanded a caste census. The leaders said that they have come together to defeat “hatred and violence” being manufactured against minorities, stop the rising crimes against women, Dalits, Adivasis and Kashmiri Pandits.

“We resolve to fight the systemic conspiracy by BJP to target, persecute and suppress our fellow Indians. Their poisonous campaign of hate has led to vicious violence against all those opposed to the ruling party and its divisive ideology,” the leaders said.

“These attacks are not only violating constitutional rights and freedoms but also eroding the basic values upon which the Republic of India is founded - Liberty, Equality and Fraternity and Justice – Political, Economic and Social,” they added.

The statement said that repeated attempts by the BJP “to vitiate public discourse by re-inventing and rewriting Indian history” are an affront to social harmony.

“We pledge to present to the nation an alternative political, social and economic agenda. We promise to transform both the substance and style of governance that will be more consultative, democratic and participative,” the statement said.



European Union-Latin America summit gets off to a rocky start

The summit between the EU and the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC) is the first since 2015, and von der Leyen said, “We need our close friends to be at our side in these uncertain times”

BRUSSELS: European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen on Monday said Europe aspires to be “the partner of choice for Latin America and the Caribbean” as she welcomed leaders from 33 Latin American and Caribbean countries to the two-day EU-CELAC summit in Brussels.

While the EU is Latin America



and the Caribbean’s biggest investor, the region’s largest trading partner is China. The EU’s Global Gateway programme has been seen as a counter to China’s global investment scheme, the Belt and Road Initiative.

The summit between the EU and the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC) is the first since 2015, and von der Leyen said “We need our close friends to be at our side in these uncertain times.”

She also promised €45 billion (\$50.5 billion) in new investment for the region under the EU’s Global Gateway program.

Disagreement over Ukraine statement

Despite the fact that the summit, the first in eight years, was designed to rekindle old connections and possibly advance the stalled EU-Mercosur free trade agreement, European leaders were soon stymied by their guests’ refusal to get on board with a strong condemnation of Russia’s war of aggression in Ukraine in the summit communique.

Host Charles Michel, the president of the European Council, opened with a plea for delegates to condemn Russia’s “illegal war,” saying it had, “devastating conse-

quences for food security, energy prices and the global economy.”

Michel immediately got push back from CELAC President Ralph Gonsalves, prime minister of St. Vincent and the Grenadines, who argued the summit was not the place to deal with the topic of the war in Ukraine.

“I am aware that member states of the European Union may have an understandable preoccupation with the situation in Ukraine,” said Gonsalves, “but this summit ought not to become another unhelpful battleground for discourses on this matter, which has been and continues to be addressed in other

more relevant forums.”

Instead, Gonsalves broached the topic of reparations and Europe’s role in the slave trade, saying he hoped the communique would address, “historical legacies of native genocide and enslavement of African bodies and something towards reparatory justice.”

Other leaders, specifically Brazilian President Lula, framed the war in Ukraine as a failure of international diplomacy rather than an act of unilateral aggression on the part of the Kremlin.

Lula, who has frustrated EU leaders for his lack of willingness to condemn Putin and criticized

the West for supplying arms to Ukraine, said, “The race for weapons makes tackling [issues like] climate change even more difficult.”

One of the main objectives of the summit was to address issues with the proposed 2019 EU-Mercosur free trade agreement.

Although the deal, proposed between the EU, Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay and Uruguay, was largely agreed to at the time, it has languished since 2019, with several EU countries refusing to ratify it over environmental concerns — above all, regarding deforestation in the Amazon as well as agricultural competition.

The EU’s so-called Green Deal, for instance, adopted in 2022, holds that trade deals must adhere to strict environmental standards.

Brazil, especially, has pushed back on EU demands. “The defense of environmental values, which we all share, cannot be an excuse for protectionism,” said Brazilian President Lula, who argued that his people deserved to enjoy economic development.

The European Union’s top diplomat, Josep Borrell, told reporters Monday that he did not “expect a big breakthrough” on closing the deal at the summit.

A senior Spanish diplomat told reporters in Brussels that EU-CELAC “will be a political summit, not a negotiating summit.” — DW

CHIEF MINISTER

Former Kerala CM Oommen Chandy passes away at 79

THIRUVANANTHAPURAM: Former Kerala Chief Minister and senior Congress leader Oommen Chandy passed away at Chinmaya Hospital in Bengaluru at 4.25 am on Tuesday. He was aged 79 and had been undergoing treatment for cancer.

Oommen Chandy represented the Puthupally constituency in Kottayam district for more than 50 years. He was the MLA from Puthupally. Chandy first represented Puthupally in 1970 when he was the Youth Congress president. He became a minister for the first time in the K Karunakaran cabinet in 1977. He was appointed Chief Minister twice.

He had handled the finance portfolio in the state. He had also been the Leader of Opposition.

Chandy was a leader who was



always reachable to his people. His programme “Janasambarka paripady” which was launched to hear people’s complaints when he was the Chief Minister was very popular. — ANI

AUSTRALIA

Mystery object washed ashore sparks curiosity

PERTH: A bulky barnacle-encrusted cylinder has washed up on a remote Australian beach with the country’s space agency suggesting it could be debris from a foreign rocket launch.

The cylindrical object about the size of a small car measures two meters (6 feet) high with cables dangling from the top.

It was spotted recently near Jurien Bay, a coastal region two hours north of the state capital, Perth.

Australian Space Agency

The Australian Space Agency said it is investigating whether the canister may be part of a “foreign space launch vehicle that has washed up on shore.”

“The object could be from a foreign space launch vehicle and we are liaising with global counterparts who may be able to provide more information,” the agency tweeted.

Authorities are also investigating the possibility that the



unknown item could have fallen from an Indian rocket while launching a satellite.

“We’re pretty sure, based on the shape and the size, it is an upper-stage engine from an Indian rocket that’s used for a lot of dif-

ferent missions,” European Space Agency engineer Andrea Boyd told the Australian Broadcasting Corporation.

She added that whoever launched the object into space would be responsible for its dis-

posal. “There is a United Nations Office for Outer Space Affairs, and they have an outer space treaty that everyone has signed saying that whoever launches something into space is responsible for it right until the very end,” Boyd said.

Speculations around mysterious object

Earlier, officials had treated the device as hazardous and urged the public to stay away.

Western Australia Police on Monday said in a statement that a government chemical analysis had determined the object was safe and “there is no current risk to the community.”

Police also shut down the online speculation that it could be linked to the 2014 disappearance of Malaysian Airlines flight MH370.

Last year, a charred chunk of debris from one of Elon Musk’s SpaceX missions was discovered outside of a paddock by an Australian sheep farmer. — DW

THAILAND

Who will form the next government?

BANGKOK: Pita Limjaroenrat, the leader of the Move Forward Party (MFP), which won the elections, failed in his initial bid to become Thailand’s next prime minister on July 13.

Despite being unopposed, he did not secure the required endorsement of more than half of the bicameral parliament, with many lawmakers abstaining or voting against him.

The Thai parliament is expected to hold another vote on July 19, which Pita can contest if nominated again.

“I am not giving up,” Pita told reporters, adding that he accepted the result of the first round of voting.

Experts, however, think his chances of becoming Thailand’s next prime minister are more or less over and his party could even be squeezed out of having any government representation at all.

“The first vote was a clear indication that not enough senators will vote for him. In the second vote, it’s unlikely that he will gather the required support,” Thitinan Pongsudhirak, a political science professor at Chulalongkorn University in the Thai capital Bangkok, told DW.

Pheu Thai Party in the driver’s seat

After winning 151 seats in the general elections in May, the MFP formed an eight-party coalition with the pre-election favorite, the Pheu Thai Party. This took the

alliance’s number of seats in the Southeast Asian country’s lower house to 312. The coalition signed a joint memorandum of understanding outlining nearly two dozen steps to reshape Thailand’s political future.

Biggest sticking points

One of the biggest sticking points for Pita and the MFP has been to get support from MPs and senators to back their agenda to reform Thailand’s lese-majeste law — Article 112 of Thailand’s penal code carries heavy punishment for criticism of the monarchy. Its reform was one of the MFP’s major campaign pledges.

With outgoing Prime Minister Prayut Chan-ocha retiring from politics and Pita having seemingly failed in his bid for the premiership, the Pheu Thai Party could be given a chance to nominate their own prime ministerial candidate in parliament.

“[Pita] has even insinuated that he and the Move Forward Party would be willing to make way for the Pheu Thai Party should they fail to win the vote,” Thitinan said.

New premiership candidates

Paetongtarn Shinawatra and Srettha Thavisin are two of the potential Pheu Thai candidates for the premiership.

Paetongtarn is the daughter of exiled former Thai Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra, who founded Pheu Thai in 2007. She



is all too aware that political parties in Thailand do not necessarily end up forming a government, even if they secure the most seats in an election.

Pheu Thai won the most seats in the 2019 general elections but was unable to form a government because the Senate backed Prayut, a former military general who in 2014 had led a military coup, as prime minister.

But today Pheu Thai is seen to be as a more appealing option than the Move Forward Party to conservatives and military loyalists in parliament.

Former real-estate mogul Srettha Thavisin, 60, has also emerged as a possible nomination for prime minister.

“The question is whether Srettha’s name will come up? Whether the Senate will vote for him? I think that if the MFP remains in the coalition, there’s a good chance that the Senate will not vote for him,” predicted Thitinan.

There has long been talk about

the how Pheu Thai could form its own alliance should the MFP fail in its bid to lead the government.

What next?

“Pheu Thai will most likely [get] first try to stick with the coalition and ask other coalition partners to support its prime minister candidate since crossing to the other pro-junta political camp would be seen as betraying their pro-democracy voters and they could face a punitive punishment by the voters in the next general election,” Pravit Rojanaphruk, a journalist, told DW.

As for the Move Forward Party, it could lose its grip on running the government altogether. Pita’s attempts to become the next prime minister have also been marred by legal issues.

On the eve of the vote last week, Thailand’s election commission announced that it had recommended Pita should be suspended, claiming he was not qualified to be a lawmaker because his ownership of shares in a media company violated electoral rules. The country’s Constitutional Court now has the final say in the case that could see Pita barred from politics and even facing prison time.

The court also confirmed it was reviewing a complaint that the MFP’s pledge to amend Thailand’s anti-monarchy law amounts to “overthrowing the democratic regime with the King as head of state.” — DW

NOTICE

According to this announcement, we inform all concerned parties that Mr. Saraj Al-Din Barmal has resigned from the Leading Universe Horizons (The Destinations Dreams Travel Agency) as of July 10, 2023. Therefore, please be aware that anyone dealing with him will be responsible for their own actions. For any inquiries or claims, please contact the following email before July 31, 2023.

If any claims please contact the e-mail
Oman_2014@icloud.com

PAKISTAN SCHOOL MUSCAT

ANNOUNCEMENT OF TENDER

PSM intends to offer the tender of Annual Contracts for the year 2023 – 2024. The contractors with relevant experiences are invited for the following bidding:

Tender No.	Tender's Name	Tender Collection Date & Time	Final Submission Date & Time
2023/010	Cleaning services	July 19 to July 25, 2023	Before and
2023/011	ACs repair & maintenance	09:00 AM	Until
2023/012	Canteen services	To 01:00 PM	11:00 AM
2023/013	Photocopy services	Working Days/Hours	July 26, 2023
2023/014	Supply of stationery		

Experienced contractor(s) having relevant experience of at least 3 years of jobs of similar nature preferably in Oman, who wish to participate in the bidding may collect the documents after payment of RO. 20,000 only through POS (non-refundable) per Job.

Admin Office
Pakistan School Muscat
P.O. Box 987, P.C. 112, Ruwi, Sultanate of Oman; Tel: 24702489 Fax: 24709746,
In case of any query you may contact 00968 93690691
Email: tulaib@pakistan-school.edu.om, directorfinancebods@pakistan-school.edu.om

The tenders shall be submitted in original and completed with all relevant documents. Tenders not in compliance with tender's requirements shall not be considered.
Tender Documents shall be submitted in sealed envelope with clearly mentioned "Tender Number/name, Company Name and POC's Number/name. The sealed envelope shall be dropped in the Tender Box available at Admin Office on or before the date mentioned above and addressed to:

Pakistan School Muscat. (PSM is not bound to accept the lowest Tender or any Tender)

SPORTS

Shakeel’s maiden double ton puts Pakistan in driver’s seat

The left-handed batter remained unbeaten on 208 as the visitors took a lead of 149 on the third day of the first Test vs Sri Lanka

GALLE: A maiden double-century by Saud Shakeel and an outstanding rearguard action by Pakistan’s lower-order batters inflicted a severe psychological blow to Sri Lanka as the tourists took an iron grip of the first Test in Galle on Tuesday.

Shakeel, who also became the first double-centurion from Pakistan in Sri Lanka, returned unconquered on 208 after starting the third day’s play at 69 as Pakistan were dismissed for 461 in 121.2 overs (3.79 runs per over) in the last hour of play.

The visitors had resumed their first innings at the oversight score of 221 for five, trailing the hosts by 91 runs, and ended up taking a first innings lead of 149 runs.

When bad light forced an early closure, Sri Lanka, who had scored 312 in their first innings, were 14 for no loss.

The seasoned and mature 27-year-old left-hander reached his second career century in the sixth Test match from 129 balls with nine fours, while he notched



up his first double-century from 352 balls when he cut Dhananjaya de Silva for his 19th and last four. He faced 361 balls during his six hours of batting.

Agha Salman, who was 61 over-night, was unlucky not to convert a brilliantly constructed innings into a century when he was stumped after scoring 83.

Salman hit nine fours and a six

as he scored his runs from 113 balls with a strike-rate of 73.45.

Salman had joined Shakeel on Monday afternoon when Pakistan were tottering at 101 for five and departed at the score of 278 after adding 177 runs for the sixth wicket in 218 balls.

Shakeel was 100 when Salman departed on the last ball of the 56th over, but he then took con-

trol of the proceedings as Pakistan’s last four wickets added 183 runs in 65.2 overs with Shakeel’s contribution being 108 runs.

The sixth-wicket pair put on a record for Pakistan in Tests against Sri Lanka, improving on the 173-run partnership between Sarfaraz Ahmed and Asad Shafiq at Dubai in 2017.

After Salman’s exit, Shakeel

found another reliable ally in Noman Ali (25) as they put on another 52 runs partnership from 104 balls.

Although Shakeel’s eighth-wicket stand with Shaheen Shah Afridi only produced 16 runs from 19 balls, it was the ninth-wicket partnership of 94 with Naseem Shah that destroyed the Sri Lankans mentally and physically.

Shakeel not only dominated the stand by scoring 70 of the 94 runs, he allowed Naseem to receive 78 balls for six runs to expose the highly-rated Sri Lanka bowling.

Naseem, to his credit, showed a lot of sense as he kept his head down and provided the best possible support to his senior partner.

Shakeel not only completed a memorable double-century, his gutsy and courageous knock also resulted in Sri Lanka’s two front-line spinners conceding in excess of a hundred runs.

Prabath Jayasuriya failed to add any wicket to his three yesterday but ended up leaking 145 runs, while Ramesh Mendis added the scalps of Salman, Noman, Naseem and Abrar Ahmed to end the day with five for 136.

Shakeel became the eighth batter to hit a double century on Sri Lanka soil after Sachin Tendulkar, Joe Root, Chris Gayle, Stephen Flemming, Mushfiqur Rahim, Virinder Sehwag and Brian Lara.

Before becoming Mendis’ fifth victim, Abrar had inflicted salt to the Sri Lanka wounds by slapping a four and six in a 12-ball 10 as the tenth wicket yielded 21 off 27 balls. The two spinners together gave away 281 runs.

With two days remaining in the Test, the wicket slowly showing signs of wear and tear, and the Sri Lankans shell-shocked by the lower-order fightback, Pakistan are in the driver’s seat.

Briefscores: Sri Lanka 312 and 14/0 vs Pakistan 1st innings 461 in 121.2 overs (Saud Shakeel 208 n.o., Agha Salman 83, Shan Masood 39, Noman Ali 25; Ramesh Mendis 5-136, Prabath Jayasuriya 3-145).

- Agencies

WORLD TEST CHAMPIONSHIP CYCLE

NZ to play Tests against SA, Australia

AUCKLAND: New Zealand will be playing against South Africa and Australia in the new ICC World Test Championship (WTC) cycle. South Africa and New Zealand played a two-Test series back in 2022, when the Proteas came from behind to level proceedings 1-1.

New Zealand claimed an innings victory in the first Test thanks largely to Matt Henry’s display, though the tourists hit back with a 198-run win.

The hosts welcome the South Africans again on 4 February at the Bay Oval in Tauranga, before the second Test match at Seddon Park in Hamilton. New Zealand are still yet to win a Test series against South Africa either home or away.

The Black Caps then host Australia in Wellington and Christchurch in WTC play from February 29.

New Zealand’s men have also locked in ODI and T20I series against Bangladesh in December, Pakistan in a five-match T20I series in January, and Australia in three T20Is, two of which will be played at Eden Park as a build-up to their ICC Men’s T20 World Cup 2024 campaign.

New Zealand Cricket chief executive David White says the bumper schedule is a great opportunity to bolster the game’s popularity in the country.

“It’s a hugely exciting time for cricket in New Zealand, both in



terms of the great series and teams on offer this summer, and the ability for fans to either attend the matches’ first-hand or watch live on TV at no charge,” he said.

“We’ve been able to schedule several back-to-back night matches and day matches to ensure good

opportunities for both families and adult patrons, respectively, which we think is good for the game.”

WTC fixtures: New Zealand vs South Africa

First Test: February 4-8, Bay Oval Tauranga.

Second Test: February 13-17, Seddon Park, Hamilton.

New Zealand vs Australia

First Test: February 29 - March 4, The Basin, Wellington.

Second Test: March 8-12, Hagley Oval, Christchurch. - ANI

SECOND TEST VS INDIA

Sinclair replaces Reifer in WI squad

ST JOHN’S: Kevin Sinclair, the off-spin-bowling allrounder, has received his first Test call-up, for the second Test against India, with West Indies looking to bounce back after a crushing loss inside three days in the first Test against India.

He replaced Raymon Reifer, the batting allrounder, in the 13-member squad in the only change from the opening Test.

Reifer, however, will remain with the squad in Trinidad as an injury cover.

Sinclair, the 23-year-old Guyana player, has a decent first-class record, where he has snapped up 54 wickets in 18 games at an average of 23.98, with a best of 6 for 33. He has also scored 756 runs at 29.07, which includes six half-centuries.

He gave a good account of himself in the four-dayers against Bangladesh A earlier this year, finishing as the leading wicket-taker in a three-match series with 13 wickets at 25.69, as West Indies A won 1-0. He also scored 149 runs at 49.66 with a best of 60.

Sinclair has played seven ODIs and six T20Is for West Indies so far, picking 11 and four wickets in the two formats, respectively. He was most recently part of



the ODI World Cup qualifier in Zimbabwe, where he picked up two wickets in three outings as West Indies failed to make it to the main draw of the ODI World Cup for the first time.

The second Test will run from July 20 to 24 in Port of Spain, and will mark the 100th Test between West Indies and India. The two teams first met in a Test match in 1948 in Delhi.

West Indies squad: Kraigg Brathwaite (capt), Jermaine Blackwood (vice-capt), Alick Athanaze, Tagenarine Chanderpaul, Rahkeem Cornwall, Joshua Da Silva (wk), Shannon Gabriel, Jason Holder, Alzarri Joseph, Kirk McKenzie, Kevin Sinclair, Kemar Roach, Jomel Warrican.

Travelling reserves: Tevin Imlach, Akeem Jordan. - Agencies

ASHES SERIES

Weather-shortened fourth Test could suit England: Stokes

LONDON: England skipper Ben Stokes says his team must shift up a gear to beat both Australia and the weather to keep their Ashes hopes alive with significant rain forecast throughout the fourth Test at Old Trafford, which begins on Wednesday.

After Australia won the first two matches, victory in the third Test at Headingley got England back into the series, with the squad arriving into Manchester buoyant they could square the series here to set up a decider at the Kia Oval next week.

However, the persistent rain that greeted their arrival on Sunday will continue into the weekend. Showers of varying degrees are expected throughout



all five days of the Test, which begins at Emirates Old Trafford.

Stokes has been reticent to pay too much attention to forecasts, though England do keep an eye on the radar in the changing room

in case they need to shift their approach during play.

With Australia able to retain the urn with a draw here, the onus is on Stokes to try and squeeze a result out of however much play is

possible if England are to prolong their hopes of a first Ashes win since 2015.

“You never want to look too much into the weather but in the position we find ourselves in we might have to,” Stokes admitted.

“We know we have to win this game to take it to the last game for us to have a chance of getting the urn back.

“Going into the last game we were 2-0 down and knew we had to win that, so I think that helped us a bit and maybe again with the weather that’s predicted that it might bring more out of us again knowing we might have to push the game on even more than we normally would. But we’ll just have to wait and see. If the weather

is what it’s predicted to be then we might have to.”

While he stopped short of declaring England will be more attacking than normal, the speed of play throughout this series has been conducive to quick results.

The third Test, for example, which the hosts won by three wickets, lasted 230.2 overs - essentially, under eight sessions of play, with the match concluding on day four through a combination of wet weather and slow over rates.

Though Australia can play this match and the weather straight, the visiting side skipper Pat Cummins has stated they will begin this Test focused on victory as they seek a first overseas Ashes series win since 2001.

“The first preference is always to try to win,” Cummins said. “We drew the 2019 series and we’ve all come back pretty fresh we want to win this one. I think it’s one of things, as the game progresses you maybe start working out how risky you want to be, but looking at the forecast it looks like it’s okay so sure we’ll get a match in.

And while Australia do not need to engage with anything England try to concoct, Cummins is excited to see what Stokes has in store.

“It would be fun. Prepared for anything, really. We’ll see how it plays out. We have already seen a lot of different things from both teams this series. I’m sure this one will be another cracker with some random stuff thrown up.”

- Agencies

OMAN CRUDE PRICE RISES
The price of Oman oil has increased, with prices for delivery by September 2023 reaching \$79.66, said Dubai Mercantile Exchange (DME). The DME statement said that the price of Oman oil rose by 5 cents from the price of Monday, which was \$79.61. - **OMA**

MARKET
BUSINESS & FINANCE



MSX INDEX ENDS HIGHER
The MSX index closed at 4,809.85 points, up by 1.1 per cent from the previous close. The Sharia Index ended up by 1.18 per cent at 475.59 points. Oman Chromite, up 10.00 per cent, was the top gainer while OIFC Bonds, down 11.11 per cent, was the top loser.

Total value of contracts awarded in Oman reaches \$1.5 billion

This was driven mainly by year-on-year growth in the Sultanate of Oman's power and gas sectors which reached \$475 million and \$728 million, respectively

Times News Service

MUSCAT: Total value of contracts awarded in the Sultanate of Oman increased by 69.70 percent to reach \$1.5 billion in the second quarter of 2023 compared to \$871 million in Q2-2022, according to a new report.

"This was driven mainly by year-on-year growth in the Sultanate's power and gas sectors which reached \$475 million and \$728 million, respectively," the Kuwait-based Kamco Invest said in its latest report titled 'GCC Projects Market Update July-2023'.

"Oman's projects market is expected to witness significant



growth during 2023," the report further added.

According to MEED Projects, Oman is expected to sign a \$6.7 billion hydrogen contract with a consortium led by the South Korean steel manufacturer Posco.

Meanwhile, the report further stated that Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) project awards surged by 86 percent during the second quarter of 2023 to reach \$49.70 billion compared to \$26.70 billion during the second quarter of 2022.

This underlines the determination of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries to execute and reach their diversification targets.

"The strong rise in the total value of project awards in the GCC is also a significant indicator of the health of the economies in the GCC region. This was the highest quarterly project awards value for over five years."

All GCC project markets witnessed year-on-year (y-o-y) growth during the second quarter of 2023 except for Bahrain which remains the smallest project market in the region while Saudi Arabia remained the largest projects market in the GCC during Q2-2023.

Saudi Arabia's project awards recorded 33.70 percent growth during the quarter to reach \$24.40

billion as compared with \$18.30 billion in the second quarter (Q2) of 2022. Comparatively, the UAE project awards jumped 127 percent to reach \$12.20 billion during the quarter. Contract awards in Kuwait increased from \$922 million in Q2-2022 to \$1.30 billion during Q2-2023, the second-highest project value in the last six quarters.

Saudi Arabia alone accounted for over 49.10 percent of the contracts awarded in the GCC region during Q2-2023, while Saudi Arabia, UAE and Qatar combined represented 94.4 percent of the overall projects in the GCC. Saudi Arabia's

growth in contracts during the quarter was mainly fuelled by the continuous uptick in the number of Neom projects awarded during the quarter. According to MEED Business Review, the Neom project awards in 2023 stood at \$13.60 billion which surpassed the total value of contracts awarded in the Saudi capital Riyadh and Dubai which reached \$11 billion and \$9.30 billion respectively. The four major elements of the Neom project (the Line, Trojena, Oxagon and Sindalah) have already been launched and are already under construction.

In terms of sector classification, the gas sector witnessed the biggest increase in the value of projects awarded during the year recording a \$10.30 billion y-o-y increase in new contract awards to reach a total of \$11.90 billion during Q2-2023.

GCC projects market outlook
According to MEED Projects, total GCC contracts that are in tender or most likely to be awarded this year are expected to surpass \$110 billion in 2023 led by Saudi Arabia, Qatar and UAE project markets which are poised to witness significant growth each this year. Moreover, Kuwait and Oman are also expected to witness sharper increases in the value of contract awards during 2023.

The GCC projects market is expected to be resilient to global economic headwinds. The IMF low-

ered its 2023 Saudi GDP forecast to 2.1 percent due to the oil cuts by Opec+ countries and allies.

However, the reduction of economic forecasts and the oil production cut is expected to have minimal impact on the Kingdom's project market and capital spending due to the availability of other revenue sources such as sovereign and private assets.

Saudi Arabia remains the largest projects market both in the GCC and in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region. Saudi Arabia's project awarded averaged around \$42.50 billion in the past five years.

In terms of un-awarded and planned projects, Saudi Arabia has the largest number of planned and unawarded projects in the MENA region estimated at \$1.18 trillion of which a total of \$836.70 billion is the construction sector while \$117.70 billion is in the power sector.

Similarly, in the UAE there are \$409.20 billion in planned and unawarded projects of which \$228.70 billion is in the construction sector, \$91.70 billion is in the oil and gas sectors and \$41.60 billion is in the transportation sector. Moreover, MEED Projects estimates the pipeline of un-awarded and planned projects in Kuwait to be \$142.70 billion of which \$44.30 billion (31 percent) is in the construction sector, \$37.50 billion (26 percent) is in the transport sector while \$35 billion (25 percent) is in the power sector.

INTERNATIONAL PROJECT

'Zone 88' in Duqm aims to attract global investments in space industry

Times News Service

MUSCAT: The Global Space and Technology Company announced the 'Zone 88' area located in the special economic zone at Duqm aims to attract global investments in the space industry.

The area includes five international projects: A space habitat centre, commercial space launching area, unmanned vehicles technology centre, artificial intelligence and advanced technology testing area and ground station. These projects have been designed to promote the space and technology industry, attract global investment and scientific research to build a sustainable knowledge-based economy in this sector in the region.

Eng. Bahiya bint Hilalbin Sultan Al Shuaibi, the Founder and CEO of the company, emphasised that these projects will open the door for international and local institutions to invest in the space industry and benefit from the strategic location of the Sultanate of Oman. It will serve as a suitable destination for spacecraft launches and as a centre for research and activities in the space sector in the region.

It is worth mentioning, that



the company aims to engage several partners, including governments, global and regional space agencies, private companies in the space and technology field, universities, research and development centres, scientists, and researchers in the field of space and related technologies, as well as investors and entrepreneurs in the space industry.

Raising the international standing of the Sultanate of Oman in the field of space, and technology and strengthening the commercial, industrial, and scientific relations

with leading countries in this field. Build a sustainable knowledge economy and qualifying competencies through these projects. It also seeks to stimulate partnerships and international cooperation in the field of space, advanced sciences, and artificial intelligence, while promoting scientific tourism related to space sciences.

It is worth mentioning, that the Global Space and Technology Company is engaged in several projects and services in the Space and Technology sector. This includes providing satellite commu-

nication services, remote sensing, and space imagery. The company also works on simulation projects, Educational Technologies, and space research, providing the necessary equipment. In addition, the company provides consulting services to the government, security, military entities, and the community within the country.

Furthermore, the Global Space and Technology Company has been selected as the winner of the Business Excellence Award 2021 by the World Union of Businesses in the United States of America.

ASSESSMENT

Opaz reports customer satisfaction rate of 86% for its services

Times News Service

MUSCAT: The Public Authority for Special Economic Zones and Free Zones (Opaz) has reported a customer satisfaction rate of 86 percent for the services provided until the end of June 2023.

The assessment included an evaluation of several services provided in the areas supervised by Opaz, such as the electronic land selection service, the central commitment system (Eltizam), environmental permits, receipt of signs, investor relations management system, unified electronic survey drawing service, central inspection system, electronic registration of small and medium enterprises, and one-stop services for investors.

The report of Opaz Call Centre (toll-free 1919) indicated that from the beginning of 2023 to the end of June, more than 647 incoming calls were received and handled. These included 37 international calls, 347 investment-related requests, and 259 inquiries regarding investment opportunities. The Call Center



regularly publishes reports on communications, proposals, and the satisfaction levels of beneficiaries with the services provided through the centre.

Notably, the Opaz Call Centre is equipped with modern technical systems and operates interactively to record transactions and requests and transfer them to the competent authorities in the regions supervised by Opaz. The centre communicates with callers without any delay as it has systems in place to manage reports and proposals. These initiatives come within the efforts made to improve the level of service provided based on the evaluation of beneficiaries and investors.

JUNE

Tethys oil production in Oman reaches 262,861 barrels

Times News Service

MUSCAT: Tethys Oil's share of the production, before government take, from Blocks 3&4 onshore in the Sultanate of Oman, in June 2023 amounted to 262,861 barrels of oil, corresponding to 8,762 barrels of oil per day.

The Official Selling Price (OSP) for Oman Export Blend Crude Oil for June 2023 was \$83.28 per barrel.

The OSP, as published by the Sultanate of Oman's Ministry of Energy and Minerals, is the benchmark price for Tethys Oil's monthly oil sales excluding trad-

ing and quality adjustments.

Tethys Oil, through its wholly-owned subsidiary Tethys Oil Block 3 & 4 Ltd, has a 30 percent interest in Blocks 3&4. Partners are Mitsui E&P Middle East with 20 percent and the operator CC Energy Development (Oman branch) holding the remaining 50 percent.

Tethys Oil is an oil exploration and production company with a focus on onshore areas with known oil discoveries. The company's core area is the Sultanate of Oman, where it holds interests in Blocks 3&4, Block 49, Block 56 and Block 58.

DIVERSIFYING ENERGY SOURCES

Oman well placed to become a global renewable energy hub: OQ's Group CEO

Times News Service

MUSCAT: Oman's plans for diversifying its energy sources through decarbonisation over the coming years were explored by Talal Al Awfi, Group CEO of OQ, and other members of the company's integrated leadership team, in wide-ranging interviews they gave recently to Oxford Business Group's online broadcasting channel, Global Platform.

In his contribution, Al Awfi noted that Oman was well placed to capitalise on its natural resources and carve a niche as a global hub for renewable energy production.

"We have certain areas of Oman that are blessed with significant solar and wind potential, and we



want to capitalise on this to produce energy and use that energy to produce things such as green hydrogen," he told OBG.

The video examines the role earmarked for alternative energy production in supporting broader efforts underway to diversify the

sultanate's economy and create new employment opportunities, in line with key goals laid out in Vision 2040, Oman's long-term economic development framework.

Members of OQ's integrated leadership team gave valuable insight into what Oman's future

energy mix is expected to look like, with hydrocarbons set to drive the shift towards clean and green energy sources in the transition phase.

The development of the downstream segment was also explored, with representatives highlighting the planned expansion of green industries in Oman, alongside alternative energy production, supported by revenue from oil and gas.

Other topical issues touched on included the added weight being given to environmental, social and governance (ESG) principles in energy production. "ESG standards have always been an important subject within the energy sector, especially as it relates to the environment," Al Awfi told OBG.

MARKET

MSX index ends higher

Oman Chromite, up 10.00 per cent, was the top gainer while OIFC Bonds, down 11.11 per cent, was the top loser

MUSCAT: : The MSX index closed at 4,809.85 points, up by 1.1 per cent from the previous close. The Sharia Index ended up by 1.18 per cent at 475.59 points. Oman Chromite, up 10.00 per cent, was the top gainer while OIFC Bonds, down 11.11 per cent, was the top loser. Shares of Bank Muscat were the most active in terms of number of shares traded as well as in terms of turnover. A total number of 388 trades were executed during the day's trading session, generating a turnover of OMR141 million, with more than 5.08 million shares changing hands. Out of 45 traded securities, 17 advanced, 8 declined, and 20 remained unchanged. At the session close, foreign investors were net buyers for OMR299,000 while domestic investors were net sellers for OMR210,000, followed by GCC & Arab investors for OMR89,000 worth of shares.

Financial Index closed at 7,854.68 points, up 0.07 per cent. Prices of National Bank Oman, United Finance, Oman & Emirates Investment, Sohar International Bank, and Bank Muscat were up by 3.45 per cent, 1.64 per cent, 1.43 per cent, 0.96 per cent, and 0.71 per cent respectively. Prices of Oman Arab Bank, Al Anwar Investment, and Ominvest were up by 4.03 per cent, 2.27 per cent, and 0.26 per cent respectively.

Industrial Index closed at 6,158.50 points, up 0.63 per cent. Prices of Oman Chromite, Oman Flour Mills, Jazeera Steel Products, Galfar Engineering, and Raysut Cement were up by 10.00 per cent, 4.73 per cent, 1.89 per cent, 0.60 per cent, 0.58 per cent respectively. Prices of A'Saffa Foods, Oman Cables Industry were up by 4.48 per cent, 0.45 per cent respectively. Services Index was up by 0.98 per cent before closing at 1,693.17 points. — **United Securities**

OMAN STOCKS

MUSCAT
STOCK
EXCHANGE

INDICES

Index	High	Low	Value	Prev. Value	Diff	Diff%
MSX 30 INDEX	4,809.85	4,754.01	4,809.85	4,757.65	52.20	1.10
FINANCIAL INDEX	7,866.62	7,808.41	7,854.68	7,849.20	5.49	0.07
Industry Index	6,158.50	6,077.14	6,158.50	6,120.22	38.28	0.63
Services Index	1,693.17	1,676.22	1,693.17	1,676.77	16.41	0.98
MSX Shariah Index	475.59	469.00	475.59	470.06	5.53	1.18
MSX TR INDEX	6,325.59	6,252.16	6,325.59	6,256.94	68.65	1.10
FINANCIAL TR IDX	8,583.92	8,520.41	8,570.90	8,564.92	5.99	0.07
SERVICES TR IDX	1,861.34	1,842.71	1,861.34	1,843.31	18.04	0.98
INDUSTRIAL TR IDX	6,578.81	6,491.90	6,578.81	6,537.92	40.89	0.63

Trading Summary

Volume	Turnover	Trades	Market Cap	Up	Down	Equal	Sec. Traded
5,082,865	1,411,110	388	23,925,253,794	17	8	20	45

SHARE PRICE BULLETIN FOR TUESDAY, JULY 18

ISIN	SECURITY NAME	VOLUME	TURNOVER	TRADES	OPEN PRICE	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE PR.	PREV. CLOSE	DIFF (RD)	DIFF %	LAST PR.	LAST BID	LAST OFFR.	PAR VALUE	MARKET CAP
REGULAR MARKET																
OM0000003968	OOREDOO	411,192	154,055	38	0.363	0.390	0.363	0.390	0.363	0.027	7.43%	0.390	0.360	0.390	0.100	253,868,250
OM0000001483	NATIONAL BANK OMAN	359,130	106,407	20	0.290	0.300	0.290	0.300	0.290	0.010	3.44%	0.300	0.288	0.300	0.100	487,783,907
OM0000002176	JAZEERA STEEL PRODUCTS	4,019	1,082	2	0.267	0.270	0.267	0.270	0.265	0.005	1.88%	0.270	0.270	0.291	0.100	33,722,449
OM0000002374	UNITED FINANCE	400	25	1	0.062	0.062	0.062	0.062	0.061	0.001	1.63%	0.062	0.061	0.062	0.100	22,079,892
OM0000001681	OMAN EMIRATES HO.	45,479	3,205	6	0.070	0.071	0.070	0.071	0.070	0.001	1.42%	0.071	0.070	0.071	0.100	8,653,125
OM0000003026	OMAN TELECOM	211,817	210,016	44	0.990	1.000	0.987	1.000	0.986	0.014	1.42%	1.000	0.986	1.000	0.100	750,000,000
OM0000004248	SMN POWER HOLDING	33,500	2,867	7	0.085	0.086	0.085	0.086	0.085	0.001	1.17%	0.086	0.085	0.086	0.100	17,168,662
OM0000003398	SOHAR INTERNATIONAL BANK	398,638	41,836	14	0.105	0.105	0.104	0.105	0.104	0.001	0.96%	0.105	0.098	0.105	0.100	481,956,540
OM0000002796	BANK MUSCAT	1,819,174	510,330	66	0.280	0.282	0.280	0.282	0.280	0.002	0.71%	0.282	0.280	0.282	0.100	118,803,971
OM0000001087	OMAN UNITED INSURANCE	5,000	1,300	1	0.260	0.260	0.260	0.260	0.260	0.000	0.00%	0.260	0.260	0.265	0.100	26,000,000
OM0000002226	ALJAZEERA SERVICES	123,448	29,628	8	0.240	0.240	0.240	0.240	0.240	0.000	0.00%	0.240	0.235	0.240	0.100	14,688,026
OM0000002440	AL SHARQIYA INVESTMENT HO.	130,000	9,490	3	0.073	0.073	0.073	0.073	0.073	0.000	0.00%	0.073	0.068	0.075	0.100	6,570,000
OM0000002549	BANK DHOFAR	11,785	2,062	2	0.175	0.175	0.175	0.175	0.175	0.000	0.00%	0.175	0.175	0.180	0.100	524,361,501
OM0000003125	GLOBAL FINANCIAL INVESTMENT HO.	100	6	1	0.063	0.063	0.063	0.063	0.063	0.000	0.00%	0.063	0.059	0.062	0.100	12,600,000
OM0000001533	OMINVEST	250,100	93,194	15	0.374	0.379	0.371	0.379	0.380	-0.001	-0.26%	0.379	0.371	0.379	0.100	253,310,496
Total	15	3,803,782	1,165,503	228												
Parallel Market																
OM0000001020	OMAN CHROMITE	3,278	13,907	11	4.000	4.268	4.000	4.268	3.880	0.388	10.00%	4.268	4.268	4.268	1.000	12,804,000
OM0000001400	OMAN FLOUR MILLS	5,000	2,857	3	0.552	0.576	0.552	0.576	0.550	0.026	4.72%	0.576	0.535	0.576	0.100	90,720,000
OM0000004825	ALBATINAH POWER	100	3	1	0.029	0.029	0.029	0.029	0.028	0.001	3.57%	0.029	0.028	0.029	0.100	19,571,735
OM0000004833	AL SUWADI POWER	100	3	1	0.029	0.029	0.029	0.029	0.028	0.001	3.57%	0.029	0.029	0.029	0.100	20,717,784
OM0000009889	THE PEARL REEF	3,500	420	1	0.120	0.120	0.120	0.120	0.118	0.002	1.65%	0.120	0.118	0.124	0.100	50,972,425
OM0000005963	PHOENIX POWER	4,950	323	3	0.066	0.066	0.065	0.065	0.064	0.001	1.56%	0.065	0.064	0.065	0.100	95,069,085
OM0000003521	GALFAR ENGINEERING & CONTRACTING	144,500	24,334	12	0.168	0.169	0.168	0.169	0.168	0.001	0.59%	0.168	0.152	0.168	0.100	34,304,709
OM0000004148	RAYSUT CEMENT	21,963	3,745	10	0.172	0.175	0.170	0.175	0.174	0.001	0.57%	0.175	0.170	0.175	0.100	35,000,000
OM0000001590	MUSCAT FINANCE	180,000	10,260	1	0.057	0.057	0.057	0.057	0.057	0.000	0.00%	0.057	0.057	0.057	0.100	17,507,341
OM0000002200	AHLI BANK	6,067	1,177	1	0.194	0.194	0.194	0.194	0.194	0.000	0.00%	0.194	0.194	0.200	0.100	378,233,548
OM0000002275	SHELL OMAN MARKETING	1,200	1,140	1	0.950	0.950	0.950	0.950	0.950	0.000	0.00%	0.950	0.900	0.955	0.100	90,250,000
OM0000002572	OMAN OIL MARKETING	1,000	1,000	1	1.000	1.000	1.000	1.000	1.000	0.000	0.00%	1.000	0.940	1.100	0.100	61,275,000
OM0000003661	VOLTAMP ENERGY	31,291	3,789	6	0.121	0.128	0.120	0.128	0.128	0.000	0.00%	0.128	0.120	0.128	0.100	10,419,552
OM0000004420	BANK NIZWA	151,793	14,412	15	0.095	0.095	0.095	0.095	0.095	0.000	0.00%	0.095	0.094	0.096	0.100	212,510,538
OM0000007910	AMAN REAL ESTATE	37,919	3,802	3	0.095	0.095	0.095	0.095	0.095	0.000	0.00%	0.095	0.095	0.104	0.100	10,000,000
OM0000008447	OMAN REIT FUND	165,367	15,541	6	0.093	0.094	0.093	0.094	0.094	0.000	0.00%	0.094	0.093	0.094	0.100	44,291,520
OM0000008934	ABRAJ ENERGY SERVICES	90,516	27,481	33	0.304	0.305	0.303	0.304	0.304	0.000	0.00%	0.304	0.304	0.304	0.100	234,140,800
OM0000001707	OMAN CABLES INDUSTRY	16,351	32,053	7	1.899	1.990	1.899	1.990	1.999	-0.009	-0.45%	1.990	1.800	1.990	0.100	178,503,000
OM0000001160	NATIONAL GAS	29,710	2,763	4	0.093	0.093	0.093	0.093	0.094	-0.001	-1.06%	0.093	0.090	0.093	0.100	7,905,000
OM0000004735	SEMBOCORP SALALAH	2,000	196	1	0.098	0.098	0.098	0.098	0.100	-0.002	-2.00%	0.098	0.095	0.098	0.100	93,548,051
OM0000001772	ALANWAR INVESTMENT	159,153	13,716	8	0.087	0.087	0.086	0.086	0.088	-0.002	-2.27%	0.086	0.086	0.086	0.100	17,716,000
OM0000005260	OMAN ARAB BANK	40,839	5,865	12	0.144	0.148	0.143	0.148	0.149	-0.006	-4.02%	0.143	0.143	0.145	0.100	238,725,630
OM0000002804	ASAFFA FOODS	126,525	41,585	8	0.330	0.330	0.320	0.320	0.335	-0.015	-4.47%	0.320	0.320	0.325	0.100	38,400,000
Total	23	1,223,032	220,171	149												

HYDROGEN OMAN

Hydrom presents its plans at Green Hydrogen Conference and Exhibition in Europe

Times News Service

MUSCAT: Hydrogen Oman (Hydrom), a subsidiary of Energy Development Oman (EDO), participated in the Green Hydrogen Conference and Exhibition- Europe 2023, held in Madrid, Spain. As part of its participation, Hydrom presented the ambitious vision and strategic plans of the Sultanate of Oman in fostering the growth of the green hydrogen industry, intending to become a global hub for its production shortly. Eng. Abdul Aziz Said Al Shidhani, the General Manager of Hydrom, took part in the conference, where he presented the results of the first public auction round in phase A. The event witnessed the signing of agreements to initiate the development of five projects in Al Wusta Governorate, spanning an area exceeding 1,600 km2 and with a total investment of more than \$30 billion. Additionally, Al



Shidhani discussed the second round of the public auction within the same phase, as well as the promising investment opportunities it offers companies interested in entering this industry. Commenting on Hydrom's participation in the conference, Eng. Abdul Aziz said, "The Green Hydrogen Conference and Exhibition in Europe is a prominent global event that focuses on the future of

renewable energy in the hydrogen sector. Hydrom decided to participate in sponsoring this event to inform major companies operating in this field about Oman's visionary plans for the green hydrogen economy and the joint infrastructure being developed to support these projects, which will open doors for various industries to transition toward green production methods.

"Our primary goal for participating was to encourage international companies to engage with us and take advantage of the excellent opportunities currently offered by the Sultanate through the second round of public auction, which will also offer numerous plots of land in the Dhofar Governorate. Our participation in this event was highly successful, as several companies expressed a keen interest in learning more about these investment opportunities." He added, "We are moving in the right direction to put the Sultanate of Oman on the list of the world's leading green hydrogen producers, thus making it an attractive destination for foreign industrial investments seeking to transition to clean energy. We are confident in our ability to attract leading companies in this sector as partners as we work together to create a more sustainable future for Oman's energy industry."

ENERGY SECTOR

OQ to organise sustainability forum on water management

MUSCAT: As part of its commitment to water resources management and paving the way towards achieving water positivity in the energy sector, OQ, the global integrated energy group, will host a sustainability forum on water management at its head office today. This forum serves as a platform for OQ to contribute to global water conservation efforts and promote effective water resource management in the energy industry. Aligned with the objectives of Oman Vision 2040, the initiative strives to facilitate a transition towards a sustainable future across all facets of the group, seamlessly integrating sustainability into OQ's performance throughout the value chain. To achieve this, the focus is on establishing objectives and devising plans to recapture lost value across various operations. The forum will illuminate key themes, fostering an ecosystem that promotes collective trans-

formation. One primary objective is to enhance the maturity of companies and organisations in water management through comprehensive risk analysis, reduced water consumption, and the adoption of leading practices. Additionally, the forum will explore the utilisation of modern technology to optimise technical aspects of water management, while emphasising the significance of agile water resource management. "We at OQ are aiming for the sustainable use of water in our operations. We have organised this forum to gather relevant stakeholders, understand the local concepts and challenges surrounding this topic, and work together towards socially and culturally equitable, environmentally sustainable, and economically beneficial water use. This will be achieved through a stakeholder-inclusive process involving site - and catchment-based actions," said Shaima Al Lawati, Vice President of Sustainability at OQ said. **ONA**

Free home delivery & timely service

oman OASIS
BALANCED DRINKING WATER

Oasis Water Co. SAOG,
PO Box 87, Rusayl 124,
Sultanate of Oman.
www.omanoasis.com

CALL TOLL-FREE
800 71 222
or GSM: 9275 5522

Winner of
His Majesty's Cup Award
in 2012 & 2013
for Best Five Factories

C.R. No.: 1026642

REGIONAL EXPANSION STRATEGY

Oman Oil expands footprint in Saudi Arabia with 14 new service stations

<



According to recent research, encouraging adolescents to feel capable and purposeful - rather than just happy - could boost their academic results as well as their mental health

HELPING TEENS

TO FEEL COMPETENT, PURPOSEFUL CAN IMPROVE THEIR GRADES: RESEARCH

The University of Cambridge study, involving over 600 teenagers from seven English schools, examined two separate aspects of their wellbeing: life satisfaction and 'eudaimonia'. While life satisfaction roughly equates to how happy a person is, eudaimonia refers to how well that person feels they are functioning. It incorporates feelings of competence, motivation and self-esteem. Researchers found that students with high levels of eudaimonia consistently outperformed their peers in GCSE-level assessments, especially Maths. On average, those achieving top Maths grades had eudaimonic well being levels 1.5 times higher than those with the lowest grades.

No such link was found between academic performance and life satisfaction. Despite this, child wellbeing policy in England tends to focus on life satisfaction. The Government has, for example, recently added 'happiness' to national curricula as part of its Relationships, and Health Education (RHE) guidance, emphasising teaching adolescents how to feel happy and resilient while managing negative emotions.

Previous research has pointed to the importance of fostering adolescents' eudaimonic well being by nurturing their personal values, goals and sense of self-worth. The new study appears to strengthen that case by demonstrating a positive link between eudaimonia and academic performance.

Its lead author, Dr Tania Clarke,

Clarke suggested that eudaimonic therapy, which increasingly features in professional mental health psychology for adolescents, could be incorporated more into wellbeing education. In particular, her study underscores the need to help students understand their academic work and progress in the context of their personal motivations and goals.

is a psychologist of education who now works for the Youth Endowment Fund, but undertook the study for her doctoral research at the Faculty of Education, University of Cambridge. The findings are published in School Psychology Review.

"Wellbeing education often focuses on teaching students about being happy and not being sad," Clarke said. "That is over-simplistic and overlooks other vital qualities of wellbeing that are particularly salient during the formative period of adolescence."

"Adolescents also need to develop self-awareness, confidence, and ideally a sense of meaning and purpose. Judging by our findings, an adolescent who is currently getting a

3 or 4 on their Maths GCSE could be helped to raise a couple of grades if schools emphasised these qualities for all students, rather than just promoting positivity and minimising negative emotions."

The study involved 607 adolescents, aged 14-15. Participants completed an established psychological assessment called 'How I feel about myself and school', which measures both life satisfaction and eudaimonia, as well as feelings of interpersonal relatedness and negativity.

These measures were compared with their scores in mock English and Maths GCSEs. The research also assessed whether the students exhibited a 'growth mindset': a belief in their personal capacity for improvement. Many educators consider this essential for enhancing academic performance.

The students' overall wellbeing - their eudaimonia and life satisfaction combined - clearly correlated positively with their exam results. Those attaining top Maths grades (Grades 8 or 9) had, on average, a well being score of 32 out of a possible 50. This was nine points higher than those with a Grade 1, and three to four points higher than the average for all 607 students.

When they analysed the separate dimensions of wellbeing, however, the researchers found a positive relationship between eudaimonia and higher attainment, but no correlation with life satisfaction. In Maths, the average eudaimonic well being score of Grade 9 students was 17.3 from a possible 25, while

that of Grade 1 students was just 10.9. These results held true even when accounting for potentially confounding factors, such as school attended, gender, socio-economic status, or special educational needs.

The study also found that a growth mindset did not predict good academic results, although students with high eudaimonic well being did tend to exhibit such a mindset. Other research has similarly struggled to draw a clear link between growth mindset and academic progress, but does link it more generally to positive mental health. This implies that eudaimonia, as well as supporting better attainment, may also underpin important aspects of self-belief, leading to broader mental health benefits.

Clarke's wider research suggests that various constraints currently limit schools' capacity to promote eudaimonic well being. In an earlier Review of Education article she published the results of in-depth interviews with some of the same students, which highlighted concerns about a 'performativity culture' stemming from a heavy emphasis on high-stakes testing. These interviews indicated that many students associate 'doing well' with getting good grades, rather than with their own strengths, values and goals.

Students said they often felt worthless, inadequate or "dumb" if they failed to get high marks in tests. "You let your scores define you," one student told Clarke. "Then you feel really low about... your worth and everything. You think it's literally

the end of the world." Ironically, the new findings suggest that by limiting teachers' capacity to support students' personal growth, the heavy emphasis on exam results and testing may be undermining academic progress, at least in some cases.

Clarke suggested that eudaimonic therapy, which increasingly features in professional mental health psychology for adolescents, could be incorporated more into wellbeing education. In particular, her study underscores the need to help students understand their academic work and progress in the context of their personal motivations and goals.

"There is a link between better well being and a more nuanced understanding of academic success," Clarke said. "Because schools are under heavy pressure to deliver academic results, at the moment students seem to be measuring themselves against the exam system, rather than in terms of who they want to be or what they want to achieve."

Dr Ros McLellan, from the Faculty of Education, University of Cambridge, who co-authored the study, said: "Wellbeing education needs to move beyond notions of 'boosting' happiness towards deeper engagement, helping adolescents to realise their unique talents and aspirations, and a sense of what happiness means for them, personally. This would not just improve wellbeing: it is also likely to mean better exam results, and perhaps fewer issues for students later on." -ANI

SPORTS

Ronaldo rules out Europe return

Portuguese star insists the Saudi Pro League is stronger than MLS in United States

MADRID: Cristiano Ronaldo has ruled out returning to play in Europe, while insisting that the Saudi Pro League is stronger than the United States' Major League Soccer (MLS). Ronaldo made his remarks after his side Al Nassr were thrashed 5-0 by Spain's Celta Vigo in the pre-season Algarve Trophy held in Faro, Portugal on Monday. Jorgen Strand Larsen scored a hat-trick as Celta romped to victory in Rafa Benitez's first game in charge, but speaking in the mixed zone afterwards, Ronaldo was disparaging about Spanish football. "La Liga has lost quality," insisted Ronaldo, who said football in Saudi Arabia was now at a high level. "It is not as UEFA saying that only veterans are coming to Arabia. This year quality players such as Jota or Ruben Neves are going there. I won't return to European football: the door is completely closed. I'm 38 years old, also European football has lost a lot of quality. The only valid league is the English Premier League, they're way ahead of all the other leagues," said Ronaldo. "The Spanish league does not have that great quality. The Portuguese league is a good league, but it is not a top, top league. The German league I think has also

lost a lot. I want to play in Saudi Arabia.' Ronaldo's Al Nassr were narrowly beaten to the Saudi Pro League title last season by league rivals Al Ittihad, but were banned from signing new players by FIFA last week, after they had failed to pay US\$511,188 in add-ons for former Leicester player Ahmed Musa. Ronaldo also said that he had "opened the way" for other players to move to Saudi Arabia and said that it would soon be a better quality than the Dutch or Turkish leagues. Ronaldo joined Al Nassr in January following an acrimonious departure after his second stint at Manchester United. In this transfer window several high-profile players have followed Ronaldo's lead, with Karim Benzema, Marcelo Brozovic, N'Golo Kante, Roberto Firmino, Edouard Mendy, and Kalidou Koulibaly all signing deals to play in the Saudi Pro League. "My decision to join Saudi clubs was 100 percent crucial to bring in new top players. It's a fact. "In one year, more & more top players will come to Saudi," said Ronaldo. "In a year the Saudi league will overtake the Turkish league and Dutch league." Ronaldo took a dig at Argentine Lionel Messi, who has joined Inter Miami, saying the Saudi Pro League "is better than" Major League Soccer (MLS). "The Saudi Pro League is better than MLS," said Ronaldo. Earlier in another interview, the five-time Ballon d'Or winner said: "I am happy here, I want to continue here, I will continue here. And in my opinion if they continue to do the work that they want to do here, for the next five years, I think the Saudi league can be a top five league in the world." - Agencies



WIMBLEDON 2023



Djokovic fined for smashing racquet during title clash

LONDON: Novak Djokovic has been fined US\$ 8,021 for smashing his racquet against the net post during the Wimbledon men's singles final. The incident occurred in the fifth set of his loss to Spain's Carlos Alcaraz when the 36-year-old Serb's serve was broken in the third game. Umpire Fergus Murphy immediately issued Djokovic a warning for a code violation for the transgression. The money will be deducted from his runner-up cheque of US\$ 1.5m. Djokovic's frustration had built up in the decisive set of an en-

thrilling contest on Sunday, having missed a simple chance at the net for a break to go 2-0 up. In the very next game Alcaraz backed up the hold by breaking the serve of the seven-time Wimbledon champion, which prompted the emotional outburst from Djokovic and brought boos from a section of the Centre Court crowd. World No.1 Alcaraz took full advantage of the break to seal a 1-6, 7-6 (8-6), 6-1, 3-6, 6-4 victory after four hours and 42 minutes. The 20-year-old's victory at the All England Club denied Serbia's Djokovic a 24th Grand Slam title. - Agencies

SPIRALLING COSTS

Victoria pulls out of hosting 2026 Commonwealth Games

MELBOURNE: The future of the Commonwealth Games have been cast in doubt after Victoria pulled out of plans to host the event in 2026 due to spiralling costs. The Australian state had been named to succeed Birmingham as host city for the event, which takes place every four years, with plans for it to take place statewide. Costs had originally been estimated at US\$ 1.8 billion but on Tuesday Victorian Premier Daniel Andrews said that costs had now nearly trebled, more than twice the estimated economic benefit to the state. Andrews said: 'I've made a lot of difficult calls, a lot of very difficult decisions in this job. This is not one of them. This is all cost and no benefit.' The Commonwealth Games Federation (CGF) had been struggling to find a host when Victoria stepped in to bring the 12-day event to Australia for a second time in eight years. And all of the remaining Australian states have ruled out stepping in to fill the void. In a statement, the Commonwealth Games Federation said: "We were informed today that the Victoria Government has walked away from their agreement to host the 2026 Commonwealth Games. This is hugely disappointing for the Commonwealth sport movement, for athletes around the Commonwealth and the organising committee, who are well advanced in their planning and preparation. "The reasons given are financial. We are disappointed that we were



given only eight hours' notice and that no consideration was given to discussing the situation to jointly find solutions prior to this decision being reached by the government. "Up until this point, the government had advised that sufficient funding was available to deliver the Victoria 2026 Commonwealth Games. We are taking advice on the options available to us and remain committed to finding a solution for the Games in 2026 that is in the best interest of our athletes and the wider Commonwealth sport movement." The sporting event for mostly former British colonies has struggled to remain relevant, with five of the last six editions held in Australia or Britain. English city Birmingham stepped in to host the 2022 Games after South Africa was stripped of them in 2017 over a lack of progress in preparations. Though Australia hosted the Games as recently as 2018 at the

Gold Coast, Victoria put its hand up for 2026 last year when no other countries showed interest. Andrews said the government will instead spend more than US\$14bn on a "regional package", which would include building all permanent sporting facilities intended for the Games, along with US\$0.7bn for social and affordable housing. The Australian Olympic Committee (AOC), which had spoken of the 2026 Games as a "runway" for hosting the 2032 Brisbane Olympics, said it was "an enormous disappointment" for the athletes. Australia, by far the Games' most successful competing nation, has hosted five of the previous 22 editions. The Commonwealth Games are a multi-sport tournament that take place every four years. They have only ever been cancelled during World War Two. - Agencies

WIMBLEDON WINNER



Vondrousova enters WTA top 10 rankings for first time

LONDON: Marketa Vondrousova has moved into the top 10 of the women's rankings for the first time after her stunning triumph at Wimbledon. The 24-year-old became the first unseeded player to take the women's singles title, landing a straight-sets win over Ons Jabeur on Saturday. The Czech player has risen 32 places and is now 10th in the WTA standings. Vondrousova has revealed she and her coach Jan Hernych will get a matching "little strawberry" tattoo to mark her victory. "We talked before the tournament and he said 'maybe if you win a Grand Slam, then I'll do it'. So this is happening," she said. Plans to have the tattoo done in London on Sunday were shelved, with both electing to instead visit a parlour in Prague later for the inking. She reached the French Open final in 2019, losing to Ash Barty, and was also runner-up at the Tokyo Games. She won her maiden Slam title at Wimbledon, having missed it last year due to a wrist injury.

ILKAY GUNDOGAN SIGNS TWO-YEAR DEAL

Former Man City captain still has 'a lot to prove' at Barcelona

BARCELONA: Barcelona's new signing Ilkay Gundogan says he still has "a lot to prove" after he was unveiled at the Catalan club following his move from Manchester City. The German midfielder, 32, captained City to the treble last season, playing a key role with 11 goals in 51 games. He has signed a two-year deal at Barca after joining on a free transfer. "Even though I'm older, I'm prepared for the challenge and I still have a lot to prove," said Gundogan. Gundogan was presented at Barcelona's training facilities on Monday. He will now play under Xavi - who played under City boss

Pep Guardiola at Barcelona from 2008-2012, winning a Spanish treble in 2009. "The style is very similar to what I played at City," Gundogan said. "Guardiola and Xavi are very similar. I felt a connection with Xavi from the first moment we talked. When I spoke to him I knew they [Barcelona] were on the right track. "It's an incredible team and an opportunity to be able to play in a different league and in a different country. "We will try to fight for the Champions League title. It is a responsibility to wear this shirt and I will try to give my best to win

as many titles as possible." Gundogan, who spent time coaching Manchester City's Under 16s, is also excited to help develop Barcelona's young midfielders who he described as "incredible" and "very talented" after both Pedri and Gavi won the Golden Boy award for the best under 21 player in Europe over the past two seasons. He added: "I come with more experience because my life and my career have not been easy and I think my experience can help a lot. "They are a very talented young group of players who do better things than me. If I can give them at least 1%, I'll be happy." - Agencies



Bank Muscat celebrates achievements of its Sayyarati partners in Salalah

The special networking event was attended by senior officials from Bank Muscat as well as representatives from car dealerships and showrooms from Dhofar Governorate

MUSCAT: In line with its commitment to strengthening its relations with partners and to further popularise the benefits of Sayyarati Auto Loans, Bank Muscat, the leading financial services provider in the Sultanate of Oman, organised a special event in Salalah for vehicle dealers based in the governorate.

The special networking event was attended by senior officials from Bank Muscat as well as representatives from car dealerships and showrooms from Dhofar.

On this occasion, Taya Eid Bait Sabeea, Deputy General Manager – Interior Regions, Bank Muscat,



said: “We are pleased to organize this special event in Salalah to further strengthen our relationship with different companies operating in the all-important automobile sector including, dealerships,

showrooms and other companies dealing with automotive services based in the Governorate. These events are an opportunity for us all to share different updates and ideas to help us develop the

sector further. Celebrating the achievements today is part of this long-standing journey together, aspiring to achieve the best for our customers and strengthen this valued partnership with you.”

Addressing the gathering, Raddhiya Hassan Al Lawati, Head of Sales, Bank Muscat, said: “We are excited to once again meet our partners from this important sector. I take this opportunity to

extend our sincere thanks and appreciation for all the cooperation and partnership over the past many years, which have resulted in us being able to provide the best services, facilities and benefits to all our valued customers. As we all know, the automotive sector is one of the most important sectors in the Sultanate, which has been witnessing good growth. We have been working hard to strengthen our partnerships with everyone in the sector and are proud of the achievements made over the past few years. We would like to extend our appreciation for the strong efforts and cooperation between all our partners and the continuous trust of our customers. The results of the recent past are a strong testament to this.”

In 2003, the bank launched its Sayyarati Auto Loans to help customers own their dream cars through an easy and accessible financing option. Sayyarati auto finance enhances banking convenience for customers as it offers various benefits, competitive rates and simplified procedures.

The automotive sector is an important one in Oman as it is a key enabler of rapid and efficient transport within the Sultanate. As always, the bank will work with its partners by launching new initiatives and facilities, which will benefit the customers as well as help the partners grow their businesses.

EPIC CONCERTS

‘Beat the Heat’ is back with performances from region’s coolest talent this Dubai Summer Surprises

DUBAI: Prepare to experience epic concerts and performances from some of the region’s coolest talent, as Beat The Heat (BTH) - the musical showcase from Dubai Summer Surprises (DSS), in collaboration with Anghami Spotlight - returns for its second annual edition.

Ever in tune with the Arab music scene, this summer’s line-up showcases the breadth and diversity of the region’s emerging musical artists, with weekly concerts taking place throughout the summer at The Agenda, Dubai Media City.

Ahmed Al Khaja, CEO of Dubai Festivals and Retail Establishment said: “Dubai Summer Surprises is a showcase of the very best that Dubai has to offer over the summer season, and that includes supporting our city’s grassroots music scene and providing a platform for local talent. For this year’s edition of Beat the Heat, we have worked with our partners at Anghami Spotlight to curate an exciting and diverse line-up of Arab artists guaranteed to appeal to audiences of residents and visitors throughout the summer months.”

“We are thrilled to be working alongside DFRE (Dubai Festivals and Retail establishment) to bring



back the highly anticipated 2nd edition of Beat The Heat. After the tremendous success of the previous year, our goal was to create an even more memorable experience for the audience,” said Maher Khoukhaji, Managing Director of Anghami Spotlight. “The lineup is packed with exceptional talent, and we can’t wait to see them deliver captivating performances that will leave the crowd amazed,” he added.

Beat the Heat is set to kick off with a bang, as Egyptian rapper WEGZ and rap futurist Dizzy-

TooSkinny take over the stage on 15 July. Switching up genres, on 22 July, there’s a chance to experience an epic set from rock band Cairokee and Jordanian-Palestinian singer, songwriter, rapper and percussionist, El Far3i.

If you’re more of a groove aficionado, then you won’t want to miss up-and-coming artists Afroto, Batti, and Soulja on stage on 29 July; and be sure to catch the hip hop and Cuban funk band Sharmoofters, plus Jordanian indie band Autostrad, as they perform on 12 August.

Saudi sensation Modi Al Shamrani and the ever-skilful DJ Aseel will be playing to the crowd on 19 August, while MassarEgbari and Disco Misr will end the summer season in style as they take to the stage on 1 September.

Purchase tickets from Platinum List or Dubai Calendar and get set for a fantastic showcase sure to Beat the Heat and deliver the coolest sounds of the summer.

Enjoy the ultimate summer extravaganza filled with incredible surprises, unmissable retail offers, diverse culinary delights and endless entertainment this Dubai Summer Surprises, running until 3 September.

FERRARI



Fun and feisty: A brief date with Ferrari’s baby berlinetta 296 GTB

MARANELLO: Since it launched the 296 GTB – the latest evolution of Maranello’s mid-rear-engined two-seater berlinetta, in June two years ago – Ferrari has maintained that the model was all about “redefining fun”.

The Italian brand boasts that it delivers pure emotions not just when pushing the car to its limits, but also in day-to-day driving situations. And, in fairness, I can vouch that is an accurate statement.

When it was first unveiled, the 296 GTB ushered in an authentic revolution for Ferrari with the introduction of a new engine type to flank the marque’s multi-award-winning 8- and 12-cylinder power units.

This new engine marks an epoch-changing moment for the Ma-

ranello marque: it is not simply the living, beating heart of the 296 GTB but also ushers in a new V6 era that has its roots deep in Ferrari’s unparalleled 70-year-plus experience in motor sports.

Plus, the 296 GTB’s plug-in hybrid (PHEV) system makes it a real everyday car while cutting pedal response times to zero and delivering a 25km range in all-electric eDrive mode with a combined maximum power output of 830cv. This performance not only place it at the top of the rear-wheel-drive sports car segment as well as making it extremely flexible.

This is true both in terms of day-to-day usage (the 296 GTB has a full-electric mode range of 25 km), and in driving enjoyment (accelerator pedal response is instant and

smooth at all engine speeds).

It also one of the prettiest prancing horses from Maranello’s stable in recent years. Externally, the model encompasses an extremely clean, elegant and tapered design in which all the performance-oriented elements meld effortlessly with the styling, in the signature synergy of technology and aesthetics of all Ferraris, while the interior layout draws on the latter’s familiar stylistic coherence. The heady mixture of finest grain leather trim, metal and technology makes for a very pleasant environment.

Well behaved in daily traffic, while dynamic, responsive and aurally addictive when blasting around the UAE’s quieter roads, the 296 GTB certainly got the memo about “redefining fun”

ACADEMICS

International students from South Korea explore aviation and airport management programmes at Modern College of Business and Science

MUSCAT: On July 12, Modern College of Business and Science (MCBS) had the pleasure of hosting a group of international students from Korea.

The event was specifically designed to provide these students with an exclusive opportunity to explore the wide range of possibilities available in the field of aviation and airport management. MCBS takes pride in being the only private college that offers these programmes, making it an ideal choice for aspiring professionals in this industry.

The event aimed to provide these Korean students with firsthand exposure to MCBS’s renowned Aviation and Airport Management programs, which are designed to equip students with the necessary skills and knowledge to excel in the dynamic aviation industry. The students had the opportunity to interact with faculty members and current students, gaining valuable insights into the curriculum, facilities,



ties, and career prospects associated with these programmes.

“We were excited to welcome the students from Korea to our campus and showcase the exceptional educational opportunities

available in our Aviation and Airport Management programmes,” said the Dean Dr Moosa Al Kindi “MCBS is dedicated to providing a global learning experience, and this event allowed us to connect

with international students and provide them with a glimpse into the exciting world of aviation.”

During the event, the students participated in informative presentations, engaging workshops,

and interactive sessions to gain a comprehensive understanding of the aviation industry’s complexities and the skills required to excel in this field. They also had the opportunity to tour MCBS’s state-of-the-art facilities, including simulation labs, aircraft hangars, and training centres, which provide hands-on experience for students pursuing careers in aviation and airport management.

MCBS takes pride in its partnerships with leading aviation organisations and industry experts, which ensure that the programmes remain up to date with the latest industry trends and demands. The college’s faculty members, who possess extensive industry experience, were present during the event to share their expertise and answer any questions the students had.

“The event served as an excellent platform for students to engage with our faculty, who bring a wealth of knowledge and industry connections to the table,” added

Dr Khalfan Al Asmi the associate dean for academic affairs. “We are confident that this event has inspired the Korean students to consider MCBS as their destination for pursuing their dreams in aviation and airport management.”

MCBS is committed to fostering a diverse and inclusive learning environment, welcoming students from around the world to experience its world-class educational programs. The college provides comprehensive support services to international students, including visa assistance, accommodation arrangements, and cultural integration programs.

Interested students from Korea or any other country can find more information about MCBS’s Aviation and Airport Management programs on the college’s website, www.mCBS.edu.om. Prospective students are encouraged to reach out to the college’s Admission and Registration Office for personalized assistance and guidance.

ROUND-UP

ABQ to open new school in August

The school will be able to accommodate 1200 students from KG to Grade 12 but will initially only launch KG to Grade 4 in Year 1

MUSCAT: Oman's largest international school operator, ABQ Education Group, is opening its very first private school at the start of the new academic year in August 2023. The group falls under the education pillar of The Zubair Corporation and operates under the philosophy of transforming and developing Oman's education system and, consequently, the nation itself.

The school will be able to accommodate 1200 students from KG to Grade 12 but will initially only launch KG to Grade 4 in Year 1. The Al Imtiaz campus in Bawshar, which was previously home to the ABQ Azzan Bin Qais International



School for 20 years before they relocated to Madinat Sultan Qaboos last year, is best-in-class and will soon be available for campus tours.

ABQ has become synonymous with excellent academic standards, innovative and unique programmes, outstanding facilities, and providing students with a comprehensive and holistic education. With the Group's well-established portfolio of premium international schools in Oman, ABQ Azzan Bin Qais, ABQ Seeb, and ABQ Sohar, and their two standalone Pre-KG nursery schools in Muscat and Sohar, ABQ is excited to open Al Imtiaz Private School in Bawshar later this year.

ABQ Education Group Chief Executive Officer, Humayun Kabir said, "We have received consistent market feedback that there is a need for a more affordable, yet

exceptional academic product, and ABQ is responding to this need by making quality education accessible to a larger segment of society. ABQ Al Imtiaz will offer a more traditional environment than other schools, with segregated classes for boys and girls from Secondary grades onwards as well as a unique blend of international (Cambridge) and enhanced Arabic curricula."

Kabir added, "Imtiaz means unique, distinct, and exceptional and we recognise that each child has unique strengths and needs. We have high expectations for all our students and encourage each student to achieve their full potential."

"Al Imtiaz School is part of ABQ's vision to further develop the educational system within the Sultanate of Oman by providing varied options and opportunities for students, and to equip the next generation to build a promising future for themselves and those around them based on the decisions being made today," Kabir concluded.

Sigve Austheim, ABQ's Chief Learning Officer said, "ABQ has an exceptional track record of delivering the highest standard in education and with this more affordable education option, we want to ensure that more families can benefit from the quality education we offer across our schools."

With close to 60 cumulative years of school operating experience, ABQ has a wealth of knowledge and expertise within the Group to ensure that ABQ Al Imtiaz will be an educational institution that is forward-looking, academically strong, and culturally rooted in the local society.

HEALTHCARE

Shifa Hospital expands heart and vascular comprehensive care with new Cath Lab

MUSCAT: Shifa Hospital Oman announced the expansion of its heart and vascular care with the introduction of the new High-Tech Hybrid Cath Lab facility, the first of its kind in the region in the private healthcare sector. The centrepiece of the new facility is the Allia IGS 7 image-guided therapy system developed by GE Healthcare, which combines advanced imaging technology with interventional devices for minimally invasive procedures.

The most highly advanced Cath Lab is designed to provide a comprehensive range of services for patients with heart and vascular conditions, offering state-of-the-art technology and world-class medical expertise. With the addition of the Allia™ IGS 7 system, doctors at Shifa Hospital Oman will be able to perform complex procedures with greater precision and efficiency, reducing risk and improving outcomes for patients.

"As part of our unwavering commitment to supporting Oman Vision 2040, Shifa Hospital is dedicated to expanding our surgical specialities. Our primary goal is to provide patients with state-of-the-art treatment facilities and ensure their access to highly skilled medical professionals," stated Dr



Salim Al Ghannami, Chief Executive Officer of Shifa Hospital. "The introduction of the remarkable Allia™ IGS 7 system signifies a breakthrough in medical technology. Its implementation will enable us to perform more intricate procedures with heightened precision and safety. We firmly believe that this advancement will have a profound impact on the quality of care we deliver to our patients, solidifying our position in the healthcare sector."

Powered by GE Healthcare's Edison™ intelligence platform, the Allia imaging system offers the first Artificial Intelligence driven imaging chain that may reduce radiation dose and contrast for inter-

ventional procedures. A digital hub of software packages gives physicians the clinical information they need to plan, guide, and assess procedures to increase diagnostic accuracy and make more informed decisions designed to improve the effectiveness of the treatments they deliver to patients.

"At Shifa Hospital Oman's Cardiac Centre of Excellence, we offer an extensive range of cardiac care services, encompassing everything from basic screening tests to advanced diagnostic and therapeutic procedures," said Dr Fahad Al Kindi, Interventional Cardiologist and Head of the Cardiology unit at Shifa Hospital. "With the

NATIONAL BANK OF OMAN



NBO holds Global Economic Outlook event for its corporate banking customers

MUSCAT: In line with its commitment to creating value for its customers, the National Bank of Oman (NBO) recently held a Global Economic Outlook event for its corporate clientele at the bank's headquarters.

As part of NBO's comprehensive Corporate Banking proposition, aimed at ensuring customers' long-term financial well-being, this unique experience included a panel discussion led by Giridhar Varadachari, General Manager and Chief Financial and Operating Officer at NBO, and featured Anatoliy Shal, a macroeconomics expert from JP Morgan. Shal shared valuable insights on the economic outlook and its regional impact during this interactive event.

Mohammed Yahya Al Jabri, Assistant General Manager and Head of Global Transaction Banking at NBO, said, "Gaining a comprehensive understanding of the global economic landscape is important for businesses to achieve long-term financial success. At NBO, we are committed to equipping our corporate customers with valuable insights on global macroeconomics trends, enabling them to make well-informed decisions."

"In the face of recent interest rate hikes, customers are encountering new challenges. However, NBO's cash and liquidity management solutions provide instruments for managing corporate cash flows, helping to manage foreign exchange risk and improve overall liquidity management by facilitating easier access to funds. This helps businesses gain better insights into their liquidity position and optimise their financial and cash management strategies," Al Jabri added.

NBO provides a wide range of corporate banking services to businesses of all sizes, including working capital financing, cash and liquidity management, transaction banking, corporate advisory, treasury services, trade services and multi-currency accounts, allowing customers to hold funds in different currencies. In addition to these services, NBO also offers a range of digital solutions to its corporate banking customers, such as Corporate Internet Banking.

The award-winning platform allows users to make instant transactions, payments and transfers in local and foreign currencies, online trade, as well as other valuable features. As the world undergoes a rapid transition towards digitalisation, NBO is actively empowering its customers to seamlessly shift to digital platforms by offering innovative solutions and extensive support. These measures aim to assist businesses in navigating the change effectively.

BRING HOME HAPPINESS

Exclusive benefits on Ford Expedition

MUSCAT: The spacious family mover – the Expedition is available with Service 3 Years / 60,000 kms, and Registration 1 Year. The campaign ends on 9 August, 2023 (Conditions apply. For details visit Arabian Car Marketing Co.)

The Expedition is equipped with a 3.5-litre EcoBoost engine with standard Auto Start-Stop plus a class exclusive 10-speed automatic transmission.

The Expedition offers best-in-class fuel economy and power, with up to 380 horsepower and 637Nm torque available.

For enhanced experiences the Expedition is equipped with driver-assist technologies, high-



strength, aluminium-alloy body and redesigned high-strength steel frame for rugged off-road and strong towing capabilities.

In terms of safety, Ford has

thoughtfully equipped the Expedition with impressive safety features. It includes Control Blade with Electronic Limited Slip Differential, collision avoidance de-

tection system that helps drivers avoid other vehicles or pedestrians, while available Blind Spot Information System helps monitor blind spots outside the driver's immediate view.

In addition, Expedition offers connectivity technologies and convenience features, including – Tri-zone Electronic Temperature Control, Wireless charging, SYNC® 4 with 12" LCD touchscreen, Power in every row: With four 12-volt power points, six USB chargers and a 220-volt power outlet that lets passengers stay charged and connected; Advanced cargo manager with an adjustable shelf, and Panoramic Vista Roof.



mai alkaline

pH 9.1 to 9.5

Alkaline Ionized Drinking Water

OmanOasis OmanOasisOfficial OmanOasisWater



HYDRATE SMARTLY

- ✓ Ultra-hydrating
- ✓ Revitalizing
- ✓ Energizing
- ✓ Electrolytes



oman OASIS

800 71 222 9275 5522

HITACHI

Enjoy the taste of fresh



جينتكو
Genetco

C.R. No. 1009680

MUSCAT
96742452

SALALAH
97924410, 94048494

Available at
Major Hypermarkets & Electronics Retailers



www.genetco.net



@GenetcoOman



@GenetcoOman



Genetco Oman



Your Preferred Choice To Send Money

WITH THE BEST RATES AND LOW CHARGES

SIMPLE | SECURE | SWIFT



Ghana



Kenya



South Africa



Ethiopia



Uganda



Rwanda



Nigeria



Tanzania



Congo

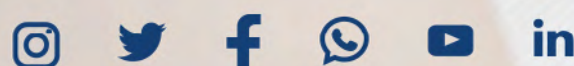


**PURSHOTTAM KANJI
EXCHANGE**



شركة برشوتم
كانجي للصرافة

Download it **NOW!**



+968: 91787829 | 99849289 | 91787829

www.pkexchange.com



TANK 300



EXPLORE THE UNKNOWN



CALL TOLL-FREE
800-50004



97295030

Products shown are for illustration purposes only.

GERMACARE

WHERE *love* MEETS CARE

Natural products for
your baby's gentle skin!
Made in Germany

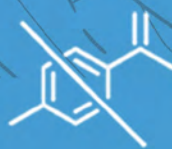
Now Available in Oman



A NEUTRAL 5.5
pH



VEGAN



PARABEN-
FREE



MADE IN
GERMANY



ORGANIC EDELWEISS
EXTRACT FROM THE ALPS



ALLERGEN-
FREE