

HM RECEIVES THANKS CABLE FROM KING OF BAHRAIN
MUSCAT: His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik has received a cable of thanks from King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa of Bahrain, in reply to His Majesty's condolences cable on the death of Sheikhha Mathayel bint Ali bin Isa Al Khalifa. In the cable, King Hamad expressed his heartfelt sentiments. He prayed to the Almighty Allah to have mercy on the departed soul, rest the deceased in heavens and spare His Majesty all harm. -**ONA**



HM THE SULTAN RECEIVES CABLE OF THANKS FROM KSA KING
MUSCAT: His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik on Tuesday received a cable of thanks from the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques, King Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA), in reply to His Majesty the Sultan's cable of condolences on the death of Prince Turki bin Saud bin Turki Al Saud. In the cable, King Salman expressed his heartfelt sentiments. He prayed to the Almighty Allah to have mercy on the departed soul, rest the deceased in heavens and spare His Majesty all harm. -**ONA**



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EFFORTS ON TO RESTORE NORMALCY IN WILAYATS AFFECTED BY HEAVY RAINS

Work is underway to quickly restore electricity, water and telephone networks

Times News Service

MUSCAT: The authorities concerned are working round-the-clock to restore the basic services that were affected due to heavy rains and overflow of wadis in the wilayats of Al-Awabi and Al-Rustaq in South Al Batinah Governorate, the wilayats of Ibri, Yanqul and Dhank in the Al Dhahirah governorate and the wilayats of Nizwa, Al Hamra and Bahla in the Al Dakhiliyah governorate.

Efforts by the Royal Oman Police are continuing to deal with the effects of torrential rains that have damaged roads, houses near the river beds of wadis, and a number of vehicles that were also washed away. People who risked crossing the flooded wadis were detained.

Traffic movement in the wilayats has been affected, and work is underway to restore electricity, water and telephone networks, affected by heavy rains.

Repair of roads

Dr. Ali Amir Al Shidhani, Communications and Information Technology Undersecretary, confirmed to Oman News Agency that the Ministry of Transport, Communications and Information Technology in cooperation with the relevant authorities is currently working on repair of roads affected by heavy rains and flooded wadis in the wilayats of Al Awabi and Rustaq. **>A2 >See also A3**



No deaths reported



MUSCAT: The Authority for Civil Defence and Ambulance (ACDA) has said that no human losses were registered on 1 August 2022, in the aftermath of heavy rains and overflowing of wadis. The ACDA warned that it would take legal action against people who take risks (by braving wadis) or endanger the lives of others.

The ACDA's teams in South Al Batinah Governorate are currently working on opening roads by removing debris and extending full support to citizens, residents and visitors of the Sultanate of Oman.

The rescue teams acted on 12 reports of vehicles stuck in wadis in the governorates of North Al Batinah, Al Dakhiliyah, Al Dhahirah and Al Buraimi. In the process, they rescued 13 people who were stranded in wadis and reported that all are in good health. Cumulus clouds continue to overcast the skies of Al Hajar mountains and adjoining areas today and tomorrow, with chances of moderate to heavy rains causing wadis to overflow. -**ONA**



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HEALTH CARE

15 to 20 cases referred for treatment abroad every week

Times News Service

MUSCAT: Between 15 and 20 cases are referred for treatment abroad every week, said Dr. Mohammed bin Jaafar Al Sajwani, Senior Consultant Surgeon and Chairman of the National Committee for Treatment Abroad. He pointed out that the National Committee for Treatment Abroad comprises a number of specialists and consultants belonging to several medical fields.

The committee is tasked with receipt, discussion and consideration of the applications and medical reports of the patients, he said, adding that the committee meets every week to discuss all files and applications received by it for necessary action and recommends cases for treatment abroad in case of unavailability of appropriate treatment in the Sultanate.

Some patients travel for treatment abroad at their own expense with no medical supervision from the Sultanate's concerned



department, he said.

Later, they seek medical advice and consultation from the National Committee for Treatment Abroad which has and ties with several renowned hospitals and health institutions abroad, he said, adding this is aimed to ensure the medical services offered to the patients are appropriate and also to avoid the patients falling victim to frauds.

On the other hand, Dr. Talal bin Ghalib Al Busaidi, Consult-

ant Ophthalmologist at Al Nahda Hospital, reaffirmed that many patients who opted for treatment abroad have been taken for a ride such as undergoing unnecessary or expensive interventions.

Dr. Al Busaidi urged the patients to approach the health institutions in the Sultanate for the necessary advice, medical diagnosis or for getting familiar with the procedures to be followed before travel in case of medical treatment abroad.

National committee

He added that there is a national committee entrusted with following up the cases that require treatment abroad in case treatment is not available within the Sultanate.

The committee is also concerned with the review of medical reports and coordinates the patient's travel for treatment at renowned hospitals and health institutions with the cost borne by the Ministry of Health to avoid any potential complications in the health condition of the patient, he said.

TOP THREE INSIDE STORIES



OMAN Property transactions touch OMR1.17bn value

1 The total value of property transactions in the Sultanate of Oman at the end of June 2022 declined by 7.3 per cent to reach OMR1.17 billion compared to the same period of 2021 when it stood at OMR1.27 billion, according to the latest data by the National Centre for Statistics and Information (NCSI). **>A5**

WORLD Al Zawahiri killed in US air strike: Biden

2 Al-Qaeda chief Ayman Al Zawahiri was killed in an air strike by the US, President Joe Biden announced, stating that "Justice has been delivered." **>A6**

MARKET Treasury bills worth OMR65mn issued

3 The Central Bank of Oman (CBO) raised OMR65 million by way of allotting treasury bills on Tuesday. The treasury bills are for a maturity period of 91 days. **>B1**



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Asr.....3:42pm
Maghrib.....6:54pm
Isha.....8:11pm
Fajr (Tomorrow).....4:16am

FROM SAUDI PUBLIC INVESTMENT FUND

Oman’s Rakiza fund gets capital commitment worth OMR115mn



INFRASTRUCTURE FUND: Rakiza invests in infrastructure projects to generate stable returns, through a combination of exit-driven capital gains, and real income from assets. – **ONA**

MUSCAT: Rakiza, a private equity infrastructure fund investing in Oman and Saudi Arabia, which is co-managed by Oman Infrastructure Investment Management (OIM) and Equitix company, announced that it has received a capital commitment of OMR115 million from the Saudi Public Investment Fund (PIF).

Rakiza invests in infrastructure projects to generate stable returns, through a combination of exit-driven capital gains, and real

income from assets.

The Fund focuses on investing in various sectors, namely renewables, power and water, social infrastructure, telecommunications, transport and logistics.

Muneer Ali Al Muneeri, CEO of Oman Infrastructure Investment Management, said: “Rakiza’s investment strategy is to foster capital market growth, foreign direct investment, and privatisation. As part of this, the Rakiza Fund is proud to partner with PIF, which

greatly enhances strategic value for all stakeholders”.

Hugh Crossley, Equitix Co-Founder and CEO, said that this partnership will contribute to the fund’s commitment to its vision as it continues to invest and develop in essential infrastructure projects. PIF is considered as one of the largest and most impactful sovereign wealth funds in the world and a major driving factor of economic transformation for Saudi Arabia. – **ONA**

MAYDAY CALLS



RESCUE: Many people trapped in their vehicles have been saved by rescue teams using special equipment. – **ONA**

People wading into wadis despite warnings: ROP

MUSCAT: The Royal Oman Police (ROP) is exerting extensive efforts to tackle the impacts of heavy rains that drenched many governorates of the Sultanate of Oman.

The floods have impacted roads and houses in the vicinity of wadis. They drifted vehicles and stranded people who attempted crossing flooded wadis.

Colonel Jumaa Saif Al Mazru’ee, Assistant Commander of Al Dhahirah Governorate Police, said that, after the recent rains, there was an uptake in the number of people stranded in vehicles.

He noted that such incidents are being repeated in every climatic condition due to rash behaviour that ignored warnings concerning risks posed by wadis. Many people trapped in their vehicles were saved by rescue teams using special equipment.

Police patrols and security checkpoints were operated to prevent drivers from crossing flooded wadis. As a measure to limit the repetition of such incidents, the ROP suspended drivers who attempted braving wadis on grounds that they endanger their



lives and the lives of others.

Meanwhile, Lt. Col. Sultan Rashid Al Dar’ee, Assistant Commander of Al Dhahirah Governorate Police, said that the ROP command in Al Dhahirah was on high alert during rainfall and wadi flooding. As a result, public security action (to limit wadi crossing risks) was undertaken by the ROP’s Special Tasks and the Authority for Civil Defence and Ambulance (ACDA).

With the assistance of the Po-

lice Aviation, the Al Dhahirah Governorate Police Command handled Mayday calls with high efficiency.

The action included medical evacuation of a patient who was impossible to transport from home to a nearby health establishment due to wadi flooding. Also, an expatriate, who was stranded in the Wilayat of Yanqul’s Wadi Al Raki, was rescued.

A family that was stranded in a vehicle in a flooded Wadi Al Buweidra, Wilayat of Yanqul, was rescued by teams from the Public Security Department and the ACDA. The teams also rescued expatriates who were stranded in another wadi, among them one was transported to Ibri Hospital for treatment.

The ROP urges all members of the public to take full precaution during rains and follow up weather reports issued by the departments concerned. In particular, all are advised to avoid wadis and low-lying areas.

The ROP thanked citizens and residents who abided by the law and those who assisted police squads during such circumstances. – **ONA**



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University of Technology and Applied Sciences

UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY AND APPLIED SCIENCES

LOCAL TENDERS NOTICE

The Internal Tender Committee of the University of Technology and Applied Sciences (UTAS) announces the following tenders: - -

NO.	Tender No.	Tender subject	companies entitled to participate	Document fees	Last date for purchase (online)	Last date for submission of bids
1	17/2022/UTAS/MR-6	Provision of operation and maintenance services for the buildings of the University of Technology and Applied Sciences (College of Applied Sciences, Sohar)	Companies and establishments specialised in the field and registered with the Tender Board in Excellent Grade	RO 25/- (Rial Omani Twenty- Five)	22/08/2022 at 2:30pm	10:00am 11 / 09/ 2022
2	18/2022/UTAS/MR-7	Provision of cleaning services for the buildings of the University of Technology and Applied Sciences (Al Musannah College of Technology)	Companies and establishments specialised in the field and registered with the Tender Board in Excellent Grade, 1st grade, 2nd Grade, 3rd Grade and 4th Grade	RO 25/- (Rial Omani Twenty- Five)	22/08/2022 at 2:30pm	10:00am 11 / 09/ 2022
3	19/2022/UTAS/MR-8	Provision of operation and maintenance services for the buildings of the University of Technology and Applied Sciences (Sur College of Applied Sciences)	Companies and establishments specialised in the field and registered with the Tender Board in Excellent Grade	RO 25/- (Rial Omani Twenty- Five)	22/08/2022 at 2:30pm	10:00am 11 / 09/ 2022
4	21/2022/UTAS/MR-9	Provision of cleaning services for the buildings of the University of Technology and Applied Sciences (Ibra College of Technology)	Companies and establishments specialised in the field and registered with the Tender Board in Excellent Grade, 1st grade, 2nd Grade and 3rd Grade	RO 25/- (Rial Omani Twenty- Five)	22/08/2022 at 2:30pm	10:00am 11 / 09/ 2022

Tenderers may purchase (online) the tender documents effective from 7:30am , Wednesday 3rd August 2022, through the link (<https://etendering.tenderboard.gov.om>).

The tender bids shall be accompanied by an interim e. guarantee in the form of a bank guarantee or cheque of not less than (1%) from the tender bid value and approved by one of the banks operating in the Sultanate. The interim guarantee shall be addressed in the name of the Chairman of the Tender Internal Tender Committee and valid for 90 days from date of submission of the bid. Any bid not meeting the accompanied by the interim guarantee shall not be entertained. The tender bid shall be stamped and signed by the authorised person and shall bear only the name and number of the tender and submitted through the e. tendering system of the University of Technology and Applied Sciences (UTAS).

Priority of award will be given to the companies or Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) registered with the Public Authority for SMEs Development and which bids indicate the highest percentage of Omanisation and purchase of national products.

- The lowest or any other bid shall not be binding to the University of Technology and Applied Sciences

Chairman of Internal Tender Committee
University of Technology and Applied Sciences

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AT HAWANA SALALAH HOTEL

Salalah Food Festival to commence from Thursday

SALALAH: The activities of Salalah Food Festival will kick off on Thursday at Hawana Salalah Hotel and will continue till August 13, 2022.

Dr. Ahmed bin Mohsin Al Ghasani, Chairman of Dhofar Municipality will preside over the inauguration of the festival, which is one of the largest food festivals in the Sultanate of Oman.

The festival will see the participation of 55 chefs and Omani establishments which would display their products at the sections allocated for them.

The festival would also see a number of accompanying com-



petitions, entertainment activities, theatrical performances and entertainment games for children among other activities.

The organisation of the festival aimed to support the small and medium enterprises (SMEs) as

it witnesses the participation of mobile food trucks offering variety of food and live cooking at the stage.

The festival also aimed to support tourism through organising entertainment activities. – **ONA**

AL-AWABI AND RUSTAQ

< FROM A1 Property of citizens damaged due to rains

In a statement to the Oman News Agency, Eng. Yousef bin Abdullah Al-Mujaini, Director of the Projects Department at the Ministry, indicated that there was damage to some roads in the wilayats of Al-Awabi and Rustaq, and the temporarily closed roads are currently being opened.

The Wali of Al Awabi, Shaikh Said Mohammed Al Harsoosi, said some damages were caused in the villages in the vicinity of Wadi Bani Kharus and Wadi Bani Khazir, but no human casualty was recorded. He said the properties of citizens were damaged as a result of water entering their

homes and farms, and the waters of the valleys washed away a number of cars and affected electricity, water and telephone services. But the authorities concerned started work early in the morning and restored the basic services. Work is still on at an accelerated pace. -With ONA inputs



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South Al Batinah most affected by heavy rains

Chances of cumulus clouds formation continue until Wednesday over the Al Hajar Mountains and adjacent areas

Times News Service

MUSCAT: Heavy rains were recorded in most of the wilayats of the Sultanate on Monday which led to overflowing of valleys affecting private and public properties. Hammoud bin Mohammed Al-Mandhari, coordinator of the relief and shelter sector in the National Committee for Emergency Management (NCEM), speaking exclusively to *Times of Oman* said, "The wilayats most affected were Al-Awabi and Al-Rustaq, where Wadi Bani Kharus and Wadi Bani Khazir were brimming with swiftly flowing rain water." He added: "As a result, many homes and private and public properties located in the vicinity of these valleys were damaged." Elaborating on the relief measures, Al-Mandhari said: "Three shelters were equipped and made functional at two centres in the Wilayat of Rustaq and one in the Wilayat of Al-Awabi, where the affected families and residents were shifted." He added: "The torrential rains and the overflowing wadis



caused damage in the areas close-by and entered homes. The affected families are being transferred to the shelters with the help of Royal Oman Police (ROP) and other authorities." Al-Mandhari further said: "The current rainfall, especially on the mountain tops, worsened the condition leading to strong currents in the valleys causing damages to homes and public and private properties." He added: "There are power and internet outages in the affected areas, and this will continue for a while as the rains are still continuing and, I believe, the water level of the valleys will increase with time. So, I call on everyone in these areas to exercise utmost caution and heed the warnings and instructions of the competent authorities." He also called on everyone to stay away from valley streams and not to risk crossing them or getting into contact with elec-

tric poles. Al-Mandhari said the shelter and relief sector is ready to provide additional shelters, if necessary. The Civil Aviation Authority (CAA), said on Tuesday: "Chances of cumulus clouds formation continue today and tomorrow over the Al Hajar Mountains and adjacent areas, with chances of thunderstorms of varying intensity accompanied by increased flow in the valleys. So, please be careful while the valleys are overflowing." Mohammed Al Wardi, an academic and economic analyst, said: "It seems that the Sultanate will become subject to many violent climatic fluctuations such as cyclones and depressions due to global climate changes, which will damage infrastructure and property, causing economic losses to the government and citizens." He added: "This calls for developing comprehensive strategic plans to live with it to prevent the recurrence of losses and tragedies."

Alila

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More people catching coronavirus second time
A story on more people catching Covid reached 20,090 people and had 1,493 link clicks on Facebook.

 MOST VIEWED VIDEO ON INSTAGRAM

535 LIKES





A picture gallery on heavy rainfall across Oman
A picture gallery on heavy rainfall across Oman affecting basic services had 535 likes on Instagram.

 MOST WATCHED VIDEO ON FACEBOOK

7,200 REACH





Midday Top Story video
The Midday Top Story video on thunderstorms in parts of Oman had 1,800 views and reached 7,200 people on Facebook.



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MIRBAT

The former capital of the Dhofar region, Mirbat was an important port when it came to trading frankincense, and is a wonderful destination featuring many historical sites, delicious seafood and a lovely, serene landscape.

It has many natural tourist sites, historical monuments and buildings of ancient architecture, most notably the castle of Mirbat, which is one of the most important historical and archaeological sites in the wilayat. It overlooks the coast of the ancient port of Mirbat and dates back to the ninth century AD. The castle sits on a cliff and offers

superb views of the crashing waves along the coast line.

Outside the fort, try to spot the two tiny statues of prancing horses marking the entrance to the town, a nod to the fact that Mirbat was once an important breeding centre for Arabian horses. Below the castle, take the winding road across the old harbour to a rocky enclave dotted with little wooden fisherman boats to enter Mirbat's old town. The houses are wonderful examples of the ancient Dhofari-style construction that uses mud bricks decorated with wooden, carved window.

The wilayat of Mirbat is also famous for the beautiful beaches and bays, which are considered to be the most important tourist attractions because of its beauty and rare marine resources.

Drive off towards Tawi Atayr to visit the towering groves of Baobab trees. On the way, stop at the marked anti-gravity point where you can leave your car in neutral and feel it drift uphill. Have a pleasant walk under the Baobab trees and marvel that this is the only place in Arabia where these African natives grow wild.



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NCSI JUNE DATA

Total value of property transactions in Oman touches OMR1.17 billion

MUSCAT: The total value of property transactions in the Sultanate of Oman at the end of June 2022 declined by 7.3 per cent to reach OMR1.17 billion compared to the same period of 2021 when it stood at OMR1.27 billion, according to the latest data by the National Centre for Statistics and Information (NCSI).

Transaction fees
The total collected real estate transaction fees reached OMR30.4 million compared to OMR50.9 million during the same period in 2021, comprising a drop by 40.4 per cent.

The number of sale contracts



by the end of June 2022 fell by 18.2 per cent, while the traded value of sale contracts increased by 2 per cent compared to the same

period in 2021. Issued ownership deeds reached 116,234 compared to 129,149 during the same period in 2021, comprising a decline by 9.9 per cent. The number of ownership deeds issued for GCC citizens by the end of June 2022 reached 353.

Sale contracts
The number of sale contracts reached 35,978 with a total value of OMR613.7 million. Real estate exchange contracts reached 677 at a value of OMR7.4 million.

The number of mortgage contracts rose by 3.1 per cent to reach 9,527 at a value of OMR558.2 million compared to the same period in 2021 when the number of mortgage contracts reached 9,242 at a value of OMR659.8 million.

— ONA

ROYAL OMAN POLICE

Two arrested for impersonating

MUSCAT: Two people have been arrested by the ROP for impersonating as cops and detaining them in an apartment, before beating and robbing them.

FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Cooperation agreement inked

MUSCAT: The Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Water Resources and Petroleum Development Oman (PDO) signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) on cooperation in different areas towards the realisation of a joint vision to achieve sustainable development.

The MoU was signed by Dr. Saud Ahmed Al Habsi, Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Water Resources, and Steve Phimister, PDO Managing Director.

The agreement stipulates that the ministry taps the experiences of the company in implementing Lean methodology through a set



of training courses. It also provides for supporting agricultural initiatives by means of technical knowledge and the creation of joint investment projects to develop the national economy.

The agreement will also help study all aspects of utilisation of water supplies accompanying oil output operations. — ONA

DHOFAR GOVERNORATE

Eight held

MUSCAT: Eight expats have been arrested and their unlicensed artisanal fishing vessel was seized in the Dhofar Governorate, the Directorate General of Agriculture, Fisheries and Water Resources in Dhofar Governorate said in a statement. — Times News Service



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TENDERS

The company invites offers for the following tenders:

Sl. #	Tender ID	Description	Tender Fee	Deadline for Purchasing of Tenders	Deadline for Submission of Offers
1.	3000000510/22	Supply of Explosives, Accessories and Crews	RO. 105.000	12 th August 2022 1700 Hours	16 th August 2022 2359 Hours
2.	32790/22	Sale of Scrap Item	RO. 205.000	19 th August 2022 1700 Hours	30 th August 2022 2359 Hours

Tender documents can be obtained by paying the above amount online to Company's account detailed below:
Account name: Oman Cement Company SAOG
Bank name: Bank Muscat SAOG
Account number: 0423 01086 3070 017
Account Type: OMR
SWIFT Code: BMUSOMRX

Copy of deposit transaction of a non-refundable amount of writing on the above as tender fees to be emailed to CFOSecretary@omancement.com & Treasury@omancement.com with the Subject showing "Tender No." and "Tender Description" enabling Company to provide tender document through email to your company. The above payment is a non-refundable amount.
Contact details: **Office number: +968 244 37803, Mobile number: +968 97932277**

The last date for submission of offers is available on the above table, accompanied by a bid bond issued by any local bank in Oman (equivalent to 1%) of the total tender value or deposit slip as stated in the tender document. The bid bond and offer validity must be valid for 120 days from the last date of submission of offers.

Any tenders received beyond the above closing time and date or not being supported by a tender bond will NOT be considered. This publication is part of the tender documents



سلطنة عُمان
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Sultanate of Oman
Ministry of Transport, Communications and Information Technology



The Internal Tender Committee at the Ministry of Transport, Communications and Information Technology In Al Khuwair invites for the Following Project:

TENDER NO.	TENDER NAME	DATE OF PUBLISHING	LAST DATE TO PURCHASE TENDER DOCUMENT	SUBMISSION DATE	COMPANIES WHO SHOULD PARTICIPATE IN THIS TENDER	DOCUMENT PRICE
91/2022/MT-CIT/HQ-18 (24470)	study, design & development of government digital transformation identity	02-08-2022	14-08-2022	31-08-2022	Experienced Companies and Registered with The Secretariat General of Tender Board (All Grades)	(25/-) Twenty-five Omani Rial Non-Refundable

Interested Companies registered with The Secretariat General of Tender Board may obtain Tender documents from the E-Tendering website: <https://etendering.tenderboard.gov.om> against non-refundable payment as mentioned above for each set of document. Tenders should be submitted online on given website. The Tenderer should enclose scan copy of Bank Guarantee issued by local bank in the Sultanate of Oman for the value of (1%) of the Tender value validity for (90) days, and addressed to (Chairman of the Internal Tender Committee). And hard copy of the same should be submitted manually to the Tenders Section, Tenders and Contracts Department (1st Floor), Ministry of Transport Building at Al Khuwair before 11:00 am on submission date.

CORRESPONDANCE:
1. Tender Inquiry: All correspondence pertaining to the TENDER Inquiry must be online at e-Tendering System. (<https://etendering.tenderboard.gov.om>)
2. E-Tendering System Inquiry: All correspondence pertaining to the e-Tendering System technical support must be directed to the following helpdesk email address and phone number.
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INTERNAL TENDER COMMITTEE



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VACANCY

The University of Buraimi in the Sultanate of Oman invites highly qualified and dynamic candidates to apply for the following position: **Vice Chancellor**
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Minimum requirements:

- A PhD from a reputable Western University
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- Ten-year academic experience, including teaching, student academic advising, and curriculum and program development
- Experience in research projects, supervision of postgraduate students, and community service
- Publications in reputable scientific journals
- Excellent interpersonal, verbal and written communication skills
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- Ability to innovate, encourage innovative thinking, and promote an environment of creativity and innovation within the institution
- Ability to operate within diverse internal and external environments at the highest levels
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- Confidence- both at personal level and in representing the interests of the university

Interested candidates are kindly requested to send their updated CV/resume along with a recent photo and a cover letter explaining how their qualifications, skills and experience match the requirements of the position in question.

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Applications that do not meet the minimum requirements, or that are sent after the closing date, will not be considered.

Key responsibilities and duties of this position as defined by the University executive bylaws can be found at the following link: <https://tinyurl.com/6e742n94>

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HELICOPTER MISSING

Army helicopter with general on board missing in Pakistan

ISLAMABAD: A Pakistani military helicopter with six people on board, including an army general, went missing on Monday.

The army aviation helicopter was taking part in a flood relief operation in the southwest of the country.

"A Pakistan army aviation helicopter which was on flood relief operations in Lasbela, Balochistan, lost contact" with air

traffic control, the army said in a statement.

It said those on board include "Commander 12 Corps who was supervising flood relief operations in Balochistan," referring to the top army official in the region.

The statement did not give details on what may have happened to the helicopter.

In addition to Corps Commander Lieutenant General Sarfraz Ali,

Director General Pakistan Coast Guard Brigadier Amjad Hanif Satti and two majors were also on board, an intelligence official told Reuters news agency.

The chopper had not been seen since the rescue operation began, police official Pervez Umrani said.

After bad weather halted the search, crews were set to resume looking on Tuesday morning, he added.

The army has been involved in rescue and relief efforts after above-normal monsoon rains and deadly flooding hit Pakistan, killing hundreds of people and wreaking havoc in the southern province of Balochistan.

Prime Minister Shahbaz Sharif called the incident "alarming." He had traveled to the province earlier Monday to inspect rescue activities. **ow**



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Justice has been delivered, says Joe Biden as Al-Zawahiri killed

Al-Zawahiri was one of the world's most wanted terrorists and a mastermind of the September 11, 2001 attacks



ANNOUNCEMENT: President Joe Biden announced that Al-Qaeda chief Ayman Al-Zawahiri was killed in an air strike by the United States.

WASHINGTON: President Joe Biden in a televised address on Monday announced that Al-Qaeda chief Ayman Al-Zawahiri was killed in an air strike by the United States stating that "Justice has been delivered."

Al-Zawahiri was one of the world's most wanted terrorists and a mastermind of the September 11, 2001 attacks was killed in a drone strike carried out by the US in the Afghan capital Kabul on Saturday.

"On Saturday, at my direction, the United States successfully conducted an airstrike in Kabul, Afghanistan that killed the emir

of Al-Qaeda: Ayman Al-Zawahiri. Justice has been delivered and this terrorist leader is no more," Biden said in a video address from the Blue Room Balcony at the

White House.

"He will never again, never again, allow Afghanistan to become a terrorist safe haven because he is gone and we're going to

make sure that nothing else happens," he added.

Zawahiri, an Egyptian surgeon was deeply involved in the planning of 9/11 and he also acted

as Osama Bin Ladens personal physician.

In a background call to reporters, a senior Biden administration official said Zawahiri had been killed on the balcony of a house in Kabul in a drone strike, and that there had been no US boots on the ground in Afghanistan.

The strike was conducted by the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) and was carried out by an Air Force drone.

The official claimed that al-Zawahiri was the only person killed in the strike and that none of his family members was injured.

Senior members of the Taliban and Haqqani Network were aware of Al-Zawahiri's presence in Kabul before the drone strike, said the senior administration official.

In fact, Haqqani Network members attempted to conceal that Al-Zawahiri had been staying at the safehouse in the hours after he was killed.

When asked about Al-Zawahiri's killing and could he have been in the safe house without the direct knowledge of Pakistan's ISI, the official said: "What we know is that senior Haqqani Taliban were aware of his presence in Kabul and

I can't comment further on other countries involvement."

Husain Haqqani, a former Pakistani ambassador to the United States who is now with the Hudson Institute, said that this operation shows that the US can still find identified terrorist leaders in Afghanistan.

"The question now would be, whether Taliban enabled Zawahiri's elimination or the US did it without assistance. His presence in the Afghanistan- Pakistan area confirms that the region is still home to international terrorist groups," Haqqani told ANI.

"We will have to wait to find out whom the Americans believe to have helped keep Zawahiri in business from within the region," the former ambassador further added. Zawahiri's killing comes a year after the US' military withdrawal from Afghanistan and the Taliban's takeover of the country. The official noted that Zawahiri's presence in the Afghan capital Kabul was a "clear violation" of a deal the Taliban had signed with the US in Doha in 2020 that paved the way for the US withdrawal from Afghanistan.

-ANI

INDO-PACIFIC TOUR

Airforce plane carrying Nancy Pelosi becomes world's most tracked flight

KUALA LUMPUR: The US Air Force's Boeing C-40C - SPAR19 which is carrying US House Speaker Nancy Pelosi to Taiwan is currently the world's most tracked aircraft.

According to flight-tracking website FlightRadar24, around 320,000 users are following every move of Pelosi's flight. Internet users are speculating whether the Democrat Congresswoman will go ahead with a visit to Taiwan against the wishes of the Biden administration.

Meanwhile, Taiwan's *Liberty Times* newspaper had earlier reported that Pelosi is expected to arrive at 10:20 p.m. local time via private plane at Songshan airport in Taipei, which also hosts a military base.

The SPAR19 flight took off from Kuala Lumpur's Subang Airport at approximately 3:40 p.m., but headed east toward Borneo island, flying close to the Indonesian city of Manado before taking a turn north to the Philippines -- steering clear of the South China Sea, reported FlightRadar24.

The 11-year-old aircraft that



is reportedly carrying Pelosi has been transmitting data to allow it to be publicly tracked but there is no official confirmation of whether she is onboard.

Flightradar24 is a popular flight tracking website based in Sweden that uses aircraft ADS-B broadcast signals sent to ground-based receivers, as well as satellite data and several other sources to track thousands of flights live around the world every day. The White House has been dismayed by Pelosi's decision to push ahead

with her Taiwan engagements.

National Security Coordinator John Kirby told reporters yesterday that the administration would also be keeping a close eye on Pelosi's jet to see if it headed to Taiwan.

US House Speaker Nancy Pelosi's plane landed in Taiwan amid a heightened security threat from China, media reports said on Tuesday.

Nancy Pelosi had arrived in Malaysia on Tuesday as part of the second leg of their Indo-Pacific tour, according to media reports. **-ANI**

MONKEYPOX

California declares emergency as monkeypox cases rise

CALIFORNIA: California Governor Gavin Newsom on Monday announced a state of emergency over an outbreak of the monkeypox disease.

It comes just days after New York became the first state in the US to declare a state of emergency to tackle the outbreak.

As of Monday, California recorded 827 monkeypox infections, the second-largest tally in the US after New York's 1,390 cases, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.



What does the announcement mean?

Newsom said the move would help the country's most-populous state seek more vaccines and spread knowledge about the disease and treatment.

"We'll continue to work with the federal government to secure more vaccines, raise awareness about reducing risk," Newsom said in a statement announcing his declaration.

The declaration allows emergency medical personnel to ad-

minister monkeypox vaccines that are approved by the federal government. A recent law also allows pharmacists to administer the jab.

So far, some 25,000 doses have been administered in California.

The governor's office said the state is building on the steps developed during the COVID-19 pandemic to set up vaccination clinics.

Global health emergency

On July 23, the World Health Organization declared monkeypox a global health emergency. The des-

ignation is the UN agency's highest level of alert.

Since the beginning of May, the WHO has reported over 20,000 cases in nearly 78 countries.

The disease has been endemic to parts of Africa for decades, but recently leaped to Europe and North America as well as other areas of the world.

Monkeypox is rarely fatal. But India and Peru both reported on Monday the death of two patients.

Spain reported two deaths last week, while another was recorded earlier in Brazil. **ow**

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‘Humanity one misunderstanding away from nuclear annihilation’

The UN chief’s warning came as leaders met at the United Nations for the 10th review of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons

NEW YORK: United Nations Secretary-General Antonio Guterres warned that once-unthinkable nuclear conflict is back in the realm of possibility, speaking at the start of a conference in New York.

His warning came as leaders met at the United Nations for the 10th review conference of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), which came into force in 1970.

“Today, humanity is just one misunderstanding, one miscalculation away from nuclear annihilation,” he said.

“The climate crisis, stark inequalities, conflicts and human rights violations, and the personal and economic devastation caused



10TH CONFERENCE: The NPT is a landmark international treaty to prevent the increase of nuclear weapons and to promote cooperation in the peaceful use of nuclear energy.

by the COVID-19 pandemic, have put our world under greater stress than it has faced in our lifetimes,” Guterres said.

This was occurring “at a time of nuclear danger not seen since the height of the Cold War,” he said. “Humanity is in danger of forgetting the lessons forged in the terrifying fires of Hiroshima and Nagasaki,” Guterres said.

The war in Ukraine has raised

geopolitical tensions to levels not seen since the 1962 Cuban Missile Crisis, Guterres stressed.

What makes the NPT so important right now?

The NPT is a landmark international treaty to prevent the increase of nuclear weapons and to promote cooperation in the peaceful use of nuclear energy.

Under normal circumstances,

it is subject to review every five years, but the 10th conference was postponed due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

It comes as concerns are rising about China’s rapid uptake of nuclear arsenal and the spread of nuclear technology, especially in Iran and North Korea.

India, Pakistan, Israel and North Korea are not part of the pact that 191 states have signed. All five

leading nuclear powers, the United Kingdom, Russia, France, China and the United States are part of the NPT while North Korea withdrew in 2003.

What did other leaders say?

Following her arrival in New York, German Foreign Minister Annalena Baerbock called for further nuclear disarmament despite growing geopolitical tension and global uncertainty. “This goal may seem distant with the current situation the world is in, but we must never lose sight of it,” she said.

Germany, alongside 15 other countries, has made 22 proposals for nuclear disarmament.

She insisted that “the global community adhered to international law” and that transparency around any nuclear arsenal had to be of utmost priority.

Yet, “Russia’s brutal war of aggression” was a clear sign that “nuclear weapons are a bitter reality,” she said. “The commitment to nuclear nonproliferation and nuclear deterrence are no contradiction in these times.”

Japan’s Prime Minister Fumio Kishida urged all nuclear states to conduct themselves “responsibly” in nonproliferation efforts at a time when he said the road to a world without nuclear arms had become much more difficult.

What was said about Russia’s war in Ukraine?

Russian President Vladimir Pu-

tin said there could be no winners in a nuclear war and no such war should ever be started, addressing the participants of the 10th NPT conference in a letter.

Since then, Russia’s nuclear forces have been put on high alert.

The United States, France and Britain criticized Putin’s threats of nuclear weapon use amid Russia’s invasion of Ukraine.

“Following Russia’s unprovoked and unlawful war of aggression against Ukraine, we call on Russia to cease its irresponsible and dangerous nuclear rhetoric and behavior, to uphold its international commitments,” they said in a statement.

“Nuclear weapons, for as long as they exist, should serve defensive purposes, deter aggression, and prevent war. We condemn those who would use or threaten to use nuclear weapons for military coercion, intimidation, and blackmail,” the statement read.

Russia should demonstrate its willingness to renew a separate bilateral nuclear arms reduction pact, the New START Treaty, when it expires in 2026, US President Biden said in a separate statement.

“But negotiation requires a willing partner operating in good faith. And Russia’s brutal and unprovoked aggression in Ukraine has shattered peace in Europe and constitutes an attack on fundamental tenets of international order.” **AW**

NEIGHBOURHOOD FIRST

Maldives occupies special place in India’s ‘Neighbourhood First’ policy: PM Modi

NEW DELHI: Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Tuesday underlined that Maldives occupies a special place in the hearts of Indians and also in the country’s “Neighbourhood First” policy as he reaffirmed strong ties with the island nation in a range of fields.

Modi made these remarks during Maldivian President Ibrahim Mohamed Solih’s visit to India. This was Solih’s third visit to India since assuming office on November 17, 2018. During the visit, Solih had restricted and delegation-level talks with PM Modi during which the two leaders expressed satisfaction at the rapid expansion of the bilateral partnership in recent years. The two leaders reiterated their commitment to further strengthen



and deepen the ties.

“The India-Maldives bilateral partnership is underpinned by geographical proximity, historical, cultural ties and shared values. Prime Minister Modi underlined that the Maldives occupies a special place in the hearts of Indians and in India’s ‘Neighbourhood First’ policy. President Solih re-

affirmed his government’s ‘India-First Policy,’ the MEA said in a statement.

President Solih thanked Prime Minister Modi and for standing by Maldives during the Covid-19 pandemic. The medical and financial assistance from India helped the Maldives overcome the health and economic fallout of the pandemic.

Both leaders agreed to further deepen institutional linkages for cooperation in the areas of defence and security, investment promotion, human resource development, infrastructure development including climate and energy.

They welcomed the growth in people-to-people ties through implementation of visa-free travel, better air connectivity, exchange programmes, and growing cultur-

al and economic linkages. India has emerged as the top source of visitors for the Maldivian tourism market, contributing to its economic resilience.

The leaders acknowledged the role of the bilateral air travel bubble, created during the pandemic, in the expansion of tourism ties.

The two leaders welcomed the ongoing work to operationalize the usage of Rupay Cards in Maldives and agreed to consider further measures to boost bilateral travel and tourism and economic inter-linkages.

Both leaders also acknowledged the valuable contribution of Indian teachers, nurses, medical workers, doctors, workers, and professionals in the Maldives. **ANI**

FLIGHT FREQUENCY

Singapore Airlines to restore pre-Covid flight frequency to India

SINGAPORE: The Singapore Airlines Group (SIA), co-owner of Indian carrier Vistara, has planned to restore all flights in India to pre-pandemic levels by the end of October. The airlines group will gradually increase its frequency to Indian cities. It will operate 17 weekly services to Chennai, up from the current 10 flights per week. Kochi services will go up to 14 times weekly, up from the current seven flights per week. Bengaluru services will go up to 16 times weekly, up from the current seven flights per week.

According to the SIA statement, the strong recovery in air travel that continued in May 2022 and even this month is because of Singapore’s relaxed border restrictions which started in April, which removed “the need for quarantine and on-arrival COV-

ID-19 tests for fully vaccinated travellers and removing pre-departure COVID-19 tests.”

The SIA Group recorded its highest-ever first-quarter operating profit of Singapore Dollar (SGD) 556 million last week (USD 403 million) on “surging passenger demand”. Notably, this is the second-highest quarterly operating profit in the airline’s history. This new record came after SIA scraped positive territory with an SGD10 million (USD7.2 million) profit for the second half of the last financial year when it reported its full-year earnings in May. SIA’s financial year is from April to March.

The SIA group made the progress in the first quarter as it recorded a net profit of SGD 370 million (USD 268 million), versus an SGD 210 million loss in the last quarter of the prior fiscal year. **ANI**

MILITARY AID

US announces \$550 million aid to Ukraine

WASHINGTON: The United States announced to deliver USD 550 million package of military aid to Ukraine, the State Department informed in a statement on Monday.

“Pursuant to a delegation of authority from the President, I am authorizing our seventeenth drawdown since August 2021 of up to USD 550 million in arms and equipment from US Department of Defense (DoD) inventories for Ukraine’s self-defence,” US Secretary of State Antony Blinken said in a statement. “Today’s announcement includes more ammunition for the High Mobility Artillery Rocket Systems (HIMARS) and 155mm artillery systems that Ukraine’s forces are using so effectively on the battlefield to defend their country,” the statement added.

Blinken said this drawdown will bring total US military assistance to Ukraine to approximately USD 8.7 billion since the beginning of the Administration of Joe Biden.

“The United States continues to stand with Allies and partners from more than 50 countries in providing vital security assistance to support Ukraine’s defence of its sovereignty and territorial integrity against Russia’s aggression,” Blinken added.

Blinken said that the people of Ukraine inspire the world as they defend their country and



their freedom from Russia’s brutal and unprovoked assault for over five months.

The US reiterated its support for Ukraine, “Our commitment to the people of Ukraine will not waver. We stand united with Ukraine,” Blinken stated.

Earlier, condemning Russia’s “premeditated, unprovoked, unjustified, and brutal war” on Ukraine, Blinken had said that the US will continue to provide Ukraine with the arms to defend itself.

“These efforts, combined with direct US humanitarian and financial support to Ukraine, support documenting evidence of Russia’s war crimes against Ukraine’s civilians, and continued efforts to ratchet up pressure on Putin’s crumbling economy together will help weaken the Russian Government’s position and further isolate them from the world until Russia ends its unprovoked and unjustified war on Ukraine,” he had said. **ANI**

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Pakistan to play host to England for T20Is for 1st time in 17 years

The seven T20Is will be part of the first leg of England's tour of Pakistan

KARACHI: England will play seven T20I matches against Pakistan at Karachi and Lahore for their first time in the country in 17 years.

The National Stadium will host the matches on 20, 22, 23, and 25 September, before the action will shift to the cricket headquarters at the Gaddafi Stadium where the remaining three matches will be played on 28 and 30 September and 2 October. All matches will start at 19:30 PKT.

The seven T20Is will be part of the first leg of England's tour of Pakistan and they will return after the ICC Men's T20 World Cup Australia 2022 for three Tests in December.

The T20I series against the second-ranked side will launch Pakistan's bumper international season. Following the September and December matches against England, Pakistan will host New Zealand twice - first for two Tests and



three ODIs in December/January and then in April for five ODIs and five T20Is - West Indies for three T20Is in late January and finally the 50-over ACC Asia Cup.

Complete schedule of England Test series as well as New Zealand and the West Indies series will be announced in due course.

Apart from five Tests, eight ODIs and 15 T20Is in the 2022-23 season, Pakistan will also stage 187 men's domestic matches in six senior competitions, 33 HBL Pakistan Super League 2023 fixtures and 19 Pakistan Junior League 2022 games.

Zakir Khan, PCB Director

International Cricket said in a statement: "We are absolutely delighted to confirm hosting England for seven T20Is in Karachi and Lahore as a curtain-raiser to a busy, entertaining and exciting season of home internationals. England is one of the top-ranked T20I teams and them playing the shortest format in the lead up to the ICC Men's T20 World Cup in Pakistan will not only help the team management to finalise their preparations, but will also set the tone for December's three-Test series."

"We demonstrated our event planning and operational skills

in the highly-successful series against Australia in March/April and I am confident we will be able to replicate these when England visit us for the first time since 2005. We have been able to confirm schedule of the T20Is following a successful tour by the England and Wales Cricket Board recce team, which was pleased and satisfied with all our arrangements."

"I am confident that the cricket fans, like they did in the series against Australia, will turn up in big numbers to support both the sides and also make our Diamond Jubilee celebration year an unforgettable one."

Rob Key, ECB Managing Director England Men's Cricket, said: "We are looking forward to returning to Pakistan and playing these seven T20Is as the team builds up to the ICC Men's T20 World Cup.

"We have been liaising closely with the PCB over arrangements for this visit and the Tests later in the year, and will continue to work closely with the PCB, British High Commission and other relevant authorities as we continue to prepare for these tours."

"We would like to thank the PCB and the city authorities for all their ongoing assistance with planning for the tours, including hosting the recent pre-tour planning visit by ECB representatives and the PCA CEO." **ANI**

Fernando Alonso signs multi-year deal with Aston Martin

LONDON: Fernando Alonso will join Aston Martin in 2023 on a multi-year contract as a replacement for Sebastian Vettel.

The Aston Martin Aramco Cognizant Formula One Team announced that Alonso will be joining the team in 2023. The 41-year-old certainly does have a lot of experience under him and the hunger to win more titles. Alonso, a two-time world champion who currently drives for Alpine will be filling up the place of Vettel who announced his retirement last week through a video posted by him on Instagram.

Aston Martin is looking to build a team that can win titles and the addition of Alonso's experience will definitely benefit the team as a whole. Aston Martin is currently second last in the standings.

"This Aston Martin team is clearly applying the energy and commitment to win, and it is, therefore, one of the most exciting teams in Formula One today," said Alonso in an official statement.

"I have known Lawrence and Lance for many years and it is very obvious that they have the ambition and passion to succeed in Formula One," he added.

Alonso believes in the vision that Aston Martin has for the future and wants to be a part of the project that will succeed in future.

"I have watched as the team has systematically attracted great people with winning pedigrees, and I have become aware of the huge commitment to new facilities and resources at Silverstone," he said.

"No one in Formula One today is demonstrating a greater vision



and absolute commitment to winning, and that makes it a really exciting opportunity for me," said the 41-year-old racer.

Turning 41 recently, the Spanish racer still has the desire to win inside him and will be looking to carry that forward and win with Aston Martin in his future endeavors with the team.

"I still have the hunger and ambition to fight to be at the front, and I want to be part of an organization that is committed to learn, develop and succeed. We all appreciate that there is much to be done to get to the front, and that we must apply all our energies in working together to find performance," said Alonso.

"The passion and desire to perform that I have witnessed convince me to maintain my enjoyment and commitment to the sport. I intend to win again in this sport and therefore I have to take the opportunities that feel right to me," he continued.

Aston Martin's executive chairman Lawrence Stroll is aiming to make the team successful again in the highly competitive sport and hence the signing of a winner like Alonso just 6 days after the leaving message from Sebastian Vettel. **ANI**

WORLD CUP

Qatar's FIFA World Cup final venue to stage Lusail Super Cup

QATAR: Qatar's biggest stadium and the stage for this year's FIFA World Cup™ final will host a special event on 9 September.

The 80,000-capacity Lusail Stadium will stage the Lusail Super Cup between the Saudi Pro League champions and Egyptian Premier League winners, followed by a concert. Ticket details for the event will be announced soon.



The venue, which is located in the pioneering Lusail City, 15km from Doha, will host matches during every stage of Qatar 2022, starting with the Group C clash between Argentina and Saudi Arabia on 22 November.

The stadium's design is inspired by the interplay of light and shadow that characterises the fan lantern. Its shape and golden fa-

cade echo the intricate decorative motifs on bowls, vessels and other art pieces found across the Arab and Islamic world during the rise of civilisation in the region.

Hassan Al Thawadi, Secretary General of the Supreme Committee for Delivery & Legacy, said: "Showcasing Lusail Stadium is the final milestone in our journey ahead of the big kick-off on 21

November. This incredible venue forms the centrepiece of our tournament and will be the focus of the world's attention when it hosts the FIFA World Cup final on 18 December, which is also Qatar National Day. I am proud this venue will play a major role during the tournament and also deliver a lasting legacy for the people of Lusail and the wider community."

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OMAN CRUDE PRICE FALLS

The price of Oman oil has decreased, with prices for delivery by October 2022 reaching \$98.96, said Dubai Mercantile Exchange (DME). The DME statement said that the price of Oman oil fell by \$2.63 from the price of Monday, which was \$101.59. - **ONA**

MARKET BUSINESS & FINANCE



MSX INDEX ENDS HIGHER

The MSX index closed at 4,645.87 points, up by 1.21 per cent from previous close. The Sharia Index ended down by 0.19 per cent at 464.86 points. Ooredoo, up 4.04 per cent, was the top gainer while Oman Cables Industry, down 6.25 per cent, was the top loser.

SAVINGS BASKET



OAB launches new scheme offering guaranteed returns of up to 5.75% per annum

Times News Service

MUSCAT: Oman Arab Bank (OAB) launched its newest scheme, the OAB Savings Basket, in line with its efforts to enhance financial returns for customers. The scheme enables them to invest their savings and receive guaranteed returns at an interest rate of up to 5.75 per cent per annum.

"With the global macroeconomic challenges that have prevailed over the last few years, it is imperative that we offer schemes that have long-term benefits for our customers and their families. The main objective of the launch of our Savings Basket is to enable customers to grow their savings with attractive returns on their investments. With this in mind, we would like to encourage our customers to take part in this limited-time opportunity that is catered to meeting their long-term aspirations, with an array

of value-added benefits," said Rashad Al Shaikh, Head of the Retail Banking Division at OAB.

With the OAB Savings Basket, customers can deposit a specified amount as a fixed deposit for a maximum period of three years, which will be subject to a guaranteed interest rate. The minimum and maximum deposits for eligibility are OMR 50,000 and OMR 1,000,000, respectively.

OAB will invest 70 per cent of the amount as a fixed deposit, with an interest rate of 5.5 per cent per annum for one year, 5.65 per cent per annum for two years and 5.75 per cent per annum for three years.

Furthermore, the remaining 30 per cent of the deposited amount will be held in a cash margin account with added benefits, including a complimentary Elite Credit Card with a maximum limit of OMR 20,000 and an Overdraft Facility with an upper limit of OMR 50,000.

ROBUST GROWTH

China-Europe freight train services see sharp rise in July

BEIJING: China-Europe freight train services saw robust growth in July amid a safe and smooth operation, according to China State Railway Group Co., Ltd. on Tuesday.

The number of China-Europe freight train trips surged by 11 per cent year on year to hit a record 1,517 last month.

The freight trains handled

149,000 20-foot equivalent units of goods, up 12 per cent from a year ago.

During the first seven months, the number of China-Europe freight train trips rose 3 per cent year on year to 8,990.

The trains transported a total of 869,000 20-foot equivalent units of goods, an increase of 4 per cent from a year ago. -Xinhua

Treasury bills worth OMR65 million issued

The treasury bills are for a maturity period of 91 days, from August 3 until November 2



MUSCAT: The Central Bank of Oman (CBO) raised OMR65 million by way of allotting treasury bills on Tuesday.

The treasury bills are for a maturity period of 91 days, from August 3, 2022 until November 2, 2022.

The average accepted price reached OMR99.313 for every OMR100, and the minimum accepted price arrived at OMR99.285 per OMR100. The

average discount rate and the average yield reached 2.75524 per cent and 2.77431 per cent, respectively.

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

to invest their surplus funds. CBO acts as the Issue Manager and provides the added advantage of ready liquidity through discounting and repurchase facilities (Repo).

It may be noted that the interest rate on the Repo operations with CBO is 3.00 per cent while the discount rate on the Treasury Bills Discounting Facility with CBO is 3.50 per cent.

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

To complement the incentive initiatives contributed by the Public Authority for Social Insurance for the Private Sector and the Omani workforce

Extension

The exemption of employers registered in the Social Insurance Scheme of Omani workers in the Sultanate of Oman, the Scheme of Self-Employed Omanis and Alike, and the Scheme of Omanis Working Abroad and Alike from all unpaid additional amounts since the implementation of the provisions of the Social Insurance Law:

Delay in registering the Omani workforce

Delay in submitting end of service notice for the insured person

Delay in the payment of monthly contributions

Terms and Conditions

1. This decision remains in force until **31/12/2022**
2. The additional amounts incurred by employers before **22/6/2022** will be exempted when the due original contributions have been paid. Additional amounts incurred after **22/6/2022** shall be outstanding.
3. The contribution installment system is applied to the target group, taking the following into account:
 - The payment is limited for the original monthly contributions amount without calculating any other additional amounts.
 - The payment shall be in a monthly installment, not exceeding twenty-four installments, to be paid in a continuous period from the date of starting the payment. Upon cessation of the installments, this exemption shall be revoked.

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SPECTRUM AUCTION

5G services in India to be launched by October

NEW DELHI: The fifth generation (5G) telecom services are likely to be launched in India by October this year as the government on Monday successfully completed the spectrum auction mopping up over Rs1.50 lakh crore in bids by four companies including Reliance Jio, Bharti Airtel, Vodafone Idea and Adani Data Networks.

Addressing a media briefing after the end of the bidding for 5G spectrum, Union Minister of Communications, Electronics and Information Technology Ashwini Vaishnaw said out of the total 72,098 MHz of spectrum on offer, 51,236 MHz or around 71 per cent has been sold in the auction. Total 40 rounds of bidding were conducted in the past seven days. The total value of the bid stands at Rs1,50,173 crore.

- ANI

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MSX index ends higher

Ooredoo, up 4.04 per cent, was the top gainer while Oman Cables Industry, down 6.25 per cent, was the top loser



MUSCAT: The MSX index closed at 4,645.87 points, up by 1.21 per cent from the previous close. The Sharia Index ended down by 0.19 per cent at 464.86 points. Ooredoo, up 4.04 per cent, was the top gainer while Oman Cables Industry, down 6.25 per cent, was the top loser. Shares of Bank Muscat were the most active in terms of the number of shares traded as well as in terms of turnover.

A total number of 1020 trades were executed during the day's trading session, generating a turnover of OMR6.79 million, with more than 22.55 million shares changing hands. Out of 52 traded securities, 23 advanced, 8 declined, and 21 remained unchanged. At the session close, domestic investors were net sellers for OMR1.175 million while GCC & Arab investors were net buyers for RO 1.072 million, followed by foreign investors for OMR103,000 worth of shares.

Financial Index closed at 7,375.01 points, up 0.68 per cent. Prices of Oman & Emirates Investment, Bank Muscat, Taageer Finance, Sohar International

Bank and Ahlia Insurance were up by 3.45 per cent, 2.67 per cent, 1.98 per cent, 1.77 per cent and 1.65 per cent respectively. The price of Ahli Bank was down by 2.26 per cent respectively.

Industrial Index closed at 5,778.7 points, down 0.51 per cent. Prices of A'Saffa Foods, National Aluminium, Oman Cement, Oman Chromite and Dhofar Cattle Feed were up by 3.9 per cent, 3.66 per cent, 3.51 per cent, 2.92 per cent and 1.35 per cent respectively. Prices of Oman Cables Industry, Construction Materials, Al Maha Ceramics, Oman Fisheries and Gulf Mushroom Products were down by 6.25 per cent, 5.88 per cent, 3.77 per cent, 1.74 per cent and 1.46 per cent respectively.

Services Index was up by 0.97 per cent before closing at 1,687.13 points. Prices of Ooredoo, Muscat Desalination, Al Jazeera Services, Renaissance Services and Oman Telecom were up by 4.04 per cent, 3.6 per cent, 2.07 per cent, 1.65 per cent, and 1.27 per cent respectively. The price of OIFC was down by 0.74 per cent respectively. — **United Securities**

MUSCAT STOCK EXCHANGE

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INDICES

Index	High	Low	Value	Prev. Value	Diff	Diff%
MSX 30 INDEX	4,656.30	4,582.83	4,645.87	4,590.20	55.67	1.21
FINANCIAL INDEX	7,427.01	7,312.71	7,375.01	7,325.44	49.57	0.68
Industry Index	5,821.10	5,762.16	5,778.69	5,808.41	-29.72	-0.51
Services Index	1,688.20	1,671.45	1,687.13	1,670.89	16.24	0.97
MSX Shariah Index	467.06	463.74	464.86	465.76	-0.90	-0.19
MSX TR INDEX	5,872.67	5,780.01	5,859.52	5,789.30	70.21	1.21
FINANCIAL TR IDX	7,717.53	7,651.93	7,717.12	7,665.24	51.87	0.68
SERVICES TR IDX	1,753.04	1,735.65	1,751.93	1,735.07	16.86	0.97
INDUSTRIAL TR IDX	6,041.32	5,980.15	5,997.31	6,028.16	-30.85	-0.51

Trading Summary

Volume	Turnover	Trades	Market Cap	Up	Down	Equal	Sec. Traded
22,555,931	6,790,320	1,020	23,184,245,530	23	8	21	52

SHARE PRICE BULLETIN FOR TUESDAY, AUGUST 2

SECURITY NAME	VOLUME	TURNOVER	TRADES	OPEN PRICE	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE PR.	PREV. CLOSE	DIFF (RD)	DIFF %	LAST PR	LAST BID	LAST OFFER	P&L VALUE	MARKET CAP
REGULAR MARKET															
OM0000003968 OOREDOO	1,671,948	677,764	85	0.400	0.412	0.400	0.412	0.396	0.016	4.040	0.412	0.412	0.412	0.100	268,189,023
OM0000001749 OMAN CEMENT	129,703	38,112	20	0.290	0.295	0.290	0.295	0.285	0.010	3.509	0.295	0.295	0.310	0.100	37,807,449
OM0000002796 BANK MUSCAT	5,593,310	3,093,015	65	0.600	0.616	0.600	0.616	0.600	0.016	2.867	0.616	0.616	0.620	0.100	2,311,970,295
OM0000002226 ALJAZEERA SERVICES	432,123	127,187	56	0.291	0.297	0.290	0.296	0.290	0.006	2.069	0.296	0.296	0.296	0.100	18,116,465
OM0000003281 TAAGEER FINANCE	523,507	53,915	35	0.101	0.104	0.101	0.103	0.101	0.002	1.980	0.103	0.104	0.103	0.100	26,642,165
OM0000002396 SOHAR INT BANK	2,410,000	274,066	30	0.111	0.115	0.111	0.115	0.113	0.002	1.770	0.115	0.109	0.124	0.100	243,857,163
OM0000003224 RENAISSANCE SER	365,936	179,690	29	0.488	0.500	0.488	0.494	0.486	0.008	1.646	0.494	0.494	0.496	0.100	116,786,540
OM0000003026 OMAN TELECOM	225,772	214,841	20	0.944	0.956	0.944	0.956	0.944	0.012	1.271	0.956	0.956	0.960	0.100	717,000,000
OM0000001532 OMNIVEST	310,000	106,534	11	0.340	0.344	0.340	0.344	0.340	0.004	1.176	0.344	0.344	0.344	0.100	229,917,707
OM0000001483 NATIONAL BANK OMAN	73,422	19,210	16	0.263	0.263	0.260	0.263	0.260	0.003	1.154	0.263	0.263	0.265	0.100	427,623,882
OM0000002168 AL ANWAR CERAMIC	1,012,049	403,779	35	0.406	0.410	0.398	0.410	0.406	0.004	0.985	0.410	0.410	0.410	0.100	90,200,000
OM0000003000 AL MAHA MARKING	38,283	27,714	4	0.720	0.724	0.720	0.724	0.720	0.004	0.556	0.724	0.724	0.724	0.000	100
OM0000001087 OMAN UNITED INSUR.	61,880	18,534	7	0.300	0.300	0.295	0.300	0.300	0.000	0.255	0.295	0.295	0.295	0.100	30,000,000
OM0000001152 OMAN NAT. ENG.	378,320	43,128	39	0.114	0.115	0.113	0.113	0.113	0.000	0.000	0.114	0.113	0.114	0.100	15,820,000
OM0000002077 AL OMANIA FIN.	125,000	19,840	9	0.170	0.170	0.155	0.160	0.160	0.000	0.000	0.160	0.155	0.159	0.100	45,514,182
OM0000002440 AL SHARQIA INV.	54,085	4,582	5	0.084	0.086	0.084	0.085	0.085	0.000	0.000	0.085	0.085	0.085	0.100	7,650,000
OM0000001525 OMAN INVST&FIN.	1,768,226	238,081	120	0.135	0.135	0.134	0.134	0.135	-0.001	-0.741	0.134	0.134	0.134	0.100	31,758,000
OM0000002176 JAZEERA STEEL PROD.	10,000	3,040	2	0.304	0.304	0.304	0.304	0.308	-0.004	-1.299	0.304	0.304	0.304	0.100	37,968,980
OM0000002200 AHLI BANK	445,673	58,290	20	0.133	0.135	0.130	0.130	0.133	-0.003	-2.256	0.130	0.130	0.130	0.100	263,455,471
OM0000005005 ALMAHA CERAMICS	236,000	108,582	6	0.472	0.472	0.460	0.460	0.478	-0.018	-3.766	0.460	0.432	0.500	0.100	25,300,000
OM0000001707 OMAN CABLES INDSTR	10,000	9,000	1	0.900	0.900	0.900	0.900	0.960	-0.060	-6.250	0.900	0.888	0.940	0.100	80,730,000
Total	15,511,247	5,828,905	615												
Parallel Market															
OM0000002804 ASAFFA FOODS	262,710	44,142	36	0.169	0.169	0.160	0.160	0.154	0.006	3.896	0.160	0.155	0.165	0.100	19,200,000
OM0000001319 ALUMINIUM PROD.	230,787	19,752	17	0.083	0.087	0.083	0.085	0.082	0.003	3.659	0.085	0.085	0.090	0.100	2,853,573
OM0000007084 MCT DESALINATE	3,478	400	1	0.115	0.115	0.115	0.115	0.111	0.004	3.604	0.115	0.115	0.115	0.100	17,888,296
OM0000001681 OMAN EMIRATES HO.	1,598,367	197,418	68	0.087	0.090	0.087	0.090	0.087	0.003	3.448	0.090	0.089	0.090	0.100	10,968,750
OM0000001020 OMAN CHROMITE	1,260	3,112	6	2.470	2.470	2.470	2.470	2.400	0.070	2.917	2.470	2.470	2.470	1.000	7,410,000
OM0000006912 AHLIA INSURANCE	16,260	5,537	2	0.364	0.370	0.364	0.370	0.364	0.006	1.648	0.370	0.364	0.370	0.100	37,000,000
OM0000001890 MUSCAT FINANCE	110,288	7,222	17	0.131	0.131	0.131	0.131	0.130	0.001	0.789	0.131	0.132	0.134	0.100	382,522,038
OM0000001301 DHOFAR CATTLE	12,980	971	3	0.074	0.075	0.074	0.075	0.074	0.001	1.351	0.075	0.075	0.080	0.100	6,083,750
OM0000004420 BANK NIZWA	475,634	48,317	17	0.100	0.102	0.100	0.101	0.100	0.001	1.000	0.101	0.101	0.110	0.100	225,932,256
OM0000002549 BANK DHOFAR	69,759	8,221	4	0.136	0.136	0.136	0.136	0.136	0.000	0.000	0.136	0.136	0.136	0.100	11,560,000
OM0000003521 GULFAR ENGINEER	1,621,310	220,569	57	0.136	0.137	0.136	0.136	0.135	0.001	0.741	0.136	0.135	0.136	0.100	27,606,157
OM0000001085 DHOFAR INSURANCE	121,652	24,330	6	0.200	0.200	0.200	0.200	0.200	0.000	0.000	0.200	0.200	0.210	0.100	20,952,409
OM0000001160 NATIONAL GAS	54,000	7,344	4	0.136	0.136	0.136	0.136	0.136	0.000	0.000	0.136	0.136	0.136	0.100	11,560,000
OM0000001418 RAYSUT CEMENT	9,000	1,469	3	0.163	0.165	0.163	0.163	0.163	0.000	0.000	0.163	0.163	0.167	0.100	32,600,000
OM0000001517 HSCB BANK OMAN	162,000	25,359	11	0.152	0.157	0.152	0.157	0.157	0.000	0.000	0.157	0.157	0.157	0.100	314,040,108
OM0000001772 ALANWAR INVESTMENT	171,011	12,997	17	0.076	0.076	0.076	0.076	0.076	0.000	0.000	0.076	0.075	0.076	0.100	15,200,000
OM0000002275 SHELL OMAN MTK.	10,000	8,800	1	0.880	0.880	0.880	0.880	0.880	0.000	0.000	0.880	0.880	0.880	0.100	83,600,000
OM0000002572 OMAN OIL MARKETING	1,695	1,492	1	0.880	0.880	0.880	0.880	0.880	0.000	0.000	0.880	0.880	0.880	0.100	53,922,180
OM0000002648 NATIONAL FINANCE	49,000	5,601	6	0.114	0.115	0.114	0.115	0.115	0.000	0.000	0.115	0.114	0.115	0.100	62,241,502
OM0000004735 SEMBROP SALALAH	1,500	108	1	0.072	0.072	0.072	0.072	0.072	0.000	0.000	0.072	0.069	0.072	0.100	68,729,180
OM0000004788 MADINA TAKULI	774,976	697,748	46	0.090	0.090	0.090	0.090	0.090	0.000	0.000	0.090	0.090	0.090	0.100	15,750,000
OM0000004925 ALBATINAH POWER	220,000	10,120	17	0.046	0.046	0.046	0.046	0.046	0.000	0.000	0.046	0.045	0.046	0.100	31,044,822
OM0000004833 AL SUWADI POWER	435,468	20,457	17	0.047	0.047	0.046	0.047	0.047	0.000	0.000	0.047	0.046	0.050	0.100	33,577,098
OM0000005985 AMAN REAL ESTATE	188,724	7,401	7	0.046	0.047	0.046	0.047	0.047	0.000	0.000	0.047	0.046	0.049	0.100	68,742,291
OM0000007910 AMAN REAL ESTATE	20,000	1,800	2	0.090	0.090	0.090	0.090	0.090	0.000	0.000	0.090	0.090	0.091	0.100	18,000,000
OM0000008710 BARKA DESALINATION	45,740	6,266	4	0.137	0.137	0.137	0.137	0.137	0.000	0.000	0.137	0.130	0.139	0.100	10,346,514
OM0000002887 GULF MUSHROOM P	7,794	2,129	4	0.275	0.275	0.270	0.274	0.274	-0.004	-1.460	0.270	0.250	0.280	0.100	11,233,423
OM0000001566 OMAN FISHERIES	104,300	11,834	13	0.115	0.115	0.113	0.113	0.115	-0.002	-1.739	0.113	0.113	0.113	0.100	20,574,859
OM0000001368 CONSTRUCTION M.	91,500	7,300	15	0.078	0.080	0.078	0.080	0.085	-0.005	-5.882	0.080	0.080	0.080	0.100	5,000,000
Total	6,904,384	720,915	402												

BOTTLENECKING EUROPE SUPPLY



According to a new study, using smartphones, smart watches and other digital devices can improve the memory skills of a person



SMARTPHONES CAN IMPROVE MEMORY SKILLS

According to a new study led by UCL researchers, using smartphones, smart watches and other digital devices can improve the memory skills of a person.

The research, published in the Journal of Experimental Psychology: General, showed that digital devices help people to store and remember very important information. This, in turn, frees up their memory to recall additional less important things.

Neuroscientists have previously expressed concerns that the overuse of technology could result in the breakdown of cognitive abilities and cause “digital dementia”.

However, the findings show that using a digital device as external memory not only helps people to remember the information saved into the device, but it also helps them to remember unsaved information too.

To demonstrate this, researchers developed a memory task to be played on a touch-screen digital tablet or comput-

er. The test was undertaken by 158 volunteers aged between 18 and 71.

Participants were shown up to 12 numbered circles on the screen, and had to remember to drag some of these to the left and some to the right. The number of circles that they remembered to drag to the correct side determined their pay at the end of the experiment. One side was designated ‘high value’, meaning that remembering to drag a circle to this side was worth 10 times as much money as remembering to drag a circle to the other ‘low value’ side.

Participants performed this task 16 times. They had to use their own memory to remember on half of the trials and they were allowed to set reminders on the digital device for the other half.

The results found that participants tended to use the digital devices to store the details of the high-value circles. And, when they did so, their memory for those circles was improved

by 18%. Their memory for low-value circles was also improved by 27%, even in people who had never set any reminders for low-value circles.

However, results also showed a potential cost to using reminders. When they were taken away, the participants remembered the low-value circles better than the high-value ones, showing that they had entrusted the high-value circles to their devices and then forgotten about them.

Senior author, Dr Sam Gilbert (UCL Institute of Cognitive Neuroscience) said: “We wanted to explore how storing information in a digital device could influence memory abilities.

“We found that when people were allowed to use an external memory, the device helped them to remember the information they had saved into it. This was hardly surprising, but we also found that the device improved people’s memory for unsaved information as well.

“This was because using

the device shifted the way that people used their memory to store high-importance versus low-importance information. When people had to remember by themselves, they used their memory capacity to remember the most important information. But when they could use the device, they saved high-importance information into the device and used their own memory for less important information instead.

“The results show that external memory tools work. Far from causing ‘digital dementia’, using an external memory device can even improve our memory for information that we never saved. But we need to be careful that we back up the most important information. Otherwise, if a memory tool fails, we could be left with nothing but lower-importance information in our own memory.”

The research was supported by an ESRC grant and a grant from the Independent Research Fund Denmark. -ANI



IN-PICTURES





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Birds seen in Guanshan Lake Park in SW China's Guizhou
Tourists view black swans in the Guanshan Lake Park in Guiyang City, southwest China's Guizhou Province. **Xinhua**



Birthdays of giant panda celebrated at Moscow Zoo
Visitors look at giant panda Ru Yi at the Moscow Zoo in Moscow, capital of Russia. The Moscow Zoo on Sunday celebrated the birthdays of two giant pandas Ding Ding and Ru Yi. Six-year-old male Ru Yi was born on July 31, 2016 whereas five-year-old female Ding Ding was born on July 30, 2017. **Xinhua**



R Madhavan meets Rajnikanth
Actor R Madhavan after being felicitated by actor Rajnikanth on the success of his film 'Rocketry: The Nambi Effect', at his residence. **ANI Photo**



East Meets West orchestral concert tour held in Australia
Picture shows the 'East Meets West' orchestral concert in Llewellyn Hall at the Australian National University in Canberra, Australia. The orchestral concert tour in Australia was held in Canberra. **Xinhua**

Singapore Garden Festival kicks off
People view the participating works of the Show Garden competition, as part of the media preview of the Singapore Garden Festival in Singapore. **Xinhua**



Poland commemorates 78th anniversary of Warsaw Uprising
People gather during an event in commemoration of the 78th anniversary of the 1944 Warsaw Uprising in the centre of Warsaw, Poland. Poland commemorated the 78th anniversary of the 1944 Warsaw Uprising on Monday, with events taking place across the capital city. **Xinhua**



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ROUND-UP



Make your mark in luxury with Lexus IS with exclusive benefits

Lexus IS with its aggressive stance, bold design and rewarding ownership experiences, stands out when it comes to luxury sedan experiences

MUSCAT: Lexus enthusiasts wishing to own the IS can look forward to exclusive benefits like service 3 years/30,000km (whichever is earlier) and 1 year of free registration. (Conditions apply. Visit any Lexus showroom for details).

Lexus IS with its aggressive stance, bold design and rewarding ownership experiences, stands out when it comes to luxury sedan experiences. The IS' impressive profile is due to its lower, wider proportions with muscular fenders. The sleek lines are also complemented with aggressive sharpness carved into the side and shoulder character lines.

The IS is available in two options. A 2.0-litre, turbocharged and intercooled inline four-cylinder engine delivers 241 hp and 35.7 kg.M of torque. The sophisticated 3.5-litre V6 engine produces 312 hp and 38.5 kg.M of torque. Both



engines are paired to an eight-speed sport direct-shift automatic transmission that offers superb drivability, together with outstanding fuel efficiency and quietness even at high speed.

The interiors of the IS are thoughtfully planned. Passengers can indulge in fine moments with a range of advanced features for a refined cabin experience. These include a new 10.3-inch touchscreen multimedia system featuring Apple CarPlay® and Android Auto™ compatibility, a 4.2-inch colour

multi-information display (MID), and a dual-zone automatic climate control system with touch-sensitive controls. The vehicle also offers SmartAccess with push-button start, a 17-speaker Mark Levinson sound system, a power moonroof, power-adjustable and ventilated front seats, as well as ample luggage space thanks to the 60:40 split-folding rear seats.

Lexus pays a lot of attention to details when it is about safety. In the Lexus IS, drivers can enjoy complete peace of mind thanks to the Lexus Safety System+, an advanced safety technology package that includes Pre-Collision System (PCS) which include Emergency Steering Assist (ESA), Daytime Pedestrian Detection (DPD), all-speed range Dynamic Radar Cruise Control (DRCC), Lane Departure Alert (LDA), Lane Tracing Alert (LTA), and Automatic High-beam System (AHB).

The vehicle also includes comprehensive safety features designed to protect its occupants, such as All round SRS airbags,

Vehicle Stability Control (VSC), Traction Control (TRC), Anti-lock Braking System (ABS) with Electronic Brakeforce Distribution (EBD), Brake Assist (BA), Blind Spot Monitor (BSM), Parking Support Alert (PKSA), Rear Cross-Traffic Alert (RCTA) and Hill-start Assist Control (HAC), among many others.

For those seeking to experience the ultimate in thrilling responsiveness, the IS, is also available in an F Sport version. Engineered for exhilaration, the F brand DNA

SUPER-MULTI-SPECIALITY

Undersecretary of Ministry of Social Development visits Aster Royal Hospital

MUSCAT: With the soft opening of Aster Royal Hospital nearing, the newest super-multi-speciality hospital located in Al Ghubra, received Ahmed Al Shamsi, the undersecretary of the Ministry of Social Development for a friendly site visit as a part Zuwarat Aster programme.

Unique services

During the tour, which was guided by the hospital's CEO, Dr Ashendu Pandey, Al Shamsi acknowledged information about all the departments, cutting-edge technology and unique services that the hospital will avail to the Oman community.

Al Shamsi visited various departments, including the intensive care unit, radiology and physiotherapy department, operation theatres, cath-lab, aster centre of excellences-gastroenterology (led by the hospital's medical director



for which an entire floor is dedicated to women.

Al Shamsi expressed his admiration for the modern design and decoration that keeps pace with modern designs that take into account the patient's comfort. He also praised the hospital's administrative and medical staff and described them as friends of the community.

Aster Royal Hospital has two underground floors of the parking area, 200 beds, one entire floor dedicated to women and children and a world-class team of doctors and medical staff and it will open its doors to the public soon.

Dr Ashendu was assisted by Nadiya Azghar Al Balushi, HR Director and other team members for the tour.

RECOGNITION

Sohar International receives Best Tourism Promotion Campaign award

MUSCAT: As an agile, dynamic, and progressive bank that is well-aligned with the Sultanate's goal of economic diversification, Sohar International has been leading innovative campaigns geared at promoting the tourism sector in the country.

In honour of its unfaltering efforts, the bank was conferred with the title of the 'Best Campaign to Promote Tourism' at the Second Arab Forum for Tourism and Heritage for the bank's initiatives in 2021 and 2022 titled 'In Oman We Win' and 'Take It From Us' respectively.

Organised by the Arab Centre for Tourism Media, the Second Arab Forum for Tourism and Heritage was held on July 24 and 25 at the Rotana Hotel, Salalah and was inaugurated by His Highness Sayyid Marwan bin Turki Al Said, Governor of Dhofar, and saw in attendance several key representatives from the public and private sectors. Representing the bank, Khalil Salim Al Hedaifi, Chief Retail Banking Officer at Sohar International attended the event and received the award.

The forum seeks to enhance the partnership between media institutions and the government and private sector establishments in the culture, heritage, and tourism sector in an endeavour to catalyse



the marketing and promotional efforts in the field.

Commenting on the award, Khalil Salim Al Hedaifi, Chief Retail Banking Officer at Sohar International, said, "Sohar International believes in taking a more holistic approach to its CSR campaigns and strategically integrates key focus areas of national interest and the country's long-term goals into its initiatives.

Through the 'In Oman We Win' and 'Take it from Us' initiatives, the bank adopted a unique approach to highlighting the natural beauty, abundant resources, and rich cultural heritage of the Sultanate while simultaneously promoting SMEs catering to this segment and hence creating a rewarding experience for all stakeholders."

He further added saying, "We are indeed honoured to have received this award which will act as further inspiration for us to continue to conceptualise innovative campaigns and add value to the tourism sector. With Oman's tourism sector showing immense potential, Sohar International will remain committed to supporting the country's vision to position the Sultanate as a key tourism destination. This will also act as a key driver of socio-economic growth, job creation, and the development of industries."

Passionate about creating a unique experience, Sohar International's 'In Oman, We Win' was a popular Prize Scheme in 2021 that took viewers on a tour through various touristic, cultural, and historic locations from Musandam to Dhofar. Meanwhile, the bank's ongoing 'Take It From Us' campaign, which primarily focuses on spreading financial knowledge amongst the community, also seamlessly integrates into each episode, a special segment highlighting the unique adventure experience offered by SMEs and other local companies across various iconic locations in the country. Through well-conceived initiatives like these, Sohar International has reaffirmed its position as a premium bank that is invested in the socio-economic progress of the country.

Recently, Sohar International was ranked by the highly coveted Best Banks Survey as the 'Fastest Growing Bank' in the Large Banks Category and 'Excellence in Digital Transformation' at the Oman Banking and Finance Awards. In addition, Global Business Review Magazine Awards 2022 honoured Sohar International with the title of 'Best Corporate Banking – Oman 2022'.

EXPANSION



Malabar Gold partners with NitolNiloy Group to expand operations into Bangladesh

MUSCAT: Malabar Gold & Diamonds, one of the largest jewellery retailers globally with a strong network of over 285 outlets spread across 10 countries is scheduled to open a new manufacturing facility in Modonpur, Bangladesh in partnership with NitolNiloy Group, a leading diversified business conglomerate based in Bangladesh.

The stone laying ceremony of this facility was held recently by MD Sirazul Islam, Executive Chairman, Bangladesh Investment Development Authority (BIDA), in the presence of Abdul Matlub Ahmad, Chairman, NitolNiloy Group, Shamlal Ahamed, MD-International Operations, Malabar Gold & Diamonds, Ameerm CMC, Director Finance, Malabar Gold & Diamonds, management team members of both the organisations and well-wishers.

The manufacturing facility, which is being set up in partnership with NitolNiloy group, a diversified business conglomerate in Bangladesh, is the first venture of Malabar Gold and Diamonds into the country. "We are very excited to start our journey in Bangladesh, a country offering a wide variety of opportunities and we are happy to have the NitolNiloy group as our partner in this journey. With our combined experience and expertise, we hope to replicate our transparent and sustainable business model in the country and turn Bangladesh into a jewellery manufacturing hub for the global audience while contributing positively to the country, its economy and society," said Shamlal Ahamed.

The new facility will have a production capacity of 6,000 kg of gold per year with high quality & finish, utilizing skilled craftsmen and the latest technologies like casting, CNC and CAD-CAM(3D). It is expected to create approximately 250 jobs. The facility, which is scheduled to open in October 2022 will include different departments for production including CNC cutting, chains, anklet, rings, bangles, 22K & 24K coins, as well as the diamond setting.

The initial operations of the manufacturing unit will largely focus on exports and will provide numerous employment opportunities, especially for local artisans. On the joint venture between Malabar Gold & Diamonds and NitolNiloy group, Abdul Matlub Ahmad, Chairman, NitolNiloy group commented, "Malabar Gold & Diamonds is a household name among the Bangladeshi community in the GCC and Far-east. We are very excited to be diversifying our operations into the jewellery sector by partnering with this brand that is synonymous with trust and quality. Through this partnership, we look forward to leveraging our business expertise in the region to add further value to the economy by generating jobs and providing skill training"

MD Sirazul Islam commented, "I'd like to congratulate both Malabar Gold & Diamonds and NitolNiloy Group on this joint venture that is expected to boost Bangladesh's jewellery exports to international markets and contribute positively to the economy. I pledge my wholehearted support to this project, including fast-tracking all the required permissions and we will also look into export incentives for jewellery export."



ROUND-UP



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ahlibank sponsors Omani Women’s Association to support job seekers

This will positively impact the target group of women from social security and less fortunate families

MUSCAT: In line with its corporate social responsibility, ahlibank announced its support for the training programme to assist social security families and less fortunate families within the initiatives of the Omani Women’s Association in Muscat to support female job seekers by offering courses and training programmes in various areas, including beauty, and tailoring.

The agreement was signed by Jumana Al Hashmi, Deputy Head Marketing and Corporate Communications of ahlibank, and Aliya Sultan Al Housni, Acting Chairperson of the Board of Directors of Omani Women’s Association in Muscat and Chair of the Economic Committee, which took place in ahlibank headquarters, on August



1, in the presence of several representatives from both institutions.

On this occasion, Jumana Al Hashmi said, “We are delighted to strengthen our partnership with one of the most important and active associations in Oman. We hope this contribution will positively impact the target group of women from social security and less fortunate families. As a well-

established banking institution in Oman, our core mission is to provide outstanding products and services that help customers manage their portfolios better and reach out to individuals who need support, whether in the form of an initiative or financial support in collaboration with various charities.”

Aliya Al Housni, stated, “We appreciate ahlibank’s efforts, its on-

going commitment to strengthen its relationship with the association, and its interest to participate in our initiatives, which are aimed at promoting the social and economic level of women and other groups benefiting from the activities of the Omani Women’s Association in Muscat. This initiative will support 20 families in the community. We look forward

to continuing to cooperate with the bank to create a greater impact and contribution to Oman’s Vision 2040.”

This initiative emphasises the bank’s interest in supporting charities’ initiatives and its awareness in organising such training and rehabilitation programmes that contribute to increasing family stability and encouraging job seek-

ers to manage their own business by promoting the concept of self-employment, thereby, developing capacities and talent to achieve sustainable development goals in the community.

The duration of the programme is three weeks and consists of pillars including direct operation, training combined with operation and rehabilitation to open a small or medium-sized project as well as supporting productive families. The job seekers training programme is featured by the presence of trainers with excellent experience in these fields and the existence of integrated training workshops that help participants make the most of the programme.

ahlibank continues to support various social, educational, cultural, health and sports activities in Oman as part of its corporate values and ambitious vision, which are critical to the bank’s employees and leadership. Through social responsibility, the bank is keen to create a framework that will help create added value for the community through the ‘ahlicares’ initiatives. The bank always seeks to support the charitable and voluntary efforts of associations and charity teams in the Sultanate, which contribute a leading role through their activities and initiatives towards the community and its members.

MOTORSPORT STRATEGY

Maserati to race in Fanatec GT2 European Series Championship in 2023



MODENA: Another big step in the Maserati motorsport strategy: the MC20 - designed ever since its early stages of development to bring the Trident back on track in closed-wheel competitions - will feature in the Fanatec GT2 European Series Championship, making its debut in 2023.

Maserati will be offering its customers and teams the MC20 GT2.

MC20 GT2 is based on the road version, from which it inherits its best-in-class specifications. These include the innovative Nettuno engine with new Maserati Twin Combustion (MTC) technology, double-wishbone suspension with semi-virtual steering axis and carbon fibre monocoque.

Maserati’s return to the track in GT competitions represents the ideal link between the brand’s new era and the victories achieved by the frequently victorious MC12 in the FIA GT Championships from 2004 to 2010.

Specifically, to highlight the link between the MC12 and MC20, at the 24 Hours of Spa - won three times by the MC12 (in

2005, 2006 and 2008) - Maserati is ushering in the new Maserati Corse era with an experience dedicated to the glorious milestones in its sporting history.

In the words of Davide Grasso, Maserati CEO, “We are driven by our passion, both on the road and on the track. We have a long history of world excellence in motorsport and we are extremely proud to race with the extraordinary MC20.

“Racing has always been Maserati’s natural habitat and now, both in the Fanatec GT2 European Series Championship and in the Formula E Championship, this brand is making a new start from its roots to build the future.”

Jean-Marc Finot, Senior VP, STELLANTIS Motorsport, stated: “Maserati Corse is bringing the link between Formula E factory program and our road cars with the MC20 GT2. This new step is completing the legacy and the legitimacy of Maserati in Motorsport. The MC20 is a fantastic road legal car. We are happy that our passionate customer will enjoy racing with it.”

Maserati GT2 - Features and technical specifications

Vehicle: Single-seater non-road-homologated race car, Maserati Centro Stile design, Width/Height (mm) 2020* x 1220*, Dry weight to be determined in BoP, Complies with FIA race safety requirements, FIA-homologated FT3 120 L fuel tank, FIA-spec fire extinguisher

Engine

Maserati Nettuno: V6 90° twin turbo, 3000 cc, Power output to be determined in BoP (630-hp base engine under development), Maserati Twin Combustion (MTC) Twin Spark with TJI double combustion control, Dry sump, Drive train/transmission, 2WD 6-speed sequential racing gearbox with paddle shifters, Racing clutch and limited-slip self-locking mechanical differential

Bodywork

MC20 GT2 racing kit bodywork: High-performance aerodynamics, Multi-adjustable rear wing, High downforce, LED headlamps, FIA-

approved rain light, Lexan front and side windows

Chassis

Ultra-light carbon fibre central monocoque, FIA-homologated safety roll cage, /4 on-board air jacks, Brakes: Racing callipers and ventilated racing brakes, Bespoke brake cooling, Rims: Bespoke forged 18” aluminium rims, Centre lock system fittings, Slick tires

Suspension

Double-wishbone with semi-virtual steering axis: Adjustable racing dampers, Adjustable front and rear anti-roll bars

Interiors

Adjustable racing pedal box, Adjustable steering column, 6-point racing safety belt, Multi-functional carbon-fibre steering wheel, Rear-view camera display (optional), In-car camera for video recording (optional), Dash and data acquisition system, Driving performance optimisation display (optional), Air conditioning, Tyre pressure monitoring system (optional), Adjusta-

HEALTHCARE



Aster Al Raffah team saves patient’s life

MUSCAT: A 43-year-old housemaid with a history of recent COVID infection had been bedridden at her sponsor’s house. They tried to send her back home but at the airport, she was found unfit to travel. She was referred to our hospital from the airport as she was unwell with low blood pressure and oxygen levels on June 28.

She was very emaciated and malnourished with basal pneumonia and bilateral pleural effusion, and ascites (fluid in the lungs and abdomen). She had severely low protein levels and low electrolytes- all of which were corrected slowly.

The echocardiogram done bedside was normal except for mild pericardial effusion. CT scan of the lung showed extensive multifocal pneumonia with large pleural effusion and bilateral lung nodules with mass-like consolidation. Findings favoured cancerous spread or Lymphoma.

Pleural fluid was removed under ultrasound guidance and sent for analysis. Her antibiotics were escalated and she was managed in the ICU and was on oxygen therapy.

She was evaluated by a multidisciplinary team consisting of the primary attending physician- Dr James Pallivathukkal, Intensivist- Dr Dilip Abdul Khadar, Cardiologist- Dr Mehar Ali, Gastroenterology- Dr. Ashik Sainu,

Radiology team - Dr Mahmood Al Hajiri, Dr Fahad Bapu, Anaesthesia team- Dr Binoy Zacharia Thomas, Dr Lekha Gopal.

On 05-07-22 the patient had a sudden cardiorespiratory arrest. She was resuscitated and revived in a short time. She was intubated, mechanically ventilated and stabilised with inotropic support through a central venous catheter after 48 hours of ventilation. She recovered without a neurological deficit.

She stayed in the hospital for nearly a month and travelled to her native country on 25-07-22. Her treatment for malignancy could not be initiated due to logistic reasons and other evident constraints. Our team of doctors visited her every day and gave her hope. Our physiotherapy team was actively involved and mobilised her every day.

The ICU nurses started taking care of her like family since her family was not there. They fed her, clothed her and started bringing her homemade food once she improved and developed an appetite. They brought her clothes when she finally became better and the time came to travel back to her homeland. The empathy, care and love showered enhanced healing which is an example of the exemplary medical and nursing care offered at Aster Al Raffah hospitals which is a part of DM healthcare.



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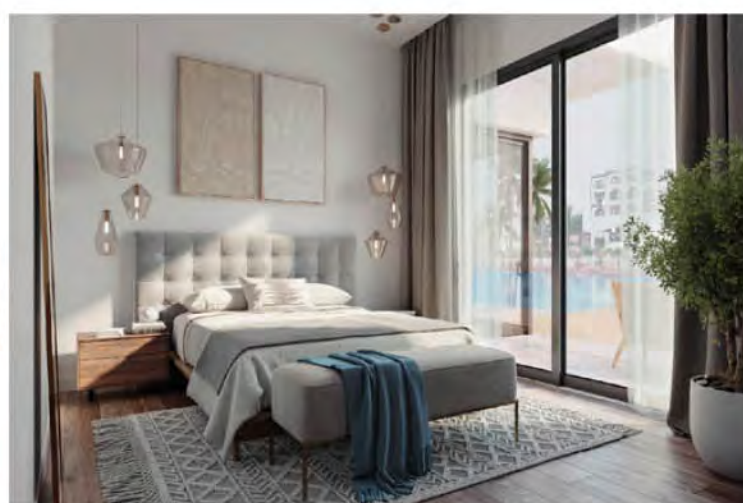
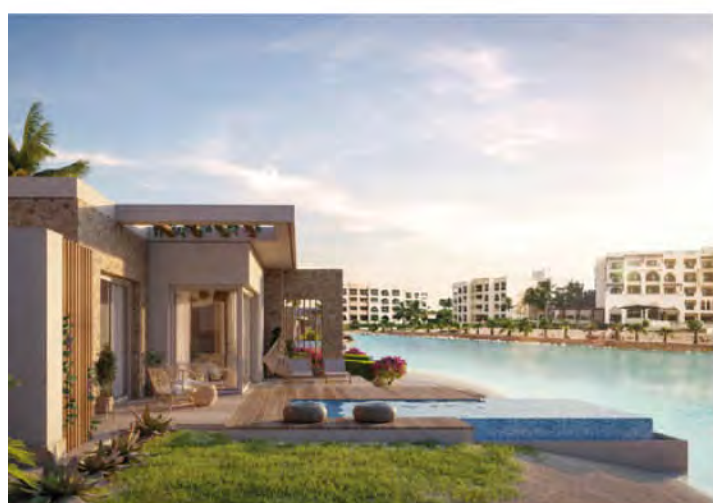
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