



## HM GREETES SOMALI PRESIDENT

**MUSCAT:** His Majesty Sultan Haitham Bin Tarik has sent a cable of greetings to President Mohamed Abdullahi Farmajo of the Federal Republic of Somalia on his country's National Day. In the cable, His Majesty the Sultan expressed his sincere greetings and best wishes of good health and happiness to President Farmajo, and the brotherly people of Somalia further progress and prosperity. **-ONA See also >A5**

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### BILATERAL RELATIONS

# Saudi-Oman plan joint growth strategy with focus on economic integration of Oman Vision 2040 and Saudi Vision 2030

**KHALID ORABI**

**MUSCAT:** Officials from the Sultanate of Oman and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia reaffirmed that the recent exchange of visits between the two countries comes within the keenness of the leaders of the two countries for boosting aspects of cooperation.

In an interview with Shabiba FM, the radio station of *Al Shabiba*, which is the Arabic publication of the *Times of Oman*, Asila bint Salim bin Sulaiman Al Samsami, Under-secretary for Investment Promotion at the Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Investment Promotion reaffirmed that the visit of the Sultanate's delegation to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia came within the integration of the Oman Vision 2040 and the Saudi Vision 2030.

"The visit aimed to discuss ways



**ABDULLAH AL ANZI**

of integration and constructive economic cooperation between the two countries," she added.

Also the Saudi Fund for Development met with its counterparts in the Sultanate and they agreed to establish joint projects, which will provide job opportunities for young



**ASILA AL SAMSAMI**

people and will provide a boost to the Omani economy.

"A number of investment opportunities in the petrochemicals, renewable energy and logistics sectors have been discussed during the visit. The two sides also discussed direct sea and air links

between the economic zones and free zones of the two countries."

She said that the delegation has visited the Saudi Authority for Industrial Cities and Technology Zones (MODON) and other authorities in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

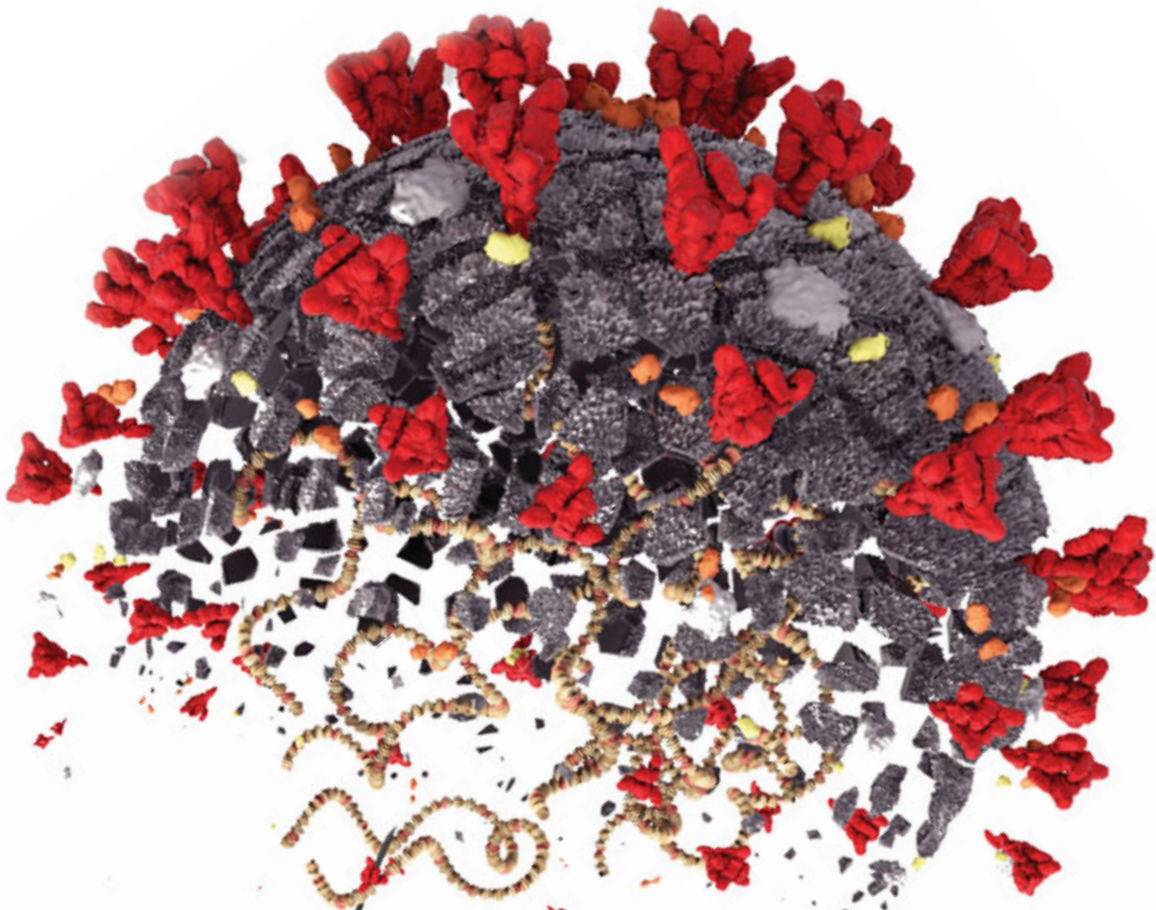
The visit also reviewed expansion of integration with such authorities. There would be a joint team from the Public Authority for Special Economic Zones and Free Zones and its counterpart authority of the KSA to consider and follow up with such integration between the two sides, she added.

Adding to this, she said: "It is important for society to acquaint itself with the steps the government is taking at present in terms of attracting investments and development of Oman exports". **>A5**



## SAYYID THEYAZIN RECEIVES AMBASSADOR OF HUNGARY

His Highness Sayyid Theyazin bin Haitham Al Said, Minister of Culture, Sports and Youth received in his office on Wednesday Dr Tibor Szatmari Ambassador of the Republic of Hungary. The meeting touched on several topics of common interest. It also reviewed the bilateral relations between the two friendly countries. The meeting further discussed aspects of the existing cooperation in the cultural and youth fields and means of developing them to serve the two sides. **- ONA**



June has so far been the worst month but doctors expect COVID-19 cases to fall soon

*Times News Service*

**MUSCAT:** People in Oman are hopeful that the COVID-19 situation in the country will improve in July, as the country's vaccination drive gains momentum and more and more people gain immunity from the virus.

June has so far been the worst

month of the pandemic, since it came to Oman in February 2020: 755 people died from the disease last month, which meant about one person died from the disease every hour last month. The number of active infections ratcheted up from 15,594 on 1 June, to 30,584 on the 30th, nearly doubling the country's caseload.

# HOPE THE WORST IS BEHIND US

755

was the number of lives lost to the disease last month, which meant about one person succumbed to it every hour during the period

During this period, there has also been a spike in patient admissions to hospitals and intensive care units. There were 802 people in hospitals on June 1, with 257 of them in ICUs, but by the 30th, the number of hospitalised COVID-19 patients also nearly doubled, growing to 1,597 admissions, with 519 of them in ICUs.

### What doctors say

Doctors, however, say that a combination of the vaccination drive and a commitment to coronavirus preventive measures will bring numbers down. In the meantime, they have asked people to take steps to boost their natural immu-

nity, which will help keep the virus at bay for longer.

As of June 28, 854,274 people in Oman have been vaccinated against COVID-19, according to the Ministry of Health. 643,744 people have received one dose, while about 210,530 have been vaccinated with both doses.

"The moment you are eligible to take the vaccination, please do so," said Dr A Basheer, a senior internist at Badr Al Sama'a Hospital. "Do not listen to the rumours about the negative effects of vaccinations. They are the best ways to keep infections down, and if the infection numbers come down, then the virus will not be able to spread." **>A5**

### TOP THREE INSIDE STORIES

## OMAN Barceló to operate At Mussanah Resort

**1** OMRAN Group has appointed Barceló Hotel Group to operate Al Mussanah Resort. **>A3**

## WORLD Merkel to discuss travel with UK PM

**2** German leader is visiting the UK for talks with Prime Minister. **>A6**

## MARKET BP announces production jump

**3** British Petroleum (BP) has announced significant rise production from the Block 61 gas field in Oman. **>B1**

### HOUSING

## Citizens await distribution of residential land plots

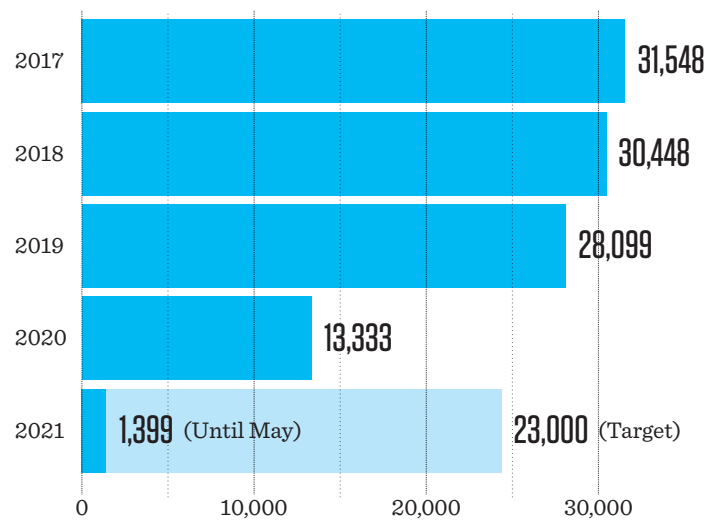
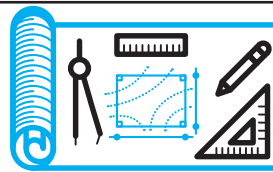
*Times News Service*

**MUSCAT:** A number of citizens who have applied for residential land plots are yet to receive these and are patiently awaiting their turn.

Out of 23,000 land plots planned to be distributed during 2021 as per the Royal Directives of His Majesty Sultan Haitham Bin Tarik, only 1,399 land plots have been distributed till the end of May 2021, said Ibrahim Al Maimani, data analyst. He said that the Ministry of Housing and Urban Planning has confirmed its commitment to dispersing the said land plots during 2021. He added that priority would be given to Omani families without their own houses or residential land plots.

He said pointed out that the Minister of Housing and Urban Planning had affirmed on April 17, 2021 that distribution of land plots would begin post-Ramadan, especially for Muscat applications of 2008. The remaining 21,601 land

## NUMBER OF RESIDENTIAL PLOTS GRANTED IN OMAN



Source: NCSI/Ibrahim Al Maimani

novagram

plots are expected to be distributed within seven months, he added, pointing out that to cover the distribution of the remaining 21,601 land plots, 3,086 land plots have to be distributed every month, for seven months.

Speaking on distribution of plots in 2020, he said that 8,424 residential plots were distributed up to May 2020 in various governorates, that is 7,025 land plots more compared to these distributed during the same period in 2021.

He said that in 2020, the most number of residential plots were distributed in South Al Sharqiyah Governorate (2,180 plots), followed by North Al Sharqiyah (2,058 plots), and Al Dakhiliyah Governorate (1,820 plots).

In 2021, up to end of May, 326 residential land plots were distributed in South Al Sharqiyah Governorate, followed by North Al Batinah (294 land plots) and Al Dakhiliyah Governorate (206 land plots), he said. **>A5**



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Oman

'Omani citizens being offered free COVID-19 tests will enable early detection of infection, and help in stopping the spread of the virus.'



TIMESOFOMAN.COM

**Majlis Al Shura member moots free COVID tests to check spread in Oman**



**Majlis Al Shura member moots free COVID tests to check spread in Oman**

A story on free Covid-19 tests in Oman reached 26,111 people and had 3,878 engagements on Facebook

### 📺 MOST WATCHED VIDEO ON FACEBOOK

4,600 VIEWS

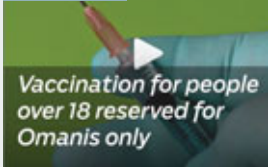


**The fighting Covid video**

The fighting Covid video had 4,600 views and reached 16,500 people on Facebook.

### 📺 MOST VIEWED VIDEO ON INSTAGRAM

5,402 VIEWS



**The Morning Minute video**

The Morning Minute video had 5,402 views and 318 likes on Instagram.

# Private hospitals open bookings to vaccinate children aged above 12

Advance bookings are the primary method for parents to vaccinate their children

Times News Service

**MUSCAT:** Children aged 12 and above will soon be able to get their COVID-19 jabs at private hospitals, after some began taking reservations for those who wish to get vaccinated.

Children who do go to private health centres to be vaccinated, however, need to be accompanied by a parent, in case they should suffer adverse side effects after being inoculated. "There are many ways for families to approach us, if they want to vaccinate their child," said Dr A Basheer, a senior internist at Badr Al Sama'a Hospital. "They can approach any of the hospitals, ring up our call centres, and book through our website and social media channels."

#### No walk-in vaccination

At present, there are no walk-in vaccination appointments available. Advance bookings are the primary method for parents to vaccinate their children. When parents book vaccination appointments for their children, they must provide the hospital a copy of their child's resident card, as well as one of their own.

"As far as we are concerned, the child is still a minor, and therefore,



an adult has to take the responsibility for their vaccine booking," explained Basheer. "We need to know that the person booking the

appointment is indeed their parent." "Children who do come for vaccination appointments must arrive with a parent," he said. "If anything untoward happens after taking the vaccine, the parent needs to be informed immediately, and might need to give consent for any subsequent treatment we might need to take."

Explaining why walk-in appointments for people are not currently available, Basheer explained this was a question of supply and demand, with the demand for vaccines far greater than the numbers of doses coming in.

As part of the efforts to vaccinate people in the country, while private companies have been ordering vaccines for their own employees, in coordination with the

ministry of health, many have also begun booking doses for the families of those who work for them.

"We are still waiting for clarity regarding when we can start vaccinating children who book through us," said Dr Rajeev Chathanath, an internal medicine specialist and head of NMC Hospital's COVID-19 unit. "Currently, we are only vaccinating children who have been referred to us under the scheme for the dependents of employees in the private sector."

"It is important that we wait for further instructions before we can continue, because right now, for members of the public, we only receive the AstraZeneca vaccine, whereas it is the Pfizer one that has been recommended for children," he further added.

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# Barceló to operate Al Mussanah Resort

Move to reposition  
the unique beach  
resort as an  
attractive all-  
inclusive family  
holiday destination

*Times News Service*

**MUSCAT:** Oman Tourism Development Company (OMRAN Group), the executive arm of the Sultanate for tourism development, has appointed Barceló Hotel Group to operate Al Mussanah Resort from 1st July 2021.

The appointment aligns with the group's plan to enhance tourism experiences and activities in the resort, while bringing new operational and management concept to its various facilities.

OMRAN Group is aiming to reposition this unique beach resort, which was established 10 years ago, in line with its wider strategic goals to position it as a locally, regionally, and internationally at-



tractive all-inclusive family holiday destination with a wide variety of activities and experiences.

### Destination of choice

Hashil bin Obaid Al Mahrouqi, CEO of OMRAN Group, said: "We are pleased to cooperate with Barceló Hotel Group. This step comes in line with the directions of the National Tourism Strategy 2040 towards strengthening the Sultanate's position in the travel and tourism markets and increasing its competitiveness as a destination of choice for visitors from around the world.

“We look forward to strengthening the tourism sector by working with Barcelo Hotels to capitalise

on their experience in the leisure tourism markets and the strength of their distribution channels in overseas markets," he added.

Raül González, CEO EMEA of Barceló Hotel Group says, "Oman has always been a prospective source market with immense growth potential for us. We are pleased to be partnering with OMARAN on this endeavour. This collaboration will provide us with the perfect opportunity to introduce our 90-year international hospitality expertise to the source market and establish our footprint in Oman"

 Full story @ [timesofoman.com/oman](https://timesofoman.com/oman)



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PERSPECTIVES

# Sustainability starts from within



*We've all heard about being more sustainable. We've all heard about reducing waste. We've all heard about changing our consumption habits. But what does this actually mean? And why is it so important?*

The United Nations defines sustainability as fulfilling the needs of the current population without diminishing the survival prospects of future generations. Being more sustainable doesn't necessarily mean reducing our consumption altogether – it's more about re-thinking the impacts of our current lifestyle and making small changes for the benefit of our planet. Realistically though, what power do individuals have? Well, more than you can imagine.

Since the 1st of January 2021, single-use plastic bags have been banned in Oman. This policy is very much a step in the right direction towards a more sustainable future. For years, single-use plastics have been a leading cause of human damage to the Earth. Such plastics take hundreds of years to decompose. Consequently, the littering of these plastics leads to a significant amount of waste entering the oceans. The plastics are then

consumed by sea creatures and results in their eventual death. This is an especially large issue for a country like Oman, which thrives on the fishing industry. As sea life moves towards mass extinction, the supply of fish will shrink until fishermen become jobless and thousands of people lose a stable source of food.

The elimination of single-use plastics will therefore reduce our misplacement of waste. However, we shouldn't wait for government policy in order to take further action. Making changes on an individual level will help prevent such crises becoming a reality.

Without the presence of public transport, most people in Oman use cars as their main mode of transport. Petrol is the power source for the majority of cars on the road. However, the issue arises from the carbon dioxide that is produced as a by-product of the combustion process to power vehicles. Lifetime exposure to excessive carbon dioxide is a leading cause of premature deaths for many people around the world.



The COVID-19 pandemic has naturally reduced the number of car trips that we make. However, this is hardly a permanent solution. Therefore, one approach could be to replace some of your car trips with carpooling – it's also a great opportunity to socialize! Furthermore, Mwasalat must be credited for developing and advancing the infrastructure for public transport in the Sultanate. Specifically, their bus and ferry services are feasible alternatives to driving your own car all the time. Reducing the number of vehicles on the roads will also lower carbon dioxide emissions, hence contributing to a more sustainable environment.

In the future, choosing electric vehicles (EVs) over petrol-fueled

cars is more beneficial for the environment. This is because EVs run on batteries which can be charged by a cable and socket. Therefore, EVs do not emit carbon dioxide or other gases into the air, making them a more sustainable way to travel.

You're probably reading this article on your phone, tablet or computer. At some point, you'll have to put that device to charge. You're also likely to be sitting in a room with the lights switched on and the air conditioning unit in full flow. But have you ever thought about how much energy is required to power on these appliances?

Let's take the air conditioning (AC) unit. The compression of air in the unit results in hot air

being released into the atmosphere. Now imagine the millions of people across the world have their AC units switched on for most of the day, every day. This once again contributes towards increasing temperatures on our planet, also known as climate change (or global warming).

The ongoing pandemic has also resulted in us spending much more time indoors at home. This makes it even more important to be energy conscious. Take a look around you and notice which lights, air-conditioning units and other appliances you leave switched on when you don't need them. From now on, make sure that no electrical equipment is switched on in rooms where nobody is using. If you constantly follow these tips, you'll also find your energy bills have decreased significantly!

COVID-19 has certainly driven Oman to use less paper. For example, the rapid development of e-learning systems by many schools and universities has naturally resulted in less books and other paper materials being used.

The process of producing paper is very detrimental to the environment – turning just one tree into sheets of paper emits about 50 kilograms of carbon dioxide. Our heavy reliance of paper is directly responsible for many of the trees that are chopped down. The uncontrolled cutting down of trees on a global scale is known as

deforestation – it poses a serious threat to the survival of many species. In particular, deforestation destroys the homes of many animals and trees that contribute to our food production. What's more, trees actually breathe in carbon dioxide and release oxygen, which naturally cleans up the air.

Going forward, you have the power to say no to paper in many different contexts. Pay by contactless card and insist that the receipt not be printed. Access resources electronically rather than printing them off or acquiring them physically. Complete as much of your work as possible on a computer or a tablet rather than using a notepad.

The good news is that making these small changes to our lifestyles is quite easy and can have long term benefits if done consistently. So, don't wait for others to tell you about sustainability – take the initiative today and inspire others to act for the sake of our world.

Now let me leave you with the wise words of Robert Swan, who has dedicated his life to sustainability: "the greatest threat to our planet is the belief that someone else will save it".

Daniel Henein is Strategy & Transactions: Economic Advisory, EY UK. He can be contacted at [dannyhenein@gmail.com](mailto:dannyhenein@gmail.com)

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CENTRAL BANK OF OMAN BOARD

# CBO reviews ‘Know Your Customer’ project

**MUSCAT:** The Board of Governors of the Central Bank of Oman (CBO) held its second meeting of the year on Wednesday.

During the virtual meeting, the Board stressed the importance of the banking and financial sector's continuous and swift response by applying CBO's directives on reliefs, relaxations and stimulus packages to minimise repercussions of COVID-19 pandemic on the national economy.

The Board proceeded by taking stock of the meeting agenda and reviewed the progress of the 'Know Your Customer' project, an e-platform that enables the relevant licenCed financial institutions to verify and identify clients online, which in turn enhances efforts towards digital transformation and financial inclusion in the Sultanate.

The Board also reviewed CBO's financial position at the end of April 2021.

It also reviewed an executive summary of the accomplish-

ments made in the project to enhance the efficiency of CBO's monetary policy, mainly the progress made in the project of enhancing the automated economic model to build forecasts of trends of the various economic indicators of the Sultanate.

This will hopefully provide reliable future forecasts of macroeconomic developments in the country reaching up to at least five years.

The Board also examined a report on the recent developments regarding the various interest rates in the banking sector, and the performance of the CBO foreign currency investments.

Other topics discussed by the Board included CBO key projects and activities for this year, along with the quarterly report of Oman Credit and Financial Information Centre 'Mala'a' and a slew of topics listed in the agenda and took the appropriate decisions accordingly.

- ONA



MT SEARAMBLER

# OQ completes first shipment of LPG products

**SALALAH:** OQ has completed its first shipment of Liquefied Petroleum Gas (LPG) products on Mt Searambler to international markets within the Indian sub-continent.

The freight ship which has been commercially commissioned will be carrying propane 5000MT and butane 5000MT.



**Important milestone**

Marking this important milestone, Eng. Ihsan Al Jandal, Vice-President Salalah Operations, OQ Downstream said, "We are proud to announce this strategic

achievement as one of the main growth projects in OQ which will reiterate the position of Oman as an energy exporter."

"This will enable the Sultanate to further optimise its gas value

chain by recovering propane, butane and condensate for international markets. This comes in addition to other operational successes in line with best global practices in the petrochemicals

industry," he added.

This product is the first of its kind to extract LPG and condensate from OQ's gas network.

OQ's LPG plant currently produces propane and butane as well as condensate - a commercially valuable and economically competitive fuel with growing demand in domestic and the international markets.

Speaking on the occasion, Mark Hardiman, Port of Salalah CEO, said, "We are happy to see the strong collaboration between the Port of Salalah team and the OQ team. I am confident that together we can deliver world class service and retain our position as one of the top players in the global marketplace."

It is worth mentioning that the OQ Liquefied Petroleum Gas (OQ LPG) facility consists of an extraction plant, a fractionation facility, storage tanks, shipping facilities, and an interconnection pipeline system.

Built with a total investment of US\$826 million, OQ LPG is first of its kind gas treatment project in Oman to extract LPG and condensate from OQ's Gas network.

- ONA

OMAN- SAUDI TRADE TIES

# < FROM A1 Both sides are working on opening border crossing

The objectives of the visit yielded fruitful results, as the two sides stressed the significance of integration of the visions of both the countries, she said, adding that "this has made us focus on the way and mechanisms of the economic integration between the countries".

The available investment opportunities in the Sultanate have been discussed during the visit.

The two sides held joint meetings between the delegation and Saudi businessmen.

The delegation comprising 10 entities has focused on attracting

investments and to acquaint the Saudi businessmen with the opportunities in the Sultanate.

**Border crossing**

Concerning the border crossing post between the two countries, she said it is important and necessary for both the countries and both sides are working on opening and operating the same at the earliest.

The border post would facilitate several issues for both the countries, she said, adding that the issue of the border post has been discussed with the Saudi de-

partments concerned, she added.

On the other hand, Abdullah bin Saud Al Anzi, ambassador of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia accredited to the Sultanate told Shabiba FM, the radio station of *Al Shabiba*, the Arabic publication of the *Times of Oman*, that the visits took place due to strong relations between the two countries.

He said that communication is going on at high levels and the latest communication has been made between the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques, His Majesty King Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud, and His Majesty Sultan

Haitham Bin Tarik, reflected the strong ties between the leaders of the two countries.

**Ambitious visions**

"Oman and Saudi Arabia hold ambitious visions and there are programmes and initiatives as a base for further horizons of cooperation and a qualitative shift in relations, investments and joint projects" between the two countries," he added.

The late visits come as continuation to earlier visits and prior to the visit of the Sultanate's delegation to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, a delegation from the Saudi Fund for Development paid a visit to the Sultanate of Oman, wherein the members of the delegation met with their counterparts in the Sultanate and agreed on establishment of joint projects, he added.

On the border post between the two countries, he said that the leadership of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia is keen for this border post and for elimination of any obstacles that it may face, he said adding that the border post would be opened in due course to serve citizens of both the countries.

CABLES

## HM sends greetings

**MUSCAT:** His Majesty Sultan Haitham Bin Tarik has sent a cable of greetings to Richard Wagner, acting Governor General of Canada on his country's National Day.

In the cable, His Majesty the Sultan expressed his sincere sentiment and best wishes of good health and happiness to the acting Governor General and the people of Canada further progress and prosperity.

His Majesty has sent a cable of greetings to President Evariste Ndayishimiye of Burundi on his country's National Day.

In the cable, His Majesty the Sultan expressed his sincere sentiments and best wishes to President Ndayishimiye and the people of Burundi.

His Majesty has sent a cable of greetings to President Paul Kagame of Rwanda on his country's National Day. In the cable, His Majesty the Sultan expressed his sincere greetings and best wishes to President Kagame and his country's friendly people. -ONA

DISTRIBUTION OF LAND

## < FROM A1 Land plots

He added that 563 residential land plots were distributed in the other governorates during the same period in 2021. Clarifying the delays caused in distribution, an official from the Ministry of Housing and Urban Planning said that "the reason for the delay in distribution of land plots is that at the Ministry of Housing and Urban Planning, we are awaiting issuance of the internal regulation of Royal Decree No. 42/2021 which would reveal the mechanism and priority for granting land plots."

OFFICIAL STATEMENT

## Fuel prices for July announced

Times News Service

**MUSCAT:** Fuel prices for the month of July 2021 were announced by the Ministry of Energy and Minerals on Wednesday. An official from the Ministry of Energy and Minerals confirmed to *Times of Oman* the prices of fuel for July 2021 and said, "Fuel prices have been approved for the next month of July 2021, and will be applied starting tomorrow (July 1)."

M91 will cost 227 baisas per litre, M95 will be 237 baisas per litre and diesel price will be 247 baisas per litre.

COVID-19 PANDEMIC

# < FROM A1 Boost natural immunity to protect against virus

Basheer added that vaccinations would also bring down patient numbers in hospitals, many of which have expanded to accommodate more and more people infected with COVID-19. Another way to stave off infection, he said, is for people to boost their natural immunity, which would avoid increased protection against the virus.

"Go outside, get fresh air, and commit to daily exercise - it is one of the best ways to improve your immunity naturally," he said.

**Eat a healthy diet**

"Because there is a lockdown these days, you can do it before 8pm, either early in the morning, or after you come back from work. Also make sure you eat a healthy diet, which contains all the nutrients you need to fight off illnesses."

Another medical practitioner, Dr Sathish N Veluswamy, a surgeon at Burjeel Hospital, advised people who feel they might have symptoms of COVID-19 to get themselves to the nearest doctor the moment they intensify, instead of waiting for them to go away on their own.

Early detection of the disease, he added, is one of the best ways to rid the body of it before it worsens and transmits to others.

"If you see your symptoms intensifying, please go to the doc-

tor as soon as you can," he said. "When the disease is caught early, then we can provide you with the right treatment options that will prevent you from hospitalisation and could enable you to see it through with only mild symptoms."

He too asked people to boost their natural immunity, saying, "Exercises like yoga are one of the best ways to boost immunity."

People in the country are also hopeful the vaccination drive will lead to a reduction in infection rates, which in turn could lead to a gradual resumption of their normal lives.

Ali Al Barwani, an Omani national, encouraged people to continue to take precautions against the virus, and hoped the expanded vaccination programmes would bring down case numbers.

"We have moved much of our work online, so a lot of our time is spent behind the screens," he said. "But after a while, this does get quite tedious - you want to avoid doing things remotely, and you want to meet a few people. We have spent too much time behind the screen. We really miss the ways we used to work."

"Yes, technology has many powerful tools, but it is not necessarily healthy...the current situation has required us to sacrifice many things," added Al

Barwani. "Technology has now become the centre of lives, even at home: we are forced to stay at home, order food online, you cannot go outside, cannot visit your family members, and even when you do, COVID-19 is all people talk about. Now is the time, therefore, to maintain our health so we can contribute to ending this pandemic."

**Uncertainty over pandemic**

Jassim Al Balushi, another local, said bringing case numbers down through vaccinations would also ease many of the stresses families are currently facing because of the uncertainty of the pandemic.

"We are required to remain indoors most of the time, so we do not have many of the freedoms we normally take for granted," he said.

"We are unable to take our children to the places they want to go, we are careful about where we buy things from, because I am afraid for my family."

"We need to monitor everything: who we go out with, whether they wear masks, we need to often check up on our kids to see that they and those with them are following the right measures," he added. "Proper measures will see us hopefully return to a sustainable way of life."



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# Merkel to discuss travel restrictions with British PM, meet Queen

The German leader is visiting the UK for talks with British PM Boris Johnson at his Chequers official country residence on the same day. The two will discuss German travel restrictions



**DEEPENING RELATIONS:** As Merkel is stepping down following Germany's September elections, it is expected to be her final meeting with the queen.

**LONDON:** Queen Elizabeth II will receive German Chancellor Angela Merkel on Friday during her visit to Britain, a statement from Buckingham Palace said on Wednesday.

The German leader is visiting the UK for talks with British Prime Minister Boris Johnson at his Chequers official country residence on the same day. The two will discuss German travel restrictions.

The 95-year-old monarch will host Merkel at Windsor Castle. As Merkel is stepping down following Germany's September elections, it is expected to be her final meeting with the queen.

German government spokesperson Steffen Seibert called the royal invitation "an honour that the chancellor is very excited about."

Johnson said he hopes that Brits who have been fully vaccinated will be allowed to travel to Germany without entering a strict two-week quarantine.

## What will Merkel and Johnson discuss?

Merkel's meeting with Johnson is set to focus on travel restrictions that Germany imposed on the UK following the spread of the highly contagious coronavirus Delta variant in recent weeks.

Johnson said he hopes that Brits who have been fully vaccinated will be allowed to travel to Germany without entering a strict two-week quarantine.

Currently, anyone traveling from the UK must adhere to these rules, even if fully vaccinated or after testing negative for the virus.

Merkel has pushed for a uniform approach in the EU to impose travel restrictions to curb the spread

of the Delta variant and avoid a fourth wave of infections.

## Fractional German-British relations

Merkel and Johnson previously held private talks during the G7 summit held in Cornwall, UK, earlier in June.

Seibert told reporters in Berlin that the chancellor's trip aims at deepening relations between the two major economies.

The German-British relationship has come under pressure in the wake of Brexit. Disputes between the UK and EU over the transporting of goods between Northern Ireland and the rest of the UK are still ongoing.

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## CONDO COLLAPSE

# 12 people confirmed dead in Florida building collapse, 149 still missing

**FLORIDA:** The number of confirmed deaths due to the collapse of an oceanfront condo building in Surfside, Florida has now increased to 12, informed Miami-Dade County Mayor Daniella Levine Cava announced Tuesday (local time).

"Since our last briefing, very unfortunately, one additional victim was recovered," Cava said during a press conference, The Hill reported. Meanwhile, the number of people still unaccounted for has officially been updated to 149. "These numbers are very fluid and they continue to change," Cava told reporters during the briefing.

The Miami-Dade County Mayor further informed that an official audit is being performed to review the list of people who remain unaccounted for to ensure the removal of possible duplicates.

Rescuers continue to work around the clock in hopes of finding additional people on the scene, however inclement weather and falling debris are hindering search efforts.

The Hill reported that US President Joe Biden and First Lady Jill



Biden will visit Surfside on Thursday to pay their respects to the victims of the building collapse.

"They want to thank the heroic first responders, search and rescue teams, and everyone who has been working tirelessly around the clock and meet with the families who have been forced to endure this terrible tragedy," White House press secretary Jen Psaki said on Tuesday.

A large oceanfront condo building near Miami Beach partially collapsed last Thursday, prompting a massive search-and-rescue response as many people were reported missing.

The cause of the collapse is still unknown. However, new details are emerging about the integrity of the structure noted in an engineering report in 2018.

## HUGE CRISIS

# Kim Jong Un warns of 'grave incident' in North Korea's fight against COVID-19



**CORONAVIRUS:** Health experts said information was too sketchy to draw any immediate conclusions about whether the coronavirus had entered the country.

**PYONGYANG:** North Korean ruler Kim Jong Un has rebuked ruling party officials for failure in anti-epidemic work, which caused a 'huge crisis' in the country, according to the state media.

However, health experts said information was too sketchy to draw any immediate conclusions about whether the coronavirus had entered the country. "By neglecting important decisions of the party in its national emergency antivirus fight in preparations for a global health crisis, officials in charge have caused a grave incident that poses a huge crisis to the safety of the nation and its people," the Korea Central News Agency (KCNA) quoted Kim as saying.

The North Korean leader had called a meeting of the Politburo of the ruling Workers' Party on Tuesday to address some officials' neglect of duty, including failing to implement important long-term measures to fight the pandemic, KCNA said. Several Polit-

buro members, secretaries of the central committee, and officials of several state agencies were replaced at the meeting.

North Korea has gone to extraordinary lengths to keep COVID-19 at bay, closing its border with China to people and most goods shortly after the pandemic broke out last year, fearing that a serious outbreak could overwhelm the country's ailing healthcare system, Washington Post reported.

It has not announced any confirmed cases of COVID-19, a claim backed by the World Health Organization (WHO) but questioned by US and South Korean officials.

North Korea had closed its border shortly after the pandemic spread through China at the start of 2020. The step cut off its own economic lifeline, placed foreigners under effective house arrest and severely restricted domestic travel.

As a result, information about

the pandemic has been extremely hard to come by, although unconfirmed reports of areas placed under lockdowns and quarantine last year fueled suspicion that some cases might have emerged.

Last July, North Korea did declare a state of emergency and locked down the border city of Kaesong after a former defector crossed back into the country from South Korea with suspected symptoms of COVID-19. However, the defector's tests were reported to have been inconclusive.

The border with China had even begun to open to trade again in recent months, before clamping shut again more recently.

Earlier this month, Kim warned that the country's food situation had become "tense," amid mounting reports of shortages, Washington Post reported.

He said the protracted emergency anti-coronavirus situation means a prolonged struggle to provide food, clothing and housing for the people.



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# Shevchenko’s Ukraine reach first-ever Euro quarterfinals

Despite dominating possession, Sweden wasn’t able to pose a lot of threat to Ukraine’s rock-solid defence



**UKRAINE VS SWEDEN:** The Ukrainians started cautiously into the match and let Sweden to pass the ball around.

**LONDON:** Ukraine advanced into the European Championship quarterfinals for a second time after overpowering ten-men Sweden by courtesy on Artem Dovbyk’s last-gasp extra time winner at Hampden Park in Glasgow on Tuesday.

The Ukrainians started cautiously into the match and let Sweden to pass the ball around.

Despite dominating possession Sweden wasn’t able to pose a lot of threat to Ukraine’s rock-solid defence hence only Alexander Isak came close with a long-range effort in the 20th minute.

Andriy Shevchenko’s side showed no mercy and clinically opened the scoring seven minutes later when Andrey Yarmolenko’s shot with the outside of the boot allowed Oleksandr Zinchenko to break the deadlock against the

flow of the game.

The Swedes remained unimpressed and responded well as Ukraine goalkeeper Heorhiy Bushcan had to stretch to defuse Sabastian Larsson’s dangerous set piece moments later.

Sweden continued offensively minded and got rewarded with the equalizer just before the break as Emil Forsberg had enough time and space to drill the ball from 23 meters past Bushcan into the bottom right corner.

After the restart, both sides came out highly motivated and created chances at both ends of the pitch as Serhiy Sydorchuk and Forsberg rattled the right post in

quick succession.

Ukraine focussed on counterattacks while Sweden remained a constant menace with Forsberg, who hit the crossbar from 16 meters in the 69th minute.

Sweden had even the golden chance to seal the deal within 90 minutes but for all that Dejan Kulusevski missed the target from inside the box with only Bushcan to beat.

In the extra time, Sweden had to swallow a heavy setback as Marcus Danielson was sent off for a rude foul play in the 99th minute.

Outnumbered Swedes defended well and hoped to rescue them-

selves into the penalty shootout, but their resilience got broken in the injury time of the extra time as Zinchenko’s pinpoint cross into the box found Dovbyk, who nodded home the 2-1 decider from very close range.

“Both teams played very well. It was an interesting match. Neither side wanted to lose so we got this drama at the end. With this performance and commitment, our team has deserved the love of the whole country,” said Ukraine head coach Andriy Shevchenko.

With the result, Ukraine will clash with England in the quarterfinal in Rome on Saturday. **ANI**

## ENGLAND VS GERMANY



## England beat Germany to end the Joachim Löw era

**BERLIN:** Germany have been knocked out of Euro 2020 at the last-16 stage after defeat to England at London’s Wembley Stadium, a result that sees Joachim Löw’s 15-year tenure as national team coach come to an end.

Raheem Sterling and Harry Kane scored late on in London to condemn Germany to a 2-0 defeat, while Thomas Müller missed a great chance to equalise.

It is the first time Germany have lost at Wembley since a friendly defeat in 1975, and it is the first time they have lost to England in the knockout stage of a major tournament since the 1966 World Cup final – also at Wembley.

Germany dominated the opening stages with intensive pressing in midfield and direct, vertical balls to Timo Werner up front – in line with Löw’s plan. But, apart

from one golden chance for Werner, Germany didn’t create enough danger.

On the other hand, the defence, considered to be at risk from England’s free kicks and crosses, did well, led by Mats Hummels who rescued Germany with a last-ditch intervention just before halftime.

But when England abandoned long balls and looked to utilise the dangerous Sterling, the game tipped in their direction, the Manchester City man finishing off Luke Shaw’s cross in the penalty area with 15 minutes remaining.

Shortly after, England repeated the move. This time, it was Jack Grealish who crossed for the otherwise quiet Harry Kane, and the centre forward finally got his goal.

England will play Sweden or Ukraine in the quarterfinal in Rome. **DW**

## WIMBLEDON

## Serena Williams out of Wimbledon after suffering injury during first round



**LONDON:** American tennis star Serena Williams on Tuesday was forced to retire during her opening match of the ongoing Wimbledon tournament.

The seven-time singles Wimbledon champion sustained an injury during her first-round match against Aliaksandra Sasnovich of Belarus. In just the fourth game, Serena slipped on the grass and had to leave the court to receive treatment to her left ankle. She tried to carry on but retired at 3-3 after 34 minutes of play.

The 23-time Grand Slam champion was leading the Belarusian by a break in the first set at 3-1, serving at 15-15, before she slipped briefly at the back of the court.

Earlier in the day, Swiss tennis maestro Roger Federer survived a scare in his opening match.

The game 6-4, 6-7(3), 3-6, 6-2 was at level with Federer winning the fourth set but Mannarino retired just at the start of the fifth essay and Swiss tennis maestro got a walkover.

In the first set Federer came

out with flying colours but Mannarino levelled up against the star player after a dominant second set tie-break.

Federer staged a comeback against Adrian Mannarino to level the game before the French tennis player was forced to retire.

Mannarino stunned Federer in the third set when he won an easy game but the Grand Slam champion won the fourth set to stage a comeback and was finally given a walkover as he reached the second round of the tournament. **ANI**

## CRICKET

## Woakes, Root steer England to win in first ODI against Sri Lanka

**DURHAM :** Chris Woakes scalped four while David Wiley picked three wickets before Joe Root smashed a classy fifty to help England register a five-wicket win over Sri Lanka in the first ODI on Tuesday.

England first folded Sri Lanka for 185 and chased down the target inside 35 overs to take a 1-0 lead in the series. Five wickets fell in the chase, but Jonny Bairstow’s sparkling start and Root’s class took England home. Chasing 186, England got off to a flying start with the

visitors scoring 54 in the first five overs. Sri Lanka did dismiss Liam Livingstone and Bairstow but Root played a gutsy 79-run knock to lead England’s charge.

England had crumbled at 80/4 with Eoin Morgan and Sam Billings going back cheaply but Moeen Ali and Root stitched a 91-run stand to revive the visitors’ innings. During the match, Joe Root also became the joint fourth-fastest batsmen to 6000 ODI runs.

Earlier, fifties from Kusal Perera and Wanindu Hasaranga had

given Sri Lanka a decent platform to score big in the opening ODI. Perera also crossed the 3000 ODI runs mark in his 100th innings.

But Sri Lanka collapsed from 145/3 to 185/10 in 14 overs as Woakes picked four wickets.

Eight Sri Lanka players got out without touching double figures.

Brief Scores: Sri Lanka 185/10 (Kusal Perera 73, Hasaranga 54; Chris Woakes 4-18); England 189/5 (Joe Root 79\*, Jonny Bairstow 43; Dushmantha Chameera 3-50) **ANI**

## EURO CUP

## Löw: Germany’s greatest coach, but a man who stayed too long

**BERLIN:** It was somehow fitting that Joachim Löw’s era ended at Wembley, a stadium in which Germany have longed reigned supreme, and against England, a nation whose national football team has so often seemed stuck in the past while the Germans won the lot.

In the last 16 of the 2010 World Cup in Bloemfontein, South Africa, a youthful Germany side featuring Philipp Lahm, Bastian Schweinsteiger, Jerome Boateng, Sami Khedira, Thomas Müller and Lukas Podolski dismantled the Three Lions’ so-called “Golden Generation” of John Terry, Ashley Cole, Frank Lampard, Steven Gerrard and Wayne Rooney, en route to a third-place finish.

For “Jogis Jungs” (“Jogi’s lads”), it was a key milestone in a footballing revolution that would culminate with World Cup glory in Brazil in 2014. For England, the despairing wait for international glory went on.

Fast forward 11 years and the two nations met again in the last 16 of a major tournament. But this time, the momentum was well and truly with England as Gareth Southgate’s young team, spearheaded by the imperious Raheem Sterling, surged to a deserved 2-0 win.

With a favorable-looking draw ahead of them, home advantage and huge public support for a likeable young team and manager, England’s time may have finally come.

For Löw, after 198 games at the helm, it’s over – although in reality, it was over five years ago.



### Germany 2006: The revolution

In time, once focus has moved on, the softly spoken 61-year-old from Germany’s Black Forest will be remembered as one of the great coaches in German football history. Perhaps even the greatest.

When he joined the Germany set-up as assistant coach to Jürgen Klinsmann in 2004 ahead of the 2006 World Cup on home soil, the Nationalmannschaft had just suffered humiliating back-to-back European Championship group stage exits in 2000 and 2004.

German football needed a revolution and Löw would be the man to lead it, changing the fate of the country’s football forever. With a revamped, streamlined youth

academy system and a pacey, dominating brand of possession football, Löw was a coach who advanced the profession.

Back-to-back defeats to Spain in the Euro 2008 final and in the 2010 World Cup semifinals were frustrating. But, at this level, the smallest of margins and a smattering of fortune can make all the difference, and Löw cannot be blamed for coming up against one of the greatest sides ever.

Indeed, Vicente del Bosque, the then Spanish head coach, later called Löw a respectful and noble character. Sometimes it just doesn’t go your way.

Another semifinal defeat at Euro 2012 stung, though. Löw’s tactical upheaval to accommodate Italy took the wind out of his own side and robbed Germany of a chance of revenge against Spain in the final.

The criticism, unsurprisingly, was great. Löw said some of it was unproductive and made him weary.

### Brazil 2014: The pinnacle

That, two years later, he would shrug off that loss and win it all in Brazil is a credit to him and the crowning moment of his coaching career.

The right squad, the right backroom staff, the right preparation, the right mentality and the right tactics – eventually, after finally moving Lahm to right-back in the quarterfinal against France – all came together.

Add to that the little bit of luck to scrape past Algeria, an unprecedented Brazilian collapse and the individual brilliance of Mario Götze’s World Cup winning finish, and it was Germany’s turn, the culmination of a decade’s work.

A fourth World Cup triumph

for Germany, a fourth star on the badge and, in a sport so often obsessed with the value of playing careers in coaching, the first uncapped German player to win the World Cup as a coach.

**Russia 2018: The debacle**

As a world champion and with Germany still flying high, the attempt to add the Euros two years later in France was more than justifiable. After another semifinal defeat, though, Löw’s second misstep followed, and this one would have disastrous long-term effects.

With integral figures such as Lahm and Per Mertesacker having already retired following Brazil, captain Schweinsteiger also bowed out. The era was clearly over, but neither the German Football Association (DFB) nor Löw had realized it, and the Bundesliga trainer stayed on.

The 2018 debacle in Russia will forever be symbolized by the image of Löw, complete with suntan and sunglasses, posing nonchalantly on the promenade in Sochi. And no wonder he was confident, having been given a shiny new contract before he’d even named his squad for the tournament. The DFB had failed utterly to prepare for life after Löw following the triumph in Brazil and was now an organization riddled by corruption allegations and obsessed with its own marketing and PR image as “Die Mannschaft.”

**Euro 2020: The end**

But still, he stayed. His desire to nurture a new generation was laudable and long overdue, but the sudden removal of veterans Müller, Boateng and Mats Hummels was clumsy and counter-productive. **DW**

OMAN CRUDE PRICE RISES

The price of Oman oil has increased, with prices for delivery by August 2021 reaching \$72.52, said Dubai Mercantile Exchange (DME). The DME statement said that the price of Oman oil rose by 52 cents from the price of Tuesday, which was at \$72. - **ONA**

MARKET  
BUSINESS & FINANCE



MSX INDEX ENDS HIGHER

The MSX index closed at 4,063.40 points, up 0.13 per cent from the previous close. The Sharia Index ended up 0.59 per cent at 596.68 points. National Finance, up 4.46 per cent, was the top gainer while Muscat Finance, down 3.08 per cent, was the top loser.



**SIGNIFICANT INCREASE:** Gas production has increased to 1.5 billion cubic feet per day (bcf/d), from its current level of around 1bcf/d. Associated condensate production is also expected to rise. - **ONA**

BP increases gas production at Oman's Block 61

Gas from Block 61 is a key part of the integrated energy value chain and will play a core role in Sultanate's future development

value for the Sultanate's government and Block 61 partnership. BP-operated Block 61 was developed in two stages - Khazzan, which began production in 2017, and Ghazeer, which started up last year. It is a high-quality, highly efficient development, designed from the outset to incorporate a number of lower emissions technologies. Yousuf Mohammed Al-Ojaili, President of BP Oman commented, "BP is building a balanced portfolio that will continue to generate both cash and value as we transform from an international oil company to an integrated energy company. A core part of this strategy is our resilient and focused hydrocarbons business, of which Block 61 is an excellent example, offering stable, long-term returns." "We are committed to supporting the sustainable development of Oman's economy and are proud of our strategic partnership with the Sultanate. Gas from Block 61 is a key part of the integrated energy value chain and will play a core role in Oman's future development. We appreciate the collaborative support we have

received from the Oman government and our partners in delivering this increase in production." With an estimated 10.5 trillion cubic feet of recoverable gas resources, Block 61 supplies over 30 per cent of Oman's total gas demand. Gas from Block 61 is distributed for domestic consumption - industrial and power - through Oman's national gas grid and is used as fuel for power plants, and feedstock to industries and Oman LNG. BP prioritises in-country value throughout its operations. During the development of Block 61, BP has worked closely with local vendors to develop their capabilities and help them be competitive both in Oman and globally, resulting in a number of contracts and technical scopes moving from international to local Omani contractors. Updated, industry-leading policies and procedures on workers' welfare and human rights have also been embedded throughout the development. At the end of 2020, Omanisation in BP Oman reached around 85 per cent and Block 61 spend with Omani-registered companies exceeded \$610 million. - **ONA**

NBC DISCUSSION

Legal effects of COVID on entrepreneurs discussed

Times News Service

**MUSCAT:** The National Business Centre (NBC), which falls under the umbrella of the Public Establishment for Industrial Estates - Madayn, organised a discussion session on the legal impact and challenges posed by COVID-19 on entrepreneurs. Moderated by Rihab Fadhal, Director of Councils and Committees at Madayn, the session

featured the lawyer Nasser Al Riyami, Law Lecturer - K&Co LLP, who highlighted several topics related to types of companies, e-commerce, lease agreements, insolvency litigation, partial versus complete lockdown, the variation between liquidation and bankruptcy, COVID-19 pandemic and the judiciary, and amicable settlement of disputes. The series of discussion sessions organised by the National Business

Centre aims at exchanging viewpoints and expertise on a variety of topics of interest and benefit to the entrepreneurs. NBC is an initiative launched by Madayn at the Knowledge Oasis Muscat to offer promising Omani entrepreneurs a platform to develop their business ideas and advance them into growing ventures. The centre offers a premier platform for Omani entrepreneurs by providing business development support.



جامعة التكنولوجيا والتطبيق  
University of Technology and Applied Sciences  
Local Tenders Announcement

The University of Technology and Applied Sciences announces the tenders shown in the following table:

| Tender Number      | Tender Subject                                                                                                                                  | Establishments eligible to bid and registered with the Tender Board | Document's Price | Place to purchase and submit tender documents                      | Last date for bid submission |
|--------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------|
| 01/2021 Re-floated | Providing cleaning services to the buildings of the University of Technology and Applied Sciences (Nizwa College of Technology)                 | Second Grade and above                                              | RO 25/-          | (Administrative Affairs Department) at Nizwa College of Technology | Thursday 15/07/2021 At 10 am |
| 02/2021 Re-floated | Providing operation and maintenance services to the buildings of the University of Technology and Applied Sciences (Ibra College of Technology) | Second Grade and above                                              | RO 25/-          | (Administrative Affairs Department) at Ibra College of Technology  | Thursday 15/07/2021 At 10 am |

- Establishments specialized in the above-mentioned works can obtain tender documents starting from Thursday 01/07/2021.
- All bidding companies must attach with their bids a temporary tender bond in the form of a bank guarantee or a cheque certified by one of the banks operating in the Sultanate, not less than (1%) of the bid value, addressed to the name of the Chairman of the Internal Tender Committee, and valid for a period of (90) days from the date of bid submission. Any bid that does not meet the required temporary tender bond shall not be considered.
- Bids shall be submitted, signed and stamped on the form prepared for this purpose and on the accompanying category table, in closed envelopes sealed with red wax, addressed to the Chairman of the Internal Tender Committee at the University of Technology and Applied Sciences, bearing the tender number and subject with no indication to the name of the bidder.
- Bids must be placed in the sub-tender box in the department referred to above before 10 am of the day specified in the table above. Bids submitted after this date will not be considered, regardless of the reasons for the delay. Preference will be given to companies or institutions whose bids include the biggest Omanisation and biggest purchase percentage of national products.
- Preference in awarding will be given to small and medium enterprises registered with the Authority for SME development and whose bid includes the biggest percentage of Omanisation and a biggest purchase percentage of national products.

The University shall not be bound to accept the lowest or any other bid

COOPERATION PROGRAMME

Pact signed to use 3D printing techniques in construction



Times News Service

**MUSCAT:** The Public Authority for Special Economic Zones and Free Zones (Opaz) signed a cooperation programme with Innovative Technology Company for Educational Solutions (Innotech), the first of its kind corporate, to form a collaboration between both parties to use 3D printing techniques in construction. Signing this cooperation comes in line with the decision of the Opaz Board of Directors, approving the use of modern building practices, including 3D printing techniques in the Special Economic Zone at Duqm (Sezad) and the other free zones. As well, it reflects Opaz support for the Omani companies specialised in this field. The pact was signed by Dr Ali bin Masoud Al Sunaidi, Chairman of the Public Authority for Special Economic Zones and

Free Zones (Opaz) and Eng. Othman bin Maktoum Al Mandhari, CEO of Innotech Company. The cooperation programme stipulates that the company shares with Opaz expertise and insights in construction with 3D printing techniques, which would provide a suitable and attractive environment for these projects in the Special Economic Zone at Duqm. The programme allows Opaz to establish projects using 3D printing techniques in the Special Economic Zone at Duqm for the Company as part of its efforts to support research and development while localising modern construction techniques in the zones, supervised by Opaz, especially the Special Economic Zone at Duqm. Accordingly, Innotech Company shall comply with all HSE standards in the projects assigned to the company by Opaz.







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# MARKET

DUBAI AEROSPACE ENTERPRISE

## DAE announces early retirement of \$1.25 billion of Senior Notes

**DUBAI:** Dubai Aerospace Enterprise (DAE) Ltd announced that it had delivered a notice of early redemption (the “Redemption Notice”) to the holders of the company’s \$800 million 4.50 per cent Senior Notes due 2022 (the “4.50 per cent Notes”) and \$1,000 million 5.00 per cent Senior Notes

due 2024 (the “5.00 per cent Notes”, and together with the 4.50 per cent Notes, the “Notes”). The Notes are scheduled to be redeemed on August 2, 2021. The outstanding principal amount of the Notes as of the date of the Redemption Notice was approximately \$1,250 million.



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Offer valid from 16th May 2021 to 15th August 2021. Total of 3 raffle draws will be held at Oasis Water Company, Aziba. Draw Dates: 16th June 2021, 18th July 2021 and 15th August 2021. Winners will be intimated directly. Oasis Water Company employees are not eligible to participate in this promotion. Gifts shown are for illustrative purpose only. Actual may vary.

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## MUSCAT STOCK EXCHANGE

INDICES

| Index             | High     | Low      | Value    | Prev. Value | Diff. | Diff% |
|-------------------|----------|----------|----------|-------------|-------|-------|
| MSX 30 INDEX      | 4,074.79 | 4,060.84 | 4,063.40 | 4,058.08    | 5.32  | 0.13  |
| FINANCIAL INDEX   | 6,494.99 | 6,465.09 | 6,466.07 | 6,473.12    | -7.04 | -0.11 |
| Industry Index    | 6,030.52 | 6,002.04 | 6,030.52 | 5,987.18    | 43.35 | 0.72  |
| Services Index    | 1,722.96 | 1,715.15 | 1,722.96 | 1,715.46    | 7.50  | 0.44  |
| MSX Shariah Index | 596.69   | 594.62   | 596.69   | 593.20      | 3.49  | 0.59  |
| MSX TR INDEX      | 4,892.95 | 4,876.19 | 4,879.28 | 4,872.89    | 6.39  | 0.13  |

Trading Summary

| Volume     | Turnover  | Trades | Market Cap     | Up | Down | Equal | Sec. Traded |
|------------|-----------|--------|----------------|----|------|-------|-------------|
| 19,494,862 | 2,791,232 | 978    | 21,562,893,711 | 21 | 15   | 17    | 53          |

## SHARE PRICE BULLETIN FOR WEDNESDAY, JUNE 30

| SECURITY NAME                    | VOLUME    | TURNOVER   | TRADES    | OPEN PRICE | HIGH  | LOW   | CLOSE PR. | PREV. CLOSE | DIFF (RD) | DIFF % | LAST PD | LAST BD | LAST OFFER | PDA VALUE | MARKET CAP    |
|----------------------------------|-----------|------------|-----------|------------|-------|-------|-----------|-------------|-----------|--------|---------|---------|------------|-----------|---------------|
| REGULAR MARKET                   |           |            |           |            |       |       |           |             |           |        |         |         |            |           |               |
| OM0000001087 OMAN UNITED INSUR.  | 142,500   | 58,610     | 8         | 0.408      | 0.412 | 0.408 | 0.412     | 0.400       | 0.012     | 3.000  | 0.412   | 0.390   | 0.410      | 0.100     | 41,200,000    |
| OM0000001005 ALMAHA CERAMIC      | 338,589   | 123,213    | 33        | 0.394      | 0.378 | 0.394 | 0.398     | 0.394       | 0.004     | 2,228  | 0.378   | 0.370   | 0.370      | 0.100     | 20,240,000    |
| OM0000002168 AL ANWAR CERAMIC    | 70,724    | 33,863     | 9         | 0.470      | 0.480 | 0.470 | 0.478     | 0.468       | 0.010     | 2,137  | 0.478   | 0.460   | 0.480      | 0.100     | 105,160,000   |
| OM0000002176 JAZEERA STEEL PROD. | 145,060   | 56,613     | 16        | 0.392      | 0.392 | 0.390 | 0.390     | 0.382       | 0.008     | 2,094  | 0.390   | 0.390   | 0.392      | 0.100     | 48,710,204    |
| OM0000001418 RAYSUT CEMENT       | 372,943   | 111,458    | 60        | 0.058      | 0.056 | 0.058 | 0.062     | 0.056       | 0.006     | 2,857  | 0.056   | 0.056   | 0.054      | 0.100     | 60,400,000    |
| OM0000003026 OMAN TELECOM        | 107,000   | 84,651     | 18        | 0.784      | 0.796 | 0.784 | 0.792     | 0.784       | 0.008     | 1,020  | 0.796   | 0.784   | 0.796      | 0.100     | 594,000,000   |
| OM0000003440 AL SHARQIA INV.     | 378,740   | 38,924     | 19        | 0.103      | 0.103 | 0.102 | 0.103     | 0.102       | 0.001     | 0,980  | 0.103   | 0.102   | 0.103      | 0.100     | 9,270,000     |
| OM0000002226 AL JAZEERA SERVICES | 129,000   | 55,440     | 11        | 0.434      | 0.434 | 0.430 | 0.434     | 0.430       | 0.004     | 0,930  | 0.430   | 0.430   | 0.440      | 0.100     | 26,562,554    |
| OM0000001707 OMAN CABLES INDSTR  | 33,550    | 39,458     | 16        | 1.180      | 1.200 | 1.160 | 1.175     | 1.165       | 0.010     | 0,858  | 1.180   | 1.100   | 1.190      | 0.100     | 105,397,500   |
| OM0000003988 OOREDOO             | 684,203   | 279,662    | 23        | 0.416      | 0.416 | 0.408 | 0.408     | 0.406       | 0.002     | 0,493  | 0.414   | 0.410   | 0.414      | 0.100     | 265,585,248   |
| OM0000003224 RENAISSANCE SER.    | 219,300   | 90,145     | 12        | 0.406      | 0.414 | 0.406 | 0.412     | 0.410       | 0.002     | 0,498  | 0.410   | 0.400   | 0.414      | 0.100     | 37,400,920    |
| OM0000002796 BANK MUSCAT         | 372,623   | 159,942    | 17        | 0.420      | 0.424 | 0.420 | 0.422     | 0.420       | 0.002     | 0,476  | 0.424   | 0.420   | 0.424      | 0.100     | 1,508,428,362 |
| OM0000001749 OMAN CEMENT         | 228,799   | 57,540     | 15        | 0.250      | 0.250 | 0.250 | 0.250     | 0.250       | 0.000     | 0,000  | 0.250   | 0.248   | 0.250      | 0.100     | 82,718,178    |
| OM0000002077 AL OMANIYA FIN.S    | 150,000   | 19,040     | 5         | 0.126      | 0.127 | 0.126 | 0.127     | 0.127       | 0.000     | 0,000  | 0.127   | 0.126   | 0.127      | 0.100     | 3,075,767     |
| OM0000003398 SOHAR INT BANK      | 283,273   | 27,202     | 10        | 0.096      | 0.097 | 0.096 | 0.096     | 0.096       | 0.000     | 0,000  | 0.097   | 0.095   | 0.100      | 0.100     | 23,712,647    |
| OM0000006920 VISION INSURANCE    | 690,500   | 63,476     | 21        | 0.092      | 0.092 | 0.091 | 0.092     | 0.092       | 0.000     | 0,000  | 0.092   | 0.091   | 0.092      | 0.100     | 9,200,000     |
| OM0000001533 OMINEST             | 103,599   | 32,508     | 7         | 0.314      | 0.314 | 0.312 | 0.314     | 0.316       | -0.002    | -0,633 | 0.312   | 0.314   | 0.318      | 0.100     | 253,640,511   |
| OM0000001525 OMAN INVST& FIN.    | 741,623   | 85,059     | 40        | 0.114      | 0.116 | 0.114 | 0.115     | 0.116       | -0.001    | -0,862 | 0.114   | 0.114   | 0.115      | 0.100     | 27,255,000    |
| OM0000001190 NATIONAL GAS        | 9,000     | 1,368      | 2         | 0.152      | 0.152 | 0.152 | 0.154     | -0.002      | -1,299    | 0.152  | 0.152   | 0.153   | 0.155      | 0.100     | 12,920,000    |
| OM0000001772 ALANWAR INVESTMENT  | 628,800   | 70,718     | 21        | 0.113      | 0.114 | 0.112 | 0.112     | 0.114       | -0.002    | -1,754 | 0.112   | 0.112   | 0.113      | 0.100     | 22,400,000    |
| OM0000002200 AHLI BANK           | 619,000   | 68,100     | 15        | 0.111      | 0.111 | 0.110 | 0.110     | 0.112       | -0.002    | -1,786 | 0.110   | 0.111   | 0.112      | 0.100     | 21,446,321    |
| OM0000001590 MUSCAT FINANCE      | 301,400   | 19,036     | 35        | 0.064      | 0.064 | 0.063 | 0.063     | 0.065       | -0.002    | -3,077 | 0.063   | 0.063   | 0.065      | 0.100     | 18,350,215    |
| Total                            | 22        | 6,744,526  | 1,572,936 | 411        |       |       |           |             |           |        |         |         |            |           |               |
| Parallel Market                  |           |            |           |            |       |       |           |             |           |        |         |         |            |           |               |
| OM0000002648 NATIONAL FINANCE    | 35,000    | 4,095      | 6         | 0.117      | 0.117 | 0.117 | 0.117     | 0.112       | 0.005     | 4,464  | 0.117   | 0.115   | 0.117      | 0.100     | 63,323,963    |
| OM0000003711 SOHAR POWER         | 28,770    | 1,257      | 4         | 0.044      | 0.047 | 0.044 | 0.047     | 0.045       | 0.002     | 4,444  | 0.047   | 0.044   | 0.047      | 0.100     | 10,387,470    |
| OM0000001965 DHOFAR INSURANCE    | 8,000     | 1,450      | 2         | 0.180      | 0.182 | 0.180 | 0.181     | 0.175       | 0.006     | 3,449  | 0.182   | 0.185   | 0.192      | 0.100     | 18,100,000    |
| OM0000004669 SHARQIYAH DESALIN.  | 13,600    | 1,646      | 5         | 0.121      | 0.121 | 0.121 | 0.121     | 0.117       | 0.004     | 3,419  | 0.121   | 0.121   | 0.122      | 0.100     | 11,834,061    |
| OM0000007200 ARABIA FALCON INS.  | 1,000     | 1,027      | 1         | 1.026      | 1.027 | 1.026 | 1.027     | 1.024       | 0.003     | 3,228  | 1.027   | 1.026   | 1.028      | 0.100     | 12,223,612    |
| OM0000004735 SEMBOCORP SALALAH   | 9,000     | 756        | 1         | 0.084      | 0.084 | 0.084 | 0.084     | 0.082       | 0.002     | 2,439  | 0.084   | 0.080   | 0.085      | 0.100     | 80,184,044    |
| OM0000004768 MADINA TAKAFUL      | 5,538,613 | 594,236    | 209       | 0.106      | 0.106 | 0.106 | 0.107     | 0.105       | 0.002     | 1,905  | 0.108   | 0.108   | 0.108      | 0.100     | 18,725,000    |
| OM0000004923 AL SUWADI POWER     | 112,170   | 6,155      | 15        | 0.054      | 0.055 | 0.054 | 0.055     | 0.054       | 0.001     | 1,852  | 0.055   | 0.053   | 0.055      | 0.100     | 39,292,349    |
| OM0000004776 TAKAFUL OMAN        | 8,000     | 808        | 2         | 0.101      | 0.101 | 0.101 | 0.101     | 0.100       | 0.001     | 1,000  | 0.101   | 0.100   | 0.104      | 0.100     | 10,100,000    |
| OM0000001152 OMAN NAT. ENG.      | 67,470    | 6,462      | 5         | 0.096      | 0.096 | 0.095 | 0.096     | 0.096       | 0.000     | 0,000  | 0.095   | 0.095   | 0.097      | 0.100     | 12,480,000    |
| OM0000001178 NATIONAL GASES      | 948       | 155        | 2         | 0.162      | 0.164 | 0.162 | 0.165     | 0.165       | 0.000     | 0,000  | 0.164   | 0.179   | 0.184      | 0.100     | 5,550,000     |
| OM0000001517 HSBCBANK OMAN       | 1,685,020 | 170,187    | 54        | 0.101      | 0.101 | 0.101 | 0.101     | 0.101       | 0.000     | 0,000  | 0.101   | 0.100   | 0.101      | 0.100     | 202,031,592   |
| OM0000001889 SALALAH MILLS       | 22        | 16         | 1         | 0.708      | 0.708 | 0.708 | 0.708     | 0.708       | 0.000     | 0,000  | 0.708   | 0.720   | 0.708      | 0.100     | 35,373,849    |
| OM0000001897 AMAN COLLEGE        | 9,119     | 1,368      | 2         | 0.150      | 0.150 | 0.150 | 0.150     | 0.150       | 0.000     | 0,000  | 0.150   | 0.000   | 0.150      | 0.100     | 13,500,000    |
| OM0000001962 AL MADINA INV.      | 38,105    | 917        | 4         | 0.024      | 0.025 | 0.024 | 0.024     | 0.024       | 0.000     | 0,000  | 0.025   | 0.024   | 0.025      | 0.100     | 4,971,633     |
| OM0000003661 VOLITAMP ENERGY     | 311       | 46         | 1         | 0.147      | 0.147 | 0.147 | 0.147     | 0.147       | 0.000     | 0,000  | 0.147   | 0.147   | 0.147      | 0.100     | 11,966,204    |
| OM0000004420 BANK NIZWA          | 116,102   | 11,269     | 11        | 0.097      | 0.096 | 0.097 | 0.097     | 0.097       | 0.000     | 0,000  | 0.098   | 0.097   | 0.098      | 0.100     | 143,503,000   |
| OM0000004925 ALBATINAH POWER     | 146,525   | 7,789      | 14        | 0.054      | 0.054 | 0.053 | 0.053     | 0.053       | 0.000     | 0,000  | 0.053   | 0.053   | 0.054      | 0.100     | 35,769,034    |
| OM0000005983 PHOENIX POWER       | 375,969   | 18,430     | 17        | 0.049      | 0.050 | 0.049 | 0.049     | 0.049       | 0.000     | 0,000  | 0.049   | 0.048   | 0.049      | 0.100     | 71,667,472    |
| OM0000007084 MCT DESALINATE      | 4,135     | 778        | 2         | 0.092      | 0.092 | 0.090 | 0.093     | 0.092       | 0.000     | 0,000  | 0.093   | 0.090   | 0.093      | 0.100     | 14,466,187    |
| OM0000007407 DHOFAR GENERATING   | 55,600    | 7,205      | 6         | 0.131      | 0.131 | 0.131 | 0.131     | 0.131       | 0.000     | 0,000  | 0.131   | 0.130   | 0.131      | 0.100     | 29,113,440    |
| OM0000005280 OMAN ARAB BANK      | 46,634    | 4,604      | 8         | 0.186      | 0.185 | 0.186 | 0.187     | -0.001      | 0,000     | 0,000  | 0.186   | 0.185   | 0.186      | 0.100     | 310,510,260   |
| OM0000002549 BANK DHOFAR         | 60,600    | 7,628      | 4         | 0.130      | 0.130 | 0.125 | 0.126     | 0.127       | -0.001    | -0,787 | 0.125   | 0.124   | 0.125      | 0.100     | 3,777,540,281 |
| OM0000001301 DHOFAR CATTLE       | 57,088    | 5,196      | 8         | 0.091      | 0.093 | 0.091 | 0.091     | 0.092       | -0.001    | -1,087 | 0.091   | 0.091   | 0.091      | 0.100     | 7,357,350     |
| OM0000001319 ALUMINIUM PROD.     | 725,252   | 124,010    | 59        | 0.169      | 0.169 | 0.169 | 0.172     | -0.002      | -1,156    | 0.170  | 0.170   | 0.169   | 0.170      | 0.100     | 5,740,718     |
| OM0000001681 OMAN EMBRATES HO.   | 23,425    | 1,750      | 5         | 0.075      | 0.076 | 0.074 | 0.075     | 0.076       | -0.001    | -1,316 | 0.074   | 0.074   | 0.075      | 0.100     | 9,140,625     |
| OM0000006979 OMAN QATAR INSUR.   | 150,000   | 22,500     | 3         | 0.152      | 0.152 | 0.149 | 0.150     | 0.152       | -0.002    | -1,318 | 0.149   | 0.137   | 0.151      | 0.100     | 15,000,000    |
| OM000000125 GLOBAL INV. H.       | 1,863,707 | 118,842    | 52        | 0.064      | 0.065 | 0.063 | 0.064     | 0.065       | -0.001    | -1,538 | 0.063   | 0.062   | 0.063      | 0.100     | 12,800,000    |
| OM0000002374 UNITED FINANCE      | 1,393,462 | 86,579     | 61        | 0.063      | 0.063 | 0.062 | 0.063     | 0.063       | -0.001    | -1,587 | 0.062   | 0.062   | 0.064      | 0.100     | 21,646,953    |
| OM0000003521 GULFAR ENGINEER     | 65,101    | 5,404      | 8         | 0.085      | 0.085 | 0.083 | 0.083     | 0.085       | -0.002    | -2,353 | 0.083   | 0.084   | 0.085      | 0.100     | 16,847,875    |
| Total                            | 30        | 12,650,336 | 1,217,996 | 565        |       |       |           |             |           |        |         |         |            |           |               |

AIR TRAFFIC

## Global travel

**KUALA LUMPUR:** Preliminary air traffic figures for May released on Wednesday by the Association of Asia Pacific Airlines showed international passenger traffic volumes remained at depressed levels, held back by strict border restrictions amid concerns about the spread of COVID-19 variants. -ANI

# MSX index ends marginally higher

National Finance, up 4.46 per cent, was the top gainer while Muscat Finance, down 3.08 per cent, was the top loser



**MUSCAT:** The MSX index closed at 4,063.40 points, up 0.13 per cent from the previous close. The Sharia Index ended up 0.59 per cent at 596.68 points.

National Finance, up 4.46 per cent, was the top gainer while Muscat Finance, down 3.08 per cent, was the top loser. Shares of Madina Takaful were the most active in terms of the number of shares traded as well as in terms of turnover.

A total number of 978 trades were executed during the day's trading session, generating a turnover of OMR3 million, with more than 19 million shares changing hands. Out of 53 traded stocks,

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# ENGLAND’S RAHEEM STERLING SHOWS JOACHIM LÖW THAT FOOTBALL HAS MOVED ON

**AT HALFTIME**, it was clear that an England victory over Germany would inevitably involve Raheem Sterling. And so it proved.

The Manchester City man had too much pace for Matthias Ginter and too much trickery for Joshua Kimmich, and had been lurking to pounce on one sloppy pass from Thomas Müller.

It was Sterling’s long-range effort that produced the first moment of genuine quality in the game, when he forced an impressive save from Manuel Neuer. It was Sterling’s driving run at the heart of the German defense that created danger, which was only cleared when Mats Hummels rescued dramatically on the goal line.

And, ultimately, it was Sterling who broke the deadlock to set England on their way to a first knockout win over Germany in a major tournament since 1966.

Sterling is the sort of player Germany simply couldn’t handle and the sort of player they don’t have.

With 15 minutes remaining, and facing a packed German defense, Sterling played the ball into striker Harry Kane and ran to take up position in the box. By the time he got there, England had circulated possession via Jack Grealish and Luke Shaw, and Sterling was on hand to put his team ahead.

It was the best move of the game, and it was no surprise that Sterling was responsible for both its genesis and its climax.

In terms of their profiles and skill sets, Bayern Munich duo Leroy Sane and Serge Gnabry are the closest Germany have to Sterling, players who change games single-handedly with their skill, pace and penetration.

But Sane has never featured highly in Löw’s plans since being omitted from Germany’s World Cup 2018 squad. Gnabry, meanwhile, was dropped on Tuesday in favor of Timo Werner, the rationale being that the Chelsea man could run deep in behind and use his pace to get at England’s back line.

In the opening stages, it worked, to a degree. Germany were combative in midfield, winning balls and launching vertical passes to Werner, but he wasted Germany’s best chance of the first half when one-on-one with Jordan Pickford.

Timo Werner’s shot is saved by England goalkeeper Jordan Pickford

Close, not close enough: Timo Werner had one of Germany’s best chances

But that was it. From then on, Werner would drop too deep, leaving Germany with no escape route, or would try to hold the ball up – not his game. Germany needed a change, but Löw hesitated too long to make one as not only this last 16 game but modern football in general seemed to visibly pass him by.

“We have talented players, but we also need to develop mature players,” legendary former captain Bastian Schweinsteiger opined in his role as a TV pundit.

“These players will continue to develop. By the time we host Euro 2024, some of them will be at the top level,” Löw said himself.

But that won’t be his responsibility. His 15-year tenure in charge of the Nationalmannschaft has come to a disappointing but deserved end, sealed by Sterling, the sort of player Löw and Germany have been unable to develop.



# HOW HIGH IS THE RISK OF CONTRACTING COVID-19 IN A STADIUM?

**BERLIN:** The European Championship is being held in 11 different cities in 10 different countries. The images we are seeing on our television or computer screens seem strange to many — 18 months into the pandemic: Crowds in confined spaces spreading aerosols through their chanting, thousands of people not wearing masks. What impact will the first major sporting event to be held with large crowds of spectators in the stands have on the third wave of the pandemic, which is only now subsiding? Our fact check provides the initial answers.

**Has COVID-19 spread at European Championship matches?**

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At some EURO 2020 matches, fans were screened in advance after positive COVID-19 rapid tests; at others, spectators tested positive for the virus after the fact.  
In Denmark, spectators tested positive for the delta variant after the match between the hosts and Belgium. The authorities then advised 4,000 spectators from certain stadium blocks to get a PCR test.  
In Budapest, a French family are reported to have tested positive after France's match against Hungary. By far the most COVID-19 cases were reported after Finland's match against Belgium, which took place in St. Petersburg.  
According to Finnish media, at least 86 infections were detected in people returning home from Russia. In most cases, it is unclear whether they were infected in the stadium itself or elsewhere,

like during travel to and from the match.

**Is it a myth that open-air events are harmless?**

Experts agree that the chance of contracting COVID-19 at outdoor events is relatively low as fresh air dilutes aerosols — it's the airborne particles produced by breathing and talking that carry the virus. But only if the minimum personal distancing from others is maintained.  
William Schaffner, professor of infectious diseases at Vanderbilt University in the United States, also points out that stadium attendance during Euro 2020 in and of itself poses a very low risk of infection, provided safety measures such as limiting the number of spectators are observed. However, the measures vary from one European Championship venue to another.  
In Budapest, they have been filling the Ferenc Puskas Stadium to capacity, but spectators need to provide a negative PCR test to be admitted. In Glasgow, Hampden Park has only been 25% full, but spectators have not been required to provide a PCR test.  
According to German aerosols researcher Gerhard Scheuch, dangers lurk in football stadiums — particularly in often poorly ventilated boxes, elevators and restrooms.  
"If an infected person exhales the virus there, the aerosols linger for a relatively long time," he said.  
Most problematic, according to Scheuch and Schaffner, is what happens before and after a game; tens of thousands of fans use buses, trains and planes to get to and from the stadium. They stay

overnight in hotels and may want to party in bars after a game.

**What about the fact that many aren't adhering to the requirement to wear a mask?**

Scientific studies show that mask-wearing is a critical factor in preventing outbreaks. According to an unpublished study obtained by DW from the RWI Leibniz Institute for Economic Research and the SDU University of Southern Denmark in Sonderborg, Bundesliga matches with large crowds led to a significant increase in new infections. This was particularly the case when masks only had to be worn on the way to stadium seats, but not in the fan block.  
Sporting events with a high number of spectators "pose an increased risk of infection," says the author of the study, Philipp Breidenbach. The researchers recorded an increase in local infection rates of about 7-8% after the Bundesliga matches studied. The results are clear evidence of how important it is to wear a mask and maintain personal distancing rules when attending events, the study says.  
Schaffner agrees: "Masks are not perfect. But they do provide some protection if everybody is yelling around you in a soccer game."  
**Can the distancing rules work inside a stadium?**  
The first half of the European Championship has already shown that the specified minimum distance in the arenas is not being observed. In Copenhagen, Munich, Budapest, and other venues, many fans stood and sat close together.

At the same time, the maximum capacities in many stadiums were drastically reduced by UEFA so that such distances could be maintained. The exception so far has been Budapest, where not only a full stadium, but also fan marches with up to 20,000 participants were allowed to go ahead.  
The semifinals and the final are to be played at London's Wembley Stadium with up to 75% capacity. This means only every fourth seat will be free — too few to maintain a minimum distance of 1.5 meters (about 5-feet) between spectators.  
Could Euro 2020 accelerate the spread of the delta variant?  
There are growing concerns that the number of infections being caused by the delta variant of COVID-19 is on the rise in host countries Russia and in Great Britain.  
UEFA has also decreed that around 2,000 foreign spectators, as well as 2,500 UEFA officials, media representatives and VIP guests are to be allowed into the stadium without going through the usually required quarantine after entering the country.  
Scheuch, like many others in his field, has warned against this. Nevertheless, Scheuch believes the risk that Euro 2020 will strongly drive the spread of the delta variant of the virus in Europe is low.  
"At the final, we might have a seven-day incidence rate of 200. Let's assume no tests were done and everyone was just let in. Then we would have about 120 people at most in that stadium who are infected." Of those people, Scheuch said, only a portion would be highly contagious. In this worst-case scenario, Scheuch arrives at a total of about 50 new infections. **-dw**





ROUND-UP

# Enjoy roads less travelled in versatile and powerful 4WD SUV Lexus GX

A dual-purpose luxury vehicle, GX 460 can go from a short work commute in the city to a long family vacation deep in the rocky mountains

**MUSCAT:** Lexus GX is a powerful and versatile luxury 4WD SUV that takes you places and enhances experiences. Built to maximise every moment, the Lexus GX raises the bar on expectations on every opportunity. A dual-purpose luxury vehicle, GX 460 can go from a short work commute in the city to a long family vacation deep in the rocky mountains. The engine is a 292-horsepower 4.6-litre V8 pro-



ducing 44.7 Kg.M of peak torque. Combine that with a 2,500kg towing capacity, and you've got an ideal boat hauler. Towing is aided with Trailer Sway Control, a function of the Vehicle Stability Control that enhances straight-line tracking. Utilising the technology of the

Kinetic Dynamic Suspension System (KDSS), the GX 460 enhances handling and ride comfort by helping to keep the vehicle level in both on and off-road conditions. When the GX encounters an uneven surface, one compressed cylinder causes fluid to flow to the

other cylinder, helping the vehicle to keep all four wheels on the ground. The system works without any action needed by the driver. Thanks to an Off-Road Package featuring Multi-Terrain Select, tackling tough terrain is equally as easy. Adding extra peace of

mind is GX's Lexus Safety System+, completing Lexus' milestone of equipping models with active safety equipment. A Torsen torque-sensing limited-slip centre differential distributes power under most driving conditions and changes the ratio

as needed based on wheel slip. The four-wheel-drive system offers a low range for slow speed off-road driving. With Downhill Assist Control (DAC), Hill-start Assist Control (HAC), Active Traction Control (A-TRAC), Vehicle Stability Control (VSC) and available Crawl Control, the GX can roam unpaved roads, trails, and steep inclines with confidence. Multi-Terrain Select allows you to choose from multiple surfaces such as loose rocks, mud and sand, moguls, and more to optimise drivability. Activated with the press of a button, the available crawl control system is designed to automatically maintain an optimal slow and steady pace over demanding landscapes. Bolstering this mission is the Lexus safety system+ suite of technologies that includes a pre-collision system, lane departure alert, intelligent high beams and high-speed dynamic radar cruise control. In Oman, every Lexus vehicle comes with special benefits and privileges such as Manufacturer's Warranty of 4 years/100,000km (whichever is earlier) and 24 hours on-road assistance from AAA.

NATIONAL BANK OF OMAN

## Two lucky customers to walk away with OMR250,000 in Al Kanz mega draw

**MUSCAT:** With more chances than ever to win, the National Bank of Oman's (NBO) Al Kanz savings scheme draw is one of banking's biggest events. In one week, the bank will be holding its half-yearly mega draw, where two customers will be given OMR250,000 each. With eligibility being as easy as maintaining an average balance of at least OMR100, it is one of the most exciting ways for customers to build savings. The event will also include the monthly Mazaya exclusive draw, which will give OMR10,000 each to four winners, and the Salary Transfer draw, with OMR500 each for 50 winners. Al Kanz Savings Scheme continues to reward more customers each year across the Sultanate with monthly prizes ranging from OMR100 to OMR250,000.



STRENGTHENING PARTNERSHIP



## Qatar Airways signs codeshare agreement with Alaska Airlines

**DOHA:** Qatar Airways announced that it has signed a codeshare agreement with the newest member of oneworld, Alaska Airlines, further strengthening its position as the ideal choice for international passengers travelling to and from the United States. Qatar Airways will be Alaska Airlines only Middle East partner, providing seamless connectivity between the US carrier's hubs and the Gulf carrier's global network of more than 140 destinations via the Best Airport in the Middle East, Hamad International Airport in Doha. Starting July 1, the agreement will enable Qatar Airways passengers to book travel and easily connect to more than 150 of Alaska's routes including Portland, Las Vegas, San Diego, Phoenix, Salt Lake City, Denver, San Jose, Anchorage and Vancouver. The second phase of the agreement will allow Alaska Airlines passengers to book travel on all of Qatar Airways' flights between the US and Qatar and beyond to their favourite destinations in Africa, the Middle East, and South Asia. Qatar Airways Group Chief Executive, Akbar Al Baker said: "This is an important step in advancing our commercial coop-

eration with Alaska Airlines as we welcome the newest member of the oneworld alliance to Qatar Airways' list of strategic partners. This agreement, combined with our existing partnerships, will help consolidate our presence in the region and provide Qatar Airways passengers travelling to and from our 12 US gateways with access to the most comprehensive network of seamless connections across the United States. As we expand services to Alaska's key hubs of Seattle, San Francisco and Los Angeles, we look forward to implementing the next phase of this strategic partnership and welcoming onboard Alaska Airlines passengers as we connect them to our global network of over 140 destinations via the Best Airport in the Middle East, Hamad International Airport. "We're thrilled to be a part of this evolving partnership with Qatar Airways, one of the world's premier airlines," said Ben Minicucci, Alaska Air Group CEO. "As international air travel resumes, it's important to provide our guests with easier, more convenient travel options to get out and see distant places again. That's why our new codeshare agreement between our two airlines is such a big deal."

MEMBERSHIP OFFERS

## Discover what makes Al Mouj one of the World's Top 100 golf courses

**MUSCAT:** Two new membership offers have been introduced at Al Mouj Golf has introduced new opportunities for golf enthusiasts to enjoy playing at the award-winning signature, oceanfront course for the summer months. opening up opportunities for more golf enthusiasts to play on the award-winning signature, oceanfront course. Al Mouj Golf is a World Top 100 course that hosts the European Tour - Oman Open and is consistently ranked the second-best course in the Middle East. The newly launched membership packages are a chance to play over the summer without golfers having to commit to a full year-round membership. The first offer package is for four weeks of unlimited play for 99 OMR plus VAT, and the second invites golfers to play for five months for the price of four at OMR399 plus VAT. Al Mouj Golf was designed by golf legend Greg Norman and



features a 72-par championship course as well as a 9-hole Academy Course, attracting players of all standards from the top level to beginners. The lush, links-style course boasts a magnificently scenic setting on the Indian ocean coastline against the backdrop of the Hajar Mountains. It is 7342 yards long with the 9th, 11th, 12th,

13th and 14th holes all situated on the seaside and so boast breathtaking sea views. Nasser bin Masoud Al Sheibani, CEO of Al Mouj Muscat says, "These are great value membership options and a fantastic opportunity to experience what play is like here. We are looking forward to welcoming new players who might only be

in Oman for a short time or simply want to try us out before making a commitment to full membership. The summer months are a great time to play as set on the coast, the sea breeze helps to keep golfers cool whilst, of course, presenting challenges given it changes both speed and direction." Any new members signing up for Al Mouj Golf's summer membership packages can also enjoy a range of exclusive member-only benefits and perks including discounts at the Pro Shop. As well there is an Academy Restaurant with a unique setting overlooking the floodlit driving range and is the perfect spot to relax after a round or meet up with family and friends. Al Mouj Muscat, Oman's premier lifestyle and leisure destination is on the doorstep with its mix of shops and restaurants, pristine beaches and landscaped parks as well as a spectacular 400-berth marina.



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