

**'OMAN DESERVES TO HOST
WORLD CUP MATCHES'**

Oman having qualified for the upcoming Twenty20 World Cup qualifiers means it has earned the right to hold some matches from the tournament, now that the country is being considered a venue for the upcoming event. **>A3**



**ROYAL OFFICE MINISTER
RECEIVES KSA AMBASSADOR**

MUSCAT: Gen. Sultan Mohammed Al Nu'amani, Minister of the Royal Office received Abdullah Saud Al Anzi, Ambassador of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA) appointed to the Sultanate. Gen. Al Nu'amani welcomed the ambassador, who expressed his thanks and appreciation for the Sultanate's efforts in the region. **>A5**



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INITIATIVE

Ministry to announce incentives for companies

MUSCAT: The first package of incentives to ease business practice for commercial companies whose owners wish to clear commercial registers within a period of one year or merge them within six months, will be released by the Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Investment Promotion on Tuesday.

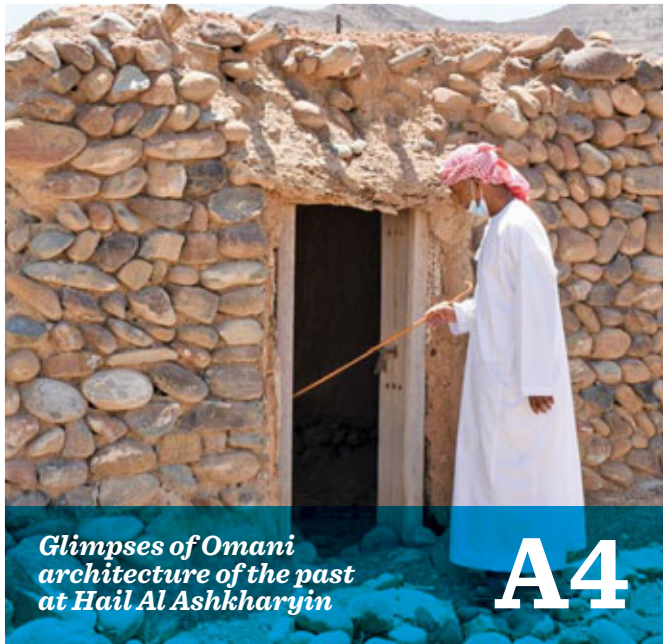
Streamline

The move aims to streamline the process of status adjustment for those establishments and encourage young people and owners of multiple commercial registers to clear or merge their businesses.

Overall aim

The overall aim is to eliminate the phenomenon of multiplicity of commercial registers, regulate the status of the market, improve business climate, allow competition and remove inactive commercial registers from the package of incentives and fee exemptions.

A file cancellation may be processed electronically via "Invest-Easy" portal or through Sanad Centres, while at the same time attaching the required documents. **-OMA**



Glimpses of Omani architecture of the past at Hail Al Ashkharyin

A4

GROWTH PATH

Citizens welcome new development projects for Musandam Governorate

Times News Service

MUSCAT: Citizens, residents and businesses welcomed the Council of Ministers' decisions regarding the implementation of a number of projects with the aim of developing Musandam Governorate and achieving comprehensive development, economic diversification and making it more attractive for investment.

Sayyid Ibrahim bin Said Al Bussaidi, Minister of State and Governor of Musandam, stated that the

lofty directives and their approval are in line with what is planned for the Musandam 2040 strategy and the Oman Vision, and that all directives in this framework will push economic development movement and secure social improvement.

The development plan for Musandam that was approved by the Council of Ministers includes the establishment of a branch of the University of Technology and Applied Sciences in Musandam Governorate, the building of an integrated system for strategic stocks

to achieve food and drug security in the governorate, transforming Khasab Port into a special logistic area, and establishing special tourist economic zones.

Raed bin Muhammad Al Shehhi, Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Oman Chamber of Commerce and Industry in the Musandam Governorate, and all its affiliates and the private sector in the governorate, appreciated the Royal directives of His Majesty Sultan Haitham Bin Tarik to develop the Musandam Governorate. **>A5**



46 people died from COVID-19 between Thursday and Saturday, with 24 people dying from the disease on Saturday alone, pushing the death toll to 2,513

Times News Service

MUSCAT: More than 2,500 people in Oman have died from COVID-19 since the start of the pandemic, figures released by the Ministry of Health show.

Oman recorded 46 deaths last Thursday and over the weekend, with 24 people dying from the

disease on Saturday alone, pushing the death toll to 2,513.

The country also reported 4,415 new cases of infection during this period: 1,622 on Thursday, 1,311 on Friday, and 1,482 on Saturday. In total, 234,634 people have been infected with COVID-19, as of 13 June, 2021. However, the recovery rate

holds steady at 90 per cent, with 210,952 people infected with the disease having recovered so far.

"The 24 deaths recorded on Saturday, 12 June, represent a record number of deaths on a single day since the start of the pandemic," said Ibrahim Al Maimani, a social activist and data analyst. "The numbers of existing cases have exceeded 21,000, and it is worth noting that the last time we saw these numbers of cases was on July 23, 2020."

Hospitalisation

153 patients have been admitted to hospital because of COVID-related issues in the last 24 hours. Some 1,180 people are in hospital, while 374 are in intensive care.

In light of this significant rise in numbers, the National Emer-

gency Management Centre has stressed the need to urgently unify the national health, civil, military, and security resources under a single management structure, so that it can perform its functions effectively.

Al Maimani added, "There has been a 46 per cent increase in the numbers of inpatients in hospitals, since the start of June, until the 13th of the month, with intensive care units now handling 51 per cent more patients than they did at the start of the month, when 127 fewer people were in ICUs."

To stop the spread of the pandemic, Oman's Ministry of Health has accelerated its national vaccination drive, and has asked all those eligible for their COVID shots to get vaccinated at the earliest. **>A5**

TOP THREE INSIDE STORIES

OMAN

Harmful bacteria, fungi in dried fish

1 A species of kingfish, known as owal, which is dried and then popularly eaten as a snack in Oman should be avoided, because it develops microbes during the drying process, according to Sultan Qaboos University researchers, who have asked people to be cautious while buying it. **>A2**

WORLD

WHO to China: Help in COVID-19 origin probe

2 World Health Organization (WHO) chief Tedros Ghebreyesus has called on China to cooperate with the ongoing investigation into the origins of the COVID-19 amid renewed call to further probe the virus. Dr Tedros made the remarks after taking part in the Group of Seven summit. **>A6**

MARKET

Oil at 2-year high on tight supply hope

3 Crude oil traded above two-year highs, over the \$70 a barrel mark, on expectations of stronger demand recovery and controlled supply, a new report reveals. The month started on a positively after the Opec+ suppliers unanimously decided to stick to the plan and raise output gradually. **>B1**

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Popular Omani fish snack found to contain harmful bacteria, fungi



EXAMINATION: Tests were conducted to find out the extent of contamination, as well as discover solutions to make them better for human consumption.

Commonly known as owal, the kingfish develops the microbes during the drying process, according to researchers at the Sultan Qaboos University (SQU)

Times News Service

MUSCAT: A popular species of kingfish that is dried and then eaten as a snack in Oman should be avoided, because it contains a high amount of bacteria and fungi, that could prove very harmful to people. Commonly known as owal, the kingfish develops the microbes during the drying process, according to researchers at Sultan Qaboos University, who have asked people to be cautious while buying dried fish, and to make sure they only purchase their food from reputable fishmongers. Tests were conducted to find out the extent of contamination, as

well as discover solutions to make them better for human consumption. Samples of two fish (anchovies and kingfish) were sourced from two separate markets in Buraimi and Seeb. **Three types of bacteria** The studies showed the presence of three types of bacteria: e.coli, staphylococcus aureus, and coliforms in anchovy sourced from both places. The kingfish samples showed the presence of fungi in very small quantities while the anchovy brought from Buraimi had much more fungi than the ones bought from Seeb market. “Dried fish also carries contami-

nation through insects and sand, as well as high concentrations of ash, especially when the fish is dried on sand,” said the researchers. “The presence of microorganisms is another major factor affecting the quality of dried fish. Great concern has to be made when purchasing dried fish. We recommend drying fish under more hygienic conditions and to use solar dryers instead of direct drying methods practiced on beach sands.” Nasir Al Ghanbosi, a fisherman from Al Ashkarah in South Al Sharqiyah, commenting on the study results, said, “This gives clear evidence that primary health concerns have not been taken into consideration during the prepara-

tion process. These include the quality of fish, the time and place of its drying, and proper storage and preparation. The emergence of these bacteria is not caused by the fish itself, but by the process of preparation and storage.” He added that Omani fishermen had devised many ways, since ancient times, to preserve fish for commercial or private consumption. One of these methods is used in the drying of sharks and sardines, where the sharks are cut according to size, after which salt is placed on them, and then washed with sea water and dried using sunlight. “We have followed this practice for several decades, and have heard

of no harm caused by owal to people who eat it,” said Al Ghanbosi. “It was a favourite among us, because it was made by experts, who cared about the health of their customers. They did not dry fish during the winter, because they knew this period was not suitable for drying, and so maintained their quality by preserving them with salt. “They did not dry fish except during the dry months,” he added. “Our ancestors and our parents had enough experience in dealing with this method of preparing, drying and storing fish in a timely manner.” He added, however, that the fishmongers who prepare owal these days lack the right skills to properly make the snack.

COVID-19

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

Oman starts drive-through vaccination



MUSCAT: The Ministry of Health, represented by the Directorate General of Health Services, Muscat Governorate has started, at the premises of Oman Automobile Association (OMA), offering vaccination against COVID-19 from inside the car for those yet to take the second dose of the vaccine and the employees of the state administrative units. The targeted categories would be updated on a weekly basis. Dr Thamrah bint Said Al Ghafri, Acting Director General of the Directorate General of Health Service for Muscat Governorate said that the service of vaccination



from inside the car aimed to save time and efforts and to mitigate the burden on the vaccination centres operating at the morning time. “Vaccination starts from 4pm to 9pm from Sunday to Thursday” she added. — **ONA**

Oman and France sign military pact

MUSCAT: The Sultanate and the French Republic signed yesterday a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) in the field of military cooperation between the two friendly countries. The MoU aims to regulate aspects of military cooperation between the Sultanate and France in a way that enhances the existing cooperation relations and serves the joint interest. The MoU was signed at the Ministry of Defence’s headquarters in Al Murtafa’a Camp by Dr.



Mohammed Nasser Al Zaabi, Secretary General at the Ministry of Defence and Renaud Salins, Ambassador of the French Republic to the Sultanate. — **ONA**



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SHANNAH-MASIRAH

Mwasalat transports over 210,000 passengers

MASIRAH: The Mwasalat “Ferries” service between the Wilayat of Masirah and Shannah Port contributes in facilitating the transportation of tourists and citizens. It also boosts the economic activities and services. Through its “Ferries” service, Mwasalat has transported passengers, cargo and vehicles to and from Masirah since the outbreak of COVID-19 pandemic till the end of the first quarter of 2021. During the aforesaid period, Mwasalat transported more than 210,000 passengers, and 65,000 vehicles and trucks through which more than 9,100 tonnes of cargo were transported. Despite the challenges posed by the pandemic on public transportation services in the Sultanate, Mwasalat was keen on sustaining its operations on the Shannah-Masirah route, and in operating more than 2,800 trips. Mwasalat affirms that it provides its services in a safe and healthy environment by adhering to precautionary measures as per the requirements issued by departments concerned in tackling the coronavirus COVID-19 pandemic. — **ONA**



 MOST READ ON FACEBOOK

19,835 REACH

Private hospitals in Oman have begun vaccinating tens of thousands of people with the COVID-19 vaccine.



Mass vaccinations begin at private hospitals in Oman

A story on mass vaccinations beginning at private hospitals in Oman reached 19,835 people and had 2,848 engagements on Facebook.

 MOST WATCHED VIDEO ON FACEBOOK

8,600 VIEWS

Oman hospitals see a surge in COVID-19 cases



The Morning Minute video

The Morning Minute video had 8,600 views and reached 24,200 people on Facebook.

 MOST VIEWED VIDEO ON INSTAGRAM

1,189 LIKES

No traffic offence in a lifetime of driving for 89-year old Omani



A photo story on an 89-year-old man

A photo story on an 89-year-old man driving for his lifetime without a traffic offence had 1,189 likes on Instagram





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Oman deserves to hold World Cup matches, says chairman of OCA

The country earned qualification for the World Cup because the efforts of all those involved were channelled in the right direction, says Pankaj Khimji

Times News Service

MUSCAT: Oman having qualified for the upcoming Twenty20 World Cup qualifiers means it has earned the right to hold some matches from the tournament, now that the country is being considered a venue for the upcoming event.

According to Pankaj Khimji, the chairman of the Oman Cricket Association, the country earned qualification for the World Cup because the efforts of all those



WELL PLAYED: If Oman has played so well in the last few years, then Oman deserves a shot at the World Cup, as well as becoming a venue for the same.

involved were channelled in the right direction.

With both Oman and the neighbouring United Arab Emirates being considered joint venues for the tournament, he is confident the same teamwork will go into getting everything ready for the tournament to take place.

“Mentally, we are more than ready,” said Khimji, who also serves as Vice President of the Asian Cricket Council. “Physically, yes, we have things to do...we have a little more than four months when the World Cup starts, but it will be less than that when you look at when the teams and officials will

start to come in.

“If Oman has played so well in the last few years, then Oman deserves a shot at the World Cup, as well as becoming a venue for the same,” he explained. “Oman deserves it more than anyone else in the region. We are the only associate country from Asia to have

qualified for this World Cup, so we are very proud of that.”

COVID-19 spoiler

Although the upcoming edition of the World Cup was set to be held in Australia last year, it was postponed to this year because of the COVID-19 pandemic. It was then offered to India, but with the pandemic situation still very serious, the Board for Control of Cricket in India (BCCI), which governs cricket in that country, has chosen to search for an alternate venue.

The United Arab Emirates, which held the recent Indian Premier League, was suggested, and Oman came into the picture when the International Cricket Council required an additional fourth venue for matches to be held.

“I believe, however, that Oman is best suited to host it,” Khimji explained. “I believe this is a great moment and an amazing opportunity for Oman, so we shall definitely make the best pitch for it. However, at this moment in time, the BCCI and the ICC will take the final call, and say the venue will shift from India to the UAE and Oman, although the hosts will still remain the BCCI.

“That is probably likely to hap-

pen towards the end of the month,” he went on to say. “Right now, we are running through the to-do list, in terms of how well we stack up towards achieving their expectations, in case they choose to move to Oman.”

The OCA’s cricket facilities in Amerat have already received accreditation to host Test, ODIs and Twenty20 matches: efforts Pankaj credits to the long-term view of the organisation in developing cricket in the country, and making it a better competitor at tournaments.

The foundations

He made it a point to add that these efforts would not have been possible without the foundations that were laid due to the support of His Majesty Sultan Haitham Bin Tarik, and the late His Majesty Sultan Qaboos bin Said bin Taimour, who have always been extremely generous and dedicated towards developing the sport in the country.

“Yes, it is a big task, a good task, but it is definitely not a Herculean task,” said Pankaj Khimji. “We are well-suited, and we have the capacity and capability of doing this. If no one else has it, then we definitely have the ability to do so.”



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HAIL AL ASHKHARYIN is one of the villages at Wadi A'Ahin in the wilayat of Sohar in North Al Batinah Governorate. The village represents the historic evidence of Oman's traditional architecture. Located at the foot of a mountain, it is famous for its old houses, date palm trees and the Aflaj system used for irrigation.

The old houses at Hail Al Ashkharyin are located at the centre of the village. Some of the concrete houses can also be seen, said Salim bin Rashid Al Ashkhari, a resident of the village.

"The old houses are built with small pieces of rock and clay and the roofs are made of palm trunks and branches. It showcases an unique engineering model in architecture," he added.



"From the outskirts of the village, at the farms, visitors can see the old houses standing tall to narrate the story of the past," he said. The houses have low roofs and few windows with vents for fresh air which makes them cold in summer, he explained.

The village farms are at the foot of the mountain. Some of the wadis are close to the mountain, he added.

OLD HOUSES AND DATE PALM TREES AT HAIL AL ASHKHARYIN





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NATIONAL IMMUNISATION PLAN

Over 435,000 vaccinated in Oman since December 2020

MUSCAT: As many as 435,090 people have been vaccinated against COVID-19, since the start of National Immunisation Plan in December 2020 till yesterday. The number stands for 12 percent of the Sultanate's population.

The percentage of those who took the first dose of COVID-19 vaccination stood at 61 percent, while 39 percent took both doses, according to statistics issued by the Ministry of Health on Sunday.

The Ministry administers the second dose after 10 weeks or more to those who take the first dose.

It is now in the process of administering the first dose to employees of the State's Administrative Apparatus (public sector employees).

The Ministry of Health plans to cover all target segments aged 12 and above, which stands for 70 percent of the population.



The vaccination process will be carried out in stages, depending on the arrival of supplies of COVID-19 vaccines.

Vaccination centres in all gov-

ernorates of the Sultanate nowadays see a large turnout of people wishing to be vaccinated, which is considered a good sign of social awareness. -ONA

ROYAL OFFICE MINISTER RECEIVES KSA ENVOY

Gen. Sultan Mohammed Al Nu'amani, Minister of the Royal Office received in his office on Sunday Abdullah Saud Al Anzi, Ambassador of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA) appointed to the Sultanate. Gen. Al Nu'amani welcomed the ambassador, who expressed his thanks and appreciation for the Sultanate's efforts in the region. He underscored the strong relations binding Oman and the KSA. The meeting touched on several topics of common interest and the current developments in the region. It also discussed means of enhancing the joint cooperation in respect to regional and international issues. — ONA



Oman's eMushrif acquires Egyptian start-up Tareeqi

This acquisition is a continuation of eMushrif's regional plans, following its recent acquisition of MyRoute, a Kuwaiti start-up, specialising in bus tracking applications

Times News Service

MUSCAT: eMushrif, an Oman-based Internet of Things (IoT) and Artificial Intelligence (AI) start-up, announced the closing of an acquisition deal with Tareeqi, a Cairo-based start-up that develops applications to track transportation.

eMushrif's expansion in Egypt comes as part of its expansion



Tareeqi Adnan Al Shuaili.

into the Middle and North Africa (MENA) region. With this expansion eMushrif's plans to attract more talent, as it works towards its mission of integrating IoT into people's everyday lives.

This acquisition is a continuation of eMushrif's regional plans, following its recent acquisition of MyRoute, a Kuwaiti start-up, specialising in bus tracking applications.

"The launch of our operations in Egypt is an exceptional opportunity for us in eMushrif. This bold step unlocks our ability to offer our products to various regional sectors looking for innovation and simplicity in their business processes. This acquisition offers us the proximity we need in the

MENA region," Tareeqi Adnan Al Shuaili, CEO of eMushrif said.

"This acquisition also offers us the unique opportunity of attracting outstanding talents in the technical field to build a team capable of achieving our strategic goals in technical expansion," he added.

eMushrif was established in 2016 and has succeeded in applying IoT to develop solutions to monitor the safety of students in school buses. With the help of these technologies, eMushrif swiftly converted traditional school buses to smart and safe school buses. eMushrif also played a vital role in Oman's response to the COVID-19 pandemic by leveraging its existing IoT technology for quarantine management at scale. With 500,000 IoT wristbands distributed and a digital pre-travel registration platform, eMushrif helped more than two million users from 150 countries enter the Sultanate safely.

The founders of Tareeqi, Al Farouk Saleh and Mohamed Monier, started the start-up in 2018 to solve the problems that face millions of people daily.

Now they will be managing the expansion of eMushrif in the Egyptian market. "I'm so excited

about this deal since eMushrif tries to solve the problems that we are trying to solve at Tareeqi, which luckily gives us an opportunity to continue working on our main purpose of building Tareeqi," Al Farouk Saleh, CEO of Tareeqi, said.

Both companies are trying to make the daily bus trips easier for students, parents, school administrators, and bus drivers. Traditional school bus trips were full of delays and problems, and the these problems were repeated daily.

Millions of people worldwide face these problems daily, which motivates us to work hard to reach more people and make their lives a little bit easier.

The expansion of eMushrif in Egypt will help the company in increasing its technical capabilities through building a big tech team in Egypt which is famous for having strong and experienced technical talents. The expansion will also enable eMushrif to access the major business opportunities in the MENA region.

"We like the dream of eMushrif of becoming the leader of the IoT sector in the MENA region, and we'll do our best to help make this dream come true," he said.

COVID-19 VACCINATION

<FROM A1> Vaccination centres giving jabs to people

A number of vaccination centres are now providing vaccine doses to people from target groups eligible for the vaccine, as well as government employees, who are among those marked for inoculation under the current phase of the rollout.

"We are taking all efforts to provide COVID-19 vaccines to employees of the administrative apparatus of the state, as well as the target groups, both in the health centre in Quriyat, and the various other sites in Muscat Governorate," said a statement from the Directorate General of Health Services in the capital.

Five sites

Those who need to get vaccinated while in the capital can go to five sites: Al Nubaha Basic Education School in Seeb, the Quriyat Health Centre, Sultan Qaboos Sports Complex in Boushar, Jabr bin Zaid School in Muttrah, and the governor's office in Al Amerat. All these locations are open between 8am and 2 pm.

Furthermore, a drive-thru vaccination centre has also been launched at the Oman Automobile Association, in collaboration with the ministry, and Aster Al Raffah Hospitals. Operating



between 4 pm and 9 pm during weekdays, the centre is currently open to people eligible for their second doses, as well as government workers who need their first shots.

Those who do go there to get vaccinated need to provide their national ID if they are taking their second dose, and must also show their employee ID if they are being administered their first shot.

"Please stay up to date about vaccination groups in the country," said the DGHS in Muscat. "Periodic updates regarding people eligible for the drive-thru centre will be issued every Saturday."

MUSANDAM DEVELOPMENTS

<FROM A1> Decision to set up first university in the governorate hailed

Al Shehhi said, "Building an integrated system for the strategic stockpile will achieve food and pharmaceutical security in the governorate and the transformation of Khasab Port into a special logistic area will provide services and facilities to activate the import and export movement, opening direct lines for export, establishing special tourist economic zones that serve as the engine for tourism investments in the governorate and activating the associated logistical movement."

"Declaring the Mahas area as an economic zone with the aim of or-

ganising and growing light and medium industries and storage that support the movement of Khasab Port will be a stimulating factor for the business and investment environment in the province," Al Shehhi added.

Fatima Al Shehhi, a businesswoman and restaurant owner, said, "these blessed high directives and the Council of Ministers' decisions to develop Musandam Governorate will reflect positively on the tourism and investment movement as the Royal directives include establishing tourist economic zones that will have a positive

impact on the tourism movement and it will undoubtedly contribute to strengthening the role of small and medium enterprises, which will include the Telegraph Island cafe and restaurant as well."

Raed Al Shehhi also praised the decision to establish the first university in the governorate and stated, "The establishment of a branch of the University of Technology and Applied Sciences in the state of Khasab that includes a number of specialisations is a long-awaited demand and will be a scientific and educational beacon in Musandam, refreshing the local economy, sup-

porting purchasing activities in the markets and will activate air-lines and sea movement."

Decision welcomed

Maitha Al Zarafi, a postgraduate student from the Arab Open University said, "The decision was welcomed with happiness by the people in the governorate, because many parents were worried when their sons went to college for long periods and stayed there for several months. The presence of a university in the governorate would contribute to encouraging many to complete their studies."

"I am happy that they are establishing a university in my governorate. I graduated this year, but I wish I had studied there because travelling for long periods of time was really tiring, as we used to spend seven hours in the car on our way to the university in Muscat, and stay there for three or four months without seeing our parents, so there were many who did not allow their daughters to complete their studies under these circumstances," Al Zarafi added.

The University of Technology and Applied Sciences said in a statement that the Musandam

University project will be implemented in two phases, according to the type of programmes.

The first phase includes qualitative programmes, including mechanical engineering, transportation systems engineering, energy systems engineering, construction engineering, building maintenance, logistics management, and transportation systems management.

The proposed programmes for the second phase include marine navigation, fish products processing technology, and marine sports management.



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VACCINE PLEDGE

G7 pledges 1 billion COVID vaccines over next year

CORNWALL: G7 countries will provide one billion COVID-19 vaccine doses over the next year and work with the private sector and other countries to increase the contribution over the next months, according to a communique draft.

"The commitments since we last met in February 2021 including here in Carbis Bay provide for one billion doses over the next year," the communique said.



"We will work together with the private sector, the G20 and other countries to increase this contribution over the months to come," it added. World Health Organization Director-General Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus lauded the vaccine pledge but said it's not enough. He said at least 11 billion doses are needed to vaccinate at least 70% of the world's population by the middle of next year. **AW**

WHO chief asks China to cooperate with probe into origins of COVID-19

Dr Tedros made these remarks after taking part in the Group of Seven (G7) summit by video conference

WASHINGTON DC: World Health Organization (WHO) chief Tedros Ghebreyesus has called on China to cooperate with the ongoing investigation into the origins of the COVID-19 amid renewed call to further probe the virus.

Dr Tedros made these remarks after taking part in the Group of Seven (G7) summit by video conference on Saturday, The Wall Street Journal (WSJ) reported. The WHO Director-General hoped there would be better cooperation and transparency when the next



phase of the probe into the virus's origin is underway. "As you know we will need cooperation from the Chinese side," he said.

"We need transparency to understand or know or find the origin of this virus...after the report was released there were difficulties in the data sharing, especially in the raw data."

He further said that the preparations for the probe's next steps

were underway and that the issue of the origin of the virus was discussed by G7 leaders on Saturday, WSJ reported.

Earlier this week, the US and the UK had extended support to a "timely, transparent and evidence-based independent process" for the next phase of the WHO-convened study of COVID-19 origins.

"We will also support a timely, transparent and evidence-based

independent process for the next phase of the WHO-convened COVID-19 origins study, including in China, and for investigating outbreaks of unknown origin in the future," a joint statement said after US President Joe Biden met British Prime Minister Boris Johnson on Thursday.

This comes amid growing calls for a timely, transparent, and evidence-based independent process for the next phase of the WHO-convened origin study.

Recently, the calls to investigate further the origins of the virus have intensified. President Biden has also ordered a fresh US intelligence inquiry into the origins of the pandemic. The origin of novel coronavirus that caused havoc around the world has remained a mystery even after 1.5 years the first case of infection was reported in the Chinese city of Wuhan.

Now, scientists and world leaders are calling for further investigations to figure out whether the virus originated naturally or leaked from the Wuhan Institute of Virology. **ANI**

OUTREACH SESSION

PM Modi seeks G7 support for COVID vaccines patent waiver proposal

NEW DELHI: Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Saturday sought the Group of Seven (G7) developed nations' support for the proposal moved by India and South Africa for a temporary global waiver on patent protection for COVID-19 vaccines.

Prime Minister Modi made these remarks in the first Outreach Session of the G7 Summit. The session, titled 'Building Back Stronger - Health', focused on global recovery from the coronavirus pandemic and on strengthening resilience against future pandemics.

During the session, the Prime Minister expressed appreciation for the support extended by the G7 and other guest countries during the recent wave of COVID infections in India, according to the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA).

He highlighted India's 'whole of society' approach to fight the pandemic, synergising the efforts of all levels of the government, industry and civil society.

He also explained India's successful use of open-source digital tools for contact tracing and vaccine management and conveyed



India's willingness to share its experience and expertise with other developing countries.

The Prime Minister committed India's support for collective endeavours to improve global health governance and sought the G7's support for the proposal moved at the World Trade Organisation (WTO) by India and South Africa, for a Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS) waiver on COVID-related technologies.

In October last year, India and South Africa, along with 57 members of WTO proposed a waiver from certain provisions of the TRIPS agreement for prevention, containment, and treatment of COVID-19. **ANI**



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CARDIAC ARREST

Eriksen was ‘gone’ after cardiac arrest, but we got him back: Denmark team doctor

COPENHAGEN: Denmark team doctor Morten Boesen on Sunday confirmed that striker Christian Eriksen suffered a cardiac arrest in the Euro 2020 game against Finland.

Boesen also said that Eriksen was “gone”, but the authorities were able to get him back after emergency CPR, which was quite fast. “He was gone. We did cardiac resuscitation, it was a cardiac arrest. How close were we to losing him? I don’t know, but we got him back after one defib, so that’s quite fast,” Sky Sports quoted Boesen as saying.

The Euro Cup match between Denmark and Finland on Saturday had to be stopped in the dying minutes of the first half as Eriksen collapsed on the pitch and he had to be taken off due to a medical emergency. Eriksen’s teammates had formed a ring around him as



he was being attended by doctors on the field. The midfielder was carried off in a stretcher.

Following the request made by players of both teams, UEFA agreed to restart the match later in the evening with the Demark midfielder in a stable condition in hospital. Finland defeated Denmark 1-0 in their tournament opener.

Denmark head coach Kasper Hjulmand on Sunday admitted that his side should not have played the Euro 2020 game against Finland on the same day midfielder Christian Eriksen collapsed on the pitch.

“I think it was the wrong decision to make between the two scenarios. It was very tough for the players. They didn’t even know if they could probably lose their best friend. I have the feeling that we shouldn’t have played and wrong that the players had to decide. I’m really proud of the way the world reacted to this incident,” Goal.com quoted Hjulmand as saying.

“It’s often about money, but yesterday we saw what football is all about - compassion and love,” he added. Hjulmand also confirmed that Eriksen will remain hospitalised for the time being to undergo more tests. **ANI**

EURO CUP

‘Chris, I love you’, says Lukaku after scoring in Belgium’s win

SAINT PETERSBURG: Belgium striker Romelu Lukaku dedicated his performance in the Euro Cup match to his club teammate Christian Eriksen following his collapse on the field against Finland on Saturday.

The Euro Cup match between Denmark and Finland had to be stopped in the dying minutes of the first half as Eriksen collapsed on the pitch and he had to be taken off due to a medical emergency. Lukaku said he cried a lot when he heard about Eriksen and hoped that the Danish midfielder is healthy.

Lukaku brace helped Belgium defeat Russia 3-0 in the Euro Cup match. After scoring his first goal in the game, Lukaku was heard shouting “Chris, Chris, I love you.”

“I enjoyed the game but for me, it was difficult to play because my mind was with my team-mate Christian Eriksen,” goal.com quoted Lukaku as saying after the match. “I hope he is healthy and I dedi-



cate this performance to him.”

“I cried a lot because I was scared, obviously. You live strong moments together. I spend more time with him than with my family,” he added.

Eriksen was hospitalised and the match was temporarily suspended before it was resumed later in the evening. Eriksen’s teammates had formed a ring around

him as he was being attended by doctors on the field. The midfielder was carried off in a stretcher.

Following the request made by players of both teams, UEFA agreed to restart the match later in the evening with the Demark midfielder in a stable condition in hospital. Finland defeated Denmark 1-0 in their tournament opener. **ANI**

Sterling’s strike helps England defeat Croatia

England managed to gain full three points from the match against Croatia

LONDON: A thunderous goal from Raheem Sterling helped England defeat Croatia 1-0 in the Group D encounter of the ongoing European Championships here at the Wembley Stadium on Sunday.

England managed to gain full three points from the match against Croatia and now the Three Lions will lock horns against Scotland on June 18 while Croatia will square off against Czech Republic on the same day. The first half between England and Croatia saw no goals and as a result, the scoreline remained 0-0 at halftime. In the first half, both teams registered one shot on target each.

In the first half, England held on to the ball for 58 per cent of the match, while Croatia held on to it for 42 per cent.

The deadlock was finally bro-



EURO CUP: The Three Lions will lock horns against Scotland on June 18 while Croatia will square off against Czech Republic on the same day.

ken in the 57th minute as Raheem Sterling registered the goal for England. This was Sterling’s first goal at a major tournament. Calvin Phillips made a stunning run as he beat two players and

then he went on to pass the ball to Sterling, and he did not disappoint and successfully netted the ball into the goalpost.

No more goals were possible in the match, and in the end, Eng-

land went away with a 1-0 victory.

Later in the day, Austria will lock horns against North Macedonia while in another match, Netherlands and Ukraine will be squaring off against each other. **ANI**

COVID POSITIVE



Portugal suffers massive blow as Joao Cancelo tests COVID-19 positive

BUDAPEST: Portugal National Football team has suffered an untimely blow with left-back Joao Cancelo withdrawing from Euro 2020, after testing positive for COVID-19.

Diogo Dalot has now been called up to the Portugal national squad for Euro 2020 as confirmed in an official statement. The Manchester United star is a last-minute replacement for defender Cancelo in the summer tournament. “Under-21 international Diogo Dalot will join the National Team’s delegation in Budapest to prepare for his debut at Euro 2020,” read the official release.

Cancelo was flagged by a posi-

tive lateral flow test which was later confirmed by a PCR test on Saturday. In accordance with the COVID-19 protocol defined by UEFA before the EURO 2020 matches, all players and members of the entourage underwent RT-PCR tests on Saturday. The results, with the exception of Joao Cancelo, were negative.

Portugal kicks off their Euro 2020 campaign against Hungary on Tuesday at Ferenc Puskas Stadium. The team is part of a difficult Group F that also includes Germany, France, and Hungary. Both Germany and Hungary have home games against Portugal in the group stage. **ANI**

FRENCH OPEN

Krejcikova becomes first player to win women’s singles, doubles since 2000



PARIS: Czech Republic’s Barbora Krejcikova along with her partner Katerina Siniakova on Sunday won the women’s double title here at the ongoing French Open.

This comes a day after Krejcikova won the women’s singles title on Saturday. In the doubles event, Krejcikova and Siniakova defeated the pair of Iga Swiatek and Bethanie Mattek-Sands 6-4 6-2.

With this victory, Krejcikova has become the first player to win both the women’s singles and doubles event at the French Open since Mary Pierce achieved the feat way back in 2000.

Krejcikova has also become the first woman to win both the

singles and doubles events at a Grand Slam since Serena Williams in 2016.

On Saturday, Krejcikova fought an intense battle to become the first woman from her country to clinch the French Open singles title since Hana Mandlikova in 1981.

Krejcikova defeated Russian tennis star Anastasia Pavlyuchenkova 6-1, 2-6, 6-4 to lift her maiden singles major trophy.

This is the sixth straight year Paris has crowned a first-time Grand Slam women’s singles champion. The past 15 majors have witnessed nine different maiden Slam winners. **ANI**

TEAM RANKINGS

New Zealand overtake India to attain number one Test ranking

SOUTHAMPTON: New Zealand on Sunday toppled India to become the number one ranked Test team in the world.

The Kiwis achieved the feat after defeating England 1-0 in the two-match Test series on Sunday.

New Zealand now has 123 points in ICC Team Test Rankings while India has 121 points and is positioned at the second spot.

Australia is placed at the third spot with 108 points while England is positioned at the fourth spot with 107 points. India and Kiwis will be locking horns in the WTC final at the Ageas Bowl, Southampton, beginning June 18.

New Zealand is also the number one ranked ODI team in the world, while India is the third-ranked side in the 50-over format.

Neil Wagner and Matt Henry took three wickets each as England was bundled out for 122 in the second innings, and in the end, New Zealand won the second Test on Day Four comfortably by eight wickets here at Edgbaston, Birmingham on Sunday. **ANI**

HALL OF FAME

Vinoo Mankad, Kumar Sangakkara inducted into ICC Hall of Fame

DUBAI: The International Cricket Council (ICC) on Sunday announced a special edition intake of 10 cricket icons into the ICC Hall of Fame to celebrate the prestigious history of Test cricket, and to coincide with the first-ever ICC World Test Championship final.

The 10 legends of the game to be inducted have all made a significant contribution to the history of Test cricket, and join an illustrious list of ICC Hall of Famers, taking the total number to 103 as a result of this intake. The special inductions of the ICC Hall of Fame from the following five eras join the ranks of the world’s greatest players.

From early cricket era, South Africa’s Aubrey Faulkner, Australia’s Monty Noble have been inducted into the ICC Hall of Fame. In the early cricket era, players whose greatest contributions to the game till 1918 were selected.

In the inter-war era (Players whose greatest contributions to the game were from 1918-1945), West Indies’ Sir Learie Constantine, Australia’s Stan McCabe were chosen. In the post-war era (Players whose greatest contributions to the game were from 1946-1970), England’s Ted Dexter, India’s Vinoo Mankad were inducted to the ICC Hall of Fame.

Vinoo Mankad of India played 44 Tests, scored 2,109 runs at 31.47, took 162 wickets at 32.32, and was an opening batsman and slow left



arm orthodox bowler, known as one of India’s greatest-ever all-rounders. His most famous feat was against England at Lord’s in 1952 when he scored 72 and 184 and bowled 97 overs in the match. He is one of only three cricketers to have batted in every position during his Test career. In later life, he also coached another legendary cricketer and fellow ICC Hall of Fame member from his country, Sunil Gavaskar in Mumbai, India.

In the ODI era (Players whose greatest contributions to the game were from 1971-1995), West Indies’ Desmond Haynes and England’s Bob Willis were inducted into the ICC Hall of Fame. In the Modern Cricket Era, Sri Lanka’s Kumar Sangakkara, Zimbabwe’s

Andy Flower were selected.

Andy Flower of Zimbabwe played 63 Tests, scoring 4,794 runs at 51.54, took 151 catches with nine stumpings as a left-handed wicket-keeper batsmen. First Zimbabwe player to be inducted in the ICC Hall of Fame.

His grit, determination and will to succeed meant at one point he was ranked number 1 batsman in the world. Andy carried his country’s batting for long periods, setting the record for the highest Test score by a wicketkeeper with an innings of 232 not out against India at Nagpur in 2000. Later, he became a hugely successful coach, leading England to the number 1 spot in the MRF Tyres ICC Test Rankings for Men. **ANI**



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US INFLATION SOARS

Inflation in the US climbed in May at its fastest pace in nearly three decades as the economy continued to roar back from a pandemic-induced recession, oil prices rose to pre-pandemic levels and supply chain disruptions drove up prices.

MARKET
BUSINESS & FINANCE



MSX INDEX ENDS HIGHER

The MSX index closed at 4,040.45 points, up 0.26 per cent from the previous close. The Sharia Index ended down 0.35 per cent at 569.35 points. Global Investment Holding, up 9.62 per cent, was the top gainer while Muscat Gases, down 5.24 per cent, was the top loser.

Oil prices at 2-year high on hope of a tightening market

The month started on a positive note after the Opec+ suppliers unanimously decided to stick to the existing plan and raise output gradually in the coming months



REPORT: The CEOs of many oil majors pointed to a similar view of a strong recovery in global oil demand including that of BP, Equinor, Rosneft and Vitol Group with promising demand trends at least until 2025, the Kamco Invest report said. - File picture

Times News Service

MUSCAT: Crude oil prices traded above two-year high levels, over the \$70 a barrel mark, backed by expectations of stronger demand recovery coupled with controlled supply in the near term, a new report reveals.

The month started on a positive note after the Opec+ suppliers unanimously decided to stick to the existing plan and raise output gradually in the coming months, the Kuwait-based investment, strategy and research firm Kamco Invest, said.

"As per the plan, the group will increase supply by 0.7 million barrels

per day in June 2021, and 0.84 million barrels per day in July-2021," the research firm said.

The remaining 5.8 million barrels per day is expected to be gradually raised until April-2022 based on outcomes of monthly meetings between the producers.

Further on the demand front, the US Energy Information Administration (EIA) has forecasted oil consumption in the US to increase at a faster pace this year with an expected growth of 1.49 million barrels per day to reach 19.61 million barrels per day. The IEA also pointed to a demand re-

covery to pre-pandemic levels by the second half of 2022.

The agency expects demand to regain the 100 million barrels per day mark and urged the Opec+ producers to increase output to avoid unprecedented price rise.

The CEOs of many oil majors pointed to a similar view of a strong recovery in global oil demand including that of BP, Equinor, Rosneft and Vitol Group with promising demand trends at least until 2025, the Kamco Invest report said.

On the other hand, oil imports in China declined in May 2021 by

15 per cent due to the maintenance season, but near-term trends are expected to be dictated by how the government sets policies for the independent oil refining sector in the country.

In India, oil demand declined to a nine-month low in May 2021, but as the economy opens up gradually and vaccinations increase, demand is expected to pick up from July 2021.

In terms of oil supply, Opec+ lowered its supply estimates by 0.2 million barrels per day and said that it expects Organisation for Economic Co-operation and De-

velopment (OECD) oil inventory to see a bigger decline during the second half of 2021.

Crude production in the US continued to remain around the 11 million barrels per day mark. However, the EIA now expects a smaller decline in US output this year by 0.23 million barrels per day against the previous decline expectation of 0.29 million barrels per day to average at 11.08 million barrels per day, while 2022 will likely see the production of 11.8 million barrels per day.

Oil prices

Crude oil price witnessed consistent gains since the start of June 2021 backed by demand optimism seen across US and European markets coupled with controlled production by Opec+ members as well as by the US, the research report said.

Brent oil futures traded at \$72.32 a barrel on June 10, 2021, the highest since May 2019 as the rate of vaccinations continues to rise globally with developed markets now focusing on accelerating vaccinations in developing markets and the rest of the world.

Brent crude oil basket averaged at \$68.54 a barrel, the highest since April 2019, after increasing by 6.3 per cent month-on-month (m-o-m) during May 2021.

The increase in Opec crude was similar at 5.8 per cent to average at

\$66.9 a barrel while Kuwait crude witnessed a slightly higher increase of 5.9 per cent to average at 67.5 a barrel.

World oil demand

Opec, in its monthly report, increased demand estimates for 2020 by 0.1 million barrels per day to show a slightly smaller demand decline of 9.3 million barrels per day to average at 90.6 million barrels per day.

The revision reflected updated data for both OECD and non-OECD producers. For 2021, the world oil demand growth forecast was kept unchanged at 6.0 million barrels per day to an average of 96.58 million barrels per day, still below pre-pandemic levels. However, data at the individual country level and a quarterly trend was updated.

According to Opec, the OECD Americas and Europe regions reported lower-than-expected oil demand during the first quarter of 2021 that was offset by higher expected demand during the second quarter of 2021 in these regions backed by easing restrictions and the revival of the transportation sector. Demand in the OECD region is expected to be back end loaded with most of the growth coming during the second half of 2021. Meanwhile, recent data has shown a recovery in jet fuel demand in the North Atlantic region with growth in passenger numbers in the US and Europe.

TECHNOLOGY

Omantel successfully tests 5G high band

MUSCAT: Riding high on the 5G wave, Omantel has successfully tested the 5G High Band at its headquarters in Madinat al Irfan under the supervision of TRA.

The 5G test using the mm-Wave, which successfully concluded recently in association with Ericsson, demonstrated enhanced network capabilities with mmWave bandwidth more than multiple times higher than the existing 5G speed.

The trial demonstrated Omantel's ability to deliver multi-gigabit speeds to the end-user with eight-cell carrier aggregation functionalities using Ericsson's state-of-the-art Street macro mm-Wave solution and advanced 5G software features. The trial used a carrier bandwidth of 800MHz at 26GHz.

Omantel successful 5G test paves the way for enhanced 5G capabilities for consumers and businesses across the Sultanate. The next step may see 5G greatly enhance the user experience at mobile broadband hotspots when using the fixed and mobile internet especially in crowded spaces such as during festivals and events. The technology will also enable low-latency industry applications like Augmented Reality (AR), its applications, robots and other future technologies.

Dr Ali Al Hashmi General Manager of Networks at Omantel said, "mmWave 5G technology is a cornerstone of upcoming 5G networks, allowing for faster data speeds and much higher bandwidth than ever before.

"The success of the 5G test with Ericsson paves the way for many more applications as 5G has opened up possibilities of newer, smarter solutions in every area of daily life and business. Omantel is happy to have partnered with Ericsson for this and look forward to exciting new applications as Oman Vision 2040 opens a new chapter in Oman's ICT landscape."

Abdullah Al-Balushi, Country Manager of Ericsson Oman says: "5G is ready to transform industries and society. Omantel will enjoy a boost in capacity and multi-gigabit speeds over the air with fixed wireless access.

"Ericsson's millimetre wave technology supports Omantel in achieving record-breaking peak data rates and massive 5G ca-



capacity paving the way to enable Oman Vision 2040."

The last few years have seen Omantel emerge as the leader in 5G network capabilities. Several live field trials, followed by the introduction of Massive MIMO technology in some governorates of Oman to bring high-speed cross-network data transmission for its subscribers laid the groundwork for the official launch of fixed wireless 5G services in Oman in late 2019, followed by 5G for mobile in 2021.

The field experiments, first conducted in November 2017 at the Omantel headquarters, focused on testing the technology's capabilities on the ground in terms of readiness, speed and response. Based on the success of these live trials, which were also conducted in economically strategic areas like Duqm and Sohar, Omantel eventually went ahead with offering the power of this technology to its subscribers.

The results of these trials underscored Omantel 5G network's reliability and the benefits it will add to the Fourth Industrial Revolution through technologies like Artificial Intelligence and the Internet of Things.

5G is set to radically change lives and businesses. It is already revolutionising sectors like oil & gas, education, healthcare, logistics and entertainment by offering speed, powering digital solutions, quick response mechanisms and by reducing operational costs of large projects.

PARTNERSHIP

Pact signed to enhance skills of students in capital markets

Times News Service

MUSCAT: The Capital Market Authority (CMA) signed on Sunday a cooperation letter with the Technology and Applied Science University of Ibra for the exchange of scientific and practical experience in the fields of capital markets, insurance and investment in stock exchanges.

The move comes within the CMA's endeavours to develop the capital markets and insurance industry in Oman through cooperation with educational institutions.

CMA aims to enhance the skills of students and employees in the fields of capital markets, insurance

and investment in stock exchanges beside enhancing the education, learning, practical training and organising joint events to benefit from the joint research and cooperation in higher education through assisting the educational process with resources and enhanced ideas in the relevant fields.

CMA attaches great importance to the cooperation with the educational institutions, as they are a productive environment for research that would contribute to developing CMA's legislative, supervisory, and regulatory roles. These institutions will play a critical role in consolidating the investment and insurance culture.



COLLABORATION: The move comes within the CMA's endeavours to develop the capital markets and insurance industry in Oman through cooperation with educational institutions. - Supplied picture

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MARKET

MSX index ends higher



Global Investment Holding, up 9.62 per cent, was the top gainer while Muscat Gases, down 5.24 per cent, was the top loser

MUSCAT: The MSX index closed at 4,040.45 points, up 0.26 per cent from the previous close. The Sharia Index ended down 0.35 per cent at 569.35 points. Global Investment Holding, up 9.62 per cent, was the top gainer while Muscat Gases, down 5.24 per cent, was the top loser. Shares of Al Omaniya Financial Services were the most active in terms of the number of shares traded while Jazeera Steel Product was most active in terms of turnover. A total number of 702 trades were executed during the day's trading session, generating a turnover of OMR10 million, with more than 13.6 million shares changing hands. Out of 51 traded stocks, 20 advanced, 9 declined and 22 remained unchanged. At the session close, domestic investors were net sellers for OMR8 million while foreign investors were net buyers for OMR8 million followed by GCC & Arab investors for OMR72,000 worth of shares. Financial Index closed at 6,393.08 points, up 0.31 per cent. Global Investment Holding, Al Omaniya Financial Service, Ahli Bank, Oman United Insurance

and Madina Takaful were up 9.62 per cent, 2.36 per cent, 1.77 per cent, 1.58 per cent and 1.03 per cent respectively. Oman Emirates Holding, Al Sharqia Investment and Bank Muscat were down 1.61 per cent, 0.99 per cent and 0.96 per cent respectively. Industrial Index closed at 5,705.27 points, up 0.45 per cent. Gulf International Chemical, Al Anwar Ceramic, Oman Fisheries, Jazeera Steel Product and National Aluminum Product were up 7.58 per cent, 1.30 per cent, 1.22 per cent, 1.03 per cent and 0.74 per cent respectively. Services Index was up by 0.35 per cent closing at 1,701.05 points. Al Jazeera Services, Renaissance Service, Sembcorp Salalah, Al Maha Marketing and Oman Telecommunication were up 2.33 per cent, 1.42 per cent, 1.23 per cent, 1.13 per cent and 1.01 per cent respectively. Muscat Gases, Al Batinah Power, Al Suwadi Power, Oman National Engineering and Oman Investment & Financials were down 5.24 per cent, 3.70 per cent, 3.57 per cent, 1.08 per cent and 0.94 per cent respectively. –

United Securities

MUSCAT STOCK EXCHANGE

Trading Summary																
Volume	Turnover	Trades	Market Cap	Up	Down	Equal	Sec. Traded									
13,662,600	9,755,359	702	21,479,743,147	20	9	22	51									
SHARE PRICE BULLETIN FOR SUNDAY, JUNE 13																
SECURITY NAME	VOLUME	TURNOVER	TRADES	OPEN PRICE	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE PR.	PREV. CLOSE	DIFF (RD)	DIFF %	LAST PB	LAST BD	LAST OFFER	P/B VALUE	MARKET CAP	
REGULAR MARKET																
OM0000002077	AL OMANIYA FIN.S	1,755,850	227,582	101	0.129	0.131	0.127	0.130	0.127	0.003	2.362	0.127	0.127	0.135	0.100	37,951,572
OM0000002226	ALAJAZEHA SERVICES	25,000	10,120	5	0.440	0.440	0.440	0.440	0.430	0.010	2.326	0.440	0.446	0.446	0.100	26,929,880
OM0000002200	AHLI BANK	554,900	63,688	10	0.114	0.115	0.114	0.115	0.113	0.002	1.770	0.115	0.114	0.115	0.100	224,210,600
OM0000001087	OMAN UNITED INSUR.	15,500	5,998	3	0.386	0.388	0.386	0.386	0.380	0.006	1.579	0.386	0.382	0.386	0.100	38,600,000
OM0000003224	RENAISSANCE SER.	93,595	40,054	10	0.428	0.428	0.424	0.428	0.422	0.006	1.422	0.424	0.410	0.428	0.100	181,183,480
OM0000002188	AL ANWAR CERAMIC	385,535	180,526	27	0.464	0.472	0.460	0.468	0.462	0.006	1.299	0.468	0.468	0.468	0.100	102,960,000
OM0000003900	AL MAHA MARKTING	16,000	11,439	4	0.716	0.716	0.708	0.716	0.708	0.008	1.130	0.708	0.708	0.752	0.100	48,404,000
OM0000002176	JAZEERA STEEL PROD.	1,127,195	443,213	23	0.380	0.400	0.390	0.394	0.390	0.004	1.026	0.400	0.400	0.400	0.100	49,209,796
OM0000003026	OMAN TELECOM	24,921	19,996	10	0.800	0.800	0.792	0.800	0.792	0.008	1.010	0.792	0.792	0.800	0.100	600,000,000
OM0000005005	ALMAHA CERAMICS	448,812	156,542	42	0.348	0.356	0.344	0.348	0.346	0.002	0.578	0.356	0.352	0.356	0.100	19,140,000
OM0000001749	OMAN CEMENT	97,471	24,249	15	0.248	0.250	0.248	0.249	0.248	0.001	0.403	0.250	0.245	0.253	0.100	82,387,305
OM0000001418	RAYSUT CEMENT	52,334	15,542	7	0.296	0.297	0.296	0.297	0.296	0.001	0.338	0.297	0.295	0.297	0.100	59,400,000
OM0000001533	OMINVEST	5,000	1,580	1	0.316	0.316	0.316	0.316	0.316	0.000	0.000	0.316	0.316	0.328	0.100	255,256,056
OM0000001590	MUSCAT FINANCE	96,765	5,630	2	0.057	0.057	0.057	0.057	0.057	0.000	0.000	0.057	0.057	0.058	0.100	17,507,241
OM0000001772	ALANWAR INVESTMENT	1,255,500	131,715	36	0.105	0.105	0.104	0.105	0.105	0.000	0.000	0.104	0.103	0.106	0.100	21,000,000
OM0000003398	SOHAR INT. BANK	100,000	9,750	5	0.098	0.098	0.097	0.098	0.097	0.001	0.000	0.097	0.097	0.097	0.100	238,581,660
OM0000006920	VISION INSURANCE	63,897	4,658	12	0.073	0.073	0.073	0.073	0.073	0.000	0.000	0.073	0.073	0.074	0.100	7,300,000
OM0000001160	NATIONAL GAS	136,000	20,451	18	0.151	0.151	0.150	0.151	0.151	-0.001	-0.662	0.151	0.151	0.152	0.100	12,750,000
OM0000001525	OMAN INVEST & FIN.	171,085	17,966	16	0.104	0.106	0.104	0.105	0.106	-0.001	-0.943	0.105	0.105	0.108	0.100	24,885,000
OM0000002796	BANK MUSCAT	32,981	13,657	6	0.416	0.416	0.414	0.414	0.418	-0.004	-0.957	0.414	0.414	0.420	0.100	147,832,564
OM0000002440	AL SHARQIA INV.	28,000	2,800	5	0.100	0.100	0.100	0.100	0.101	-0.001	-0.990	0.100	0.100	0.100	0.100	9,000,000
Total	21	6,487,641	1,407,066	356												
Parallel Market																
OM0000003125	GLOBAL INV. H.	9,000	513	1	0.057	0.057	0.057	0.057	0.052	0.005	9.615	0.057	0.051	0.057	0.100	11,400,000
OM0000002028	GULF INT. CHEM.	253,394	36,106	30	0.137	0.145	0.137	0.142	0.132	0.010	7.376	0.145	0.143	0.145	0.100	2,862,000
OM0000004735	SEBICOOP SALALAH	104,100	8,537	10	0.082	0.083	0.082	0.082	0.081	0.001	1.235	0.082	0.082	0.083	0.100	78,274,500
OM0000001566	OMAN FISHERIES	6,100	506	2	0.083	0.083	0.083	0.083	0.082	0.001	1.220	0.083	0.083	0.086	0.100	10,375,000
OM0000004768	MADINA TAKAFUL	177,000	17,279	8	0.097	0.098	0.097	0.098	0.097	0.001	1.131	0.098	0.097	0.098	0.100	17,150,000
OM0000002275	SHELL OMAN MKK	21,000	17,472	3	0.832	0.832	0.832	0.832	0.834	0.008	0.971	0.832	0.832	0.832	0.100	79,040,000
OM0000001319	ALUMINIUM PROD.	435,500	59,535	38	0.136	0.138	0.135	0.137	0.136	0.001	0.735	0.138	0.138	0.138	0.100	4,599,289
OM0000001301	DHOHAR CATTLE	8,150	851	1	0.093	0.093	0.093	0.093	0.093	0.000	0.000	0.093	0.093	0.097	0.100	7,519,050
OM0000001485	NATIONAL BANK OMAN	540,170	106,204	10	0.197	0.197	0.195	0.197	0.197	0.000	0.000	0.197	0.196	0.197	0.100	320,311,432
OM0000001517	HSBC BANK OMAN	550,500	57,804	16	0.105	0.107	0.105	0.105	0.105	0.000	0.000	0.105	0.105	0.113	0.100	210,032,843
OM0000001962	AL MADINA INV.	253,390	5,574	13	0.022	0.022	0.022	0.022	0.022	0.000	0.000	0.022	0.022	0.023	0.100	4,557,330
OM0000002374	UNITED FINANCE	1,582,042	83,948	35	0.083	0.083	0.083	0.083	0.083	0.000	0.000	0.083	0.083	0.087	0.100	19,526,430
OM0000002549	BANK DHOHAR	100,000	12,000	3	0.120	0.120	0.120	0.120	0.120	0.000	0.000	0.120	0.120	0.127	0.100	359,562,172
OM0000003281	TAGEER FINANCE	35,000	2,695	3	0.077	0.077	0.077	0.077	0.077	0.000	0.000	0.077	0.073	0.079	0.100	19,526,430
OM0000003681	VOLTAMP ENERGY	100,729	14,105	4	0.141	0.141	0.140	0.141	0.141	0.000	0.000	0.140	0.140	0.140	0.100	11,477,788
OM0000003711	SOHAR POWER	1,129	54	2	0.048	0.048	0.047	0.047	0.047	0.000	0.000	0.047	0.045	0.047	0.100	10,387,470
OM0000004420	BANK NIZWA	24,839	2,384	6	0.085	0.086	0.085	0.086	0.086	0.000	0.000	0.085	0.085	0.086	0.100	144,000,000
OM0000004776	TAKAFUL OMAN	3,200	331	2	0.102	0.104	0.102	0.100	0.100	0.000	0.000	0.104	0.104	0.104	0.100	10,000,000
OM0000005963	PHOENIX POWER	152,706	7,432	11	0.049	0.049	0.048	0.049	0.049	0.000	0.000	0.048	0.048	0.049	0.100	71,667,472
OM0000007043	NATIONAL LIFE INS.	76,300	31,130	10	0.408	0.408	0.408	0.408	0.408	0.000	0.000	0.408	0.408	0.408	0.100	108,120,000
OM0000007084	MCT DESALINATE	967	91	2	0.094	0.094	0.094	0.090	0.090	0.000	0.000	0.094	0.089	0.094	0.100	13,999,536
OM0000008447	OMAN REIT FUND	106,650	9,829	5	0.092	0.092	0.092	0.092	0.092	0.000	0.000	0.092	0.092	0.092	0.100	60,257,252
OM0000001152	OMAN NAT. ENG.	40,000	3,680	6	0.092	0.092	0.092	0.092	0.093	-0.001	-1.075	0.092	0.091	0.094	0.100	11,960,000
OM0000001681	OMAN EMIRATES HO.	326,100	19,992	9	0.061	0.062	0.061	0.061	0.062	-0.001	-1.613	0.061	0.061	0.064	0.100	7,434,375
OM0000004933	AL SUWADI POWER	874,867	46,939	41	0.055	0.055	0.053	0.054	0.056	-0.002	-3.771	0.054	0.054	0.055	0.100	38,577,942
OM0000004925	ALBATINAH POWER	1,138,220	59,734	43	0.055	0.055	0.052	0.052	0.054	-0.002	-3.704	0.053	0.053	0.054	0.100	35,094,146
OM0000001178	MUSCAT GASES	160,800	29,122	27	0.191	0.191	0.179	0.181	0.191	-0.010	-5.236	0.179	0.179	0.188	0.100	5,430,000
Total	27	7,082,783	633,835	341												

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Contact 94887879
Email: amani.alhaj94@gmail.com

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Email: mq_199820@yahoo.co.in
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Contact No: +96891735780
Email: cia.acca1989@gmail.com

CHARTERED ACCOUNTANT (SRI LANKAN)
CA, CPA, BSc. (Accountancy & Business Finance) Special with 12 years of experience (6th year in Oman) is looking for an opening. DL, NOC are available.
GSM: 78259755

Sr. Accountant (BSc, CA Inter)
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Contact: 78072563

Software Professional
Indian female, 27 years, Software professional (MCA), having 4 years experience in MNC seeks a suitable job in Muscat. Currently on visit visa.
Contact 78037607

JOB WANTED

LOGISTIC
Young Indian male B.com graduate, PG Diploma in logistic (Air cargo and supply chain management) and Digital Marketing Valid Oman Driving License. Looking for suitable placement. Contact 79748272 Email: shazil.sadique@gmail.com

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HSE Officer with Valid Oman D/L License. 7 years experienced in Oman. Contact 94743007 (Oman), +917902565053 (India), Email: ajeesh4god@yahoo.com

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FEATURES

Herd immunity is often presented as a simple mathematical calculation, but achieving it is far from easy. Understanding how widespread immunity works is, however, key to returning to normal.

Despite vaccinations, coronavirus cases continue to rise across the globe, from the UK, India and Russia to Malaysia. With experts in Germany now talking of an impending fourth wave, many people want to know once and for all: when will this end?

Since the beginning of the pandemic, the term “herd immunity” has come to symbolise the point at which enough people will be immune to the coronavirus that we can hug each other once again, relieve our overburdened healthcare workers and say goodbye to COVID-19.

But what is this hazy holy grail exactly, and why does it seem forever out of reach?

Herd immunity: explained

Adam Kleczkowski, a professor of mathematics at the University of Strathclyde in Scotland, likens “herd immunity” to a forest fire running out of dry wood. When there is not enough left to burn, the fire runs out of fuel and disappears. When enough people are resistant to the coronavirus, either through infection or vaccination, the virus cannot spread, and the pandemic stops growing and starts to decline.

The percentage of immune people needed to achieve this level of community resistance centres on the reproductive (R) number. This is the average number of people an infected person will pass a disease on to at a certain point in time. When the R number is below 1, meaning when an infected person is not likely to infect more than one other person, the disease starts to run out of fuel and die off.

“We can achieve this by waiting long enough so most people in society have been infected, or by staying socially distant and in lockdown forever, or by vaccinating enough people,” Kleczkowski told DW. “The key thing to understand is that not everybody needs to be immune — there is a point at which enough people are immune that the fire can no longer spread,” he said.

So, what’s the key ‘point’ for the coronavirus?

At the beginning of the pandemic, scientists estimated this figure to be around 60 to 70 per cent. But throughout the last year and a half, that goal post has been shifting. Recently, experts said the percentage is closer to 80 or even 90 per cent.

That’s due to several reasons.

COVID:

Why experts say herd immunity is still out of reach

Variants pose a problem

One issue is that this critical number is dependent on how infectious a virus is — how fast it spreads. For measles, which is highly infectious, this percentage is 95 per cent, but for influenza, it can be as low as 35 per cent.

At the start of the outbreak, the R number for the coronavirus was estimated to be between 2.5 and 3. But as more infectious variants have emerged, it has become more transmissible.

The Delta variant is around 64 per cent more infectious than the Alpha (Kent) variant, first identified in Britain, which was already 50 per cent more contagious than the original coronavirus variant that spread from China.

The faster the virus spreads, the greater immunity it will take to slow the infection rate. “That shifts this number up. We might need as much as 85 per cent immunity to slow the Delta variant,” Kleczkowski said.

But, he points out, percentages such as this are only estimations. “They are based on limited data. It is not completely clear what percentage we need to reach,” he said.

Vaccination crucial to herd immunity

Kaja Abbas, assistant professor of disease modelling at the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, says vaccination is key to reaching herd immunity.

“Herd immunity through vaccination is the preferred pathway,” he told DW. “Herd immunity through natural infection will come at a colossal loss of human life and suffering,” he said.

A recent study out of Israel shows the vaccine has not only been successful in protecting vaccinated individuals from becoming seriously unwell, but also in significantly reducing transmission of the virus.

That level of immunity requires that a significant portion of the population is vaccinated, Abbas said — which also means ensuring vaccines are administered evenly across the globe. “We’re not safe until everyone — everywhere — is safe,” Kleczkowski said.

While the UK and the US are nearing full vaccination of 50 per cent of their populations, and Israel is nearing 60 per cent, just over 3 per cent of people in India and 11 per cent of Brazil’s population have received both vaccination doses — two countries where more than 350,000 people have died from COVID.

What’s more, people may also need to be re-vaccinated with a third or fourth dose to protect against new variants of the virus.

A new normalcy

Mathematical herd immunity calculations are also unable to take into account the complexities of human behaviour. Once a certain figure of immunity is achieved, it could be the case that control measures like mask wearing, physical distancing and border closures are relaxed, and as a result, new outbreaks occur and herd immunity is lost.

For these reasons, Kleczkowski says defining herd immunity using a concrete figure “is not helpful.”

Rather than focusing on whether we reach 70 or 80 per cent immunity in the population, Kleczkowski says it’s more useful to think about herd immunity as a process of stamping out the virus to eventually eliminate it.

That doesn’t mean we need to let the virus rip through communities, he adds, or live in an endless strict lockdown. Instead, he recommends maintaining a combination of control measures, such as ongoing testing and mask wearing in places where infection rates are high, in tandem with widespread vaccination and re-vaccination in response to new variants.

Even if the world cannot entirely eradicate the coronavirus — which has only been achieved once before with smallpox — experts such as Abbas and Kleczkowski say vaccines will largely protect people from the worst effects of COVID-19 if infections continue to break out into the future. —DW

ROUND-UP

Mazda takes lead in We Rate the Car Brands annual report

It is a proud moment for Mazda as it landed the top spot with Subaru and Porsche coming in second and third respectively

MUSCAT: In the We Rate the Car Brands, an annual report card for the year 2021, Mazda outshined and took the first spot.

There were some changes in the report compared to the previous years. Some brands went to the top and some took the plunge.

These changes can be accredited to the brands which consumers find the most reliable. The reliabil-



ity was added up by asking people taking part in the surveys to mention the problems they had faced with the said vehicles.

It is a proud moment for Mazda

as it landed the top spot with Subaru and Porsche coming in second and third respectively. Honda improved up to 10 brands and made it to the top five list. BMW also leapt

to become one of the top five.

Chrysler and Buick showcased a betterment in their product line and did better than their competitors, which led to them securing

a place in the top ten. The brands which experienced the most significant drops were luxury car brands; Genesis and Lincoln due to mediocre reliability.

Mazda rose to the topmost position by ticking all the boxes of the criteria. The report card was accumulated by looking at the total score achieved by each model in road-test performance, predicted reliability, owner satisfaction, and safety. Then an average was made to find out the total brand score.

To be included in the report card, the brand had to have at least two models to be tested. Fiat, Maserati, and Ram missed the mark since they didn't have the minimum number for this year. Fiat was the lowest brand last year with Alfa Romeo coming in at last.

The marking criteria was not an easy feat with the vehicles being put through more than 50 tests and evaluations for the road test only. For the predicted reliability ratings, the members reported

problems in 17 trouble areas in CR's auto surveys. In the owner satisfaction category, members mentioned whether they would buy the same vehicle again or not if they had the chance.

The safety test included an assessment of crash test results with extra points given to the brands that had proven safety features standard on all trims.

The most refreshing criterion out of all was how environmentally friendly the vehicles were. It went by the name of green choices and the vehicles that were the cleanest and least pollution emitting took the crown.

Mazda has raised the bar higher by coming on top of this prestigious ranking along with the likes of the best brands in the world. This comes off as no surprise since Mazda has always kept the consumer first and worked tirelessly to achieve the highest standards to date. With this win in the bag, the future is indeed bright for Mazda.

NATIONAL BANK OF OMAN

NBO's safety deposit boxes offer peace of mind 24/7 and more value than ever

MUSCAT: An ideal solution for keeping life's most valuable items, the National Bank of Oman (NBO)'s safety deposit boxes combine state-of-the-art security and unparalleled convenience 24/7.

Available at its head office in Azaiba, this month the bank is offering up to 60 per cent off of its annual rates, exclusively for its Mazaya and Sadaracustomers. NBO Account-holders can now obtain a safe deposit box for as little as OMR 75, while new customers can avail of one from just OMR 50, with a limited number of boxes available.

Available in medium and large sizes, the safety deposit boxes offer the ultimate protection through a combination of card access, PIN and biometric authentication.



Accessible around the clock, 365 days a year, and conveniently located at the bank's headquarters in Azaiba, the boxes also offer a joint

ownership option, making them perfect for families.

Committed to providing an enhanced and seamless banking ex-

perience, NBO continues to bring compelling and innovative financial solutions closer to its customer base across the Sultanate.

National Bank of Oman, the first local commercial bank in the Sultanate of Oman, was founded in 1973 and is today one of the leading banks in Oman. The bank serves its customers in Oman through 60 Branches, more than 180 ATM/FFM/CCDMs as well as two branches in UAE.

The bank is committed to community improvement through its corporate citizenship programmes and is an active supporter of a range of worthy causes in Oman, with emphasis on health and human services, civic, education, environment, youth, women, arts and culture.

MINI-SERIES CAMPAIGN



Renault Koleos impresses social media influencers with its commendable features

MUSCAT: Renault Oman has launched a mini-series campaign on social media in association with local Omani influencers to promote its popular brands.

Participating in this campaign Oman's popular social media influencers @zakoorr and @_budoor have given rave reviews for the Renault Koleos praising it for its varied attractive features. Lauding its superior performance, local Omani influencers husband and wife duo of @zakoorr and @_budoor described Renault Koleos as a distinctive and advanced car.

They particularly liked features such as the all mode 4x4-i transmission, 8.7" touchscreen tablet with R-Link 2, roomy cabin, best-in-class rear knee room, wide door opening and drive assistance technology.

Extolling the all mode 4x4-i transmission available on Koleos, the influencers praised the all-wheel drive system for its uniqueness. Commending the roomy cabin, they applauded the best-in-class rear knee room and wide door opening.

A spokesperson for Renault Oman, from the house of Suhail Bahwan Automobiles, said, "We are delighted to hear great commendations for Renault Koleos. Emphatic, charismatic, feature rich and packed with safety attributes, Renault Koleos has been capturing everyone's attention in Oman. With its athletic profile, robust front end, roomy seats, taut lines underscored with chrome, Renault Koleos allows owners to take their journey with confidence. The Koleos is considered a strong SUV contender with premium style and plenty of safety tech on board."

Renault Koleos particularly amazes car enthusiasts who value distinctive design, advanced technology, high reliability and superior performance. Koleos exudes elegance with its strong lines and signature Renault design cues. The carefully sculpted bonnet on the Koleos flows seamlessly from the stylish, chrome-



highlighted grille to the sweeping taillight design.

Featuring efficient engines, safety attributes and onboard technologies, Renault Koleos has been winning the hearts of customers in Oman. The SUV is marked for its fuel efficiency and infotainment options too.

Renault Koleos LE model has LED fog lamps with chrome borders, new 19-inch Kavea alloy wheels and a resplendent new front grill. The Renault Koleos SE has been augmented with Sand Grey leather seats, tilt adjustment front headrests, one touch easy folding rear seats with two-step reclining and power seats, electric power seats for driver and passenger, 18-inch Argonauta two tone alloy wheels, auto folding rear view mirrors with door lock, auto-dimming rear view mirror. It also supports Apple car play and android auto.

At the rear, Renault's trademark style is again prominently on display. The wide, horizontal tail lights amplify the impression of width (1,843mm) and draw the eye to the Renault logo on the tailgate. Chrome inserts set into the lower part of the rear bumper take the shape of twin exhaust tail pipes, a detail that is complementary with Koleos' overall exterior design.

OPINION

Inventions, innovations and motivation

MUSCAT: We live in the age of knowledge economy, where most workers are of the knowledge worker type - a worker whose main capital is knowledge. We say that a knowledge worker thinks for a living. And because of this new reality, most developing countries find themselves investing heavily in sectors of the economy that enable knowledge-based economic activities.

Important to this discussion is that we understand the difference between innovations and inventions. An invention is a great idea created by a great thinker often for the thrill of making a breakthrough discovery in a specific field of knowledge. An innovation, on the other hand, is an application of some invention created often by a normal person for the purpose of providing a commercial solution that serves the customer needs of some industry. For example, for the hi-tech and healthcare industries, innovation is not an option, it is the lifeblood. The good news is that human inventions, by their very purpose, are available for free to anyone and that a single invention can lead to countless innovations. For example, Newton's inventions of the laws of motion and gravity started the age of the machine and the industrial revolution. Maxwell's explanations of the laws of electricity and magnetism paved the way to the high standard of living we all enjoy today because of the availability of electricity and instant communication. Thus, it is fair to say that human knowledge, as we know it, is the culmination of hundreds of years of human inventions; and that human civilisation is the culmination of hundreds of years of human innovations.

On a yearly basis, the Global Innovation Index (GII) of the World Intellectual Property Organisation (WIPO) ranks economies around the world based on their innovation capabilities and performance. The score given to a particular economy is the average of two other scores: one captures main pillars of innovation enablers,



Fouad Chedid

called Innovation Inputs; and another captures innovative activities within the economy, called Innovation Outputs. In the GII 2020, where 131 economies were featured, Oman scored 68th on Innovation Inputs, 109th on Innovation Outputs, and 84th overall. The recent EJAAD platform where universities are invited to propose solutions to industry challenges is a welcomed move to improve the innovation outputs of Oman. However, lessons learned from successful innovative economies point clearly to the changing role of top management in creating an environment conducive for innovation within their organisation. Understanding the issues that motivate the knowledge worker and the skills expected within the organisation is key to the knowledge worker's effectiveness and to that of their organization, and consequently to the Innovation Outputs Index of their national economy.

What motivates a knowledge worker?

The father of modern American management, Peter Drucker, answered this question in 1963 in a management classic entitled The Effective Executive. In his book, Drucker writes "The knowledge

worker is rapidly becoming the major resource of the developed countries. He is becoming the major investment; for education is the most expensive investment of them all." He then goes on to explain that knowledge workers cannot be managed in the traditional sense. They can only be supported and must be made responsible for their contributions at the level of standards they set for themselves. Thus, top management must understand that today's workers must be given enough opportunities to think on their own. And that this is the only way for them to put their knowledge to use and be able to contribute. It is important for top management to understand that today's worker biggest motivation is their contribution. To be able to contribute is the way for today's worker to be effective. Top management should be there to provide support and should only be concerned with results.

What we just described the knowledge worker must be expected from top management executives as well; for the executive is the most decisive knowledge worker. Drucker writes "The key to effective knowledge worker is effective executive. Executive effectiveness is a country's one hope

to make modern society productive economically."

What skills are required within an organisation to foster innovation?

We now know that successful knowledge work, and ultimately innovation, requires a knowledge worker who has gained solid knowledge in a specific field and is skilled in problem-solving and critical thinking. Unfortunately, it is no longer a secret that universities, in general, fail to do a good job when it comes to teaching problem solving and critical thinking. This is an area where universities must pay greater attention to. At Al Sharqiyah University, we have recently introduced a new certificate consisting of three courses in leadership, critical thinking and problem solving, and communication skills that we want all our students to take by the time they complete their degree. Another requirement for an effective knowledge work environment is for management to have a proper internal communication policy. It is important that executives communicate constantly with their staff to keep them up-to-date with any changes in strategic directions, and to make sure that each unit within the organisation is aware of the achievements and challenges of other units. Such kind of knowledge sharing is essential for knowledge workers to identify new opportunities for innovation. We should all learn from Google's TGIF meetings, a forum initiated by Google in 1999 (limited to once a month from 2020), where Google's founders, Larry Page and Sergey Brin, had held weekly meetings with hundreds of thousands of Google's employees throughout the world to discuss their concerns and listen to their new ideas in an open and free dialogue.

The writer, Fouad Chedid, is currently the Vice Chancellor of Al Sharqiyah University. He has taught at several universities in the USA, Japan, Lebanon, and Oman.



ROUND-UP

Alizz Islamic Bank provides vaccines for its employees and their families

Ahead of the campaign, a lot of health awareness drive was made internally about the importance of taking the vaccine and following the necessary precautionary measures



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The safety of our staff, as well as the safety of their families, is our highest priority

Mohammed Al Balushi
DGM - Chief Human Resources Officer of Alizz Islamic Bank



MUSCAT: Alizz Islamic Bank, in coordination with the Ministry of Health, started its vaccination campaign for the bank employees and their families against COVID-19. This comes as part of the bank's mission to provide a healthy environment for employees and provide everything that would ensure their safety and the safety of their families.

Ahead of the campaign, a lot of health awareness drive was made internally about the importance of taking the vaccine and following the necessary precautionary measures.

Speaking on this occasion, Mohammed Al Balushi, DGM - Chief Human Resources Officer of Alizz Islamic Bank said, "The safety of our staff, as well as the safety of their families, is our highest priority.

Our precautionary actions demonstrate a firm commitment to deploying appropriate resources to help maintain a healthy environment for both."

Al Balushi added, "Following the protocols that have been advised by the Ministry of Health is a national responsibility that we all need to adhere to, I would also emphasise that information and news should only be taken seriously.

ously from the relevant authorities' communications channels, we need to work together to ensure the safety of everyone in Oman."

Alizz Islamic Bank is continuously monitoring the ever-changing circumstances surrounding the coronavirus, and all Alizz Islamic Bank branches have been fully briefed on essential preparatory and prevention measures. These ranges from hygiene measures,

including increased cleaning and sanitizing frequency, as well as guidelines on how to handle suspected or confirmed cases of COVID-19 in cooperation with the local authorities. The bank is following all the recommendations of the Ministry of Health and the Supreme Committee tasked with the mechanism to tackle the developments of coronavirus and all relevant authorities to ensure the actions taken are comprehensive

and suitable.

The bank had already taken a preventive measure ahead of time by implementing the Business Continuity Plan (BCP). As part of the business continuity plan, a secondary team was transferred on March 15, 2020, to the bank's business continuity site to ensure that services are not interrupted, in case of any adverse situations and that customers' banking requirements continue to be served.

PROMOTION

Toyota's Biggest Excitement campaign ending soon



MUSCAT: If you are a Toyota fan and want to make the most of the Biggest Excitement and get more than you expect, then the time is now. Own a Toyota and get a chance to win a Supra as grand raffle and raffle of two New Camry.

Customers walking into the Toyota showroom too have a

chance to win seven iPhone 12 in walk-in & win a raffle. Besides these are cash gift from OMR 700 up to OMR 5400, Service 2 Years / 20,000 km, 5 Years / 50,000 km (Whichever is earlier), 1 Year Insurance, Interest 0% Up to 2 Years or 1.99% Up to 4 Years or 2.99 % up to 5 Years (On Yaris sedan and

Yaris hatchback models) and an Assured Gift Voucher.

(Prospective buyers may be advised that the benefits vary between model variants, model year and manufacturing year. Terms & Conditions apply. Visit the showroom for exact details. The campaign ends on June 17.)

COMMITMENT TO HEALTH, SAFETY

Kempinski Hotel Muscat begins its vaccination drive

MUSCAT: As part of the commitment to the health and safety of guests and team members, Kempinski Hotel Muscat has announced the start of COVID-19 vaccination of their team in collaboration with the Ministry of Health and Oman International Hospital, the team will be vaccinated this week in two days period delivering 150 vaccine doses per hour at the hospital.

"We have been carefully following the rules and guidelines implemented by the supreme committee dealing with COVID-19 and the Ministry of Heritage and Tourism since the reopening last year. We have also implemented the Kempinski own safety measures



(white glove services) as a double safeguard to ensure our guests and team members safety and well-being during the pandemic," said Carsten Wiegandt, General Manager of Kempinski Hotel Muscat.

"We have been in touch with the

health authorities and local health institutions to secure the vaccine for our team members and we are pleased to start the vaccination today, this is an important step for us to protect our guests and team members and prevent the spread of COVID-19."

This initiative comes as part of our continued efforts to attract local and foreign tourism to benefit the destination and the local community.

Nestled within Al Mouj Muscat's community and encompassing over 6 km of stunning coastline, Kempinski Hotel Muscat is an unparalleled luxury destination in the capital of Oman.

HASSLE-FREE SERVICE

Khedmah phone app: Best option to recharge prepaid electricity meter

MUSCAT: As part of its ongoing efforts to meet clients' aspirations and enhance the quality of its services, Oman Investment and Finance Company (OIFC)'s Khedmah app constantly seeks to enrich its customer experience by providing hassle-free and flexible services that can be availed with a push of a button, such as the recharge of the prepaid electricity meter.

Over the past period, prepaid electricity meters have been gaining acceptance among consumers. To meet the high demand for this service, Khedmah provides easy electricity recharge solutions to customers that can be obtained easily without the need to travel outside to get the vouchers.

"Khedmah always endeavours to keep pace with community' needs by providing comprehensive and easy services that meet people requirements such as prepaid electricity meter recharge and many more. Customers can benefit from these solutions anytime and anywhere from various e-channels that include the Khedmah phone app and the company's website.

"Utilising these channels save time, efforts and maintain public safety especially during these unprecedented circumstances that the Sultanate is going through," said Mohammed Al Ghabshi, Regional Manager of Khedmah Branches in Muscat.

Al Ghabshi further indicated that Khedmah provides the recharge service for prepaid electricity meters of all the electricity companies across Oman.

To avail of the service, consumers only need to download the Khedmah app and follow simple steps that take less than a minute until obtaining the recharge code. This service is also available in all Khedmah branches and kiosks, which gives people multiple easy options to benefit from the service.

Established in 1979, OIFC is



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Khedmah always endeavours to keep pace with community needs by providing comprehensive and easy services that meet people requirements such as prepaid electricity meter recharge and many more. Customers can benefit from these solutions anytime and anywhere from various e-channels that include the Khedmah phone app and the company's website

Mohammed Al Ghabshi
Regional Manager of Khedmah Branches in Muscat

one of the leading Investment and Services Company and specialises in billing, collection & debt factoring for electricity, water and telecom services in the Sultanate of Oman. The company's various branches and e-payment channels allow customers to easily pay their electricity, water and tel-

communications bills, recharge phone, electricity prepaid meter bills as well as making payment to the Public Authority for Social Insurance (PASI). Through its various branches across the Sultanate, the company also provides customer support related to these services.

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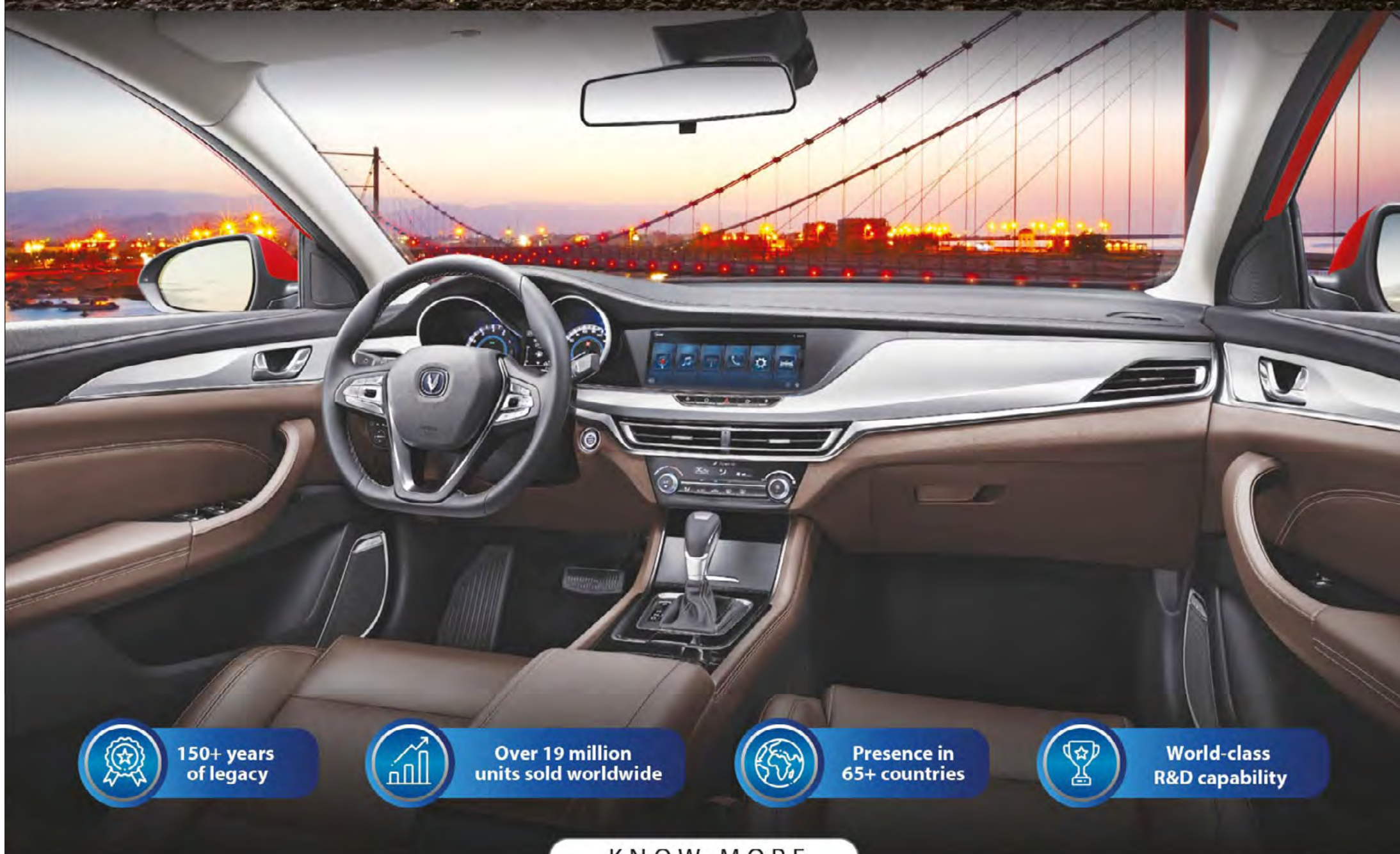
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Showroom Location:
Suhail Bahwan Automobiles Premises, Al Qurum.

www.changanoman.com

[f](#) [@](#) [changanoman](#)

800 50800

9464 1010

*@Easy monthly installments are calculated based on 20% down payment for 6 year loan tenure for the respective CHANGAN basic model inclusive of 5% VAT. Subject to credit approvals from Banks. Images shown are for illustrative purpose only and actual may vary as per the model variant. To know more, please visit the Changan Showroom.

Cherish the moment

NOW OPEN

in Qurum and Muscat Hills



Pick from a wide array of exquisite flowers and watch our floral artistes compose them into beautiful arrangements. With gifts, boxes, vases, forever flowers, house plants and artificial flowers to choose from you can never run out of gifting options. Deliveries are also available in the Muscat area with personalized options for events or home beautification.

**For enquiries call/ whatsapp
79760668 or visit us today!**



FLORA D'LITE

Locations:

Next to Funzone
Qurum

Opposite Spinneys
Links building
Muscat Hills

 @FloraDlite