

**OMAN PARTICIPATES IN
GLOBAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP
CONFERENCE IN MELBOURNE**

MUSCAT: The Sultanate of Oman is participating in the Global Entrepreneurship Conference 2023 which is being held in Melbourne, Australia. **>A3**



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HM GREETES PRESIDENT OF NEPAL

MUSCAT: His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik has sent a cable of greetings to President Ram Chandra Poudel of the Federal Democratic Republic of Nepal on his country's Constitution Day. In the cable, His Majesty the Sultan expressed his sincere sentiments and best wishes of good health and happiness to President Ram Chandra Poudel. His Majesty also wished the people of Nepal further progress and prosperity. — **ONA**



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TOP THREE INSIDE STORIES

OMAN
Rare and complex surgery conducted



1 A medical team from Royal Hospital's Surgery Department succeeded in performing a complex operation to remove the adrenal glands and colon of a patient. **>A3**

WORLD
'People looking at leaders for action'

2 Leaders of a world fractured by war, climate change and persisting inequality on Tuesday gathered under one roof to hear the United Nations chief summon them to take united action on humanity's huge challenges. **>A6**

MARKET
OQGN to hold eight roadshows in Oman

3 OQGN Company will be organising eight roadshows within the framework of its intention to inaugurate its initial public offering (IPO). **>B1**

UN HEADQUARTERS

Delegated by HM The Sultan, Sayyid Badr heads Oman's delegation at Sustainable Development Goals Summit

NEW YORK: Assigned by His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik, Foreign Minister Sayyid Badr Hamad Al Busaidi headed the Sultanate of Oman's delegation at the 2023 Sustainable Development Goals Summit, which kicked off yesterday at the United Nations (UN) Headquarters in New York. At the opening of the summit, Sayyid Badr delivered Oman's speech during which he conveyed His Majesty the Sultan's greetings to the conferees, as well as His Majesty's appreciation for the efforts made to organise this major summit. Sayyid Badr pointed out that the event is taking place at prime time for joint efforts to improve all aspects of life, notably towards the realisation of the sustainable development goals (SDGs) in all sectors.



Sayyid Badr said that Oman is exerting tangible efforts to achieve the goals of sustainable development, and, accordingly made technology, science and digital transition an essential part of its national strategies and legislation.

He added that Oman will submit its second voluntary national report in 2024, which will highlight the country's strong commitment to achieving the target objectives and maintaining comprehensive progress in various social, econom-

ic, scientific, environmental and renewable energy fields. Sayyid Badr stressed that Oman's march to achieve sustainable development goals, as stipulated in Oman Vision 2040, reflects the country's strong commitment to science, technology and innovation. Oman's action also consolidates international efforts and cooperation to transfer knowledge and technology and facilitate investment and employment opportunities to ensure a safe and prosperous future for all, said Sayyid Badr. In this context, he expressed the conviction that integration and co-operation among various sectors constitute a necessity and require good understanding of challenges and opportunities, as well as the development of innovative solutions. — **ONA**

AIR TRAVEL

More travel options to India and Pakistan from October

Times News Service

MUSCAT: Travellers to India and Pakistan will have more flying options, come October 1, with Oman Air, the national carrier of the Sultanate of Oman, and SalamAir, the low-budget airlines of Oman, announcing resumption and new routes to the sub-continent.

While India-bound passengers from Oman welcomed the resumption of Oman Air flights to the north Indian city of Lucknow and the southern Indian city of Thiruvananthapuram, SalamAir will provide an option to Pakistan-bound travellers with flights to Peshawar. This will be the fourth destination of Salam Air to Pakistan as they currently fly to Multan, Karachi and Sialkot.

Oman Air had opened the bookings for both the cities and said that they would be resuming direct flights to Lucknow and Thiruvananthapuram from October 1.

The resumption of direct flights will provide better options for travellers to the two cities ahead of the festival season in India in late October and November.

It may be mentioned that Oman Air had announced earlier this year that it would resume flights to Lucknow and Thiruvananthapuram with 12-weekly flights from Muscat to Lucknow and 5-weekly flights between Muscat and Thiruvananthapuram.

Oman Air currently flies directly to New Delhi, Mumbai, Chennai, Hyderabad, Goa, Bengaluru, Kochi and Kozhikode. The addition of two more destinations – Lucknow and Thiruvanan-



thapuram - is part of their expansion plans for 2023.

It demonstrates Oman Air's ongoing efforts to contribute to the economy of the Sultanate of Oman while also exhibiting its drive for increased global reach through its award-winning services and products, along with its signature Omani hospitality both in the air and on the ground.

Welcoming the resumption of direct flights to Lucknow, Prakash Singh, a Muscat-based native of Lucknow city, said: "It is wonderful news. Oman Air's connectivity from Muscat to Lucknow also caters to a lot of expatriate population living in Uttar Pradesh. And the resumption of flights from October 1 means that we will have better options while planning my trip during the forthcoming festivals of Dussehra and Diwali in October-November."

Ismail Khan, another Nizwa-based expatriate, who hails from the city of Gorakhpur in Uttar Pradesh, said: "The resumption of Oman Air flight to Lucknow will

make things much easier for us. We are happy and hope the prices are not very high, which is at times the case with direct Oman Air flights."

Shiju Mohammed, a Muscat-based Keralite, said that resumption of Oman Air flight to Thiruvananthapuram "is a blessing for people living around the city". "We already have direct Oman Air flights from Muscat to Kochi and Kozhikode, two major airports in Kerala and this third destination will cater to the needs of the large Keralites in Oman."

SalamAir to fly to Munich, Peshawar

In a related development, SalamAir, the low-budget carrier of Oman, announced that it would be beginning direct flights from Muscat to the German city of Munich from September 30.

The twice-a-week flights will operate every Wednesday and Saturday with the flight departing Muscat at 14.45 and reaching Munich at 19.35. **>A4**

SCHOOL BUSES WITH NEW SAFETY FEATURES SET TO MAKE DEBUT



The new buses are expected to be rolled out in Oman's domestic market by the start of 2024



Dr. Ibrahim Ali Al Balushi, CEO of Karwa Motors. — **ONA**

MUSCAT: Each school day, thousands of children ride school buses across the Sultanate of Oman. Despite the safety measures, there have been tragic road accidents involving school buses in Oman. With children at risk, it's important to ensure safe and secure school buses.

Karwa Motors Company, the leading Omani company in the bus manufacturing sector, on Tuesday launched its latest model of school buses that is designed in accordance with the highest safety standards to ensure the safety of students while on the move. The latest school buses are expected to be rolled out in Oman's domestic market by the start of 2024.

Dr. Ibrahim Ali Al Balushi, CEO of Karwa Motors told Oman News Agency (ONA) that Karwa school bus will be equipped with the latest safety devices and systems that are compatible with the system of "Darb Assalama" (safe journey), which was approved by

"The school bus will feature high-quality air conditioning system, safety doors lock, and a distinctive design of the side doors with a sensor system"

the Ministry of Education.

Al Balushi pointed out that the step embodies Karwa's commitment to ensuring the safety of students and advancing the require-

ments of educational institutions.

The top official of Karwa Motors Company added that the company will provide spare parts for the vehicles for a period of not less than 10 years, along with high-standard regular maintenance and after-sales services in all governorates of Oman.

Al Balushi said the new school bus production comes as part of its commitment to providing transportation solutions that are compatible with the requirements of the concerned authorities in the Sultanate of Oman and the regional market.

He added: "We designed the school bus after studying all the challenges of the school transportation sector in terms of public safety and its requirements. The bus will accommodate 23 students and the seating will have compatibility with Gulf Cooperation Council standards. It will also be equipped with internal and external surveillance cameras, a safe arrangement of passenger seats, the presence of an emergency port and a clear vision for the driver and passengers, and an automatic fire extinguishing system.

"The school bus will also feature high-quality air conditioning, safety doors lock, and a distinctive design of the side doors with a sensor system. It will also carry first aid boxes, an external sensor system, a bus location tracking system via GPS technology, and a system to monitor driver performance." **>A4**

OMAN DELIVERS OVER 80 TONNES HUMANITARIAN AID TO LIBYA

The Sultanate of Oman has delivered more than 80 tonnes of relief and medical aid to Libya as a result of the floods that recently swept the country, Oman Charitable Organisation (OCO), stated.



PRAYER
TIMINGS

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Asr.....	3:32pm
Maghrib.....	6:11pm
Isha.....	7:22pm
Fajr (Tomorrow).....	4:40am

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Oman chairs major GCC-British ministerial meeting in New York

The meeting was held within the context of the 78th session of the United Nations General Assembly in New York and Oman was represented by Foreign Minister Sayyid Badr Hamad Al Busaidi

NEW YORK: The Sultanate of Oman on Tuesday chaired a joint ministerial meeting between the GCC foreign ministers and James Cleverly, British Foreign Secretary. The meeting was held within the context of the 78th session of the United Nations General Assembly in New York.

At the meeting, Oman was represented by Foreign Minister Sayyid Badr Hamad Al Busaidi, Chairman of the current session of the Gulf Ministerial Council. The meeting was attended by the GCC Secretary General.

The meeting reviewed relations between GCC states and the United Kingdom and explored ways of expanding areas of bilateral cooperation. It laid emphasis on consolidating ties in the sectors of trade, investment, renewable energy, education and the transfer of sciences and knowledge.

The ministers commended the progress made in advancing rela-



tions and underscored the need to expand and diversify common areas of action to realize their shared interests.

The two sides also exchanged views on a number of current international and regional issues. They underlined the significance of promoting dialogue and respecting the sovereignty of the international law and the UN Charter in a manner that consolidates world peace and stability.

Arab ministerial consultative meeting

The Sultanate of Oman on Tuesday took part in the Arab ministerial consultative meeting of foreign ministers, who convened within the context of the 78th session of the United Nations General Assembly held in New York.

Oman's delegation was headed by Foreign Minister Sayyid Badr Hamad Al Busaidi.

The meeting, which was chaired by Sameh Shoukry, Minister of Foreign Affairs in the Arab Republic of Egypt, dealt with means of coordinating Arab stance about issues on the General Assembly's agenda for the 78th session and priorities for joint Arab action, most notably the Palestinian cause.



Caribbean States foreign ministers

The Sultanate of Oman on Tuesday chaired a meeting of GCC foreign ministers with their counterparts in the Association of Caribbean States. The meeting was held within the context of the 78th session of the United Nations (UN) General Assembly in New York.

At the meeting, Oman was represented by Foreign Minister Sayyid Badr Hamad Al Busaidi, Chairman of the current session of the GCC Ministerial Council. The meeting was attended by the GCC Secretary General.

The two sides stressed their

common keenness to engage in active cooperation, especially in economic, commercial and tourism fields. They agreed to exchange expertise and promote investments in various sectors, including food security, energy and the environment.

The two sides signed a memorandum of cooperation (MoC) and espoused a joint action plan between the GCC and the Association of Caribbean States. The meeting identified the main goals and mechanisms for political dialogue, trade facilitation and promotion of investment and tourism cooperation.



President of International Peace Institute

Sayyid Badr Hamad Al Busaidi, Foreign Minister held a meeting with Prince Zeid Ra'ad Al Hussein, President of the International Peace Institute, on the sidelines of the Sultanate of Oman's participation in the 78th session of the UN General Assembly (UNGA78) in New York.

The meeting addressed a number of global issues, such as the cli-

mate change and efforts to underscore the strategic importance of achieving permanent peace in the Middle East, in addition to restoring the Palestinian people's right of establishing their independent state with Jerusalem as its capital.

The meeting was attended by Dr. Mohammed Awad Al Hassan, the Sultanate of Oman's Permanent Representative to the United Nations (UN).

— ONA

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OMAN TAKING PART IN AMMAN BOOK FAIR

The Sultanate of Oman, represented by the Ministry of Information and the Ministry of Culture, Sports and Youth, is taking part in Amman International Book Fair, which will be held in the Kingdom of Jordan during 21-30 September 2023. The participation comes within the framework of cultural exchange and cooperation between the two countries. It also aims to enhance cultural communication between Omani and Jordanian publishing houses. Oman's pavilion at the book fair sees a great turnaround of visitors annually. It contains many publications that span various categories, such as history, literature, culture, religion, medicine and astronomy, among others. — ONA



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FIVE-HOUR SURGERY

Royal Hospital conducts complex surgery to remove adrenal glands and colon

MUSCAT: A specialised medical team from Royal Hospital's Surgery Department succeeded in performing a complex operation to remove the adrenal glands and colon of a patient who was suffering severe high blood pressure due to a tumour in the suprarenal glands and acute inflammation of the colon. The surgery took about five hours.

Dr. Amr Redha, Head of the Department of General Surgery at the Royal hospital, Consultant endocrine surgeon, told Oman News Agency (ONA) that such operations are considered rare and complex. The dual surgery was conducted simultaneously, he said.

Dr. Amr pointed out that the gland removed in the right part of the body weighed 100 grams, while the one on the left weighed 3kg — highly disproportionate to the normal size of about 40 grams.

Dr. Amr explained that such cases require special care, since they involve controlling blood pressure while maintaining the body's hydration and protecting it from dehydration. This surgery also required keeping the pressure on the colon under control by removing the distension through endoscopy, he observed. "In addition, such surgeries involve taking other precautions before the patient undergoes surgery, if the patient's clinical condition so disposes," Dr. Amr said. — ONA



ARAB TOURISM ORGANISATION



Arab countries' position in global tourism reviewed

MUSCAT: Salim Mohammed Al Mahrouqi, Minister of Heritage and Tourism received here on Tuesday Dr. Bandar Fahd Al Fahid, President of the Arab Tourism Organisation (ATO).

The meeting reviewed the current procedures for registering the city of Sur as the Arab Tourism Capital for next year, according to the nomination file that was submitted to the secretariat of the Council of Arab Tourism Ministers and the Arab Tourism Organisation.

The two sides underlined the importance of highlighting the Arab world's position in global tourism and means of utilising it, in addition to discussing the training plan presented by the ATO and the proposal of investment programme in cooperation with banking institutions.

On his turn, the Heritage and Tourism Minister reviewed the comprehensive tourism development plan in Oman and future plans for the tourism sector that come in line with the objectives of Oman Vision 2040.

The meeting was attended by a number of officials from both sides. — ONA



ENTREPRENEURSHIP MEET

Oman takes part in global conference in Melbourne

MUSCAT: The Sultanate of Oman is participating in the Global Entrepreneurship Conference 2023 which is being held in Melbourne, Australia.

The Sultanate of Oman is participating in the Global Entrepreneurship Conference 2023 in Melbourne, Australia, which was launched on Tuesday under the slogan "Change Your World" to exchange ideas and experiences among participating entrepreneurs from around the globe, and to learn about the latest innovations and trends in the world of entrepreneurship.

The Sultanate of Oman's participation in the global conference comes through two start-up companies with the support of the Small and Medium Enterprises Development Authority, which is CureTech, which specialises in medical technologies, and iLab Marin, which specialises in transforming and developing marine sectors using innovative technologies.

The four-day conference is a global event and the largest gathering of male and female entrepreneurs in the world. It includes many specialised workshops in this field, hosting institutions supporting the entrepreneurship sector.

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Winners of Falling Walls Lab announced

The winners will participate in the global Falling Walls Lab Finale as a representative of the Sultanate of Oman

MUSCAT: The Ministry of Higher Education, Research and Innovation, in collaboration with the Falling Walls Foundation in Germany announced the winners of the Falling Walls Lab Oman 2023 competition at Innovation Park Muscat on Tuesday.

The 21 finalists of the Falling Walls Lab Oman competition, who have been selected out of the 95 projects that applied to the competition this year, presented their research projects and business models, covering different disciplines, in a duration of three minutes each in front of a high-level competition jury for the final evaluation round.

Out of the 21 projects, the best three projects were announced as winners. The winning projects went to 'Breaking the Wall of Methane Biosynthesis' by Shabib



Al Rashdi (National University of Science and Technology), 'Breaking the Wall of Lost Heat in Solar Cells' by Anfal Al Busaidi (Sultan Qaboos University), and 'Breaking the Wall of Aging Minds: AI-Enhanced Diagnostics' by Abdulah Al Ghailani (Oman Medical

Specialty Board).

The winners will participate in the global Falling Walls Lab Finale as a representative of the Sultanate of Oman on 7 November 2023 and attend the Falling Walls Science Summit on 7-9 November 2023 in Berlin, Germany.

The Ministry of Higher Education, Research and Innovation has participated annually in the Falling Walls Lab competition since 2016.

The Falling Walls Lab competition aims at boosting innovative ideas and business models among researchers and entrepreneurs across different fields.

The competition also provides a platform for up-and-coming researchers to meet up with some of the best accomplished scholars, thus, offering a wonderful opportunity for emerging researchers and entrepreneurs from varying disciplines to expand their horizon and spike their interest in the research field even further through the Falling Walls Lab competition. — ONA

BILATERAL TIES



Oman and Switzerland celebrate 50 years of diplomatic relations

MUSCAT: The Foreign Ministry on Tuesday held a ceremony celebrating the 50th anniversary of establishing diplomatic relations between the Sultanate of Oman and the Swiss Confederation. Sheikh Khalifa Ali Al Harthy, Undersecretary of the Foreign Ministry for Political Affairs underscored that the two countries' leaderships accord attention to bilateral relations and means of advancing them. He also said that both sides are working on boosting relations in various economic, business and investment fields.

Al Harthy valued the Swiss Confederation's role in the global forefront, being a country that hosts many international organisations, as well as its role as a me-



diator internationally.

The two countries, he affirmed, share common interests, including their role internationally in bringing conflicting parties to tables of dialogue in a bid to enhance security and stability. — ONA

AVIATION

< FROM A1 Twice a week flights to Peshawar

It would return from Munich the same day, starting at 20.20 and arriving in Muscat the next day at 04.50.

The airlines also announced that it would begin operating flights twice a week to the Pakistani city of Peshawar, beginning

on October 1.

The flight will depart Muscat on every Sunday and Wednesday at 23.50 and land in Peshawar at 03.25. The return flight from Peshawar will start at 04.10 and land in Muscat at 06.00 every Monday and Thursday.

SCHOOL BUSES

< FROM A1 Buses to be available in local market by 2024

Al Balushi said: "We expect Karwa school buses to be available in the local market starting at the beginning of next year."

It may be mentioned that Karwa Motors Company began its production at its factory in the Special Economic Zone of Duqm

last year.

A joint venture

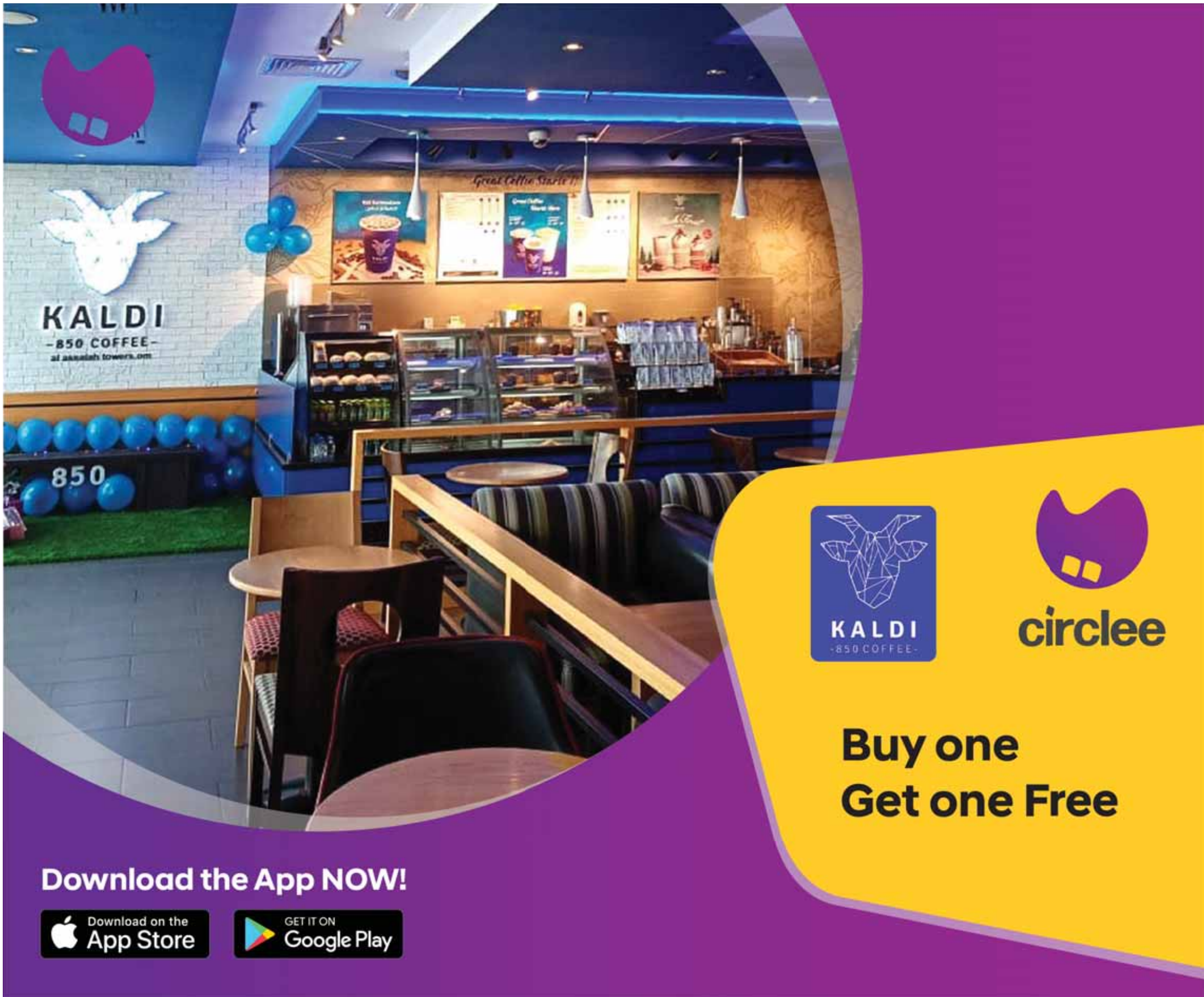
The investment value of Karwa Motors stands at OMR71 million, as it is a joint venture between Oman Investment Authority (30 percent) and Mowasalat Qatar,

the state-owned transport company of Qatar (70 percent).

The factory is established on an area of 568,000sqm and is designed to produce three different types of buses: city buses, school buses, and intercity buses, ranging in size from 8 to 12 metres

with a seating capacity ranging from 25-55.

The Karwa Motors Company's factory production capacity is around 700 buses per year and the Duqm facility also provided buses to Qatar during the FIFA World Cup 2022.





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JOINT COOPERATION

Meeting reviews recommendations of the GCC Supreme Council decisions

MUSCAT: The Sultanate of Oman, represented by the Ministry of Labour, on Tuesday chaired the 9th meeting of GCC Ministers of Civil Service and Labour.

The meeting saw the participation of the GCC secretariat general and the Executive Office of GCC Labour Ministers.

The meeting discussed the recommendations that were submitted by the ministerial committees to the undersecretaries of the respective ministries—with a view to the decisions of the GCC Supreme Council.

The meeting also looked into the coordination of topics to be

presented at international meetings and issues related to joint cooperation in the fields of civil service and labour, among other matters.

Khalid Ali Al Sunaidi, Assistant Secretary for Economic and Development Affairs at the GCC Secretariat General, delivered a speech in which he extended his thanks and gratitude to His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik, Chairman of the current session of the GCC Supreme Council, for enhancing the joint GCC march and upgrading it in all fields, including civil service and labour sectors. — **ONA**



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ECONOMIC COOPERATION

OCCI hosts Oman-Tunisia Business Forum

MUSCAT: Oman Chamber of Commerce and Industry (OCCI) organized here on Tuesday the Oman-Tunisia Business Forum.

The event highlighted several sectors, namely transport, logistics, tourism, electric industries, food industries, renewable energy and safety and security.

The forum aims to boost economic cooperation and expand

business opportunities between the two countries.

Exchange of expertise

It also targets providing opportunities for companies and investors to exchange expertise and experiences, as well as strike new partnerships through the B2B meetings held on the side-lines of the event. — **ONA**





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The last date for submission of offers is on Tuesday, 2359 hours detailed date on the above table, accompanied by a bid bond issued by any local bank in Oman (equivalent to 1% of the total tender value, for the SI # 1 cash deposit of RO. 500/- on our account and send email to the above email seeking your deposit receipt. The bid bond/deposit cash receipt must be valid for 120 days from the last date of submission of offers and ORIGINAL bid bond/Deposit cash receipt must be submitted on the tender box at the reception on our Administration Building, Al Mesfah West factory Site, Bashaer, Muscat, Oman.

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1	82/2023	Construction of 132/33kV Grid Station at Masirah Island along with the Associated 132kV OHL from Mahout Grid Station to Masirah Grid Station and Extension of Mahout Grid Station.	04/10/2023	31/10/2023	Local Companies with Experience in Same Field, Have A Valid Commercial Registration & OETC Registration Certificate.	2,625/-
2	83/2023 (International)	Construction of 132kV Subsea Cable from Mahout OHL Gantry to Masirah Island Grid Station	04/10/2023	31/10/2023	Local & International companies with experience in same field Local companies have to provide a valid Commercial Registration.	2,625/-

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- Any bid not comply with the required guarantee, will not be accepted.
- OETC is not bound to accept the lowest or any other offers.

Offer: The bid bond should be submitted in Tender Box No. (1) at the company's building before 11:00 am on the assigned date for submission of the Tenders.

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وزارة عمان
Ministry of Social Development

Tender Announcement

The Internal Tender committee of Ministry of Social Development hereby announces the following tender :-

Tender No.	Tender Subject	Grade	Last date for obtaining of tender document	Last date for tender submission	Tender Document Price (non-refundable)	
					small and Medium companies	local companies
321/2023	Establishing a water therapy unit at the Al-Wafa Center for Rehabilitation of Persons with Disabilities in the Wilayat of Taqah	Companies specialized in the field of building contracting and registered with the General Secretariat of the Tender Board in the first degree	Sunday 8-10-2023 02:00 PM	Sunday 29-10-2023 10:00 AM	10 R.O	10 R.O
324/2023	Establishing a water therapy unit at Al-Wafa Center for Rehabilitation of Persons with Disabilities in the Wilayat of Al-Amerat					
323/2023	Establishing a water therapy unit at the Association for the Care of Disabled Children in the Wilayat of Dhank					
325/2023	Supply and installation of false ceilings for the building of the General Directorate of Social Development in Dhofar Governorate	Companies specialized in the field of building contracting and registered with the General Secretariat of the Tender Board at the third degree	Wednesday 4-10-2023 02:00 PM	Thursday 19-10-2023 02:00 PM	10 R.O	10 R.O
322/2023	Supply, preparation and provision of nutritional meals for residents of the Rustaq Social Welfare Home	Companies specialized in the field of food, beverage and luxury supply services and registered with the General Secretariat of the Tender Board in the excellent, first, second, third or fourth degree.				

- Specialized Companies, registered with the Tender Board may obtain the Tender documents at the Tender Board e-tendering digital portal link (<https://etendering.tenderboard.gov.om>), On Wednesday 20/9/2023
- For Inquiry , please contact though the e-tendering website (reg@tenderboard.gov.om) tel. (24402200)

* The lowest or any other tender shall not be binding to the Ministry*

www.mosd.gov.om

OPENING DAY

Oman participates in 78th Session of UN General Assembly in New York

NEW YORK: The Sultanate of Oman took part in the opening of the 78th session of the United Nations (UN) General Assembly, held in New York on Tuesday.

Oman's delegation was headed by Sayyid Badr Hamad Al Busaidi, Foreign Minister. The general assembly was attended by António Guterres, Secretary General of the UN and Dennis Francis, Chairman of the 78th session, as well as several leaders and ministers who represented member states in the UN.

The 78th session of the UN General Assembly is themed "Rebuilding trust and reigniting global solidarity: Accelerating action on the 2030 Agenda and its Sustainable Development Goals towards peace, prosperity, progress and the sustainability for all". — **ONA**



OPHTHALMOLOGY DEPARTMENT

Al Nahdha Hospital resumes cornea transplant operations

MUSCAT: A specialised medical team from Al Nahdha Hospital's Ophthalmology Department on Tuesday performed the first cornea transplant surgery marking the restart of cornea transplant operations in Oman.

Dr. Mohammed Majid Al Salmi, Head of the Ophthalmology Department at Al Nahdha Hospital, told Oman News Agency (ONA) that the surgery was conducted on a citizen who lost vision due to a bacterial infection of the cornea that resulted in opacity of the cornea.

Al Salmi pointed out that corneas are currently being imported from several international eye banks as part of a programme of

cooperation with 5 international eye banks. "It is expected that 100 cornea transplants will be performed on an annual basis in Oman, and the number is scheduled to increase," he added.

Al Salmi stressed that the National Organ Transplant Programme seeks to localise the cornea transplant service in the Sultanate of Oman through the establishment of an eye bank that will collect and preserve corneas from donors within the country over the next five years.

"The aim is to achieve self-sufficiency and provide this service in all governorates of the Sultanate of Oman, not only in Muscat Governorate," Al Salmi explained. — **ONA**



‘People are looking to leaders for action’

The world needs action now – not merely more words – to deal with the worsening climate emergency, escalating conflicts, UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres said ahead of the annual gathering in New York



NEW YORK: Leaders of a world fractured by war, climate change and persisting inequality on Tuesday gathered under one roof to hear the UN chief summon them to take united action on human-

ity's huge challenges – and to start delivering their own assessments on the most global of stages.

"People are looking to their leaders for a way out of this mess," Secretary-General Antonio Guterres said ahead of the annual gathering of presidents and premiers, ministers and monarchs at the General Assembly. He said the world needs action now – not merely more words – to deal with the worsening climate emergency, escalating conflicts, "dramatic technological disruptions" and a global cost-of-living crisis that is increasing hunger and poverty.

"Yet in the face of all this and more," Guterres said, "geopolitical divisions are undermining our capacity to respond."

This year's week-long session, the first full-on meeting of world leaders since the COVID-19 pandemic disrupted travel, has 145 leaders scheduled to speak. It's a large number that reflects the multitude of crises and conflicts.

But for the first time in years, US President Joe Biden, who will speak soon after the UN chief, will be the only leader from the five powerful veto-wielding nations on the UN Security Council to ad-

dress the 193-member assembly.

The absence of leaders from the four Security Council powers has sparked grumbling from developing countries who want major global players to listen to their demands including for money to start closing the growing gap between the world's haves and have-nots. The G77, the major UN group of developing countries that now has 134 members including China, lobbied hard to make this year's global gathering focus on the 17 UN goals adopted by world leaders in 2015. Those are badly lagging at the halfway point to their 2030 due date.

At a two-day summit to kick-start action to achieve the goals, Guterres pointed to grim findings in a UN report in July. He said 15% of some 140 specific targets to achieve the 17 goals are on track. Many are going in the wrong direction, and not a single one is expected to be achieved in the next seven years.

The wide-ranging goals include end extreme poverty and hunger, ensure every child gets a quality secondary education, achieve gender equality and make significant inroads in tackling climate change — all by 2030. — **ONA**

UNESCO

India's 'Sacred Ensembles of Hoysalas' in World Heritage list

RIYADH : India rejoices at the inclusion of Karnataka's 'Sacred Ensembles of Hoysalas' on the World Heritage list, the permanent representative of India to UNESCO, Vishal V Sharma said in Riyadh on Monday.

Sharma's remarks came after Karnataka's Hoysala temples were included in the UNESCO World Heritage list.

He said, "India rejoices at the inclusion of the Sacred Ensembles of the Hoysalas on the World Heritage List. On behalf of my country, I offer my thanks to the World Heritage Committee for recognising the outstanding universal value of this nomination under Agenda 45COM.8B.29."

"If ever poetry was carved in stone, it is in these monuments of India," he added.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi also expressed happiness over the inclusion of Karnataka's Hoysala Temples' sacred ensembles in the World Heritage site list and said these temples are a testament to India's rich cultural heritage.

Taking to X, PM Modi said, "More pride for India! The magnificent Sacred Ensembles of the Hoysalas have been inscribed on the @UNESCO World Heritage List. The timeless beauty and intricate details of the Hoysala temples are a testament to India's rich cultural heritage and the exceptional craftsmanship of our ancestors."

Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Monday expressed happiness over the inclusion of Karnataka's Hoysala Temples' sacred ensembles and West Bengal's San-



tiniketan in the World Heritage site list and said it is a joyous occasion for our nation.

Taking to social media platform, X, Shah said, "It is a joyous occasion for our nation that two of our cultural legacies have been included in UNESCO's List of World Heritage Sites. Santiniketan in West Bengal and the Sacred Ensembles of the Hoysalas in Karnataka are living testaments to the eternity of our culture. While Santiniketan, the abode of Kaviriguru Rabindranath Tagore's worldview, fosters the infinite evolution of human potential, the Hoysala temples are the manifestation of the pinnacle of our craftsmanship. My heartfelt congratulations to the citizens on this momentous occasion."

Karnataka's Hoysala Temples' sacred ensembles have been inscribed on the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) World Heritage list.

This comes just a day after Santiniketan, the town in West Bengal, was included in the UNESCO World Heritage list on Sunday.

Notably, the Hoysala Temples of Belur, Halebid, and Somnathapura in Karnataka that are now included in the UNESCO World Heritage list make them the 42nd UNESCO World Heritage Site of India.

Santiniketan

On Sunday, Santiniketan was inscribed in the UNESCO World Heritage list during the 45th Session of the World Heritage Committee in Saudi Arabia. — **ANI**



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

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

MINISTRY OF HEALTH

Oman marks World Patients Safety Day

MUSCAT: The Ministry of Health, represented by the Directorate General for Quality Assurance, organised a scientific conference on the safety of patients.

The conference themed "Involving patients for their safety" coincides with marking the World Patient Safety day, which is celebrated on 17 September every year.

The event was held under the patronage of Dr. Said Harib Al Lamki, Undersecretary of the Ministry of Health for Health Affairs. — **ONA**

WILAYAT OF AL SEEB

Saudi delegation visits National Autism Centre

MUSCAT: A delegation from the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA) today visited the National Autism Centre of the Ministry of Social Development in the Wilayat of Al Seeb.

The delegation was briefed on the centre's roles and its various halls which are equipped with necessary equipment to accommodate different types of thera-

pies. The delegation was headed by Eng. Ahmad Sulaiman Al Rajhi, Saudi Minister of Human Resources and Social Development. Upon their arrival at the centre, the Saudi minister and the delegation were greeted by Sheikh Rashid Ahmed Al Shamsi, Undersecretary of the Ministry of Social Development and several officials from the Ministry. — **ONA**

Canada expels Indian diplomat over death of Khalistani leader

Canada Prime Minister Justin Trudeau accused the Indian government of being behind the fatal shooting of the wanted Khalistani leader



ACCUSATION: PM Justin Trudeau's statement alleging an Indian hand in the killing of wanted Khalistani leader Hardeep Singh Nijjar.

OTTAWA: Signalling a further souring of bilateral ties, Canadian Foreign Minister Melanie Joly on Monday said an Indian diplomat in the country had been expelled, according to media report.

The expulsion comes in light of PM Justin Trudeau's statement alleging an Indian hand in the killing of wanted Khalistani leader Hardeep Singh Nijjar.

Joly said the Canadian government had expelled an Indian diplomat over allegations of the country's involvement in the killing of

the Khalistani leader, according to Al Jazeera.

However, she did not provide any further details on the diplomat's name or the place from where he was expelled, according to the report.

"We see this possible breach of sovereignty as completely unacceptable, and so, that is also why we're coming (out) with this information (of the expulsion of the Indian diplomat) today," Joly said

at a news conference, Al Jazeera reported. Earlier, on Monday, Prime Minister Justin Trudeau accused the Indian government of being behind the fatal shooting of the wanted Khalistani leader, CBC News reported.

Nijjar was gunned down outside a gurdwara, in a parking area in Canada's Surrey, BC on June 18.

According to CBC News, Canada, PM Trudeau said his country's national security officials had rea-

sons to believe that "agents of the Indian government" carried out the killing of the Canadian citizen, who also served as the president of Surrey's Guru Nanak Sikh Gurdwara.

"Canadian security agencies have been actively pursuing credible allegations of a potential link between agents of the Government of India and the killing of a Canadian citizen, Hardeep Singh Nijjar," Trudeau said. -ANI

India expels Canadian diplomat

NEW DELHI: India on Tuesday expelled a senior Canadian diplomat to India in a reciprocal move to Canada expelling a senior Indian diplomat.



The move comes after India rejected as "absurd and motivated" Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau's charge that India played a role in the June killing of a Khalistani terrorist Hardeep Singh Nijjar.

Canadian High Commissioner to India, Cameron MacKay was summoned today to the South Block, the headquarters of Ministry of External Affairs.

"The High Commissioner of Canada to India was summoned today and informed about the decision of the Government of India to expel a senior Canadian diplomat based in India," a statement from the Ministry of External Affairs said on Tuesday.

"The concerned diplomat has been asked to leave India within the next five days. The decision reflects the Government of India's growing concern at the interference of Canadian diplomats in our internal matters and their involvement in anti-India activities," it said.

India reject allegations

India rejected the allegations by Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau regarding the Indian government's involvement in the fatal shooting of Khalistan Tiger Force chief Hardeep Singh Nijjar in Canada. -ANI

EXPULSION OF INDIAN DIPLOMAT

Surprising move: US-based expert

WASHINGTON DC: Director of South Asia Institute at the Wilson Centre, Michael Kugelman has said Canada's claims regarding an Indian hand in the killing of Khalistani Hardeep Singh Nijjar and the expulsion of an Indian diplomat was a 'surprising move'.

"I am very surprised by this development (expulsion of Indian Diplomat). That coming after a very dramatic allegation that

President Trudeau made against India's Government. It's very surprising, something like this rarely happens. This is a key Western partner - a really big deal. These types of things do not happen so often. So, I was very surprised by this development,"

Kugelman said Canadian PM Justin Trudeau's actions "suggests a view that he believed what he was talking about."

"Clearly, for the PM of Canada

to come out and speak before the House of Commons and make this allegation so publically in the way that he did, that would suggest that he feels he has very strong reasons to believe that what he is saying is accurate" he said.

"Would he really want to jeopardise such an important relationship with India? For me, the fact that he went public suggests a view that he believed what he was talking about" he added. - ANI

Ministry of Defence
TENDER ANNOUNCEMENT

The Ministry of Defence invites MOD registered suppliers to participate in The following tender:

Subject	Tender Number	Last Date for Inquiries	Last Date To Submit The Tender	Tender Documnet Price
SUPPLY OF HEAVY DUTY EQUIPMUNT FOR MOD INFORMATION PRESERVATION AND DESTRUCTOR CENTER	22/2023	03/10/2023	10/10/2023	78 OMR

1. Tenders documents and terms may be obtained on payment from the office of the Secretary of the Tender Committee, gate No. 14 of MAM Camp between 0900 to 1300 hrs on the working days.

2. Payment of Tender documents to be made by using of any Visa Electron Cards or "Visa credit" Cards or through Smart Card issued from all the banks are operated in Oman.

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Al Nahda go down to Al Ahed

Omantel League winners lose to Lebanese club in a Group A match of the AFC Cup at the Seeb Sports Stadium on Monday night

MUSCAT: Omantel League and His Majesty's Cup champions Al Nahda flattered to deceive as they went down 2-1 to Lebanon's Al Ahed FC in their Group A AFC Cup match at the Seeb Sports Stadium on Monday night. After a goalless first half, Billel Bensaha broke the deadlock to give the domestic double title holders Al Nahda the lead before Al Ahed replied through Khalil Khamis and substitute Karim Darwich to seal the victory. Al Ahed were almost caught napping in the opening minute when a poor back pass by Felix Michel was almost intercepted by Al Nahda's Issam Al Subhi, who collided with keeper Mostafa Matar in his attempt to deflect his clearance. Al Ahed, the 2019 AFC Cup winners, had their first look at goal three minutes later when Mohamad Haidar found space deep inside Al Nahda territory, but his rushed effort from distance



failed to find the mark. Al Nahda almost surprised Al Ahed again in the 11th minute when a clever through ball from Abdullah Fawaz found an overlapping Ahmed Al Kaabi, who did well to evade his marker but his intended set-up for Al Subhi was easily intercepted by Matar at the near post. The Lebanese side came close to scoring moments later when Haidar collected Mohamad Al Hallak's clever pass from inside the box before maneuvering past his marker and forcing a save from Al Nahda custodian Ibrahim Mukhaini. Al Nahda continued to test their opponents with Fawaz feeding

Harib Al Saadi from just above the six-yard box before the midfielder saw his effort blocked in the 22nd minute. Al Ahed continued to be wasteful, first with Walid Shour missing his headed attempt in the 31st minute before Lee Erwin failed in his attempt to catch Mukhaini off his line in the closing stages of the half. Al Nahda finally broke the deadlock in the 55th minute when they kept the pressure on Al Ahed's left flank with Abdul Aziz Khalfan chipping the ball in for Fawaz, who waltzed his way through before cutting back for Bensaha to fire home the opener. Al Ahed, however, struck back

three minutes later through captain Khamis, who hit a volley off Al Hallak's cross for a sublime finish. The momentum having shifted in their favour, the Lebanese side scored a well-crafted goal in the 86th minute with substitute Darwich beating Mukhaini from close range to seal the points. Later Al Ahed head coach Raafat Mohammed said that the win over Al Nahda will galvanise his players into reaching the knockout stage. Mohammed said it was a crucial win for his side. "Al Nahda are one of the best teams in the competition, and this win will help boost our chances of qualifying as group winners," he said.



The Al Ahed coach, however, felt the tie could have gone either way. "Commiserations to Al Nahda. Both teams had important absences, but the match went according to our plans. "The hot weather impacted the players and that showed as the performance levels dropped during the game." **Palestine club win** Al Ahed next play Al Futuwa SC on October 2. The Syrian side suffered a 1-0 defeat to Palestine's Jabal Al Mukaber Club in Zarqa, Jordan, on Monday. Up next for Jabal Al Mukaber are Oman's Al Nahda on October 2

at the Seeb Sports Stadium. The win gives Jabal Al Mukaber a head start in the race for a stage in the knockout stage, with only the group winners assured of a place in the West Zonal semi-finals. Both teams started cautiously at the Prince Mohammed Stadium in Zarqa, with neither side able to find a breakthrough in the opening half. The second half continued to be a tight affair but that changed in the 70th minute when some clever work by Mohammed Obaid ended with Mohammed Yamin sending his right footed shot from the centre of the box into the back of the net.

ODI SERIES AGAINST AUSTRALIA

India recall Ashwin for Australia ODIs

MUMBAI: India have included both R Ashwin and Washington Sundar in their 15-member squad for the three-match ODIs series against Australia. With the World Cup looming and the team intent on testing more of their bench, regulars such as captain Rohit Sharma, Virat Kohli, Hardik Pandya and Kuldeep Yadav have been rested for the first two ODIs. In Rohit's absence, KL Rahul will lead the side. For the third ODI, the selectors have picked the same squad that they will play with at the World Cup, plus Ashwin and Washington. Ashwin last played an ODI more than 18 months ago, and his selection is a chance for the team management to have him ready, along with Washington, should they need to replace Axar Patel, who has a left quadriceps strain that ruled him out of the Asia Cup final. Ashwin has been training at the NCA over the past week along with spin consultant Sairaj Bahutule, apart from regular physical conditioning work, even as the national team was away in Sri Lanka, *ESPNCricinfo* reported. "We're hoping Axar will be fit," chief selector Ajit Agarkar said. "Washy was already part of the squad for the final. Ashwin brings experience, so it gives us options in case there is a need at some stage for us to look at those guys." Rohit elaborated on the Ashwin selection a bit more when asked if the off-spinner's lack of match-



time in the format could be a possible hindrance. "With guys like Ashwin, game-time and time on the ground is not so much of a concern," he said. "Which is why we thought if he is an option for us, we need to get him in. With the kind of experience he has, for guys like him, it's all in the head more than the body. I thought getting him in could give us a chance to understand where he is at, how his body is and stuff like that. "It's not like he has not been playing cricket for the last year or so. Yes, he hasn't played in this [ODI] format, but he played Test cricket recently in the West Indies, and if I'm not wrong, in the TNPL as well. Of course, there's no comparison but he has had some cricket there. The games against Australia will give us a chance to look at where he's at." Explaining the team manage-

ment's rationale behind naming two different squads for a short ODI series, Agarkar stressed the importance of giving the senior players a "mental break" given the short turnaround between their victorious Asia Cup campaign and the first ODI. "Luckily we got a fair amount of cricket at the Asia Cup," Agarkar said. "If not, we would've looked at it some other way. More than physical, sometimes guys need a mental break, which isn't a bad thing leading into a tournament like the World Cup. "For the third game, everyone will be available. We will play our World Cup squad. This [squad for the first two ODIs] gives us a chance to give guys sitting outside a chance. It's still a strong squad. Like I said, if we hadn't got a lot of cricket at the Asia Cup, who knows, we may have thought differently."

With Rohit resting, India have the option of picking either Ishan Kishan or Ruturaj Gaikwad as an opener. Gaikwad has been training at the NCA along with the rest of India's Asian Games contingent that will leave for China on September 27. Gaikwad, who is set to captain that team, will now link up with the rest of the touring group immediately after the second ODI in Indore on September 24. The Australia series, which begins on September 22, is India's last ODI assignment before the World Cup and it presents a chance for highly-rated middle-order batter Tilak Varma to push his case at the highest level. He has been picked for the first two games. **India's squad for Australia series: For first two ODIs:** KL Rahul (capt), Ravindra Jadeja (vice-capt), Shubman Gill, Ruturaj Gaikwad, Shreyas Iyer, Ishan Kishan, Suryakumar Yadav, Shardul Thakur, Jasprit Bumrah, Mohammed Siraj, Mohammed Shami, Tilak Varma, Prasidh Krishna, R Ashwin, Washington Sundar **For third ODI:** Rohit Sharma (capt), Hardik Pandya (vice-capt), Shubman Gill, Shreyas Iyer, KL Rahul, Ishan Kishan, Suryakumar Yadav, Ravindra Jadeja, Shardul Thakur, Jasprit Bumrah, Mohammed Siraj, Mohammed Shami, Virat Kohli, Kuldeep Yadav, Axar Patel (subject to fitness), R Ashwin, Washington Sundar.

WORLD CUP BUILD-UP

We don't want to expose Kuldeep a lot: India skipper



MUMBAI: Kuldeep Yadav is riding a wave of confidence following a Player-of-the-Series effort at the Asia Cup. Ahead of the World Cup, the Indian team management is doing all it can to "preserve" its lone wrist-spinner in the squad, and not "expose" him much against Australia, by resting him for the first two ODIs. "Kuldeep is a rhythm bowler, we all know that," India captain Rohit Sharma said on Monday. "But we thought of a lot of things and took this call. His bowling is going well, like Ajit [Agarkar] said, we had to give players a chance, especially those who played just one game at the Asia Cup and are in the World Cup squad. "We have been looking at Kuldeep for the last one, one and a half years, this is why we don't want to expose him a lot. He is coming back for the last match. There are a lot of reasons. This is the best decision for

us, to have him sit out for two games and play the third. We also have two practice matches [before the World Cup opener], so for the bowling rhythm, he will be back in it." Kuldeep's control and variety earned plaudits from the coaches and experts alike. Agarkar, who worked with Kuldeep at Delhi Capitals in the IPL not long ago, spoke of the virtues that make Kuldeep a vital cog in India's World Cup wheel. He reiterated how a little bit of "faith and confidence" could do wonders for a bowler's mindset. "I spent a couple of years with him, he is a guy who has a special skill set," Agarkar said. "Every player needs to be shown faith, given a bit of confidence, which the team management has done and it is showing on the field. In various conditions and against varied opposition, he is one of the trump cards for the team," he added.

ASIAN GAMES



Oman beach spikers begin campaign on winning note

MUSCAT: Oman's beach spikers began their campaign at the 2022 Asian Games in Hangzhou, China on a winning note on Tuesday. In a preliminary round Pool G match, the pair of Haitham Al Shreiqi and Ahmed Al Hosni defeated the South Korean duo of Myeongjin Kim and Inho Bae

2-0 (21-8, 21-10) in 29 minutes at the Ningbo Banbianshan Beach Volleyball Centre. The other Omani pair of Nouh Al Jalbubi and Mazin Al Hashimi also won their Pool H preliminary round match with a 2-0 (21-9, 21-17) victory over Macau's Ka Lon Chan and Chit Meng Tam late on Tuesday.

TO COMPETE IN THREE EVENTS

Four sailors to represent Oman at Asian Games

MUSCAT: Four sailors from Oman Sail have been picked to represent the Sultanate of Oman for the forthcoming 19th Asian Games in Hangzhou, China. The quartet will compete in three different events of the sailing competition and will aim to boost their chances for the Paris 2024 Olympic Games qualification. Competition takes place from September 21-27, at the Ningbo Sailing Centre. Waleed Al Kindi and Musab Al Hadi will compete in the 49er class, AbdulMajeed Al Hadhrami will compete in the iQFOiL men's windsurfing event and Abdul-Latif Al Qasbi will join the most talented juniors from across the continent in the ILCA 4. Leading the delegation will be Hashim Al Rashdi, Oman Sail's Head of Performance, and he will be assisted by Munther Al Kindi,



specialist coach for the ILCA 4. Al Rashdi said, "The Asian Games is a prime opportunity to test ourselves against nations from the Asian continent and place as high as possible in all three events. Olympic qualification in windsurfing is a clear goal

for Oman Sail, and a long-term objective of ours, but we are also confident of a strong performance in the 49er and ILCA 4." He added, "We are very proud to represent the nation in international competition and look forward to supporting our national

athletes across all sports throughout the Games." A route to Olympic qualification is open for Al Hadhrami in the iQFOiL, who will be looking to improve on his performance at the 2023 Allianz Sailing World Championships.

OMAN CRUDE PRICE FALLS

The price of Oman oil has decreased, with prices for delivery by November 2023 reaching \$95.09, said Dubai Mercantile Exchange (DME). The DME statement said that the price of Oman oil fell by 11 cents from the price of Monday, which was \$95.20. - **ONA**

MARKET
BUSINESS & FINANCE



MSX INDEX ENDS LOWER

The MSX index closed at 4,687.58 points, down by 0.49 per cent from previous close. The Sharia Index ended down by 0.27 per cent at 468.23 points. Oman Qatar Insurance, up 9.66 per cent, was the top gainer while ASaffa Foods, down 9.64 per cent, was the top loser.

OQGN roadshows all set to educate investors about its IPO

OQGN plans to float up to 49 per cent of its shares, in an offering that will provide investors with access to the company's growth as the exclusive owner and operator of the gas transportation network in the Sultanate of Oman



Times News Service

MUSCAT: OQGN, the company, which holds a natural monopoly over essential gas transportation in Oman as the exclusive operator and owner of the company's natural gas transportation network (NGTN) in Oman, a part of OQ the global integrated energy group, will be organising eight roadshows to support the announcement of

its intention to launch its IPO.

The roadshows will be carried out in collaboration with the Capital Market Authority (CMA), the Oman Chamber of Commerce and Industry, and offices of governors and Walis in several governorates. The roadshows, starting on September 20 and ending on October 3, aim to educate investors, nationals and residents about the system of subscription in issued shares

and targeted categories.

OQGN plans to float up to 49 per cent of its shares, in an offering that will provide investors with access to the company's growth as the exclusive owner and operator of the gas transportation network in the Sultanate of Oman.

The first roadshow will be held on September 20 in collaboration with the Oman Chamber of Commerce and Industry in the Wilayat

of Sohar in Al Batinah North Governorate. The Chamber's branch in the Wilayat of Khasab will host the second roadshow in Musandam Governorate on September 21.

Following this, another roadshow will be held in Al Dhahirah Governorate in the Chamber's branch in the Wilayat of Ibri on September 24. The fourth roadshow will be hosted in the Chamber's branch in Al Buraimi Governorate on September 25.

The Wilayat of Nizwain Ad Dakhiliyah Governorate will host the fifth IPO roadshow on September 26, while the sixth roadshow will be held in the Chamber's branch in Dhofar on September 28.

The last two roadshows will be held in the Wilayat of Ibra in Ash Sharqiyah North Governorate on October 2 and in Muscat Governorate on October 3, respectively.

Mansoor Ali Al-Abdali, Managing Director of OQGN, said, "This

IPO enhances the Government's efforts towards economic diversification, in line with the objectives of Oman Vision 2040."

OQGN's intention to float up to 49 per cent of its shares through an IPO is part of the plans, announced by OIA, to enter into partnerships with the Omani and foreign private sectors with regard to its assets. These plans are designed to expand the investor base in government companies, through public offerings in line with the plans of economic diversification and attracting national and foreign investments. OQGN's IPO reflects the efforts made by OQ to expand investment in its assets, attract foreign investors, and provide broader segments of society access to its ownership with the aim of directing their savings to new investment opportunities, in addition to increasing liquidity on the Muscat Stock Exchange."

SUSTAINABLE FINANCE

Standard Chartered issues first green guarantee for solar project in Oman

Times News Service

MUSCAT: Standard Chartered has announced the issuance of its first-ever green guarantee for China Energy Engineering Shanxi Electric Power Engineering Company (CEECS-SEPEC) in Oman.

This ground-breaking initiative underscores the bank's and CEECS-SEPEC's commitment to sustainable finance and supporting renewable energy projects globally and regionally.

The green guarantee provided by Standard Chartered is for a solar project in Oman, where CEECS-SEPEC is the main EPC contractor. The project aims to develop and operate a state-of-the-art solar power plant, contributing to Oman's renewable energy targets and reducing carbon emissions. Standard Chartered's guarantee not only demonstrates its confidence in CEECS-SEPEC's project



The project aims to contribute to Oman's renewable energy targets and reducing carbon emissions

but also reinforces its commitment to fostering a greener and more sustainable future.

Commenting on this milestone, Hussain Al Yafai, CEO Standard Chartered Oman, said, "We are proud to play a vital role in facilitating sustainable development in Oman. By issuing the first green guarantee for CEECS-SEPEC's renewable energy project, we are not only supporting the growth of the renewable energy sector but also aligning our efforts with Oman's

renewable energy development in Oman. With Standard Chartered's support, we will accelerate the transition towards a low-carbon economy, contribute to Oman's sustainable development goals, and create a positive impact for the local community."

The issuance of the first green guarantee between Standard Chartered and CEECS-SEPEC represents a significant milestone in fostering the strong bilateral relationship between China and Oman. Both countries recognise the growing importance of collaboration and the exchange of expertise in various sectors, including finance, energy, and sustainable development. This partnership not only strengthens economic ties but also paves the way for future opportunities and reinforces the commitment of China and Oman to collaborate on fostering sustainable growth.

ECONOMIC INSIGHT

Oman's GDP projected to grow at 2.5% this year

Times News Service

MUSCAT: Oman's economy is expected to expand moderately in 2023. Oman's economy entered this year on a positive note, expanding 4.7 per cent y/y in Q1, outpacing the average growth rate last year and driven by non-oil output, which expanded 4.6 per cent.

While non-oil activities are forecast to grow 2.9 per cent, up from 1.6 per cent last year, headwinds in the oil sector, driven by Opec+ policy changes, will cause GDP growth to slow to 2.5 per cent year-on-year (y/y) compared to the 4.3 per cent y/y growth in 2022, according to the latest Economic Insight report, commissioned by ICAEW and compiled by Oxford Economics.

While the energy sector slowed to 3.5 per cent, with oil output growing by just 2.8 per cent, fishing, building, and construction sectors have rebounded following double-digit contractions last year. Services have also climbed by 4.5 per cent, supported by retail, transport, and real estate activity.

Aligned with the Opec+ agreement, Oman is expected to reduce oil output to 1.042mn b/d this year, down 2.1 per cent from last year, with further adjustments anticipated in the coming year. Meanwhile, gas production increased by 3.4 per cent in 2022 and will continue to inch up as more projects come online, shifting the composition of energy trade further in favour of gas.

Despite hotel occupancy rates hovering slightly below 2019 levels, tourism is expected to be among the key sectors boosting the Sultanate's non-oil economic



Hanadi Khalife

recovery, with indicators such as visitor numbers showing promising signs of improvement. Oman is also capitalising on growth and diversification plans in the region, such as the UAE's Etihad Rail, which will connect Oman, the UAE and Saudi Arabia.

Oman is also advancing renewable wind and solar energy projects, aiming to raise the share of renewable energy to 30 per cent by 2030, up from the current 5.5 per cent. The government has signed agreements valued at \$20 billion to develop green hydrogen and biofuels. It has also embarked on creating a sustainable finance framework, with a focus on funding initiatives supporting energy efficiency.

However, with energy sector trends being unfavourable, a small budget deficit is anticipated both this year and next. Fiscal data for January to July shows a positive balance due to lower spending. Still, the decline is expected to exert pressure on the budget for the



rest of the year. In 2022, Oman achieved a budget surplus of 2.7 per cent of GDP, driven by a commodity price boom, marking a significant shift from prior budget and trade deficits into surpluses and repayment of external debt. ICAEW estimates this lowered the public debt-to-GDP ratio to 40 per cent last year, down from a peak of over 65 per cent in 2020.

Hanadi Khalife, Head of Middle East, ICAEW, said: "Despite last year's growth being primarily bolstered by elevated oil prices, Oman is demonstrating its ability to sustain economic expansion by diversifying and fostering growth within its non-oil sector. The marked expansion in renewable energy, tourism, and the pursuit of sustainable finance initiatives underscores Oman's unwavering commitment to maintaining its upward growth trajectory amid global economic challenges."

Scott Livermore, ICAEW Economic Advisor, and Chief Economist and Managing Director, Oxford Economics Middle East,

said: "While Oman confronts challenges in its oil sector, the nation's strategic emphasis on non-oil sectors and renewable energy is positioning it for sustained economic expansion. The government continues to unveil plans to support its medium-term growth with a \$5.2 billion Future Fund to boost investment, the expansion of Muscat's outskirts, and several other mega projects. The decision to diversify revenue streams away from oil sources is vital for Oman's resilience in the face of changing global energy trends, and the sooner it's done, the better."

Oman's inflation has eased to below 1 per cent, primarily due to declining transport prices and slowing food price increases. ICAEW forecasts a 2023 consumer price index of 1 per cent, the second lowest in the GCC. However, inflation is expected to rise to 1.7 per cent next year, in line with the Oman Central Bank's adherence to the path set by the US Federal Reserve, which is anticipated to start policy easing in 2024.

REPORT

GCC outlook downgraded due to oil output cuts

Times News Service

MUSCAT: The GCC region's economic performance weakened in second quarter of 2023 as a result of the energy sector lowering oil output, reveals the latest Economic Insight report for the Middle East, commissioned by ICAEW and compiled by Oxford Economics.

The pace of GDP growth in the Middle East has therefore been downgraded by 0.4 percentage points and is forecast to slow to just 1.7 per cent this year. Despite the slowdown, optimism prevails as the region's non-oil activity remains robust.

According to the Q3 report, the revised economic outlook reflects the Middle East's weakened performance in Q2, driven by reduced oil production in GCC countries. Projections for GCC growth this year have been scaled back by 0.5 percentage points to 1.4 per cent.

Nonetheless, there are encouraging indicators in the non-oil sector and domestic demand. Businesses have reported growth in their customer base and employment; however, this positive performance may face challenges due to the impending impact of high-interest rates on consumption and private investment.

Growth in the region's non-energy sector is demonstrating significant resilience, primarily fuelled by the tourism-related sectors, with data showing double-digit expansion in transport, storage, accommodation and food services. The tourism sector is experiencing rapid growth in Dubai, up 20 per cent from Q1 2023, with a record 8.6 million tourists hosted. Saudi Arabia is also witnessing substantial growth in the sector, with a notable 225 per cent surge since Q1 2022. Both Saudi Arabia and Qatar are anticipated to further boost tourism arrivals, supporting diversification efforts.

Energy prices have seen strong gains with Brent oil price rising to \$90pb, the highest since November last year. This is a result of support from Chinese stimulus measures, robust US demand and deeper supply cuts. Saudi Arabia has extended its voluntary 1mbd production cut through year-end, while Russia also pledged to reduce its oil exports further. Consequently, the oil price projection has been adjusted, raising the average Brent oil price estimate for this year to \$83.10, against the forecast of \$81.50pb three months ago.

Hanadi Khalife, Head of Middle East, ICAEW, said: "This quarter has been challenging for the region, marking weaker growth than initially predicted. However, looking forward, the



Scott Livermore

planned inclusion of Saudi Arabia and the UAE into the BRICS group next year is expected to create new opportunities for increased trade and investment. This development will also help reduce their reliance on the US dollar, offering a positive outlook for the future."

Scott Livermore, ICAEW Economic Advisor, and Chief Economist and Managing Director, Oxford Economics Middle East, said: "The recent energy cuts have had a pronounced impact on the economic outlook for this quarter. As a result, 2023 is forecast to be the GCC's weakest year for the energy sector since 2017, excluding the exceptional circumstances of 2020. In contrast, the non-energy sector continues to thrive; we expect 30 million international tourists to visit Saudi Arabia next year with Qatar receiving 3.17 million visitors. The surge in the tourism industry continues to bolster the GCC's diversification efforts."

The report also notes the favourable level of GCC inflation in recent months, due to a decline in food and fuel prices. However, despite the outlook of inflation normalizing, interest rates are expected to stay at the same levels as the GCC currency pegs to the US dollar, preventing regional central banks from cutting rates before the Federal Reserve starts its easing cycle.

The Federal Reserve is anticipated to begin cutting rates next year, following a very gradual path once they start. This means borrowing costs in the region will remain high over the near term, leading to a further slowdown in the pace of lending and weighing on non-oil GDP growth. According to the report, non-oil GDP growth is projected to reach 3.9 per cent in 2024, down from 4.3 per cent expected this year.

MARKET

MSX index ends lower



Oman Qatar Insurance, up 9.66 per cent, was the top gainer while A'Saffa Foods, down 9.64 per cent, was the top loser

MUSCAT: The MSX index closed at 4,687.58 points, down by 0.49 per cent from previous close. The Sharia Index ended down by 0.27 per cent at 468.23 points. Oman Qatar Insurance, up 9.66 per cent, was the top gainer while A'Saffa Foods, down 9.64 per cent, was the top loser.

Shares of Bank Nizwa were the most active in terms of number of shares traded while Oman Telecom were the most active in terms of turnover.

A total number of 617 trades were executed during the day's trading session, generating turnover of OMR3.11 million, with more than 13.79 million shares changing hands.

Out of 43 traded securities, 9 advanced, 24 declined, and 10 remained unchanged.

At the session close, domestic investors were net buyers for OMR547,000 while GCC and Arab investors were net sellers for OMR386,000, followed by foreign investors for OMR161,000 worth of shares.

Financial Index closed at 7,600.97 points, down 0.64 per cent. Prices of Oman Qatar Insurance, Oman United Insur-

ance, Al Madina Takaful, Taageer Finance, Bank Muscat were up by 9.66 per cent, 1.48 per cent, 1.19 per cent, 1.11 per cent, 0.35 per cent respectively.

Prices of Arabia Falcon Insurance, Takaful Oman, Oman Arab Bank, Al Madina Investments, Global Financial Investments were up by 8.33 per cent, 4.00 per cent, 3.52 per cent, 2.86 per cent, 1.72 per cent respectively.

Industrial Index closed at 5,709.90 points, down 0.82 per cent. Prices of Gulf Mushroom Products were up by 1.82 per cent respectively. Prices of A'Saffa Foods, Raysut Cement, Galfar Engineering, Jazeera Steel Products were up by 9.64 per cent, 8.09 per cent, 2.52 per cent, 1.21 per cent respectively.

Services Index was down by 1.27 per cent before closing at 1,612.89 points. Prices of Abraj Energy, Renaissance Services were up by 0.34 per cent, 0.24 per cent respectively. Prices of Al Suwadi Power, Dhofar Generating, Al Batinah Power, OIFC, National Gas were up by 8.70 per cent, 6.98 per cent, 4.35 per cent, 2.63 per cent, 1.12 per cent respectively. — United Securities

OMAN STOCKS

MUSCAT
STOCK
EXCHANGE

INDICES

Index	High	Low	Value	Prev. Value	Diff	Diff%
MSX 30 INDEX	4,710.52	4,680.44	4,687.58	4,710.52	-22.94	-0.49
FINANCIAL INDEX	7,628.29	7,600.97	7,600.97	7,650.16	-49.19	-0.64
Industry Index	5,757.37	5,708.52	5,709.90	5,757.37	-47.46	-0.82
Services Index	1,633.59	1,604.46	1,612.89	1,633.59	-20.71	-1.27
MSX Shariah Index	469.94	467.87	468.23	469.50	-1.28	-0.27
MSX TR INDEX	6,201.97	6,162.36	6,171.76	6,201.97	-30.21	-0.49
FINANCIAL TR IDX	8,323.87	8,294.05	8,294.05	8,347.73	-53.67	-0.64
SERVICES TR IDX	1,804.22	1,772.04	1,781.35	1,804.22	-22.87	-1.27
INDUSTRIAL TR IDX	6,150.30	6,098.12	6,099.60	6,150.30	-50.70	-0.82

Trading Summary

Volume	.....	Turnover	.....	Trades	.....	Market Cap	.....	Up	.....	Down	.....	Equal	.....	Sec. Traded
13,792,472	.....	3,107,460	.....	617	.....	23,682,649,562	.....	9	.....	24	.....	10	.....	43

SHARE PRICE BULLETIN FOR TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 19

ISIN	SECURITY NAME	VOLUME	TURNOVER	TRADES	OPEN PRICE	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE PR	PREV. CLOSE	DIFF (RD)	DIFF %	LAST PR	LAST BID	LAST OFFER	PAR VALUE	MARKET CAP
REGULAR MARKET																
OM0000001087	OMAN UNITED INSURANCE	72,000	19,740	13	0.275	0.275	0.274	0.274	0.270	0.004	1.481	0.274	0.274	0.275	0.100	27,400,000
OM0000004788	MADINA TAKAFUL	125,600	10,651	10	0.084	0.085	0.084	0.085	0.084	0.001	1.190	0.085	0.084	0.085	0.100	14,875,000
OM0000000796	BANK MUSCAT	1,947,035	554,097	89	0.284	0.285	0.283	0.285	0.284	0.001	0.352	0.285	0.284	0.285	0.100	2,139,323,163
OM0000001483	NATIONAL BANK OMAN	88,700	27,054	6	0.305	0.305	0.305	0.305	0.304	0.001	0.329	0.305	0.290	0.315	0.100	495,913,638
OM0000003224	RENAISSANCE SERVICES	471,000	192,978	17	0.410	0.410	0.408	0.410	0.409	0.001	0.244	0.410	0.410	0.415	0.100	96,928,100
OM0000001533	OMINVEST	520,000	204,937	36	0.395	0.395	0.394	0.394	0.394	0.000	0.000	0.394	0.394	0.394	0.100	263,335,978
OM0000002168	AL ANWAR CERAMIC	73,028	13,433	14	0.190	0.190	0.181	0.190	0.190	0.000	0.000	0.190	0.177	0.194	0.100	41,800,000
OM0000002374	UNITED FINANCE	77,903	4,367	8	0.057	0.057	0.056	0.056	0.056	0.000	0.000	0.056	0.056	0.056	0.100	19,943,129
OM0000003968	OOREDOO	1,087,881	414,711	46	0.382	0.382	0.380	0.382	0.382	0.000	0.000	0.382	0.382	0.386	0.100	248,660,696
OM0000003026	OMAN TELECOM	767,891	771,847	65	1.009	1.009	1.000	1.005	1.009	-0.004	-0.396	1.005	1.005	1.005	0.100	753,750,000
OM0000001152	OMAN NATIONAL ENGINEERING & INVESTMENT	50,000	5,200	8	0.104	0.104	0.104	0.104	0.105	-0.001	-0.952	0.104	0.101	0.104	0.100	15,600,000
OM0000003398	SOHAR INTERNATIONAL BANK	2,778,000	289,232	46	0.105	0.105	0.104	0.104	0.105	-0.001	-0.952	0.104	0.103	0.104	0.100	568,660,404
OM0000003000	AL MAHA PETROLEUM PRODUCTS MARKETING	10,200	10,212	6	1.020	1.020	1.000	1.000	1.010	-0.010	-0.990	1.000	1.000	1.101	0.100	69,000,000
OM0000002176	JAZEERA STEEL PRODUCTS	10,000	2,460	1	0.246	0.246	0.246	0.246	0.249	-0.003	-1.205	0.246	0.245	0.264	0.100	30,724,898
OM0000003125	GLOBAL FINANCIAL INVESTMENT HO	5,631	321	2	0.057	0.057	0.057	0.057	0.058	-0.001	-1.724	0.057	0.057	0.058	0.100	11,400,000
Total	15	8,084,869	2,521,239	367												
Parallel Market																
OM0000006979	OMAN QATAR INSURANCE	19,468	3,095	2	0.159	0.159	0.159	0.159	0.145	0.014	9.655	0.159	0.159	0.159	0.100	25,633,733
OM0000002287	GULF MUSHROOM PRODUCTS	10,000	2,240	1	0.224	0.224	0.224	0.224	0.220	0.004	1.818	0.224	0.224	0.224	0.100	10,251,539
OM0000003281	TAGEER FINANCE	148,000	13,468	4	0.091	0.091	0.091	0.091	0.090	0.001	1.111	0.091	0.085	0.096	0.100	24,008,988
OM0000008934	ABRAJ ENERGY SERVICES	225,713	66,104	36	0.292	0.293	0.292	0.293	0.292	0.001	0.342	0.293	0.293	0.300	0.100	225,668,600
OM0000001806	MUSCAT INSURANCE	47	18	1	0.380	0.380	0.380	0.380	0.380	0.000	0.000	0.380	0.380	0.000	1.000	4,189,517
OM0000004669	SHARQIYAH DESALINATION	310,080	39,380	13	0.127	0.127	0.127	0.127	0.127	0.000	0.000	0.127	0.127	0.132	0.100	12,420,874
OM0000005983	PHOENIX POWER	486,106	26,249	29	0.054	0.058	0.052	0.057	0.057	0.000	0.000	0.057	0.057	0.057	0.100	83,368,283
OM0000007910	AMAN REAL ESTATE	1,150	115	1	0.109	0.109	0.109	0.109	0.109	0.000	0.000	0.109	0.090	0.109	0.100	20,000,000
OM0000008447	OMAN REIT FUND	1,000	82	1	0.082	0.082	0.082	0.082	0.082	0.000	0.000	0.082	0.082	0.084	0.100	38,637,284
OM0000008868	THE PEARL REIF	400	48	1	0.120	0.120	0.120	0.120	0.120	0.000	0.000	0.120	0.118	0.120	0.100	60,972,426
OM0000004420	BANK NIZWA	3,830,000	372,478	77	0.097	0.098	0.097	0.097	0.098	-0.001	-1.020	0.097	0.098	0.097	0.100	216,984,444
OM0000007084	MUSCAT CITY DESALINATION	32,100	2,849	5	0.089	0.089	0.088	0.089	0.090	-0.001	-1.111	0.089	0.086	0.089	0.100	13,843,986
OM0000001160	NATIONAL GAS	10,000	880	1	0.088	0.088	0.088	0.088	0.089	-0.001	-1.124	0.088	0.085	0.090	0.100	7,480,000
OM0000002200	AHLI BANK	91,193	14,864	4	0.163	0.163	0.163	0.163	0.165	-0.002	-1.212	0.163	0.163	0.168	0.100	382,994,167
OM0000001772	ALANWAR INVESTMENT	15,000	1,140	3	0.076	0.076	0.076	0.076	0.077	-0.001	-1.299	0.076	0.076	0.076	0.100	15,656,000
OM0000003821	GALFAR ENGINEERING & CONTRACTING	66,490	10,015	10	0.150	0.155	0.150	0.155	0.159	-0.004	-2.516	0.155	0.145	0.153	0.100	31,462,899
OM0000001962	AL MADINA INVESTMENT HOLDING	280	10	1	0.034	0.034	0.034	0.034	0.035	-0.001	-2.857	0.034	0.032	0.034	0.100	2,890,000
OM0000005280	OMAN ARAB BANK	100	14	1	0.137	0.137	0.137	0.137	0.142	-0.005	-3.521	0.137	0.138	0.145	0.100	228,708,170
OM0000004776	TAKAFUL OMAN	4,920	236	1	0.048	0.048	0.048	0.048	0.050	-0.002	-4.000	0.048	0.048	0.055	0.100	12,000,000
OM0000004925	ALBATINAH POWER	18,300	403	5	0.022	0.022	0.022	0.022	0.023	-0.001	-4.348	0.022	0.022	0.022	0.100	14,847,523
OM0000007407	DHOFAH GENERATING	29,800	1,192	3	0.040	0.040	0.040	0.040	0.043	-0.003	-6.977	0.040	0.039	0.042	0.100	8,889,690
OM0000001418	RAYSUT CEMENT	151,817	19,461	22	0.132	0.132	0.125	0.125	0.136	-0.011	-8.068	0.125	0.125	0.133	0.100	25,000,000
OM0000007290	ARABIA FALCON INSURANCE	4,000	440	2	0.110	0.110	0.110	0.110	0.120	-0.010	-8.333	0.110	0.110	0.000	0.100	11,363,183
OM0000004933	AL SUWADI POWER	168,000	3,528	14	0.021	0.021	0.021	0.021	0.023	-0.002	-8.696	0.021	0.021	0.023	0.100	15,002,533
OM0000002275	SHELL OMAN MARKETING	910	815	2	0.896	0.896	0.896	0.896	0.984	-0.088	-8.943	0.896	0.896	0.896	0.100	85,120,000
OM0000002804	AASAFFA FOODS	2,000	600	1	0.300	0.300	0.300	0.300	0.332	-0.032	-9.639	0.300	0.000	0.300	0.100	36,000,000
Total	26	5,626,874	579,724	241												

RESTRUCTURING INDUSTRIAL CITY

Madayn launches abandoned vehicles removal campaign in Wadi Kabir Industrial City

Times News Service

MUSCAT: The Public Establishment for Industrial Estates (Madayn) has launched a campaign aimed at clearing abandoned vehicles from Al Wadi Al Kabir Industrial City, as part of its ongoing efforts to elevate the quality of services in the industrial hub.

This campaign, conducted in close coordination with relevant authorities, is geared towards restructuring the industrial city to meet modern standards, supporting business growth and sustainability, while maintaining a steadfast focus on environmental, health, and safety preservation.

In this regard, the following statement was issued by Madayn, “The Public Establishment for Industrial Estates (Madayn) is pleased to announce the launch of a campaign dedicated to the removal of abandoned vehicles from its lands within Al Wadi Al Kabir



Industrial City. Owners of these vehicles are kindly requested to cooperate by removing them within two weeks from the date of this announcement.

“Madayn bears no responsibility for any damages that may occur during the vehicle removal process, as abandoned vehicles will be handled in accordance with the

applicable rules and regulations.”

As one of the oldest service industrial cities in Muscat Governorate and recognising the importance of maintaining the highest levels of security, safety, and environmental standards, a decision was made to transfer the affiliation of Al Wadi Al Kabir Industrial City to Madayn. This move is aimed

at replanning the industrial city, enhancing its infrastructure, and fostering a more conducive working environment.

After Madayn assumed management of Al Wadi Al Kabir Industrial City, particularly managing the industrial blocks (142, 144, 146, 154, and 158), a tender was awarded for the consultancy services project for the rehabilitation and redesigning of Al Wadi Al Kabir Industrial City. Madayn has also prepared a three-year implementation plan for the Al Wadi Al Kabir Industrial City project and has identified the proposed industrial activities to address their respective situations.

Furthermore, the management's office of the industrial city has been completed and Masar Service Centre is now operational, providing a wide range of services to investors. Additionally, road repair works have been completed in Al Wadi Al Kabir Industrial City.

ORGANIZATION FOR ECONOMIC COOPERATION AND DEVELOPMENT



OECD predicts weaker growth and continued inflation for 2024

NEW YORK: Growth in the global economy is expected to remain “sub-par” next year, according to the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD



LIFESTYLE

PLANT-BASED FOOD ALTERNATIVES MIGHT HELP IN SHIFT TO GLOBAL SUSTAINABILITY

According to new research, replacing 50 per cent of meat and milk products with plant-based alternatives by 2050 can reduce agriculture and land use-related greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions by 31 per cent while also halting the deterioration of forest and natural land. According to the study just published in Nature Communications, additional climate and biodiversity benefits could accrue from reforesting land spared from livestock production when meat and milk products are substituted by plant-based alternatives, more than doubling the climate benefits and halving future declines of ecosystem integrity by 2050.

The restored area could contribute up to 25 per cent of the estimated global land restoration needs under Target 2 of the Kunming Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework by 2030.

The study is the first to look at the global food security and environmental impacts of plant-based meat and milk consumption at large scales that consider the complexity of food systems.

The research was conducted independently by IIASA in partnership with the Alliance of Biodiversity and CIAT, as well as USAID, and solicited input from Impossible Foods – a company that develops plant-based substitutes for meat products – as a potential user of the data to ensure relevance.

The company also provided generic recipes for the plant-based meat substitute products used in the analysis. The data are, however, not specific to Impossible Foods and the science team had complete control over decision-making.

“Understanding the impacts of dietary shifts expands our options for reducing GHG emissions. Shifting diets could also yield huge improvements for biodiversity,” notes study lead author Marta Kozicka, a researcher in the IIASA Biodiversity and Natural Resources Programme.

“Plant-based meats are not just a novel food product, but a critical opportunity for achieving food security and climate goals while

also achieving health and biodiversity objectives worldwide. Yet, such transitions are challenging and require a range of technological innovations and policy interventions,” adds study coauthor Eva Wollenberg from Alliance of Bioversity International and CIAT and the Gund Institute, University of Vermont.

The authors developed scenarios of dietary changes based on plant-based recipes for beef, pork, chicken, and milk. The recipes were designed to be nutritionally equivalent to the original animal-derived protein products and realistic for the existing food manufacturing capabilities and globally available production ingredients.

The authors found that a 50 per cent substitution scenario would substantially reduce the mounting impacts of food systems on the natural environment by 2050 compared to the reference scenario. The impacts as compared to 2020 include:

- Global agricultural area declines by 12 per cent instead of expanding.
- The decline in areas of forest and other natural land is almost completely halted.
- Nitrogen inputs to cropland are nearly half of the projections.
- Water use declines by 10 per cent instead of increasing.
- Without accounting for any carbon sequestration on spared land, GHG emissions could decline by 2.1 Gt CO₂eq year⁻¹ (31 per cent) in 2050 (1.6 Gt CO₂eq year⁻¹ on average in 2020–2050).
- Undernourishment globally declines to 3.6 per cent, as compared to 3.8 per cent in the reference scenario (reducing the number of undernourished people by 31 million).

The full environmental benefit of diet shifts can be achieved if the agricultural land spared from livestock and feed production is restored through biodiversity-minded afforestation. In the 50 per cent scenario, the benefits from reduced land-use emissions could double as compared to a scenario without afforestation – a total reduction of 6.3 Gt CO₂eq year⁻¹.

At 90 per cent substitution, the reduction of all agriculture

and land-use emissions would increase to 11.1 Gt CO₂eq year⁻¹ in 2050.

The restoration of forest ecosystems would also improve biodiversity. The 50 per cent scenario would reduce predicted declines in ecosystem integrity by more than half, while the 90 per cent scenario could reverse biodiversity loss between 2030 and 2040.

“While the analyzed dietary shifts serve as a powerful enabler for reaching climate and biodiversity goals, they must be accompanied by targeted production side policies to deliver their full potential. Otherwise, these benefits will be partly lost due to production extensification and resulting GHG and land-use efficiency losses,” explains IIASA Biodiversity and Natural Resources Program Director Petr Havlík, who coordinated the study.

The study points out that impacts across regions could differ due to differences in population size and diets, unequal agricultural productivity, and participation in international trade of agricultural commodities.

The main impacts on agricultural input use are in China and on environmental outcomes in Sub-Saharan Africa and South America. These regional differences could also be used to design better interventions.

“A global introduction of all novel alternatives has additional benefits compared to the scenarios with limited product or geographical scope, but regional substitution of specific products may be highly effective, especially if combined with regional strategies and purposeful selection of recipes,” Kozicka explains.

While the results support the increased use of plant-based meat substitutes, the authors recognize that livestock are a valuable source of income and nourishment for smallholders in low- and middle-income countries, and have significant cultural roles, reduce risk, and diversify smallholder income. Simultaneously, climate change threatens the livelihoods of smallholder farmers. -ANI

SPORTS

Hudson-Odoi stunner earns Forest draw against Burnley

Following three straight defeats, the result allows Burnley to get off the mark this season, while Forest have seven points from 5 games

LONDON: Callum Hudson-Odoi scored a stunning equaliser on his Nottingham Forest debut to earn a Premier League 1-1 draw against Burnley on Monday.

The Clarets looked to be controlling the game but deadline day signing Hudson-Odoi had other ideas, curling a stunning strike into the top corner on the hour mark.

Burnley had taken a first-half lead through Zeki Amdouni's well-taken shot into the bottom corner after fine work by the lively teenager Luca Koleosho.

Swiss striker Amdouni, who scored the winner here in the Carabao Cup just 20 days ago, had already given goalkeeper Matt Turner a warning sign with a stinging drive from range before netting a cool finish.

Vincent Kompany's visitors thought they had grabbed the winner 12 minutes from time when Lyle Foster stroked in from close range, but it was ruled out by the video assistant referee (VAR) for a handball by Sander Berge in the build-up. "I have to get used to it," said Kompany. "In the Championship if it's in, it's in."

"I have a decent business and coaching brain, but when it comes to laws and legality I switch off. Handball this way or that, they come and explain it to us but I have made a decision to trust what they are doing and have the right intentions. It is not something I want to discuss too much, I cannot change it now."



Burnley's night then ended on a sour note when top scorer Foster was sent off for violent conduct in injury time, after a needless off-the-ball elbow on Ryan Yates.

Following three straight defeats, the result allows Burnley to get off the mark this season, while Forest have made a decent start to the campaign with seven points from five games.

These two sides met at the City Ground for the second time in three weeks and it seemed like a repeat result was on the cards.

Burnley's club record signing Amdouni converted a 90th-minute winner to send his side through to the EFL Cup third round at the expense of Forest last month.

And he netted again on Monday night with a drilled effort from the edge of the box after being set up by Italy youth international Koleosho, who outpaced home skipper Joe Worrall close to the byline.

Koleosho impressed, giving Argentina World Cup winner Gonzalo Montiel the runaround throughout the game before being replaced by Belgium international Mike Tresor.

This was a solid showing from Kompany's men in their first away game of the campaign after conceding three or more goals in all their matches so far. A club-record five consecutive Premier League defeats was avoided but their return to the top-flight has been a struggle after cantering to the Championship title last season.

Forest, though, hit back in the second period through Hudson-Odoi's brilliant finish with the side highlighting their prowess in front of goal by scoring in their 12th straight top-flight game.

The equaliser came from Taiwo Awoniyi's knockdown and the Nigeria striker is becoming an integral part of a Forest side that keeps changing personnel, now contributing a goal or assist in his last nine league games.

The two sides face Manchester clubs on Saturday - Forest travelling to Treble winners and league leaders Manchester City, while Burnley host United on the same day. — Agencies

MONTREAL PLAYER



MLS sacks player after fake name, ban claims

LOS ANGELES: Major League Soccer (MLS) has terminated the contract of Montreal midfielder Matko Miljevic following claims he played for an amateur team under a fake name.

Widespread reports in Canada also alleged the player was banned indefinitely for punching an opponent while turning out for the local side.

He was "engaging in conduct detrimental to the league and violating his standard player agreement", MLS said.

Montreal confirmed the 22-year-old American was no longer with the club. Montreal head coach Hernan Losada last week confirmed an investigation was underway following the reports. It was claimed Miljevic had played three games for a friend's team in a Quebec amateur league - scoring six goals - after becoming frustrated with a lack of playing time at Montreal.

Miljevic made eight substitute appearances for Montreal this season. — Agencies

CONTROVERSY

Spain women players to boycott national team despite call up

MADRID: Spain players have reiterated that they are boycotting the women's national side despite being called up to the latest squad.

Fifteen members of the team that won the World Cup last month have been included in a squad for upcoming Nations League fixtures. A group of 81 players boycotted the national team after the Spanish FA boss Luis Rubiales was involved in an indecent act towards forward Jenni Hermoso following last month's final.

The fall out led to Rubiales resigning. On Friday, 39 players - including 21 of the 23 World Cup winners - said their strike would continue until further changes were made and that they did not yet "feel in a safe place".

Two-time Ballon d'Or winner Alexia Putellas was among the 15 players called up who were part of the triumphant squad in Australia and New Zealand. However, Hermoso was left out.

The players later published



a statement, issued by Futpro, stressing the boycott remains in place and expressing their regret that they were again "put in a position in which we never wanted to be in".

They added that they intended to explore the potential legal implications of being called up against

their wishes, saying: "We will study the possible legal consequences to which the RFEF (Spanish football federation) exposes us by putting us on a list from which we had asked not to be called for reasons already explained publicly and in more detail to the RFEF, and with this make the best decision for our

future and for our health."

This was the first squad announcement by new coach Montse Tome, who replaced Jorge Vilda - considered a close ally of Rubiales - after he was sacked earlier this month. Tome, who was Vilda's assistant manager, has become the first woman to hold the position of Spain women's boss.

Earlier on Monday, the RFEF had urged striking players to return to the national team. The organisation previously said the players have "an obligation" to play if selected. "We stand with Jenni," Tome said. "We believe that the best way to protect her is like this, but we are counting on Jenni."

"It's the start of a new phase, the clock is ticking," said Tome. "There is nothing behind us and we really want to connect with these players."

Rubiales has been banned from going within 200m of Hermoso, who has said the act was not consensual. — Agencies

CHAMPIONS LEAGUE

Bonucci set to debut for Union Berlin against Real Madrid

BERLIN: Union Berlin's participation in the 2023/24 UEFA Champions League campaign, a first in the club's history, still feels like a surreal fairytale to many.

Facing world football giants like Spanish powerhouse Real Madrid at the iconic Bernabeu Stadium only heightens the excitement. The Group C Champions League match between Real Madrid and Union Berlin will be held on Wednesday.

However, for Urs Fischer, things seem different. The Union coach is more focused on his lineup than fairytales and unrealistic goals.

Central to his considerations is the renowned former Juve defender, Leonardo Bonucci.

The 36-year-old defender has been working on his fitness since joining the Berlin club this summer from Italy. After being excluded from Juve's first team and missing a solid pre-season, Bonucci is eager to make his mark. A shaky defence in Union's recent league match against Wolfsburg might boost the chances of the former Italian international making his season debut in a Union jersey.

Former Milan defender Robin Gosens urged patience, noting that

returning to peak form takes time. The German international added: "You can see his experience and determination to get to the best possible level. He will soon be of great value to us."

Fischer is pleased with Bonucci's progress, noting, "I am happy to see he can't wait to be on the pitch." The challenge, from the coach's perspective, is "to find the right time to make all happy."

Fischer believes that Bonucci, with his 121 international caps, could provide a motivational boost, even if he plays just the final 30 minutes.



Gosens encouraged the team to relish "the unique experience of playing in one of football's greatest arenas against one of the world's best." The 29-year-old added that it is always possible for "a smaller club to hurt one of the big ones in one game."

Former German national team captain Michael Ballack commented, "The club having deserved to play Champions League and do the next development step as the Champions League will make them collect experience and grow." For Fischer, the key is "to find solutions in the game and not

only kick the ball out of our box." Otherwise, he warns, "you get into trouble against a team of Real's quality."

Facing teams like Real, Napoli, and Braga is uncharted territory for Union, demanding courage and resilience.

Fischer sees it as an added challenge to act with courage. Leonardo Bonucci might be the one to provide that courage when Union feels "in an emotional rollercoaster", as Gosens put it.

The full-back next to Bonucci is the only Union player with Champions League experience. — Xinhua

ROUND-UP

MHD launches brand new showroom featuring iconic Stellantis brands

The state-of-the-art showroom features a wide range of Stellantis models from high-end brands including Jeep, Dodge, RAM, and Alfa Romeo

MUSCAT: Mohsin Haider Darwish Automobiles (MHD), Oman's leading automotive distributor, launched its brand-new showroom for its iconic Stellantis brands including Jeep, Dodge, RAM, Alfa Romeo and its after-sales brand, Mopar.

The flagship showroom located in Al Hail North opened on Monday, 18 September, under the patronage of Sayyid Saud bin Hilal bin Hamad Al Busaidi, Governor of Muscat and in the presence of Madam Areej Mohsin Haider Darwish, Chairperson of Mohsin Haider Darwish - ACERE, Mohsin Hani Al Bahrani, Chief Executive



Officer of MHD Automobiles, and representatives from Stellantis.

The state-of-the-art showroom features a wide range of Stellantis models from high-end brands including Jeep, Dodge, RAM, and Alfa Romeo. A one-stop destination for Stellantis customers, the showroom also includes convenient after-sales services such as car

care and spare parts stations. With the launch of this brand-new showroom, customers can now discover the popular Stellantis models and access professional expert advice from MHD's trained professionals.

This showroom marks a new milestone for MHD as it recently became a distributor of Stellantis in Oman, the world's fourth-largest



car maker. The strategic partnership between MHD Automobiles LLC and Stellantis saw iconic brands such as Jeep, Dodge, RAM and Alfa Romeo added to MHD's renowned portfolio of brands including MG, Jaguar, Land Rover, Jetour, INEOS, Hongqi and McLaren.

Commenting on the launch of the flagship Stellantis show-

room, Mohsin Hani Al Bahrani, CEO said: "We are thrilled to announce the launch of our brand-new showroom. After becoming a Stellantis distributor in Oman, we were determined to offer our customers access to a first-class destination where they could discover a wide range of Stellantis models. This new showroom is indicative

of our commitment to providing the Omani market with access to world-class brands. We worked closely with Stellantis to develop this unique space bringing together modern features, high-end technology, and quality services for our valued customer."

Madam Areej Mohsin Haider Darwish, Chairperson added: "I am proud to see MHD Automobiles expanding its leading position as an automobile distributor in Oman. Responding to market demands, we were committed to opening a unique showroom for our Stellantis models as a testament to our innovative and forward-thinking approach for our valued customers in Oman."

Samir Cherfan, Chief Operating Officer at Stellantis Middle East and Africa stated, "Our partnership with Mohsin Haider Darwish Automobiles has been instrumental in expanding our footprint in Oman. Together, we are committed to delivering Best in Class Customer Experience, underpinned by both top-notch products and exceptional pre and after sales services. This showroom embodies our mutual dedication to setting the highest standards for quality performance in the Omani market. Customers will have the unique opportunity to fully engage with the pioneering innovation that distinguishes each of our iconic brands."

DISCOUNTS



Aster Royal Al Raffah signs pact with University of Technology and Applied Sciences Muscat

MUSCAT: Aster Royal Al Raffah Hospital announced the signing of a cooperation agreement with the University of Technology and Applied Sciences - Muscat, under which special services will be provided to faculty members, employees, students and their families (father, mother, husband, wife and children), as they will receive special discounts and benefits in all the services it provides at the facility.

The agreement comes within the framework of the hospital's interest in providing integrated treatment in all specialties. The agreement was signed on behalf of the university by Dr. Ahmed bin Mohammed Al-Maamari, Assistant President of the University, while it was signed on behalf of the hospital, by Mr. Shailesh Guntu, CEO of Aster Hospitals and Clinics Oman.

For over 18+ years, Aster Healthcare Group has been dedicated to serving the Sultanate of Oman with a compassionate approach to healthcare. Operating 5 state-of-the-art hospitals and 7 clinics in Al Ghubrah, Sohar, Ibri, Salalah, Al Amerat, Al Maabilah, Al Suwaiq and Liwa, the group takes pride in providing the highest levels of quality achievable in patient care.

Aster Royal Al Raffah Hospital in Ghubra stands as a testament to the group's commitment to bringing advanced healthcare closer to the people of Muscat. As the fifth Aster Hospital in Oman and the 32nd hospital across the group, the facility aims to facilitate access to excellent medical services for the people of Oman.

The 175+ bedded multi-speciality hospital features state-of-the-art technology and includes

10 ICU beds. With a comprehensive range of services, such as a dedicated maternity and childcare floor, a unique cath lab, and centres of excellence in gastroenterology, urology, orthopaedics, cardiology, neurology, obstetrics and gynaecology, the hospital meets a wide range of medical needs.

By providing many locally advanced secondary and tertiary care services in Oman, Aster Royal Al Raffah Hospital addresses the immediate need of Omanis to access specialised care. Leveraging Aster Healthcare Group's legacy of over 35+ years, a global network of clinical expertise and medical knowledge and supported by an experienced team of over 300+ doctors, 450+ nurses and staff, the hospital delivers on the Aster brand promise of "We will treat you well".

EARN MAKASIB POINTS

Omantel launches new programme to promote healthy lifestyle with Apple Watch

MUSCAT: Omantel, the leading provider of integrated telecommunication services in the Sultanate of Oman, is launching a new programme to promote a healthy lifestyle.

Customers can use Apple Watch to earn Makasib points by closing their move, exercise, and stand activity rings. Point targets are automatically adjusted within the app to make them achievable for everyone, regardless of their current levels of activity, and over time will gradually adjust based on performance.

This service is free to Omantel's customers. They only need to have an Apple Watch, or other compatible smartwatch, and join the program through Omantel App.

Sara Al Busaidi, Manager of Devices at Omantel, said, "Omantel strongly believes that being active and exercising helps people to stay healthy and contributes towards their quality of life. This program is aimed at promoting positive engagement and better health, with the added incentive of earning Makasib loyalty points based on meeting monthly physical activity goals. This is a great way of utilising technology to promote a healthy lifestyle."

The Sehati program, leveraging the GlobantBeHealthy platform, is available with Apple Watch on iOS, and with other compatible smartwatches on Android platforms. Users will first opt into the program via Omantel App, activate their Sehati account, grant access to



HealthKit (or to other smartwatches), and then start the program. All physical activity will contribute towards their daily targets, and for each day they achieve their target they will earn a star. Every star gets the user closer to the monthly goal and the Makasib points reward.

Omantel will reward customers for achieving their target through Omantel loyalty points. Customers can redeem points for the following: Telecom services (Free minutes, Free internet usage (GB), Bill discount, Prepaid Top-up), Draw promotion where points can be redeemed as draw gifts, and Omantel loyalty partners (Fuel, Food delivery, airline points exchange, and many others).

The programme was developed to be used with powerful privacy protections on every iPhone and Apple Watch, and users have full control over their data and whom it is shared with.

It is remarkable to note the concept of 'Sehati' emerged as the winner of the Omantel Innovation Labs Big Data Hackathon from the preceding year. The hackathon served as a catalyst for highlighting innovation and nurturing entrepreneurship within Oman, all under the guiding light of Omantel's Innovation Labs.

Omantel has succeeded, through the integration of its operations, processes, and extensive expertise in the field of communications and digital technology, in establishing its position as a leading telecommunications company within Oman and beyond. The company's innovative approaches have contributed to providing the latest solutions to various consumer and business sectors. The company aims to deliver an unparalleled, exceptional experience to its subscribers and strives to always exceed their expectations.

IN DUQM

Meethaq opens first Islamic banking branch in Al Wusta governorate

MUSCAT: Continuing the expansion of its branch network across the Sultanate of Oman, Meethaq Islamic Banking from Bank Muscat celebrated the official opening of a new branch in the Wilayat of Duqm in the Governorate of Al Wusta.

The opening ceremony was held under the patronage of Sheikh Badar bin Nasser Al Farsi, Wali of Duqm, and attended by a number of customers and officials from Meethaq Islamic Banking. Meethaq is the first to provide Islamic Banking services in the Governorate. This came in line with its strategy to enhance financial inclusion and provide easy access to banking and financial services to Meethaq Customers, including individuals, corporates or government institutions, in Al Wusta.

During the ceremony, Wali of Duqm was introduced to the different

Islamic Banking services and facilities, Meethaq's strategy to uphold its leadership role in the sector, as well as, the future steps taken to further expand Meethaq branch network to new locations. The new branch adds to Meethaq's already excellent network of branches amounting to 27 branches across different governorates. It will enhance Meethaq's pioneering position in providing Islamic Banking services considering it are the largest Islamic window with branch network in Oman.

The new branch offers various Sharia-compliant services and facilities for individuals and corporates. It is a convenient choice for customers in Wilayat of Duqm, which will make it easier for them to benefit from the wide range of modern services. The new branch is operated by experienced Omani



cadres, who are ready to provide the best services for customers. The services provided by the branch can be availed during weekdays from Sunday to Thursday, from eight in the morning until two in the afternoon.

On this occasion, Sami Bait Rashid, Assistant General Manager - Meethaq Personal Banking, said:

"We are pleased to open our new branch in Wilayat of Duqm considering that it is a key business and industrial hub in the Sultanate and also the future prospects for rapid development in this strategic part of Oman. Meethaq is delighted to offer customers a wide range of Islamic Banking services and facilities for both individuals and corporates as

part of its strategy to enhance its branch network. Meethaq has currently 27 branches across Oman and they are fully equipped to provide an easier access to customers and meet their needs. We would like to thank all Meethaq customers for their continuous trust in its services and we are happy to invite you all to visit the new branch and benefit from the different services and products offered."

Ali Ahmed Al Lawati, Assistant General Manager, Meethaq - Corporate Banking, said: "Meethaq has been always keen to contribute towards supporting economic development and providing various services to meet the needs of institutions and corporates. Duqm is playing a huge role in the development of the region considering that it provides wide investment opportunities. Meethaq's new

branch will be offering a wide services package to corporate customers in the Wilayat and the Governorate as a whole considering that it is the first Islamic Banking entity in Al Wusta. The services offered include Meethaq's services include capital finance, term and project finance, contract finance, trade services, currency exchange services and tailored financing solutions for corporates based on their business needs. The services also cover accounts like current accounts, deposits and call accounts and corporate purchase cards. Moreover, it offers special services related to transfers, collection of cheques, digital services, payment and currency services. We will continue enhancing our partnerships to offer the best services and benefits to our valued customers."

ROUND-UP

Mall of Muscat hosts Oman’s first indoor 5,000-metre race

The race featured four distinct categories, including a 5,000-metre challenge for men, a 5,000-metre run for women, a 1,000-metre contest for children aged 10-12, and an exciting 300-metre fun run tailored for children aged three to nine

MUSCAT: Mall of Muscat, Oman’s premier shopping destination, played host to the historic Muscat Refresh Race 2023, Sultanate of Oman’s first indoor running marathon that brought together passionate runners spanning all age groups.

The race featured four distinct categories, including a 5,000-metre challenge for men, a 5,000-metre run for women, a 1,000-metre contest for children aged 10-12, and an exciting 300-metre fun run tailored

for children aged three to nine.

There were a total of 186 participants in the men’s and women’s categories combined, while the children’s category had 120 participants. While the men’s race started at 7:00 am, the women’s race began at 8:00 am, and the children’s race took place at 4:00 pm.

Abdullah Salim Al Qarini claimed victory with a time of 15:27.11, closely followed by Abdullah Hassan Ousghir at 15:30.78 and Muhssen Suleiman Al Hatmi, who secured third



place with a time of 15:34.00.

A spokesperson for Mall of Muscat said, “The Refresh Race 2023 Marathon served as a resounding testament to our unwavering dedication to fostering an active and healthy lifestyle among the community. We were truly elated to witness the remarkable turnout of individuals spanning all age

groups, united by their passion for fitness and the sheer joy of running. Our sincerest gratitude goes out to every participant, invaluable sponsors, dedicated volunteers, and the supportive local community for their enthusiastic involvement. We also wish to express our heartfelt thanks to the local authorities whose steadfast support played an

instrumental role in bringing this event to life. The collective efforts and commitment of all involved were instrumental in making this race a resonant success, furthering our shared mission of promoting a healthier way of life.”

Mall of Muscat served as the venue sponsor, while Dr. Nutrition provided support as the nutrition

and energy drink sponsor. Chulha Oman, an Indian cuisine restaurant, was the official beverage sponsor for the event. Additionally, a group of other valued sponsors included UFC Gym, Healthy Habit, Oman Running Team, Muscat Track, One Way Team, Garmin, Bausher Club, and Rovers Bausher Club. The prize money to the winners was sponsored by Janaab Sayyid and Muhallab Mundhir Majid Al Said.

Incorporating an expanse of approximately 200,000 square metres and providing more than 3,000 parking spaces, the Mall of Muscat boasts a substantial area. Beyond its shopping allure, Mall of Muscat presents a host of family-centric attractions, including a cinema, an entertainment zone, and other engaging features. Remarkably, it also hosts the Oman Aquarium, the largest and only public aquarium within the Sultanate. With an impressive array of 240+ brands spanning across fashion, lifestyle, sports, and electronics, Mall of Muscat offers an unparalleled luxurious experience.

ANNIVERSARY

BANKING SERVICES



Mazda’s enduring legacy in Oman shaped by historic 50-year partnership with TAC

MUSCAT: Towell Auto Centre (TAC), one of Oman’s oldest automotive distributors, recently celebrated the 50th anniversary of its robust, growth-centric and enduring partnership with renowned Japanese automaker Mazda – a milestone that also has special resonance with the brand’s countless customers here in the Sultanate of Oman.

To commemorate this momentous jubilee, Masashi Otsuka, General Manager (Global Sales & Marketing Div), Mazda Motor Corporation, presented a distinguished plaque to the senior executives representing Towell Auto Center. Inscribed on the plaque was the succinct but eloquent message: ‘In Gratitude for a Successful and Fruitful Partnership of Fifty Years (1973 -2023)’.

The 50th anniversary signifies more than a mere observance of another chapter in their longstanding relationship; it symbolizes a testament to Mazda’s cherished heritage, deeply rooted in visionary leadership, resilience in the face of adversity, and an indomitable spirit.

Mazda, having endured the devastation of Hiroshima in the atomic bombing of August 1945



and emerged from the ashes Phoenix-like as a beacon of hope and inspiration for Japan’s automotive industry. Within just four months and fueled by founder Jujiro Matsuda’s ‘never give up’ philosophy, Mazda resumed production with an array of models that attested to its engineering prowess, innovative spirit, and passion for exceptional success.

Halfway across the world, Towell Group – one of Oman’s foremost business houses with a rich 150-year history – had opened what was then the nation’s first

car showroom at Darsait - Muscat. The launch marked the birth of Towell’s Auto business with Mazda as its flagship automotive franchise in 1973, marking the start of a relationship that has continued to blossom and thrive over the ensuing decades.

Oman’s unbreakable bond with the Mazda brand, as many older generations of Omanis and expatriates will fondly recall, began with the Mazda 323 and Mazda 808 series of sedans in the early 1970s, followed by the Mazda 616 and Mazda 929, and Mazda Cronos models a decade or so later. The models embodied much of what still distinguishes the brand today: stylish design, high functionality, innovative spirit, and technical competence. Another notable highpoint was the launch of the Mazda 6, pushing boundaries in performance, fuel efficiency, and design.

Indeed, the automotive landscape in Oman buzzed with excitement every year with the latest offerings from Mazda’s innovative line-up. They included everything from the fun-loving MX-5 Miata sports car to the luxurious family Crossover CX-60 and the compact Mazda 3.

Over the past half a century,

Mazda has cultivated a loyal and rapidly expanding customer base, drawn by the brand’s core attributes like effortless joyful driving, artful design, and human centric engineering.

In trend with the brand’s rapid growth trajectory, TAC has also expanded its footprint to cover all parts of the Sultanate of Oman. Impressive showrooms, complemented by professionally manned service and parts centre, now span the length and breadth of the country.

Reflecting on this highly fruitful partnership with Mazda, Riyadh Ali Sultan, General Manager of Towell Auto Centre, commented, “It’s has been an unparalleled privilege and honour to represent Mazda in the Sultanate of Oman these past 50 years, based on a relationship that continues to be shaped and sustained by our respective heritage, values, and most importantly, a mutual commitment to excellence and perseverance.”

He further added, “As we look ahead to the next half a century of Mazda’s growth in Oman, powered by its world-class passenger cars, we also thank our expansive customer base that has stayed true to the brand ever since it debuted here in the Sultanate.”

Maisarah Islamic introduces high yield savings account with up to 3.8% annual profit rate

MUSCAT: Maisarah Islamic Banking Services, Oman’s leading Islamic financial institution, announced the launch of its enhanced account options designed to provide customers with a wide range of Sharia-compliant banking solutions tailored to their individual financial goals and preferences.

In response to the evolving needs of our valued customers and the growing demand for innovative and flexible banking services, Maisarah Islamic Banking Services is proud to introduce these new account options, which aim to offer greater choice and convenience.

The High Yield Savings Account from Maisarah Islamic Banking Services is designed to empower customers to achieve their financial goals while adhering to Islamic principles.

Key features of the high yield savings account include:



Competitive profit rate

With an annual profit rate of up to 3.832 per cent, customers can watch their savings grow steadily over time. This rate is among the highest available in the market and reflects Maisarah Islamic Banking Services commitment to providing competitive and ethical banking solutions.

Mudarahab principles

The account operates based on the principles of Mudarahab, ensuring a fair and equitable sharing of profits between customers and the bank. This transparent approach aligns with Islamic finance’s ethical framework.

Tiered profit rates

The High Yield Savings Account features tiered profit rates, meaning that the more you save, the higher your potential profit rate. This encourages customers to save more and earn more in return.

For those who require day-to-day banking services, Maisarah Islamic Banking Services also provides regular saving and current accounts with a wide range of features and benefits, including digital banking services for added convenience.

“We are delighted to introduce the High Yield Savings Account, which not only offers an attractive profit rate but also exemplifies our commitment to ethical banking through the Mudarahab principles,” said Amor Said Al Amri, DGM and Head of Retail Banking at Maisarah Islamic Banking Services”, we are dedicated to providing our customers with innovative financial solutions that help them achieve their financial goals while adhering to Islamic values.”

Maisarah’s national wide branch network is growing rapidly. The network also consists of more than 300 (ATMs – CDMs – FFMs – MFKs) including Islamic and conventional devices.



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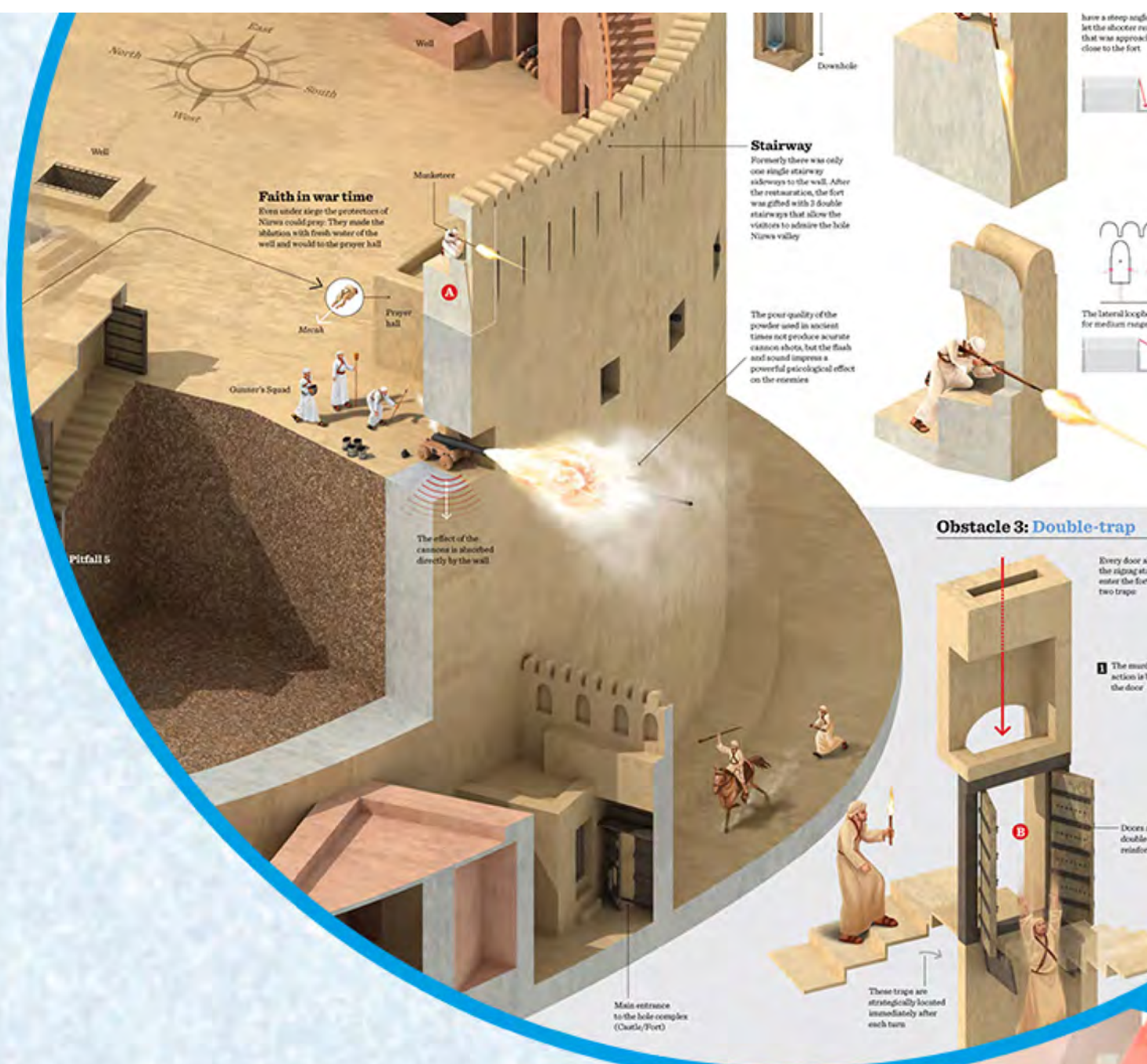
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