

MSX-LISTED BANKS POST OMR118.5MN NET PROFITS

The net profits of banks listed on the Muscat Stock Exchange (MSX) rose by 26.2 per cent to OMR118.5 million in the first quarter of 2023, compared to OMR93.8 million in the same period last year. **>B2**



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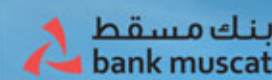
AL HARTHY MAKES HISTORY AGAIN AS 1ST OMANI TO GET FIA WEC POLE

Oman Racing with TF Sport's Ahmad Al Harthy stormed to a dominant GTE Am class pole position at Spa-Francorchamps on Friday, 28th April – a landmark first qualifying topping performance from the Omani in his maiden season in the FIA World Endurance Championship. **>B6**



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FIFA-FUNDED

Residential units for football players to be ready this year



Times News Service

MUSCAT: A state-of-the-art housing complex and technical building for football players at Seeb Stadium is almost ready, courtesy Oman Football Association.

Almost 80 per cent of the construction work of the technical building and the residence of players is complete with chances of delivery during the current year as per the contract.

The project, financed by the FIFA, comprises an integrated technical building of 55 rooms with all the facilities, sports halls, a swimming pool among others.

Fahd Al Saadi, Acting Director of administrative and financial affairs, said that the residential units are one of the key elements and goals that OFA aims to execute due to the significance of football in Oman.

This would also contribute to mitigating the financial burden on the budget of Oman Football Association, in terms of the reservations for the stay of national teams during regular camps, he added.

He said that the building enjoys high-standard specifications and it would further help develop football in the Sultanate and achieve the goals of the Oman Football Association.

Basma bint Mohammed, Director of Purchases at Oman Football Association, said that the design of the building has taken into account the needs of the national teams as it comprises rooms for residence of players of the national teams.

The project has rest rooms, halls, sports lounges, a swimming pool and other facilities for the management over an area of 4,700 sqm. **With inputs from ONA**



Search on for missing citizen in Wadi Dayqah

A3

NEW OMANI CONSUMER COOPERATIVE REGULATION TO STIMULATE GROWTH

The initiative will help increase the share of the manufacturing sector in Oman's GDP

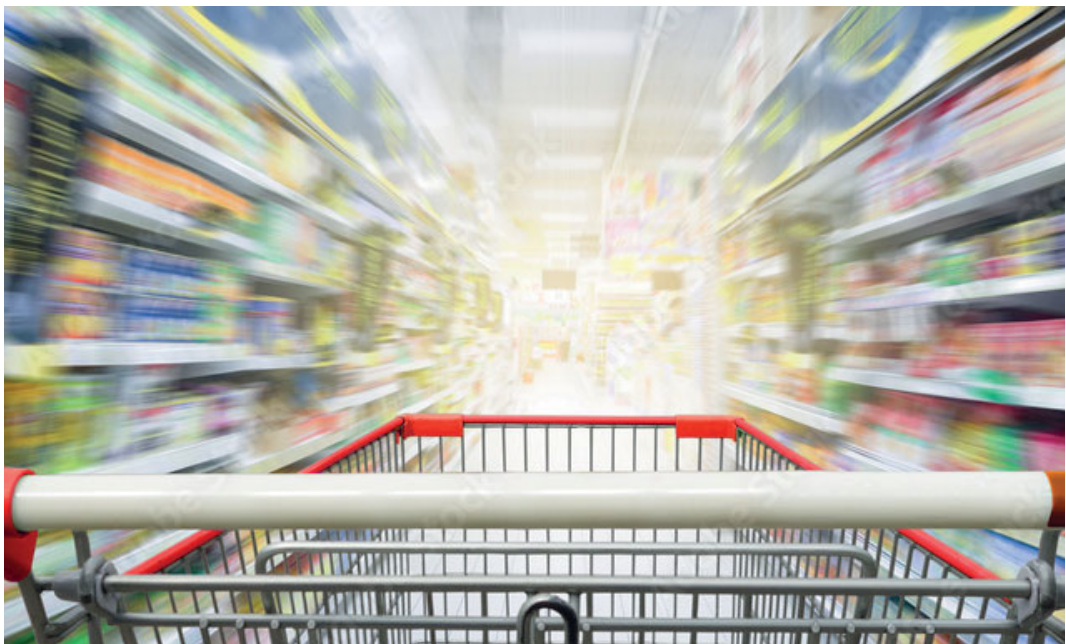
Times News Service

MUSCAT: The new Omani Consumer Cooperative regulation will stimulate economic growth in the Sultanate of Oman.

The initiative will help in raising the contribution of the manufacturing sector in the gross domestic product (GDP), along with promoting local content and enhancing the presence of the national products in commercial centres and malls.

The regulation governing the practice of the activity of consumer cooperatives was issued by the Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Investment Promotion (MoCIIP) with an aim of organising the activity of consumer cooperatives. It will also enhance Omani consumers and producers by creating new supply chains, supporting national industries, developing the governorates, and in providing new investment opportunities in this sector.

"First of all, we appreciate the



Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Investment Promotion for this qualitative gesture to address this issue, which represents a response to the demands of citizens and various segments of society in order to find effective cooperative consumer associations that have a presence in the Omani economic and social scene to face the economic challenges and their impact on the life of the citizen," Dr Rajab bin Ali Al-Owaisi, an expert in social and educational studies at the State Council, a writer and researcher, said.

He explained that it is a well-known fact that consumer cooperative is a new horizon to

“

This regulation will also contribute to provide a new range of Omani products

stimulate the economic and commercial movement in the governorates. It will contribute to creating a safe space for the citizens

in the face of high prices.

These cooperatives will offer citizens new incentives, alternatives and options for families of low income, insolvent and other families who are within the social security system, he said.

He stressed that these cooperatives will be dealt with in accordance with codified frameworks and clear strategies. They will play a more significant role in controlling consumer practice and in controlling prices. This trend will strengthen consumer confidence in these cooperatives where the consumer will give priority to choose the products that are offered by these cooperatives. **>A5**

TOP THREE INSIDE STORIES

OMAN

Oman's economic progress praised

1 The Anglo-Omani Society in London praised the Oman's economic achievements under the wise leadership of His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik and expected economic recovery in the coming period with the support of financial plans and rise in oil prices. **>A3**



OMAN

Veterinarians praised for their role in Oman

2 The Sultanate of Oman joined the world on Saturday in celebrating the International Day of the Veterinarian, in appreciation of their role for community service, achieving food security, developing economy and preserving public health in the country. **>A5**

WORLD

Fighting on in Sudan, evacuations dip

3 Warplanes continued to hover over Khartoum on Saturday, with the sound of air strikes and artillery challenging a 72-hour cease-fire agreement that's nearly halfway through. Both the Sudanese military and RSF paramilitary group continued to exchange blame for the violence. **>A6**

TRA

Facebook bucks trend, users of other apps dip in Oman

Times News Service

MUSCAT: Barring Facebook, all other social media applications have seen a decrease in the number of users in the second half of 2022 compared to the first half of the same year, according to the Telecommunications Regulatory Authority.

In its semi-annual report entitled "Market Indicators: Telecommunications and Postal Sectors", which covers the period from July to December 2022, Facebook witnessed an increase of 61 per cent in the number of its users compared to the first half of 2022.

Nine social media applications witnessed a decrease in the number of their users in the Sultan-

ate of Oman, and the highest decrease was for electronic games by 55 per cent, followed by TikTok by 40 per cent, YouTube by 26 per cent, WhatsApp and Zoom by 18 per cent each.

Sharp decline

A number of social media applications witnessed a sharp decline in their use, while others witnessed an increase compared to the various electronic applications in comparison the first and the second half of the year 2022.

The Twitter application ranked sixth in terms of the most applications that witnessed a decrease in the number of its users by 12 per cent, followed by Snapchat and Netflix by 10 per cent each,



while the Instagram application witnessed a slight decrease of 0.01 per cent only.

According to a study of more than 40,000 people by the McKinsey Institute of Health, 'Generation Z' (Gen-Z) is the most affected by social media applications.

It found that social networks are harmful to the mental health of Gen-Z children around the world, as people of this generation spend more hours on social networks than others, making them more vulnerable to harm.

The study said that people of 'Generation Z' tend to talk about their negative feelings on social networks more than other generations.



34°
MUSCAT



PRAYER
TIMINGS

Dhuhr.....	12:09pm
Asr.....	3:35pm
Maghrib.....	6:39pm
Isha.....	7:54pm
Fajr (Tomorrow).....	4:14am

THREE-DAY FORUM

First forum for people with disabilities to begin on 1 May

MUSCAT: The activities of the first edition of Persons with Disabilities Forum will kick off on 1 May 2023 under the slogan "Incorporation and Empowerment".

The three-day forum seeks to promote and empower people with disabilities. It will explore ways to utilize their capabilities and skills, with the prime aim of integrating them into society.

The forum is organised by the Ministry of Social Development in partnership with Oman Energy Association.

This was unveiled during a media meeting held today at the National Centre for Autism, in the presence of Sheikh Rashid Ahmed Al Shamsi, Undersecretary of the Ministry of Social Development.

Hamoud Murdad Al Shabibi, Director General of Persons with Disabilities Affairs, said that the Ministry of Social Development accords great attention to persons with disabilities. -ONA

MOCIIP

Unlicenced sale of precious metal, stones on social media prohibited

MUSCAT: The Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Investment Promotion (MoCIIP) has warned that selling precious metals and stones through social media without a licence is a violation of the Precious Metals Control Law.

Prior licence

The MoCIIP said that it has noticed some people selling precious metals and precious stones through various social networking platforms without obtaining a prior licence from them.

The Ministry stated that this is a violation of the Precious Metals Control Law issued by Royal Decree No. (109/2000) and its executive regulations issued by Ministerial Resolution No. (123/2003). In addition, it was noted that the Ministry will take legal measures against anyone who violates this.

The Ministry of Commerce called on consumers to purchase precious metals and gemstones from licenced stores on social media, and to ensure the presence of the government stamp, in addition to obtaining an official invoice upon purchase.

Penalties according to the Royal Decree No. (109/2000):

Article (14)

Without prejudice to the provisions of Article (193) of the Omani Penal Code, whoever stamps or numbers precious metals or items with forged stamping or numbering marks shall be punished by imprisonment for a period not exceeding three months and a fine not exceeding OMR 500, or by either of these two penalties for a trader or manufacturer who sold these minerals or items, offered them for sale, possessed them with the intention of selling, or dealt with them knowing that



they were forged. Confession is ruled in all cases.

Article (15)

Whoever makes precious metals or items after being stamped or numbered a change or modification that makes them not conforming to the caliber shall be punished by imprisonment for a period of not less than six months and not exceeding two years, and a fine of not less than OMR 1,500 and not exceeding OMR 3,000, or one of these two penalties. Anyone who sells these minerals or items, offers them for sale, possesses them with the intent of selling, or deals in them with knowledge of the change or modification that he has caused in them shall be subject to the same penalty.

Article (17)

Whoever prevents any of the employees stipulated in Article (13) of this law from performing his duties in any way, shall be punished by imprisonment for a period not exceeding three months and a fine not exceeding OMR 500, or by one of these two penalties.

Article (18)

Anyone who violates the provisions of this law or the decisions issued for its implementation, except for what is stipulated in the previous articles, shall be punished by imprisonment for a period not exceeding six months and a fine of not less than OMR 200 and not more than OMR 1,000, or one of these two penalties.

Article (16)

Every trader or manufacturer offering for sale or dealing in any manner whatsoever in precious metals or items that are not stamped or numbered shall be punished by imprisonment for a period of not less than three months and not exceeding a year and a fine of

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HEALTH CONDITION

Citizen airlifted from the UAE

MUSCAT: Acting in coordination with the Ministry of Defence, the Ministry of Health responded to a request to transfer a female Omani citizen who experienced an adverse health condition in the UAE.

Dr. Mohammed Saif Al Bousafi, Director of the Emergency Management Centre at the Ministry of Health, said that, after evaluating the patient's condition, coordination was made with the RAFO to transfer the patient to the Royal Hospital. -ONA

BUSINESS DELEGATION

Omani delegation to boost trade ties with Singapore



INVESTMENTS: The delegation learned about the Singaporean experience, which is witnessing remarkable developments in various fields.

Times News Service

MUSCAT: An Omani delegation headed by the Minister of Commerce, Industry and Investment Promotion concluded its visit to the Republic of Singapore.

The business delegation was aimed at strengthening the establishment of trade relations between the two friendly countries, and to search for available investment opportunities and new markets.

During the visit, the delegation learned about the Singaporean experience, which is witnessing remarkable developments in the economic, business, industrial and investment fields.

The visit included holding several meetings between the Omani and Singaporean sides to showcase attractive investment environment provided by the Sultanate of Oman to businessmen and investors, and to review the incentives, advantages and

investment opportunities available in various sectors.

Qais Mohammed Al Youssef, Minister of Commerce, Industry and Investment Promotion, and his accompanying delegation visited Okio's commercial office to learn about its activities in the field of trading and marketing oil, gas and petrochemical products in Asian markets.

The delegation was headed by the Minister of Commerce, Industry and Investment Promotion, with the participation of representatives from the Oman Investment Authority (OIA), Oman Chamber of Commerce and Industry, (OCCI), Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Water Resources, Public Authority for Economic Zones and Free Zones, Ministry of Energy and Minerals, Oman International Logistics Group, (ASYAD), and the National Program for Investment and Export Development "Nazdaher".



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Oman’s economic achievements under HM praised



His Majesty the Sultan has directed to fix the fuel prices till end of 2023

Times News Service

MUSCAT: The Anglo-Omani Society in London praised Oman’s economic achievements under the wise leadership of His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik, expecting recovery of the Omani economy with the support of the fiscal plans and programmes launched by the government and the increase in oil prices.

Anglo-Omani Society
The statements came during a lecture organised by the An-

glo-Omani Society in London and delivered by Dr. Khalid bin Said Al Ameri, chairman of the Anglo-Omani Society in London, in which he talked about the laws and legislations supportive to economic growth, expected to be issued in 2023, including the Labour Law, the Social Protection Law and the Public Debt Law.
He said that during the COVID-19 pandemic, the Omani economy had witnessed the most difficult time in its history, but thanks to the Royal Directives of

His Majesty the Sultan, the economic reforms and the initiatives, growth rebounded. The new stage of recovery is supported by the increase of oil revenues, he added.
To improve business environment and attain fiscal sustainability and diversification of sources of income and to provide sources of finance with competitive interest rates for the various projects and to attract foreign investments through integration of investments with Oman Investment Authority and the development of local projects, updating the laws and legislations in the banking sector have been initiated, he added.
He also said that His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik has directed to fix the fuel prices till end of 2023.

-With ONA inputs

SEARCH ON FOR MISSING CITIZEN IN WADI DAYQAH

Search operations are ongoing for the last two days to trace a citizen who reportedly drowned in Wadi Dayqah in the North Al Sharqiyah Governorate. A statement by the Civil Defence and Ambulance (CDAA), said: “The teams continued their search for the second day for the missing citizen who reportedly drowned in the Wadi Dayqah in the Wilayat of Dima and Al-Tayyin. Teams from the CDAA in the North Al Sharqiyah Governorate are being supported by their counterparts and citizens from the Muscat Governorate.”



FILM ‘AGENT’

Actor Dino Morea shares his Oman’s shooting experience



MUSCAT: Actor Dino Morea is set to make a foray into Telugu cinema with the film ‘Agent’.
The makers of the movie recently released its trailer that shows Dino in a never-seen-before avatar, playing the role of the antagonist ‘The God’.
The shooting of the film took place in diverse locations such as Budapest, Hyderabad, and Oman. It was not easy for the team to shoot in Oman due to the extremely hot weather.
Sharing his experience shooting at different locations, Dino said, “Shooting in Oman was an

extremely challenging experience, it was hot and my look for the action we were filming was 4 layers of clothing, and then act out in the bright Sun, I was literally baking.
However, the show must go on and we made it happen. It is always exciting to step out of my comfort zone, and I am thrilled to be making my Telugu debut with such an intense and daring character.”
‘Agent’ is a spy thriller, helmed by Surender Reddy. The film also stars superstar Mammootty and Akhil Akkineni. -ANI

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Veterinarians are first frontier against epidemic

The Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Water Resources appreciates the efforts of veterinarians in preserving the livestock in the Sultanate of Oman

Times News Service

MUSCAT: The Sultanate of Oman joined the world on Saturday in celebrating the International Day of the Veterinarian, in appreciation of their role for community service, achieving food security, developing economy and preserving public health.

The Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Water Resources appreciates the efforts of veterinarians in preserving the livestock in the Sultanate of Oman and working on to prevent animals from various diseases.

The number of veterinary doctors working in the Sultanate of Oman in government and private veterinary facilities is more than 750.

Eng. Khalfan bin Matar Al Sharji, Director General of Livestock at the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Water Resources, stressed that the ministry will continue to pay attention to veterinarians in all aspects



of work, with the aim of developing livestock and their products, and for their important role in protecting them against epidemics through vaccines.

He explained that the medical practices performed by the veterinarian are represented in surgeries, obstetrics, and forensic medicines, not to mention the human dimension, which is represented in alleviating the pain of animals that cannot complain and achieving the principle of animal welfare.

He pointed out that among the important roles played by the doctor in all areas of public health is the examination of meat in slaughterhouses and the health

supervision of animal products with the aim of providing consumers with healthy and safe food.

The veterinarian is considered one of the most important pillars in combating more than 200 common diseases between humans and animals. Studies have shown that 80% of the pathogens that affect humans are of animal origin.

Veterinarians contribute to combating epidemics that can be transmitted from animals to humans, such as avian influenza and the emerging coronavirus (Covid-19). They diagnose these diseases and take necessary measures to prevent their spread, including isolation, disinfection and sterilisation of common spaces.

They are the first line of defence against cross-border animal diseases, by imposing strict control at the land, sea and air outlets, where the veterinarians are tasked with preventing the passage of infected live animals that carry diseases, supervising meat and animal products, and following up the epidemiological situation regionally.

-With ONA inputs

Consumer cooperatives to attract investment

<FROM A1 He further stressed that this regulation will also contribute to providing a new group of Omani products with global added value, and will enhance the capability of the Omani products to target new export markets.

Dr Rajab Al -Owaisi added: “We believe that the presence of these consumer cooperatives, represents the way in which it must be followed in light of the future indicators so that it can exercise its pioneering role in light of an integrated community work system, in order to contribute directly to address the challenges and difficult conditions that society faces or some individuals.”

“These consumer cooperatives will also contribute to providing investment and functional opportunities that support the family, and they will also be able to adopt educational and training programmes to prepare young people in families with limited income or social security families and qualify them to engage in productive projects.”

“The success of consumer cooperatives will also contribute to encouraging productive families and employing youth skills and their initiatives, to exercise the role of the facilitator, and the producer by sponsoring or carrying out various community activities by expanding the spread of consumer cooperatives in the governorates,” he said.

Dr. Rajab Al -Owaisi also pointed out that, the success of the role of consumer cooperative in the next stage remains dependent on the level of clarity of policies and organisational, structural, administrative and financial frameworks. It also depends on the presence of an integrated national system for consumer cooperatives, their philosophy, specialisations and work mechanisms, and in the possibility of providing opportunities to enhance their presence in the society.

Its success also depends on the extent of the possibility of building a national system strengthened by institutional references,

legislative, organisational, administrative, structural, planning and executive regulations and integrated databases that determine the details of its work and implementation steps, evaluation, monitoring and diagnosis systems.

Eng. Salem bin Saif Al-Abdali, a writer and economic analyst, said: “The idea of consumer cooperatives can benefit the consumer, through the diversity of products that it provides, and through ensuring the quality, since these cooperatives usually focus on the national product, which is well known by its high quality, thus the consumer will have many and varied options of fresh products.”

“In every governorate, at least one main consumer cooperative is required along with its branches across the wilayats of the Governorate, in accordance with the population density of each governorate and the Wilayat, while this will be an opportunity for SMEs to invest in the establishment of these cooperatives in cooperation with private sector companies, through creating specialised private companies in this field,” he added.

He pointed out that the future of these cooperatives can be successful in the Sultanate of Oman, in the event that the necessary support for them is provided through a package of facilities and incentives, including soft loans, granting lands, and exemption from fees and taxes for long periods so that these cooperatives can compete successfully.

Al-Abdali stressed the importance of managing these cooperatives with high experience and efficient people, provided that these cooperatives are subject to accountability, transparency and governance, and must issue annual reports on profits and losses, and they can benefit from the experiences of some countries in the region, such as the State of Kuwait, which has a leading and ancient experience in this field, in order to avoid the negatives and to build on its positives aspects.

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Tender Announcement

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Tender No.	Tender Subject	Grade	Last date for obtainment of tender document	Last date for tender submission	Tender Document Price (non-refundable)
103/2023	Construction of the educational kitchen at Al-Wafa Center for the Rehabilitation of Persons with Disabilities in Ibri	Companies specialized in the field of urban contracting and maintenance and registered with the General Secretariat of the Tender Board in the second degree	Sunday 14-5-2023 02:00 PM	Sunday 28-5-2023 10:00 AM	R.O. 25/=

- ❖ Specialized Companies, registered with the Tender Board may obtain the Tender documents at theTender Board e-tendering digital portal link (<https://etendering.tenderboard.gov.om>), On Sunday 30/4/2023
- ❖ Tender shall be submitted in compliance with the technical specifications and terms along with a local bank warranty at (1%) of the tender value, valid ninety (90) days from the date of e-submission.
- ❖ For Inquiry , please contact though the e-tendering website (rag@tenderboard.gov.om) tel. (24402200)

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UNAUDITED FINANCIAL STATEMENT FOR THE PERIOD ENDED 31,MARCH 2023

CHAIRMAN REPORT

In the name of Allah, the Beneficent, the Merciful.

Dear, Shareholders,

After compliments,

On behalf of the Board of Directors, I would like to present the unaudited financial statement for the first quarter ended on 31th March 2023.

During the period, the company managed to produce 18,043 tons of chrome ore, compared to 12,095 tons and to sell 27,015 tons, compared to 10,344 tons in the same period last year and achieving revenues of 1,885,638 riyals, compared to 575,269 riyals in the same period last year. A profit after tax of 801,645 Omani riyals achieved in the period, compared to 204,154 riyals for the same period last year, an increase of 393%.

Finally, on behalf of the board of directors and the executive management of the company, I would like to express my sincere loyalty, appreciation and gratitude to His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik, may God protect him, and convey our thanks to the wise government for the extended support. I would also like to thank all the shareholders of the company for their continued support, confidence and above all for their trust in the board and the, executive management of the company and its employees.

Thank you,

Humaid bin Masoud Al Maqbali
Chairman

STATEMENT OF COMPREHENSIVE INCOME
FOR THE PERIOD ENDED 31-3-2023

	31-3-2023 RO	31-3-2022 RO.
Revenue	1,885,638	575,269
Cost of Sales	(516,291)	(181,312)
Gross profit	1,369,347	393,957
Other income	495	0
Total operating profit	1,369,842	393,957
Selling and distribution expenses	(213,365)	(72,362)
General and administrative expenses	(145,316)	(108,893)
Profit from operations	1,011,161	212,702
change in investments at fair value through profit or loss	(93,348)	0
Realised gains on sales of investment at fair value through profit or loss	378	(660)
Interest income	24,921	28,139
Net profit before tax for the period	943,112	240,181
Income tax expenses	(141,467)	(36,027)
Net Profit after tax and total comprehensive income for the period	801,645	204,154
Basic earnings per share	0.267	0.068

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION AS AT 31, MARCH, 2023

	March 2023 OR	March 2022 OR
ASSETS		
Non-current Asset		
plant and equipment	628,374	266,061
Intangible assets	457,699	315,141
investment in associate company	406,652	0
Deferred Tax Assets	0	38,192
Bank Guarante	137000	92000
Total Non-current Assets	1,629,725	711,394
Current Assets		
Investments at fair value through profit or loss	3,671	3,608
Inventories	1,201,272	894,280
Trade and other receivables	845,370	288,936
Cash and bank balance	474,739	230,653
term deposits	1,750,000	2,050,000
Total Current Assets	4,275,052	3,467,477
Total Assets	5,904,777	4,178,871
Equity and Liability		
Capital and reserve		
Share capital	3,000,000	3,000,000
Legal reserve	1,000,000	832,974
Retained earnings (loss)	1,097,869	-116,707
Total capital and reserve	5,097,869	3,716,268
Non-current Liabilities		
Employees benefits liabilities	32,134	21,644
Deferred Tax Liability	39,087	0
Total Non-current Liabilities	71,221	21,644
Current Liabilities		
Trade and other payables	543,391	294,012
Income tax (estimate)	192,296	146,947
Bank borrowings	0	0
Paid dividend	0.000	0.000
Total Current Liabilities	735,687	440,959
total liabilities	806,908	462,603
Total Equity and Liability	5,904,778	4,178,871
Net assets per share	1.699	1.239

Note: 1. The complete accounts will be sent by mail to any shareholder on request either in Arabi English within 7 days of receipt of the request.

2. Shareholders and investors are advised to read the full financial statements. 3. Certain comparative figures have been reclassified in order to conform to the presentation for current period.

WORLD



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Royal Oman Police
ANNOUNCEMENT

The Directorate General of Customs at the Royal Oman Police announces a public auction to sell various goods at the Logistics City Port on Tuesday 09 May 2023. The goods can be inspected at the warehouse of the Logistics City during official working hours on Sunday and Monday 7 & 8 May 2023, according to the following terms and conditions:

- Those wishing to bid must be registered with the Bayan System.
- The buyer must pay the auctioneer's fees at 3% of the total value of the purchased materials.
- A guarantee of RO 100/- shall be collected to enter the auction.
- The buyer must pay the value of the purchased materials electronically by electronic payment within a maximum period of (48) hours from the end of the auction.
- Goods will be submitted to the successful bidder after completing the customs declaration procedures and providing the permits for the restricted goods, if any.
- The Directorate General of Customs shall bear no responsibility for any damage to the goods after sale is concluded.
- The successful bidder must approach the Logistics City Port in the Wilayat of Barka to receive the goods during the period from 08 to 14 May 2023, noting that a fine will be imposed for delay after that period.

ON ISS

Emirati makes history as first Arab astronaut to complete spacewalk

DUBAI: The Mohammed Bin Rashid Space Centre (MBRSC) achieved a new milestone on Friday when astronaut Sultan AlNeyadi ventured out of the International Space Station (ISS) and completed his spacewalk.

With the conclusion of the mission task, the UAE commemorates AlNeyadi as the first Arab to undertake a spacewalk during Expedition 69, currently underway on the ISS. This accomplishment marks an important step forward for the Arab world's participation in space exploration.

His Highness Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Vice President and Prime Minister of the UAE and Ruler of Dubai, said, "After three years of intensive training, today we see Sultan AlNeyadi on his first spacewalk, carrying out several tasks outside the International Space Station. AlNeyadi is the first ever Emirati, first Arab and first Muslim astronaut to perform a spacewalk."

— ANI/WAM



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512 KILLED

Fighting rages on in Sudan as foreign evacuations slow

KHARTOUM: Warplanes continued to hover over Khartoum on Saturday, with the sound of air strikes and artillery challenging a 72-hour cease-fire agreement that's nearly halfway through.

Both the Sudanese military, under the leadership of General Abdel Fattah al-Burhan, and Mohamed Hamdan Daglo's Rapid Support Forces (RSF) paramilitary group continued to exchange blame for the violence, which has already entered its third week.

"We woke up once again to the sound of fighter jets and anti-aircraft weapons blasting all over our neighbourhood," a witness in southern Khartoum said.

The violence has thus far killed at least 512 and injured over 4,000 more, as per United Nations figures. The real toll is believed to be significantly higher.

The UN also says at least 75,000 have been internally displaced due to the fighting. They include many of the capital's population, which, when combined with the adjoining cities of Bahri and Omdurman, is home to some 10 million. — DW



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- Calcium
- Uric Acid
- Blood Urea Nitrogen
- Serum Creatinine
- BUN / Serum Creatinine Ratio
- eGFR

IRON DEFICIENCY

- Total Iron Binding Capacity
- Serum Iron
- Transferrin Saturation

DIABETEC SCREEN

- HbA1c
- Blood Sugar

THYROID PROFILE

- Triiodothyronine (T3)
- Total Thyroxine (T4)
- Thyroid Stimulating Hormone (TSH)

LIPID PROFILE

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INDIAN PREMIER LEAGUE

Plan to play extra bowler backfired, says Dhawan after loss

MOHALI: Punjab Kings skipper Shikhar Dhawan explained that his plan to play with an extra bowler was one of the major reasons for their 56-run loss to Lucknow Super Giants (LSG) in the Indian Premier League (IPL) 2023.

Punjab Kings decided to bowl first with seven bowling options at their disposal. But in the end, they ended up conceding 257/5 runs. Punjab had several pace bowlers but they missed a spinner. “We gave away too many runs. I felt that it (ball) didn’t come on quickly to the bat and it went straight to the fielder (on his dismissal). I felt my strategy to play with the extra bowler backfired. We missed a spinner today. It’s a learning experience for me. Livi (Livingstone) and even Sam (Curran) were there, so we couldn’t send him (SRK) ahead,” Shikhar Dhawan said after the match.

Despite giving a strong chase and scoring at a healthy rate, Punjab played catch-up for the better part of their innings and eventually folded for 201, succumbing to the pressure of having to go at almost 13 runs per over.

Explosive Englishman Liam Livingstone’s (36 off 22) and Sikandar Raza’s (23 off 14) weren’t enough to give the hosts a real shot at the target. While young Atharava Taide scored a swashbuckling 66 off 36 balls, his first fifty-plus score in IPL, his late dash for the target wasn’t enough for the Punjab franchise to go over the finish line.

PBKS were bundled out in the 20th over of the game, with Yash Thakur scalping the last wicket of Shahrukh Khan. **-ANI**



Titans thrash Knight Riders

GT are the new table-toppers with 12 points, having won six matches out of eight

KOLKATA: An explosive half-century by Vijay Shankar and classy knocks from Shubman Gill and David Miller powered Gujarat Titans (GT) to a seven-wicket win over Kolkata Knight Riders (KKR) in their Indian Premier League (IPL) match at Eden Gardens in Kolkata on Saturday.

With this win, GT are the new table-toppers with 12 points, having won six matches out of eight. KKR are at the seventh position with three wins and six losses. Chasing 180, GT started really well. Shubman Gill made his intentions clear by smashing Harshit Rana for four boundaries in the third over.

However, Andre Russell, the birthday boy struck to end Wriddhiman Saha’s stay at the crease, which lasted 10 balls and yielded 10 runs only. Harshit took a simple catch at midwicket. GT were 41/1 at that point.

Skipper Hardik Pandya joined Gill at the crease and a boundary from the latter helped GT cross the 50-run mark in 5.2 overs.

Harshit and Sunil Narine turned the game in KKR’s favour,



sending back Pandya (26 of 20 balls with two fours and a six) and Gill (49 of 35 balls with eight fours) quickly. GT were reduced to 93/3 in 11.2 overs.

It was for the duo of Vijay Shankar and David Miller to carry on with the chase. GT reached the 100-run mark in 12.3 overs.

With GT in a tricky situation as 69 were needed in the final six overs, Miller relieved some pressure by hitting Suyash Sharma for two consecutive sixes in the 15th over.

At the end of 15 overs, GT were 129/3, with Miller (26*) and Shankar (12*) unbeaten at the crease. They needed 51 runs in the final five overs.

Put to bat first by GT, KKR was off to a shaky start. After Narayan Jagadeesan smashed skipper Hardik Pandya for three boundaries in the second over, Mohammed Shami trapped him leg-before-wicket for 19 (15 balls) that included four boundaries. KKR were 23/1 at this point.

Shardul Thakur came to bat at number three, with KKR looking to up the attack. Rahmanullah Gurbaz unleashed some heavy hits on GT from the other side, smashing Pandya for two sixes and Shami for a six and four.

However, the move to send Shardul at the top backfired as he was caught by Mohit Sharma at mid-on for a duck. Shami got his second wicket. KKR were 47/2 in five overs. **-ANI**

KKR

Rinku is a phenomenal talent: Hussey

NEW DELHI: Former Australian batter David Hussey said on Saturday that Kolkata Knight Riders (KKR) batter Rinku Singh is a “phenomenal talent” and expressed hope that he will play for India soon.

IPL 2023 has entered its second phase of the league stage and in the first half of the biggest T20 league, fans witnessed some spectacular individual performances. In the first 35 games in IPL 2023, the fans enjoyed some nail-biting encounters. There are players who set the stage on fire with their consistent and flamboyant performances, midway through the IPL 2023.

When it comes to the uncapped Players who made their mark in IPL 2023, Kolkata Knight Riders’ Rinku Singh has been the best batter. In nine matches so far, he has scored 270 runs at an average of 54.00 and a strike rate of over 151.

-ANI

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TODAY'S MATCHES

VS

Chennai Super Kings

Punjab Kings

2pm, Chennai

VS

Mumbai Indians

Rajasthan Royals

6pm, Mumbai

POINTS TABLE

TEAM	P	W	L	NR	NRR	PTS
GT	8	6	2	0	0.638	12
RR	8	5	3	0	0.939	10
LSG	8	5	3	0	0.841	10
CSK	8	5	3	0	0.376	10
RCB	8	4	4	0	-0.139	8
PBKS	8	4	4	0	-0.510	8
KKR	9	3	6	0	-0.147	6
SRH	8	3	5	0	-0.577	6
MI	7	3	4	0	-0.620	6
DC	8	2	6	0	-0.898	4

CSK: Chennai Super Kings, DC: Delhi Capitals, GT: Gujarat Titans, KKR: Kolkata Knight Riders, LSG: Lucknow Super Giants, MI: Mumbai Indians, PBKS: Punjab Kings, RCB: Royal Challengers Bangalore, RR: Rajasthan Royals, SRH: Sunrisers Hyderabad

SRH BOWLERS HELP TEAM SEAL WIN AGAINST DC

Chasing a total of 198, DC lost their first wicket in the second ball without scoring a single run

NEW DELHI: With an excellent comeback performance from Sunrisers Hyderabad's bowlers, SRH restricted Delhi Capitals to 188/6 despite half-centuries by Phil Salt and Mitchell Marsh, winning their Indian Premier League (IPL) match by nine runs at the Arun Jaitley Stadium on Saturday.

Phil Salt and Mitchell Marsh's partnership of 112 for the second wicket had provided a solid platform to DC, however, after their dismissal, DC lost the momentum and lost wickets at regular intervals. Salt scored his maiden fifty, scoring 59 off 35 balls. Marsh performed in both the departments, scoring 63 off 39 balls and also taking four wickets.

SRH bowlers provided the win with their effective bowling in the last five overs. Mayank Markande took two wickets, while Bhuvaneshwar Kumar, Akeal Hosein, T Natarajan and Abhishek Sharma took one wicket each.

Chasing a total of 198, DC lost their first wicket in the second ball without scoring a single run. Bhuvneshwar dismissed David Warner on a duck.

Losing the early wicket of the skipper, Salt and Marsh took the responsibility and reached 50 runs mark in 5.1 overs.

The pair chose young bowler Umran Malik to accelerate the run rate, in the 7th over they collected 22 runs.

Salt brought his maiden fifty IPL off 29 balls by hitting Markande to a boundary.

Taking their side closer to the

win, Salt and Marsh brought 100 runs partnership in 9.2 balls. In the 11th over Marsh clinched his fifty off 28 balls by taking one run on Natarajan's bowl.

Looking good at the beginning of the innings, DC batters kept losing wickets at regular intervals. In the 17th over, DC lost their sixth wicket as Natarajan dismissed Sarfaraz Khan at 9 off 10 balls.

With tight line and length, SRH bowlers restricted DC to 188/6 in 20 overs.

Earlier, SRH after winning the toss had opted to bat, but they did not get the start as they would have planned. In the third over, Mayank Agarwal was dismissed cheaply by Ishant Sharma, scoring five runs off 6 balls.

SRH's second wicket also came early in the 5th over when Mitchell Marsh bowled a length ball and Rahul Tripathi tried to hit it over the mid-off, giving a catch to Manish Pandey on extra cover. Tripathi was dismissed for just 10. SRH was at 44/2.

Abhishek Sharma showed some class by hitting four boundaries in the 6th over to Ishant Sharma, collecting 16 runs. Hyderabad in 5.1 overs reached the mark of 50 runs losing two wickets.

Aiden Markram was dismissed at 8 off 13 balls and Harry Brook again disappointed everyone with a duck. With these two quick scalps, SRH was reduced to 83/4.

With the help of Mukesh Kumar's poor bowling in the 11th over where he bowled two wide bowls and one no ball, SRH collected 24 runs. Klaasen punished Mukesh with three fours and one six.

Klaasen gave support to Abhishek, and he punished Mukesh Kumar, taking Hyderabad 107/4 in 11 overs.

Axar Patel dismissed Abhishek in the 12th over, he scored 67 runs from 36 balls consisting of 12 fours and one six.

In the 16th over, SRH reached the mark of 150 runs with Klaasen batting at 33* off 17 balls and Abdul Samad at 20 off 17 balls.

Marsh again provided a breakthrough to his team, clearing up Abdul Samad with a slower ball. Samad scored 28 off 21 balls.

Klaasen clinched his maiden half-century off 25 balls.

SRH scored 197/6 in 20 overs.

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TOP 2 SPOTS

Every game from now on is very important: LSG skipper

MOHALI: Lucknow Super Giants (LSG) skipper KL Rahul emphasized that each game will be crucial after victory against Punjab Kings.

LSG registered a dominant 56-run victory against PBKS and they currently sit in the second position with 10 points. They will be looking to secure their place in the Top 2 spots. In order to achieve this they will need to win the majority of their games that lie ahead of them. "It is so against the T20 trend. Can't put a finger on it. Happy that we got the win. Every game from now on would be very important. We had a break after the last game.

We came back fresher after that," LSG skipper KL Rahul said after the match.

LSG's batting approach is becoming more and more clear with each game. Rahul plays the role of an anchor while Kyle Mayers is given the license to play according to his own will. Ayush Badoni then comes into play according to the situation.

"We were clear as to how to bat. When you see such wickets, you get excited as batters. Getting 250 speaks highly of how we batted. You are familiar with what you can expect. Just being familiar with wickets helps. We always talk about setting the tone at the

start. We had guys like Mayers, Stoinis. Badoni has been batting well. Hooda as well. The think tank does most of the thinking and I try to understand what they are thinking. And if it suits us, we go through with the plan," Rahul added.

Lucknow Super Giants have a difficult run of games ahead as they will play their next three games against Royal Challengers Bangalore, Chennai Super Kings and Gujarat Titans on Monday, Monday Wednesday and Sunday respectively. They will have the advantage to play at their home stadium in their first two games.

MENA'S FIRST FACILITY

Abu Dhabi-based manufacturer Monarch Holding and Chinese company EHang Holdings have signed a partnership agreement to establish the first facility in the Middle East and North Africa to manufacture and operate sustainable, electric-powered aircraft and drones for passengers and cargo transportation in Abu Dhabi.

MARKET
BUSINESS & FINANCE



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TETHYS OIL PRODUCTION

Tethys Oil's share of production from Blocks 3&4 during the first quarter of 2023, before government take, amounted to 847,002 barrels of oil, corresponding to 9,411 barrels of oil per day.

ADVERTORIAL

Under the auspices of HE Salim bin Oufait Al-Shanfari, Jawharat Mirbat Hotel inaugurated



SALALAH: Under the auspices of HE Sheikh Salim bin Oufait Al-Shanfari, the Jawharat Mirbat project of Mondial Hotels and Resorts Company was recently inaugurated. The project includes a commercial complex, 300 rooms and suites, and halls for meetings and events. It extends over an area of 74,000 square meters and can accommodate about 500 guests. The project will contribute to the promotion of the tourism sector in the Sultanate.

Engineer Awad bin Hassan Al-Shanfari, Chairman of Mondial Hotels and Resorts Company, said that the establishment of this hotel was the result of unremitting efforts by the partners in the company (Mondial Hotels and Resorts Company). He explained that the hotel is an important addition to the infrastructure map of the tourism sector in the Sultanate, and in particular the Wilayat of Mirbat. The implementation and construction of the project would take a maximum of 3 years.

Vice Chairman, Sheikh Khalid bin Ali Ahmed Al Busi, said that the hotel is the latest

THE PROJECT INCLUDES A COMMERCIAL COMPLEX, 300 ROOMS AND SUITES, AND HALLS FOR MEETINGS AND EVENTS.

hospitality destination in the Jawharat Mirbat project to provide visitors and residents with the concept of authentic Omani hospitality. "It is full of distinctive elements that embody Omani hospitality and architecture inspired by landscapes," he added.

The hotel also includes 10 restaurants, lounges and a fully equipped health club to reflect the local traditions of Omani hospitality. This hotel is considered a global edifice due to its advantages that place it in the ranks of hotel hospitality in the Sultanate.

The inauguration ceremony was attended by a number of officials from the public and private sectors and those interested in the hotel and tourism sector. It is worth noting that the hotel is managed and operated by one of the leading international hotel companies in the world.



MSX expected to remain exposed to price correction

However, after this extended decline, investors could start considering returning to the market in the coming days to weeks, an industry expert said



quences on stock markets, currencies and energy prices as well as costs of financing and the strength of the world's economy.

The Federal Reserve's decision could impact the Omani financial market as the cost of financing could go up significantly, impacting the performance of smaller businesses and non-financial public companies, Fadi Reyad said. The latter could be confronted with some additional difficulties in this regard, which could impact their profit margins to a certain extent.

"However, the expected strong economic growth could alleviate these effects. The expected path in monetary policy could also lead to a weaker dollar and rial against other currencies, leading to more expensive imports and an impact on local companies purchasing costs," he added.

Banks, however, could see a positive impact as interest rates continue to increase, widening their margins. However, this positive factor could be limited in time if, as expected, the Federal Reserve pauses and then starts lowering its interest rates later this year, Fadi Reyad said.

Financial institutions could record more deposits and loans despite higher costs of financing as economic activity is expected to continue to improve. At the same



time, investors could remain cautious to a certain extent as they heed the concerns around the health of US and European banks which continue to weigh on expectations and risk appetite. A decline in these concerns could support banks' stock prices to a certain extent, he added.

The other indices on the Muscat Stock Exchange (MSX) recorded a positive performance except for the main index of the Stock Exchange, which declined by about 9 points and closed at 4,734 points, while the service sector index rose 18 points, the financial sector index rose 10 points, and the Sharia index recorded an increase of 6 points.

The value of trading last week, which was limited to 3 trading days from Tuesday to Thursday due to the Eid Al-Fitr holiday, was about OMR5.7 million, compared to OMR17.9 million in the previous week, and the number of deals executed decreased from 2,368 to 1,932 deals.

Oil prices

Oil prices could continue to put some pressure on the market and the economy as well, Fadi Reyad said. "While OPEC+'s production cut announcement a couple of weeks ago has pushed prices to the upside, prompting expectations of a positive impact on the Omani stock market, fears of declining demand in the US and Europe as well as some doubts over China's rebound have sent crude prices downward," he added.

Natural gas markets

Natural gas markets also left the economy without support as prices stagnated at multi-month lows and could remain under pressure, Fadi Reyad said. "The commodity could potentially see higher prices as the demand for cooling increases as summer temperatures arrive in Europe and the US. A resurgence in energy prices could provide strong support to the Omani stock market and could help reverse the current trend," he added.

CBO BULLETIN



Private deposits with commercial banks in Oman reach OMR14.46bn

MUSCAT: The total value of private deposits with commercial banks in the Sultanate of Oman decreased at the end of February 2023 by 1.02 per cent, to reach OMR14.46 billion, compared to OMR14.61 billion during the same period in 2022.

The monthly statistical bulletin issued by the Central Bank of Oman (CBO) stated that the total value of these deposits was represented in term deposits amounting to OMR4.66 billion, savings deposits amounting to OMR5.37 billion, and demand deposits amounting to OMR4.66 billion.

The bulletin further indicated that the total value of deposits was OMR13.16 billion and OMR1.444 billion in foreign currencies.

As for the banking indicators of Omani commercial banks as a percentage at the end of last February, the bulletin stated that

the ratio of total cash and clearance to deposits in Omani rials amounted to 7 per cent, while the ratio of total cash and clearance to total deposits reached 6.1 per cent, while the ratio of total loans to deposits reached 112 per cent.

The ratio of foreign currency deposits to total deposits was 12.8 per cent, while the ratio of foreign assets to total loans was 15.6 per cent, the ratio of foreign assets to total assets was 8.8 per cent, and the ratio of foreign liabilities to total liabilities was 11.3 per cent.

The ratio of private demand deposits to total private deposits rose to 28.6 per cent, and the ratio of capital and reserves to total deposits reached 26.8 per cent, while the ratio of provisions and retained interest to total credit amounted to about 5.4 per cent.

- ONA

MARKET

MSX-listed banks post OMR118.5mn net profits

Banks in Oman witnessed growth in most of their financial indicators, and preliminary data indicated that the total assets of the eight banks listed on the stock exchange increased at the end of March

MUSCAT: The net profits of banks listed on the Muscat Stock Exchange (MSX) rose by 26.2 per cent to OMR118.5 million in the first quarter of 2023, compared to OMR93.8 million in the same period last year.

The preliminary financial results announced by the banks on the MSX website indicated an increase in the profits of all banks.



Bank Muscat recorded the highest profit at OMR51.3 million, an increase of 6.4 per cent over the profits recorded by the bank in the first quarter of last year amounting to OMR48.2 million. The National Bank of Oman (NBO) was able to raise its net profits to OMR14.3 million, compared to OMR10.2 million in the first quarter of 2022 and Sohar International Bank ranked third, recording net profits of about OMR13.3 million, compared to ROOMR8.5 million in the first quarter of 2022.

HSBC Bank Oman recorded a

growth of about 126 per cent after its net profits increased from OMR5.4 million to OMR12.2 million and the net profit of Oman Arab Bank (OAB) increased from OMR3.5 million to OMR5.5 million and Bank Nizwa recorded an increase of 5.7 per cent, bringing its net profit in the first quarter of this year to OMR3.5 million compared to OMR3.3 million in the same period last year.

Banks in Oman witnessed growth in most of their financial indicators, and preliminary data indicated that the total assets of

the eight banks listed on the stock exchange increased at the end of March 2023 to OMR37.60 billion, compared to OMR36.10 billion at the end of March of 2022, recording an increase of 4 per cent.

Bank Muscat has the highest volume of assets at OMR13.79 billion, while Sohar International Bank had assets of OMR4.63 billion. Bank Dhofar had assets amounting to OMR4.62 billion and the National Bank of Oman (NBO) had assets of OMR4.4 billion, and Oman Arab Bank (OAB) had assets of OMR3.8 billion. - **ONA**

BLOCKS 3&4



Tethys first quarter oil production in Oman reaches 847,002 barrels

Times News Service

MUSCAT: Tethys Oil's share of production from Blocks 3&4 during the first quarter of 2023, before government take, amounted to 847,002 barrels of oil, corresponding to 9,411 barrels of oil per day.

The net entitlement, Tethys Oil's share of production after government take, amounted to 440,441 barrels of oil, corresponding to 52 per cent of the total production, the company said in a press statement. A total of 471,550 barrels of oil were sold in the quarter with an achieved oil price of \$81.7 per barrel.

Net entitlement is the share of production available for sale by Tethys Oil and is calculated

monthly in accordance with the terms of the Exploration and Production Sharing Agreement (EPSA) for Blocks 3&4.

The net entitlement will vary depending on the level of production, oil price and recoverable costs incurred during the period.

The oil sales of 471,550 barrels in the first quarter of 2023 reflect the January, February and March lifting nominations. Consequently, the first quarter of 2023 achieved oil price reflects the Official Selling Price (OSP) of January to March 2023, Average Official Selling Price in that same period was \$81.6.

Tethys Oil's interim report for the first quarter of 2023 will be published on May 9, the statement further said.

DUBAI MERCANTILE EXCHANGE

Oman crude oil delivery through DME rises 18% to 64 million barrels

DUBAI: The Dubai Mercantile Exchange (DME) announced that the actual delivery volumes of Oman crude oil increased by 18 per cent, in the first quarter of 2023.

The exchange delivered 63.77 million barrels compared to 54.01 million barrels in the same period of 2022. The DME also reported a 9 per cent increase in trading volume in the same period.

Raed bin Khalifa Al Salami, Director General of the Dubai Mercantile Exchange, said that the volume of actual delivery on the stock exchange is a real and tangible indicator of the dynamics of supply and demand in the Asian oil markets, and there is a significant increase in the volume of demand for crude oil since the beginning of this year.

He added, in a statement to the Oman News Agency (ONA), that the Oman crude oil futures



contract is closely linked to the actual delivery, and here lies its importance as a real indicator of crude oil in the Middle East, as it is adopted by national oil companies to determine the prices of their crude oil exports to Asian markets.

In this regard, he pointed out that the Sultanate of Oman, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, the State of Kuwait, the Kingdom of Bahrain, and the Emirate of Dubai depend, in determining the oil price, on the Oman crude oil futures contract, which contributes to the pricing of 5.5 million barrels of crude oil per day. - **ONA**

ELECTRIC-POWERED AIRCRAFT AND DRONES

Abu Dhabi to set up Mena's first sustainable electric aircraft manufacturing facility

ABU DHABI: Abu Dhabi-based manufacturer Monarch Holding and Chinese company EHang Holdings, a leading autonomous aerial vehicle (AAV) technology platform company, have signed a partnership agreement to establish the first facility in the Middle East and North Africa to manufacture and operate sustainable, electric-powered aircraft and drones for passengers and cargo transportation in Abu Dhabi.

The announcement aligns with Abu Dhabi Industrial Strategy's initiatives, including Industry 4.0's innovative technologies, new circular economy regulatory framework, green policies, and incentives to continue its transition towards a smart, circular, and sustainable economy.

The cooperation aims to manufacture sustainable electric aircraft and drones, establish a command-and-control centre to manage urban air mobility auton-

omously and build infrastructure, vertiports (take-off and landing platforms), and facilities for operating electric aircraft and drones, as well as provide opportunities to qualify and train Emirati talent.

Revitalising markets

The project contributes to revitalising markets and supporting local products by facilitating the flow of goods and merchandise to sales outlets, ports, and airports, enhancing trade.

The partnership will help establish an advanced infrastructure for vertiports and an autonomous flight management system operated by artificial intelligence, supporting sustainable and electric-powered commercial aircraft and drones, through cooperation with local entities, enabling Abu Dhabi to adopt urban aviation technologies.

The project, which focuses on improving smart and sustainable mobility, will enhance Abu Dha-

bi's position as the smartest city in the Middle East and North Africa.

Rashed Abdulkarim Al Blooshi, Undersecretary of the Abu Dhabi Department of Economic Development (ADDED), said, "Abu Dhabi is focusing on knowledge-based, innovation-driven economic sectors. The Industrial strategy is a major factor in achieving our objectives as its programmes aim to enhance and adopt methods and technologies of industry 4.0, circular economy, talent development, ecosystem enablement, home-grown supply chain, and value chain development.

"This partnership reflects the high level of our infrastructure for advanced and smart industries and developed legislative and regulatory frameworks in the emirate, which provides an attractive environment for innovations and investments in advanced industries and technological transformation. To ensure

the best conditions for investors and entrepreneurs, ADDED has launched many initiatives to enhance ease of business and trade, financing, and attracting foreign direct investment."

Hussain Ali Alomaeirah, Founder and Chairman of Monarch Holding, said, "This venture will support the future of the transportation sector in Abu Dhabi in line with the government vision to enhance the fundamentals of the smart city. It provides a new cargo and passenger transportation concept, utilising advanced technologies, artificial intelligence, and sustainable energy with zero carbon emissions.

Monarch is establishing partnerships with the world's best manufacturer of electric aircraft and a designer and consulting company for urban air mobility, which develops and operates the most advanced UAM systems in the world, he added. - **WAM**

GERMAN SUPPLY CHAIN ACT

New supply chain laws shake suppliers in developing world

BRUSSELS: The new German Supply Chain Due Dilligence Act has been designed to ensure more environmental protection and better social and working conditions for suppliers. It especially targets poorer countries with little worker protection. But some companies in those countries feel they have little reason to celebrate because meeting the new rules their German customers demand is tough.

Since the new German law came into force in January, German companies are obliged to regularly control and monitor conditions in their supply chains abroad and must undergo regular audits.

Germany has joined countries like France, Italy, Australia and Canada that have already passed such laws. The EU is also working on a draft supply chain law.

Supply chain shakeout underway

Alexander Sandkamp of the Kiel Institute for the World Economy (IW) sees a danger that stricter requirements will force small companies abroad out of German supply chains because it is simply too expensive for German importers to inspect them. He told DW that some of them might also "move production directly back to industrialized countries, where it's easier to ensure human rights are respected."

In France, where a due diligence law was already passed in 2017, a decline in imports from low-income countries has taken place, according to a study by the



Institute of the German Economy (IW) to be published soon.

The basis of the study was an IW survey conducted in February 2022, which revealed that 18% of the German companies polled are planning to source their upstream products from countries that pay sufficient attention to compliance with human rights and environmental protection standards. Around 12% said they would withdraw from suppliers in developing and emerging countries.

Poor farmers fear for their livelihoods

Stefanie Simon, a German business consultant for the Chamber of Commerce in Western Ghana, says local partners that are part of Western supply chains "are worried that they will be kicked out." It is not easy for Ghanaian producers to obtain information about the German supply chain law, which

is why so far only a few companies know about it, she told DW.

The situation is similar in Malaysia, confirms Napoleon Anak Royal Ningkos, the managing director of Nasling Plantation, which supplies palm oil mainly to markets in Europe. "It's a big burden for us smallholders because we can't meet the requirements without financial support," he told DW.

Ningkos, who is also the president of the Sarawak Dayak Oil Palm Planters Association, said he would like to see more workshops and educational programs for palm oil smallholders, educating them on topics such as sustainable business and agricultural diversification. Better communication between the EU and local farmers was also needed, he said.

Many chambers of commerce and business associations are working on programs to support and educate the locals about the

new German requirements. Stefanie Simon has started a project in Ghana. "Our goal is to teach suppliers about what the law entails, meaning how it works, how to do risk management, and what will I be able to afford as a business in Ghana?"

Poverty a cause of supply issues

Gert van der Bijl from the non-profit organisation Solidaridad says his partners in the developing world see the law as "beneficial." However, the practical implementation of due diligence is crucial, he said.

"The goal should be to fundamentally change the purchasing policy of large companies and not simply pass on requirements to suppliers," he told DW. Tested mostly voluntarily, the implementation of stricter standards hasn't worked so far, he noted, making laws to this end an important step in obliging companies to produce more ethically.

Bijl argues most sustainability issues within supply chains have to do with the poverty of suppliers on the ground. "Farmers get very low prices for their products anyway. If you now encourage companies to impose additional burdens on suppliers, it's unlikely to have a positive impact," he said.

That's why Bijl thinks the law must open up the possibility for what he calls a careful withdrawal, meaning companies must be given time to invest in suppliers and help them improve their standards over time. - **DW**

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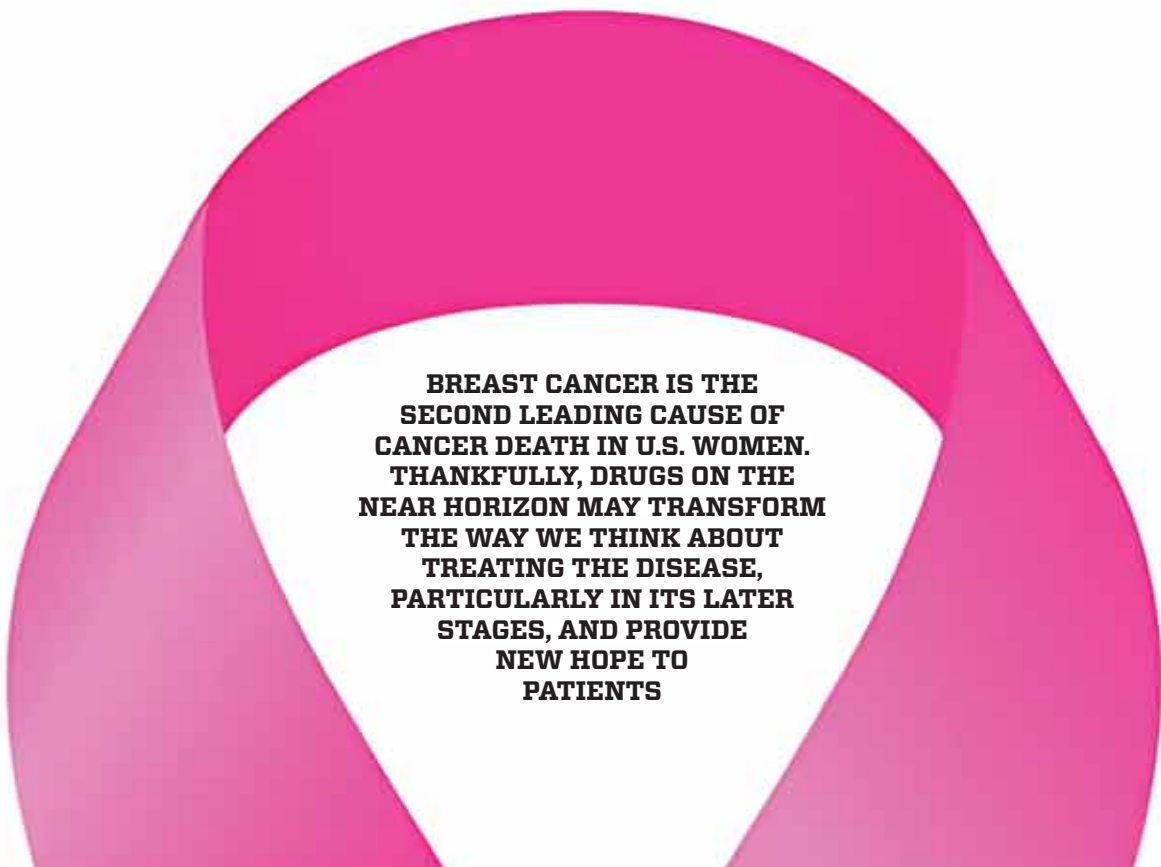
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LIFESTYLE



**BREAST CANCER IS THE
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NEAR HORIZON MAY TRANSFORM
THE WAY WE THINK ABOUT
TREATING THE DISEASE,
PARTICULARLY IN ITS LATER
STAGES, AND PROVIDE
NEW HOPE TO
PATIENTS**

NEW TREATMENTS MAY HELP THOSE WITH ADVANCED BREAST CANCER LIVE LONGER



Breast cancer is highly treatable when caught at the early stages -- there is a 99% five-year survival rate when the cancer is found only in the breast tissue. However, as soon as the cancer spreads to lymph nodes under the arm or to nearby tissues (regional stage), the 5-year survival rate drops to 85%, and once it spreads to other lymph nodes or body parts, (distant stage or metastatic cancer) the 5-year survival rate falls to as low as 27%. These figures suggest there is a significant need for more effective treatments for this deadly cancer.

New immunotherapies may provide the solution for patients with advanced breast cancer and fewer treatments options. Currently under development, Bria-IMT and Bria-OTS from BriaCell Therapeutics (NASDAQ: BCTX), are two drugs that have shown promising results so far in clinical trials, with substantial tumor regression in several patients, even those with metastatic cancer. Both drugs work through a completely novel therapeutic mechanism, using breast cancer cells to generate a strong immune response against breast cancer.

“For many breast cancer patients, the only option left is chemotherapy. We realize how hard chemotherapy is on the body, commonly causing nausea, vomiting, hair loss, lack of appetite, inflammation of the mouth and tongue, and bone marrow suppression,

which can lead to serious and at times fatal infections. Recently, immunotherapies have come to the fore as a type of therapy which avoids most of these side effects. Unfortunately, immunotherapy only currently works in a small subset of patients, and then only when given with chemotherapy. We are dedicated to developing new, more effective immunotherapy approaches that have very few side effects and may provide substantial benefits to more patients. We hope our efforts will afford these patients another option that is much better tolerated and can provide improved quality of life and prolong their survival,” says Dr. William Williams, CEO of BriaCell Therapeutics.

In the case of Bria-OTS, a simple saliva test can determine a patient's cell type so they can receive personalized immunotherapy treatment. Dr. Williams notes that this technology is already being explored for other cancer treatment uses, including prostate cancer, lung cancer, and melanoma. To learn more about the future of cancer treatment, visit briacell.com/about-briacell.

Breast cancer is the second leading cause of cancer death in U.S. women. Thankfully, drugs on the near horizon may transform the way we think about treating the disease, particularly in its later stages, and provide new hope to patients.- Statepoint.

SPORTS

Al Harthy makes history again as first Omani to get FIA WEC pole

Oman Racing star Ahmad Al Harthy is proud to have delivered grid-topping performance

MUSCAT: Oman Racing with TF Sport's Ahmad Al Harthy stormed to a dominant GTE Am class pole position at Spa-Francorchamps on Friday, 28 April – a landmark first qualifying topping performance from the Omani in his maiden season in the FIA World Endurance Championship.

Delivering a faultless showing throughout the 15-minute session, which was red flagged half-way through and then re-started, the Aston Martin Vantage driver shot to the top of the times with his first true flying lap, a time of 2m18.127 seconds.

No sooner had Al Harthy put Oman Racing at the summit of the timesheets than the session had to be halted due to a car off track, and so the runners all returned to pit-lane. When qualifying resumed, Al Harthy got down to business straight away and posted an improved time of 2m17.474 seconds.

Extending his advantage markedly, there was still time to better it further with his final lap of the session and he duly delivered with a session best of 2m17.216 seconds. Sparking huge celebrations within the Oman Racing squad,



Al Harthy's first WEC pole – the first ever in the World Championship by an Omani entrant – was achieved by a gap of almost two seconds.

The result comes as a welcome boost to Al Harthy and teammates Michael Dinan and Charlie Eastwood after a challenging start to the 2023 campaign, and hopes are now justifiably high ahead of today's TotalEnergies 6 Hours of Spa-Francorchamps race in Belgium.

The build-up to the third contest of the season has been strong from the get-go for Oman Racing, with the squad finishing third fastest in the opening free practice session on Thursday, 27th April, before then working hard on the set-up for qualifying and race trim.

As a track where Oman Ministry of Culture, Sports and Youth, OQ, Omantel and MHD-ITICS

backed Al Harthy has excelled throughout his distinguished motorsport career, Oman's number one racing driver is very much looking forward to round three of the FIA WEC campaign.

Ahmad Al Harthy:
“I'm absolutely delighted, our first FIA WEC pole position and we are the first Omani entry to ever do that in the World Championship. It's a dream come true! I'm delighted with how we managed to prepare ourselves for qualifying, everything over the last two days which we have been practicing worked and it was all about maximising the tyres at the right time in qualifying.”

“We knew some competitors were able to be in the low two minute 17 seconds bracket in practice, and for us to do that in qualifying and the others not to replicate that was a huge boost. I think we can have a good race, it's always a long six hours of racing around Spa, but we did what we had to do in qualifying. I'm so proud to have achieved this for Oman, hopefully it's the start of more to come.”

Race three of the FIA World Endurance Championship season will get underway at 12.45 local time today, Saturday, 29th April, at Spa-Francorchamps in Belgium. Follow the action at www.fiawec.com

2023 FIA World Endurance Championship GTE Am Driver Standings:
14th Ahmad Al Harthy/Michael Dinan/ Charlie Eastwood, 7pts

2023 FIA World Endurance Championship GTE Am Team Standings:
11th Oman Racing with TF Sport, 7pts

CRICKET

Oman go down to UAE by two runs in semi-final

Times News Service

MUSCAT: It was heartbreak for Oman as they narrowly lost to the UAE by two runs on DLS method in the rain-curtailed semi-final match of the ACC Men's Premier Cup at Mulpani Ground in Kathmandu, Nepal, on Saturday.

In a closely fought match, where fortunes swung like a pendulum, rain stopped play with Oman needing 47 runs off 42 balls and four wickets in hand.

Oman were at 190/6 in 43 overs when downpour started, falling short of the DLS target of 193 in 43 overs.

UAE will take on hosts Nepal in the final on May 1 after the hosts semi-final match against Kuwait was abandoned.

Nepal put up a total of 281/9 in 42 overs after rain forced the match to be reduced to 42-over-a-side game.

Kuwait were 37/6 in 8.3 overs when rain stopped play with Nepal pacer Karan KC picking up five wickets for just 10 runs in 4.3 overs.

Nepal booked the spot in the final as they had more points than Kuwait at the conclusion of the group stage.

On Saturday, Oman skipper



Zeeshan Maqsood won the toss and put UAE to bat, a decision that was vindicated by the Oman bowlers, who came up with a disciplined performance to restrict UAE to 236 in 49.2 overs.

Spinner Maqsood was exceptional as he picked four for 32 while pacer Bilal Khan continued his fiery form to claim four for 44, including two in one over, to sent back Asif Khan and experienced Rohan Mustafa.

The Mulpani ground was assisting the slower bowlers in a big way and Oman's off-spinner Jay Odedra kept a tight leash on the run-rate in the middle of the innings as he produced a miserly spell of 0/19 in eight overs while Ayaan Khan took two crucial wickets.

Muhammad Waseem was the top run-getter for the UAE with 48 off just 31 balls while there were notable contributions from

Rameez Shahzad (46), Asif Khan (34) and Basil Hameed (34). With cloudy and overcast conditions persisting throughout the day, prospects of rain interrupting play was high.

Chasing 237 to win, Oman openers – Jatinder Singh and Kashyap Prajapati – began on a positive note and scored briskly.

Both looked in good nick and kept the scoreboard moving with boundaries at regular intervals.

However, the introduction of leg-spinner Karthik Meiyappan swung the game in UAE's favour as he sent back the top-three Oman batters.

Prajapati was Meiyappan's first of three victims in the 16 th over, adjudged leg- before wicket for a 43-ball 49 that included nine boundaries.

Meiyappan spun a magical web that then had Jatinder stuck in it as the star Oman batter was bowled for 65-ball 42.

Oman were 98/2 in the 20 th over and were soon three down in the 24 th over.

Shoaib Khan became the third scalp of Meiyappan to leave Oman in a spot of bother at 119/3.

Captain Maqsood then dropped anchor and along with Mohammad Nadeem

(24 not out) rebuild the chase with a 62-run partnership before Zahoor Khan got the crucial breakthrough when he castled Maqsood for a 70-ball 40 in the 42 nd over. At that stage of play, Oman were at 181/4 in 41.3 overs, slightly ahead on DLS method.

With rains threatening play, a sense of panic ran down the new batters – Ayaan Khan and Sandeep Goud – who opted to go for quick runs and in the process departed in one over.

UAE spinner Basil Hameed was the tormentor as he sent back Ayaan and Goud in the 43 rd over.

The two wickets in a space of three balls turned the tables on Oman in the DLS calculation with Goud caught behind by Vriitya Aravind off the last ball of the over before rain stopped play.

Hameed had earlier got Ayaan caught off the third ball and Goud's dismissal sealed the fate of Oman.

Oman next play Kuwait in the third-place playoff on Sunday.

Brief scores: UAE 236 in 49.2 overs (Muhammad Waseem 48, Rameez Shahzad 46, Basil Hameed 34, Asif Khan 34; Zeeshan Maqsood 4/32, Bilal Khan 4/44, Ayaan Khan 2/54) beat Oman 190/6 in 43 overs (DLS target 193 in 43 overs)

Klopp ready to settle for UEFA Europa League

ANFIELD: Jurgen Klopp's Liverpool are currently seven points away from the Champions League spot and two points away from the UEFA Europa League spot. They will play a crucial game against Tottenham at Anfield and if they win this clash they will leapfrog to the fifth spot.

Even though Liverpool may fail to secure a place in the Champions League after 13 years, Klopp is still satisfied to play in the Europa League next season. “We take what we get, that's how it is. It's not that we started the season and said if we qualify for the Europa League it would be fantastic but the season taught us a few things. And that's absolutely fine. If it's the Europa League then it's absolutely fine. For what we qualify for is not so interesting for me.”

“I want to create a basis that we qualify for the best possible scenario, so squeeze everything out. I want to play the best possible football - if we get nothing for that at the end of the season then we created that situation earlier in this year,” Klopp said. **ANI**

ON DLS METHOD

Man City look to build on Arsenal win against Fulham

LONDON: Manchester City can go to the top of the on DLS method , albeit for just over 48 hours when they visit Fulham on Sunday afternoon, while league leader Arsenal doesn't play Chelsea until Tuesday evening.

City produced one of the best displays of the season to beat Arsenal in a game that most consider to be a title decider on Wednesday night, with Kevin De Bruyne and Erling Haaland running riot against a rival that was a yard slower in key moments.

The 4-1 win didn't flatter Pep Guardiola's side, but it will count for little unless they are able to take three points from their visit to play Fulham at Craven Cottage.

Guardiola played a more direct football against Arsenal, using Haaland's power to control long passes, but could return to their more common passing game



against a rival likely to sit much deeper than Arsenal did.

With the UEFA Champions League semi final against Real Madrid on the horizon, expect some changes to the City's starting 11, with Aymeric Laporte, Julian

Alvarez and Riyad Mahrez all in line to start.

Newcastle will expect to take another step towards ensuring a top-four finish when they entertain bottom side Southampton, who look greg condemned to

the drop after losing at home to Bournemouth in midweek.

Manchester United's defensive problems were again evident as they surrendered a 2-0 lead away to Tottenham on Thursday, and they now face a fascinating game at home to Aston Villa.

Unai Emery's side is sixth, level on points with Tottenham, who plays seventh-placed Liverpool. Villa has eight wins and two draws from their last 10 league games, and Ollie Watkins will be a big test for a defense missing Harry Maguire, Lisandro Martinez and Raphael Varane.

Three consecutive wins have given Liverpool a chance to qualify for Europe and they host Tottenham, who showed a new spirit under Ryan Mason to fight back against Manchester United.

Liverpool looks to have recovered their high-press, while Harry

Kane and Son Heung-min continue to be the Spurs' biggest threat.

Nottingham Forest ended an 11-game run without a win to beat Brighton 3-1 on Wednesday to throw themselves a survival lifeline, but Steve Cooper's men now face a difficult visit to Brentford, who is boosted after their comfortable 2-0 midweek win away to Chelsea.

Brighton looked drained after their FA Cup exertions last weekend as they capitulated in Nottingham, but should have recovered their legs again in their home game against Wolverhampton.

The match promises to pit Brighton's passing game against Wolves' organization, as Brighton chases a place in Europe, while a win would probably assure Wolves is safe from relegation.

Crystal Palace is on 37 points - the same as the Wolves - after

their revival following the return of Roy Hodgson as coach. That revival has stuttered with a draw and a defeat in their last two matches, and they now play West Ham, who has 34 points after their narrow defeat to Liverpool on Wednesday.

Bournemouth's win over Southampton lifted them seven points clear of the bottom three, and they entertain Leeds, who are two places and one point above the drop zone with three defeats and a draw in their last four games.

Leicester City will test their recovery at home to second from bottom Everton, who has just 25 goals in 33 games. Arsenal will hope to have defender William Saliba back as they take on a Chelsea side in disarray with five defeats in five games since Frank Lampard returned and no sign of any improvement. **Xinhua**



WOMEN IN INDIA
FIGHT FOR DIGNITY
WITH MORE
TOILETS



Women’s groups in eastern Odisha are the driving force behind enabling access to toilets in their homes and within their communities, with the aim of ending open defecation.



Bedamati Mirdha of Nildungri village in Sambalpur, India, has been at the forefront of encouraging people in the villages nearby to construct a toilet at home instead of going out into the forest to defecate. Two years back, as part of a women’s self-help group (SHG), Mirdha built a retrofitted twin pit toilet which has made a huge difference to her family.

Fighting to end open defecation
“We do not worry about diseases and the many problems people face while defecating in the open. You must understand how important a toilet is in our lives,” Mirdha told DW. At the far end of the village, Prabhasini Munda, a cancer survivor, has a similar story after having built a toilet last year. “There was always a fear of snakes and other poisonous insects in the open fields,” Munda told DW. “The problems worsened during the monsoon season and that is why I too decided that a toilet was a necessity.” “We call it an ‘izzat ghar’ [dignity house] and womenfolk don’t have to fear anymore,” added Munda.

The women went door-to-door to talk to villagers about better hygiene practices and told them about the government schemes that offer help with constructing toilets. Open defecation has often led to increased vulnerabilities among girls and women including verbal, physical and sexual violence affecting them both physically and psychologically.

Leading by example in Odisha
Across several rural parts of Odisha state, women SHGs are leading by ex-

ample to ensure that toilets are built in homes without any resistance. The drive is currently underway in six districts – Angul, Jagatsinghpur, Sambalpur, Deogarh, Koraput and Gajapati – with the aim of adding another 14 districts in the state. Though the sanitation in rural areas is still poor, Odisha is among the top five performing states where a number of villages have been declared free of open defecation. “UNICEF and Water.org have partnered with Odisha Livelihoods Mission, a government run project to empower women by generating their livelihoods by various trainings. In this way, the program builds momentum and the community can lead it for long term sustainability,” Surati Bada, an SHG leader told DW. Constructing a twin pit toilet can cost anywhere between Rs15,000 and Rs20,000 (\$185-\$244, €164-€222). Until now, 12,000 loans have been disbursed benefiting about 60,000 people, mostly for sanitation purposes. “Financing is a great complementary tool to the government’s efforts for sustaining the momentum in bringing access to drinking water and sanitation for the economically active poor,” Abhishek Anand of Water.org told DW.

Stepping up toilet construction
Until recently, people were not aware of affordable financing options for building and maintaining water, sanitation and hygiene assets. But the situation has now changed. The retrofitted twin pit toilet ensures that the human waste is treated naturally without polluting water bodies or the soil. The main feature of the toilet technology is the two pits that are used alternatively, to ensure on-site fecal sludge manage-



The women went door-to-door to talk to villagers about better hygiene practices and told them about the government schemes that offer help with constructing toilets.

ment, making it a complete on-site sanitation solution for households. Once a toilet gets constructed, SHGs monitor people to ensure they regularly use the facility and are not defecating in the open. “Our dream is to provide toilets across the state. We take loans and government officials are cooperative in this regard. Many of the members are able to pay back within a year,” Sakuntala Mirdha, an SHG president, told DW. Toilets are arguably one of the most potent tools of women empowerment in history. Several studies show that an improvement in public sanitation reduces women’s time spent in care work by 10% and also

leads to higher female literacy rates. In several parts of the state, women are seen taking up traditionally unconventional roles, like masons and contractors engaged in toilet construction. “We started making concrete rings for the twin pit toilets and sell it to nearby villages as well. We are able to get additional income and this is an incentive for every toilet we help construct,” Soudamini, from Khulia village, told DW. Empowerment of women is one of the key development initiatives identified by the Odisha government. Mission Shakti, a flagship program of the state, has so far created more than 600,000 SHGs. The government’s Swachh Bharat Mission or ‘Clean India,’ created in 2014, aimed to give all urban local bodies in the country Open Defecation Free (ODF) status by October 2019. Now in order to sustain the ODF outcomes, the focus is on functionality and proper maintenance of community and public toilets, and addressing safe management of fecal sludge, ensuring that no untreated sludge is discharged into water bodies. Sujoy Mojumdar, a water sanitation and hygiene specialist at UNICEF, pointed out that this initiative is contributing to the provision of safely managed sanitation. This includes safe toilets and water services to all, while also promoting the economic empowerment of women through livelihood programs ensuring their family well-being in the long run. “It also makes long-term sustainable income generation opportunities for the trained women technicians like masons, plumbers and sanitation entrepreneurs,” Mojumdar told DW. -nww

ROUND-UP

Maserati Levante Modena: A drive fuelled by passion and performance

The Levante Modena blends the typical Maserati performance and handling with luxurious Italian design, and has been breaking the mould of what a luxury SUV can do



MUSCAT: Maserati Oman extended an invitation to attend an exclusive Iftar event at Enab Beirut, where I had the opportunity to test drive the Maserati Levante Modena. Based on my experience, I can confidently attest that if you are in search of an SUV with exceptional road performance, the Maserati Levante could be the perfect fit for you.

The Levante Modena blends the typical Maserati performance and handling with luxurious Italian design, and has been breaking the mould of what a luxury SUV can do. With its spacious interior, sumptuous Italian leather interior trims, and unmistakable exterior design treatment, it's a product reserved for the most discerning of customers.

But with the Modena trim, the Levante takes its dynamic purpose even further, redefining performance and pushing the boundaries of what is possible in an SUV. It's designed for customers who love the world of sport and are looking for a balance between innate elegance, dynamism, and driving pleasure.

Equipped with a 350-hp V6 petrol engine, the Levante Modena provides an exceptional driving experience with low fuel consumption, delivering torque of 500 Nm from 1,750 to 5,000 rpm. The SUV can accelerate from 0 to 100 km/h in just 6.0 seconds and reach a top speed of 251 km/h. Plus, the latest-generation high-performance Maserati engines, all Euro 6C-approved, are powerful, bold,

and eco-friendly.

Additionally, the Levante Modena comes with features like power-adjustable front seats, a leather-wrapped multi-function steering wheel, keyless ignition, dual-zone automatic climate control, and a power liftgate.

The full-colour touchscreen infotainment system offers navigation, Bluetooth, Android Auto, Apple CarPlay, USB/Aux inputs, and high-fidelity audio to keep you connected and entertained.

The Levante Modena's stunning interior indulges you on every drive, while advanced safety features like adaptive cruise control, forward collision warning, and blind-spot monitoring with rear cross-traffic alert, help keep you safe on the road. And for those who



are curious, the signature deep-throated Italian exhaust note that Maserati is known for is still present in the Levante Modena.

Overall, the Levante Modena's unique personality was designed to conquer new horizons, and it does so abundantly. So, if you're looking

to stand out from the crowd and experience the thrill of driving a Maserati, the Levante Modena might just be the SUV for you.

EMPOWERING PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

Bank Muscat to participate in Forum for Persons with Disabilities from May 1-3

MUSCAT: Bank Muscat, the leading financial services provider in the Sultanate of Oman, has announced its participation in the Forum for Persons with Disabilities, to be held at the Oman Convention and Exhibition Centre from May 1-3, 2023.

The forum, which is being held under the auspices of the Ministry of Social Development, will see the strong participation of several leading government and private sector organisations. Also present will be a number of local and regional organisations working for the welfare of persons with different types of disabilities, technical institutions and manufacturers of various assistive devices.

During the forum, Bank Muscat will highlight its pioneering role in empowering persons with disabilities through various services and initiatives for this important segment of society.

The event aims to enhance the status and role of persons with disabilities by providing them with opportunities to showcase their abilities and talents. In particular, the forum will highlight the importance of modern technologies, which can assist persons with disabilities to lead as normal a life as possible. It will also bring to the fore the role of the family in supporting persons with disabilities through early intervention and the need for promoting accessibility by a society that cares and empowers the disabled socially and economically. A number of presentations and works by persons with disabilities will also be displayed at the forum for the benefit of the large numbers of visitors.

Visitors to the exhibition will have an opportunity to learn more about the different facilities pro-



vided by Bank Muscat to persons with disabilities through its dedicated stall. In particular, visitors can learn about the job opportunities available to persons with disabilities as well as specially designed inclusive features and services. It may be noted that Bank Muscat has a number of achievements to its credit in this regard including the launching of the first ATM in Oman for persons with visual disabilities at the premises of the Al Noor Association for the Blind. The bank's participation at the forum comes as part of its keenness to enhance financial inclusion as part of its overall strategy to support Oman's renaissance.

Bank Muscat has also been taking great effort to ensure that staff trained in sign language is available at different branches to provide banking services to serve customers with hearing and speech impairments. The bank also continues to partner with the Omani Association for the Hearing Impaired by providing assistive de-

vices to those in need.

The bank has also previously provided wheelchairs and electrically operated beds to the disabled and Braille Sense devices and special laptops to students with visual disabilities at Sohar University. It has also supported the Al Aman Rehabilitation Centre and the Al Wafa Centre for the Rehabilitation of Children with Disabilities.

These efforts are a part of the bank's initiatives in the field of social responsibility projected to improve the facilities provided to the persons with disabilities and help them to integrate into society and contribute to the development of the country.

The bank is comprehensively upgrading 11 conventional banking branches and 9 Meethaq Islamic branches across the Sultanate of Oman so as to provide enhanced banking services to persons with disabilities. Also, the m-Banking app has been updated to allow screen reading in Android and iOS to assist persons with visual disabilities.

G2T GLOBAL AWARDS

Oman Sail CEO named Best 100 Arabian CEO of the Year

MUSCAT: Dr Khamis Al Jabri, Chief Executive Officer of Oman Sail, has been named in the top rated 100 Arabian CEOs of the year by the G2T Global Awards.

Dr Al Jabri joins a group of leaders from across the region, representing a diverse variety of sectors including energy, industry, tourism, education, food production, health and sport.

The announcement was made at the official G2T Global Awards ceremony that took place in Marrakech, Morocco on 27 April.

Since taking office in 2020, Dr Al Jabri has successfully led Oman Sail to a number of notable achievements. These include enabling Oman Sail to deliver socio-economic benefits for Oman through community programmes, the investment in sport development and attracting international events to be hosted in Oman.

Dr Al Jabri played an instrumental role in leading the sailing teams to continued excellence and success as well as enhancing community programmes that introduce the sport of sailing to wider audiences. Several national, regional, and prestigious international events in Oman since 2020, such as the Youth Sailing World Championship in 2021 and the RS Venture Connect World Championship in 2022 - the first-ever exclusively para-sailing event to be staged in Oman.

Moreover, Dr Khamis's leadership enabled Oman Sail to share its expertise with the sporting community, joining hands with World Athletics and Oman Athletic Association to bring the World Race Walking Team Championships 2022 and with the International Table Tennis



Federation and Oman Table Tennis Federation to host the World Veteran Table Tennis Championships 2023 in Muscat.

At the ceremony in Morocco, Dr Khamis Al Jabri commented, "It is a huge honour to be included in this year's Best 100 Arabian CEOs and join a group of dynamic, innovative, and high-achieving leaders from across the region. This is an achievement to be shared throughout the organisation because without the tireless efforts of the dedicated team at Oman Sail we would not have accomplished the feats we have over the past year. The talent within the company creates unique opportunities to plan and lead in a variety of directions with complete confidence that the team will deliver an exceptional event."

"Oman Sail will continue to add to our reputation as a prominent figure in the community, and our mission to rekindle Oman's maritime heritage, as we work

together to develop the capacity of Omanis in sailing and para-sailing, preserving the environment, teaching transferable skills and flying the flag of Oman proudly around the world," he added.

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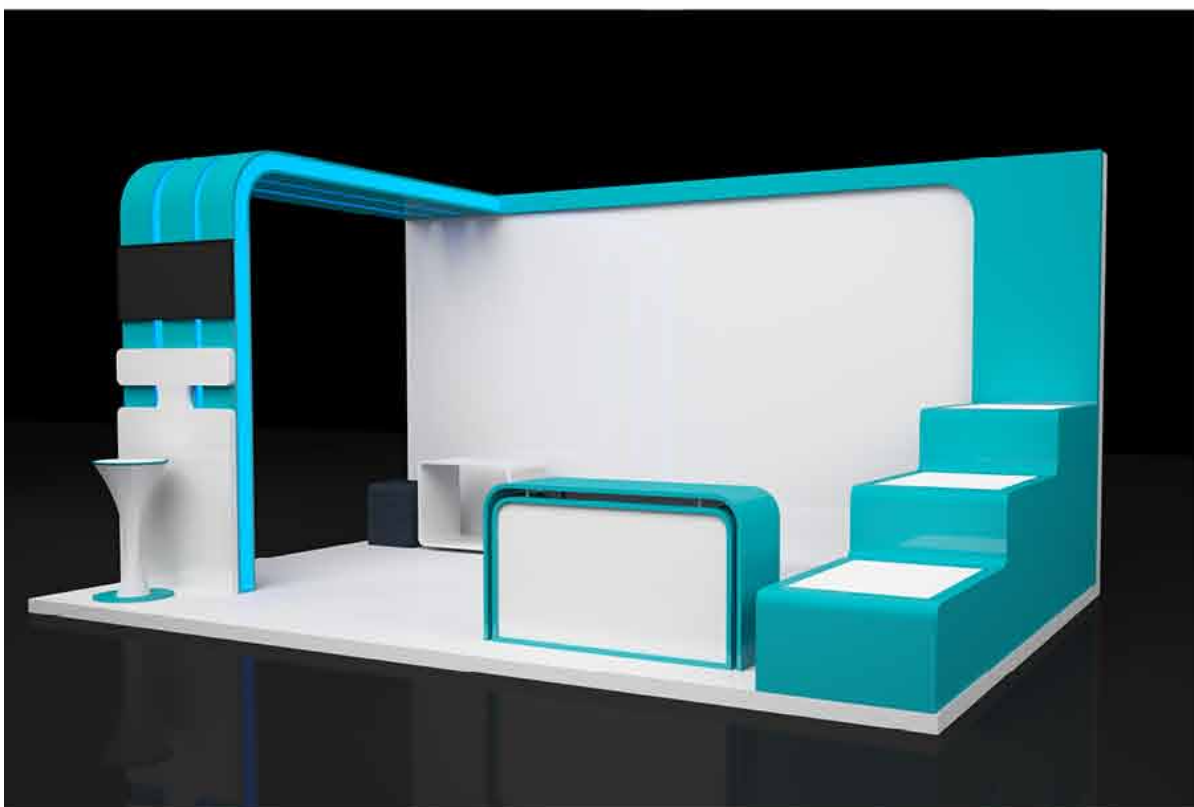
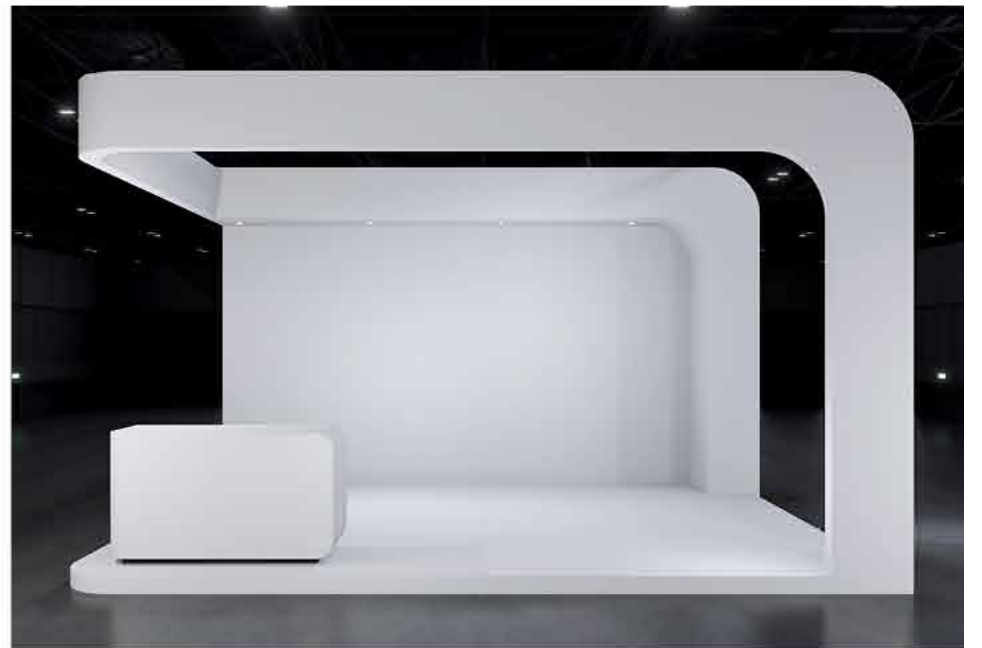
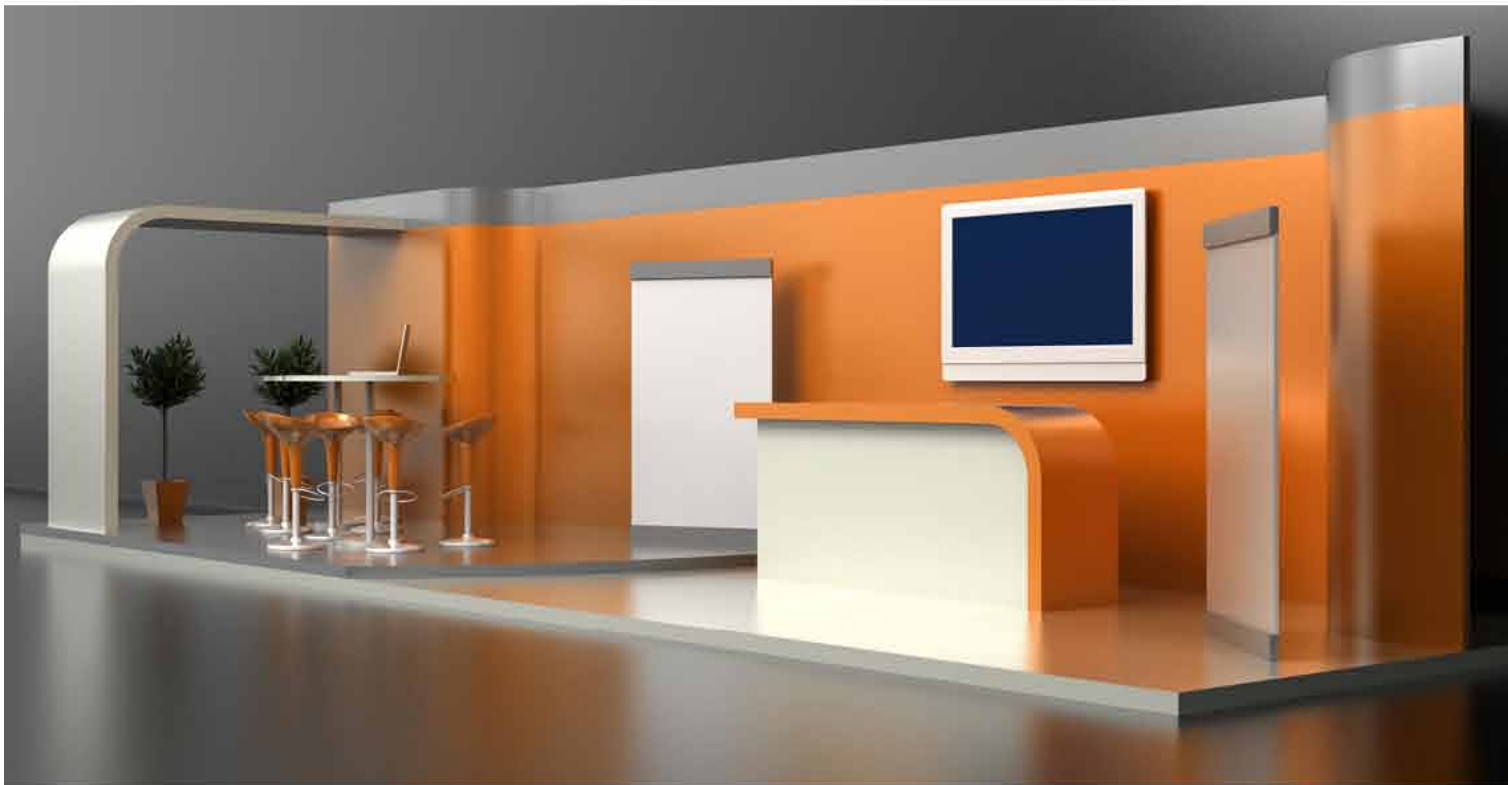
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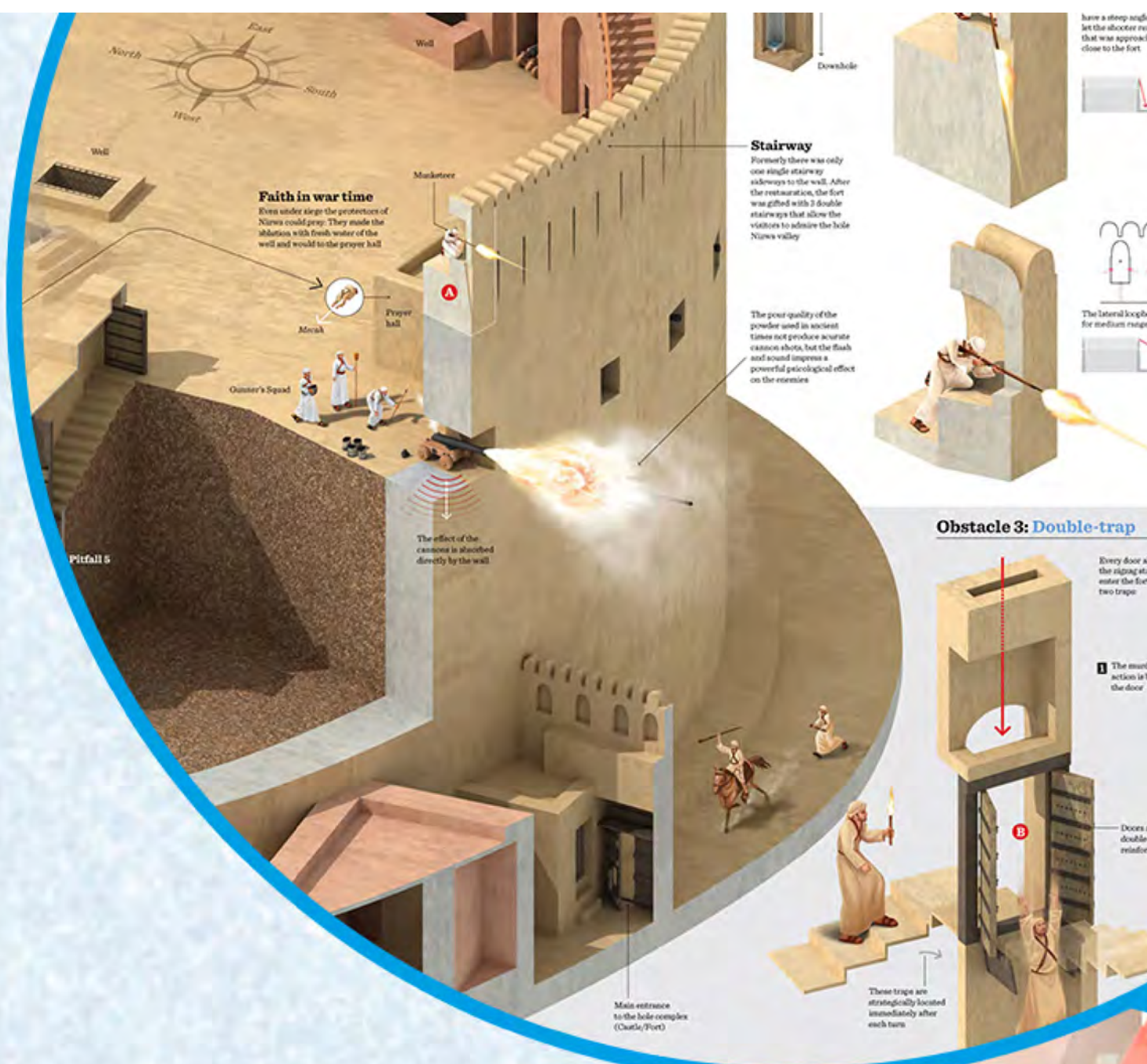
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