

PRAYER
TIMINGS

Dhuhr.....12:11pm
Asr.....3:37pm
Maghrib.....6:36pm
Isha.....7:49pm
Fajr (Tomorrow).....4:21am

Ladies Account

Empowering you
more than ever!

f i in Dhofar.islamic X Dhofar_islamic 2477 5777 www.dhofarislamicbank.com

Efforts on to repair infrastructure, rehabilitate displaced people

Everyone in North Al Batinah Governorate is lending their hands to mitigate the effects of the weather condition

Times News Service

Muscat: The direct impact of weather conditions in North Al Batinah Governorate affected the population and infrastructure, damaging road, power and communications networks. The agricultural and residential areas also experienced serious losses as a result of the overflow of valleys.

The government, private, civil and community workers of North Al Batinah Governorate and other parts of the Sultanate of Oman continue to lend their helping hands to address the effects of the weather condition.

Officials' visit

The Government officials from various institutions in the country continue to visit the affected areas to monitor the damage caused by the rains and wadis in the various states of the North Al Batinah Governorate.

A number of officials, including, Their Excellencies, heads of various bodies, and some undersecretaries of the ministries visited the affected areas. Eng. Said Hamoud Al Ma'awali, Minister of Transport, Communications and Information Technology, Engineer Khamis bin Muhammad Al Shamakhi, Undersecretary of Transport, Dr. Mansour bin Talib Al Hinai, Chairman of the Public Services Regulatory Authority, Engineer Badr bin Salem Al Mamari, Secretary General of the Tender Board, and Engineer Hamad bin Ali Al Nazwani, Undersecretary of the Ministry of Housing and Urban Planning for Housing, Sheikh Rashid bin Ahmed Al Shamsi, Undersecretary of the Ministry of Social Development, accompanied by Mohammed bin Sulaiman Al Kindi, Governor of North Al Batinah, and a number of officials in the governorate, visited the states affected by the Al Mateer Depression. On the other hand, Sheikh Khalid bin Hilal Al Maawali, the Speaker of the Shura Council, reviewed a number of affected states and listened to the citizens and enquired about their sufferings as a result of this weather condition.

Mohammed bin Sulaiman Al Kindi, Governor of North Al Batinah, said: "With combined efforts among all sectors of society and with support from all government service sectors, life will return to normal soon. There has been significant damage to property as a result of the weather condition in most of the wilayats, and efforts are continuing to address these impacts and restore the most important services."

He added: "We faced great challenges in opening some secondary and mountain roads after they were affected by the flow of the valleys, but thanks to the sincere efforts of the people of the governorate, most of these roads were opened and work is underway to open the rest of the roads, especially the mountain ones. The first step was to return those who were in the shelter centres to their homes, ensure their safety, and provide them with basic necessities."

He said that he follows up on a daily basis the repairs and effects resulting from the weather condition that is affecting the governorate.

He visited all the states in the governorate and listened to the

concerns of citizens, their suggestions, opinions and aspirations. He promised to address the situation as quickly as possible and according to the available capabilities.

On the other hand, Their Excellencies the officials of the wilayats of the North Al Batinah Governorate played a major role in following up on the conditions of all their states, accompanied by a number of government department officials and members of the municipal council in each state. They visited various damaged sites and directions were given to repair them.

Efforts of the North Batinah Municipality

The municipalities of North Al Batinah, from the Wilayat of Suwaiq to the Wilayat of Shinas, continue their efforts to open roads, remove silt and dust, and withdraw accumulated water, with the aim of facilitating traffic movement and ensuring the safety of road users. Efforts are focused on removing dust and mud and transporting waste resulting from the flow of valleys, as well as filling potholes to secure roads. This contributed to the opening of all public roads and a number of internal roads, in addition to opening of a number of mountain roads that were affected by rainfall.

Volunteers' efforts

Sports and cultural clubs, civil teams, charitable and volunteer teams, and volunteers from the local community in the North Al Batinah Governorate continue their great efforts to stand by their affected brothers in the Wilayats of Suwaiq, Saham, Sohar, and Shinas, where food supplies, water, and all cleaning tools were provided, and they worked hand in hand in cleaning mosques and homes. Oman is proud of the combined efforts of its citizens who brought happiness on the faces of those affected, and stood by the side of their brothers in such a difficult situation.

-With inputs from ONA





We deliver your products
to your client's door





www.asyadexpress.om

Military teams from various units helping in rehabilitation work

The units of the RAO continue with their restoration and rehabilitation operations in the North Al Sharqiyah Governorate

Times News Service

MUSCAT: Military teams from various units are working round the clock to bring normalcy in the



lives of people in the aftermath of weather conditions affecting the Sultanate of Oman.

As part of a coordinated national effort to deal with the effects of the weather situation, units of the Royal Army of Oman (RAO) continue with their resto-

ration and rehabilitation operations in the North Al Sharqiyah Governorate.

The Royal Army of Oman, represented by the Desert Battalion, provided drinking water to the Wilayat of Al Mudhaibi, and reopened a number of main and



secondary roads affected by the weather condition.

The units area lso engaged in removing mud and dirt in the wilayat of Dima Wattayeen , Wilayat of Al-Qabil, and Wadi Bani Khalid, in addition to continuing the search for the missing person in the

Wilayat of Al-Mudhaibi due to the weather condition.

The engineering services of the Ministry of Defence, along with other government institutions, are intensifying their efforts to contain the effects of the weather condition (rainfall), and they provided

engineering and technical support to ensure safe passage on the damaged roads in the North Al Batinah Governorate.

The engineering services teams continue to restore basic and necessary infrastructure in the governorate by activating mobile water suction pumps, water transport tanks, and draining water bodies, in a number of villages in the wilayats of Al Khaboura and Saham.

The engineering services team also reopened the Madha-Buraimi road and removed mud accumulations in Al-Buraimi Governorate from the recent weather condition.

The units also helped in providing electrical power generators to the sites affected by the power outage in the Wilayat of Mahout in the Governorate.

PUMP IMPLANT

Complex heart surgery performed by the Royal Hospital doctors

Times News Service

MUSCAT: A specialised team, from the Department of Interventional and Structural Cardiology at the National Centre for Cardiac Diseases and Surgery at the Royal Hospital, was able to treat a very complex heart disease using modern technology.

They used a temporary pump to support the left ventricle to stimulate coronary and general blood circulation, and it was implanted cathetically from the femoral artery.

The surgery was performed by a medical team headed by Dr. Hatem bin Lutfi Al Lawati, a senior consultant physician in the interventional and structural cardiology, and Dr. Khaled bin Humaid Al Saedi, a consultant physician in interventional and structural cardiology, with an integrated team of the anesthesia department, technical and nursing teams of the catheterisation laboratories at the centre. The surgery took approximately two hours.

The patient was diagnosed with advanced atrophy compromising the pumping efficiency of the left ventricle, a dangerous increase in pulmonary vascular resistance, and blockages in all major coronary arteries due to dense fatty and calcified deposits in the tiny



blood vessels.

Due to the progression of the disease to advanced stages, the option of surgically implanting and connecting the coronary arteries was a risky option.

The medical team implanted the booster pump - the iVAC 2L device - in the left ventricle, then broke up the dense calcifications causing narrowing of the main coronary artery, followed by implanting a number of modern mesh stents. The patient remained in a stable condition throughout the catheterization procedure and in the post-catheterization period and left the hospital the next day.

Such a successful catheter operation constitutes a qualita-

tive leap in the treatment of the increasing cases of patients with atherosclerosis of the coronary arteries, which are accompanied by atrophy or severe morbidity as a result of ischemia, that are difficult to treat with conventional methods, whether by catheter or surgery.

Such modern technologies, combined with the expertise of the medical staff at the National Centre, also open the way for treating other complex cases in the field of valve diseases and ventricular electrical activity disorder, providing hope for recovery from complex heart diseases for which there was no surgical or catheterization option available before.





YZ250F
RIDE
LIKE A PRO



Elevate your off-road experience with Yamaha's YZ250F. Boasting an all-new frame and enhanced ergonomics, this dirt bike sets a new standard for agility and control.

For inquiries and order get in touch with us today
+968 2471 2240 / 2471 1312

Or visit
www.ohmarine.com

OMAN AND UAE RELATIONS WITNESSING A REMARKABLE PROGRESS

The two leaderships are keen to elevate the relations to serve the interest of the two countries and maintain security and stability in the region



MUSCAT: The Sultanate of Oman and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) are bound by fraternal bonds and strategic partnership. These bilateral relations are witnessing a remarkable progress, thanks to the support and attention accorded by the wise leaderships of His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik and Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, President of the United Arab Emirates (UAE).

The two leaderships are keen to elevate the relations towards wider horizons in a manner that serves interest of the two countries' peoples and maintains security and stability in the region and the world at large.

The distinguished relations between the two sides are based on economic and trade partnership.

These relations were unique since the first meeting between the late Sultan Qaboos bin Said and Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan. The two countries shared the same vision towards issues of mutual concern to the two countries' peoples. Their relations represented the real meaning of fraternity and harmony over the past five decades.

The state-visit of His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik to the UAE this Monday and his meeting with Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed Al Nahyan assume a great importance. The visit aims at promoting the bilateral relations and pushing them forward towards wider horizons. During their meeting, the two leaders will exchange views on the regional and international developments.

Oman and the UAE strive to boost the effective cooperation between them on the principle of mutual interest in various fields.

The joint supreme committee between the two countries, which was established in 1991, seeks to enhance ways of cooperation and coordination between the two countries in diverse economic, commercial, cultural and educational fields. It also works to link electricity and communications networks, coordinate land transport services and transportation procedures between the two countries through various border crossings, in addition to promoting opportunities and areas of joint investment, for the present and future benefits of the Omani and Emirati peoples.

Sayyid Dr. Ahmed bin Hilal Al Busaidi, Ambassador of Oman to the UAE said that His Majesty's upcoming visit to the UAE will contribute to accelerating and developing the path of cooperation, integration and partnership between the two countries. He pointed out that the mutual visits of the leadership of the two countries culminated during the last period through the signing of 16 agreements and memorandums of understanding in various fields.

He affirmed to Oman News Agency (ONA) that there is a re-



markable leap in the economic relations between Oman and the UAE, thanks to the attention accorded by the leaderships of the two countries. Sayyid Al Busaidi expected that the upcoming period will witness more joint investment cooperation that would contribute to consolidating and developing the existing economic partnership between the two countries.

He explained that the key Omani investment in the United Arab Emirates include the sectors of financial activities, insurance, manufacturing industries, real estate, professional and technical activities, wholesale and retail trade, information and communications. Meanwhile, the list of the most important Emirati investments in Oman includes the industrial, financial, banking, tour-

ism, power generation, real estate activities, retail trade sectors and construction, he noted.

Sayyid Ahmed said that the UAE is one of the most important trading partners of the Sultanate of Oman. He pointed out that the indicators of continuous growth in the volume of trade and investment exchange between the two countries over the past years reflect the advanced economic partnership between them and its lucrative prospects.

He noted that Omani exports to the UAE during 2023 exceeded OMR1 billion, marking an increase of 20.4 percent compared to 2022.

The Embassy of Oman in the UAE strives to boost the economic and investment cooperation between the two countries through

continuous communication with the relevant government agencies, chambers of commerce and industry, and investors in the UAE, affirmed Sayyid Ahmed.

He explained that the Embassy urges them to utilize the investment opportunities available in Oman.

Statistics issued by the National Centre for Statistics and Information (NCSI) show that the volume of trade exchange between the Sultanate of Oman and the United Arab Emirates by the end of 2023 amounted to about OMR5.439 billion, compared to OMR5.571 billion by the end of 2022.

The statistics also showed that the value of Omani products exported to the United Arab Emirates by the end of last year amounted to more than OMR291.7 million, represented by metal products, chemical industry products, related industries, and other products and commodities. Meanwhile, the value of products imported from the UAE amounted to More than OMR837.7 million. They included machinery, appliances, electrical equipment and other products.

The figures showed that the United Arab Emirates topped the countries attracting direct Omani investments abroad, amounting to OMR960 million until the end of 2022, while the total direct Emir-

ati investments in Oman until the end of last year amounted to about OMR958 million.

The Sultanate of Oman is one of the most important markets for Emirati trade. It is ranked third in the Arab world and 10th globally in the list of trade partners of the UAE and accounts for 20 percent of the total trade of the Emirates, due to the ease of transporting goods and the smooth and free movement of national products between the two countries through land ports.

The private sector in the two countries plays a vital role in economic development and is relied upon to achieve economic diversification trends through various areas, namely converting industries, logistics services, mining, tourism and fisheries.

Faisal Abdullah Al Rowas, Chairman of Oman Chamber of Commerce and Industry affirmed that the fraternal bonds between Oman and the UAE represent a solid ground for integrated partnership in the economic and trade sectors.

He told Oman News Agency (ONA) that the UAE is one of the most important trading partners of Oman through direct investment in a number of sectors, including manufacturing industries, real estate and rental activities, commercial project activities,

construction, financial intermediation, transportation and storage, hotels, and others.

He pointed out that the UAE comes in first place as a destination for the direct Omani investments abroad.

The Sultanate of Oman and the United Arab Emirates established "Oman and Etihad Rail" in September 2022 as a joint company owned equally between them. With the aim of designing, developing and operating a railway network linking Sohar Port to the UAE national railway network, with a total project investment of \$3 billion, the joint company will devise the work plan for implementing the project, including financing mechanisms and the timetable, and then supervise the design, implementation and operation of the railway network project.

Through this project, which will link the Wilayat of Sohar in the Governorate of North Al Batinah with the capital Abu Dhabi, the two sides seek to raise the efficiency of the supply chain system and ease the practice of cross-border trade, link commercial ports and economic zones to the railway network, enhance commercial and social connectivity between the two countries and improving the efficiency of logistics services.

The Omani and Emirati ports are linked by direct lines to transport various products and exports. This contributed to achieving mutual economic benefits for the two countries. The ports of the Sultanate of Oman and the United Arab Emirates are also considered a gateway and a major link between the continents of Asia, Europe and Africa, and serve transiting ships.

The Duqm Dry Dock, which provides marine solutions and maintenance and repair services for various types and sizes of ships, received more than 350 projects from the UAE market in 2023, recording a growth of 43 percent compared to 2022.

In the field of tourism, tourist facilities in the two countries receive many groups of tourists from both countries. Moreover, there are many joint tourism investments that have contributed to attracting more tourists.

As for the cultural aspect, the two countries have closely and continuously strengthened cooperation in this important field by organizing joint cultural events and activities. The Sultanate of Oman participated in Expo Dubai 2020 and other national occasions and events that reflect the fraternal bonds and common historical ties.

The Sultanate of Oman, represented by the Ministry of Culture, Sports and Youth and the Ministry of Information, annually participates in book fairs in Abu Dhabi and Sharjah, while various cultural and media institutions in the United Arab Emirates participate every year in Muscat International Book Fair. **-ONA**

OMAN - UAE

<FROM A1 Visit to strengthen bilateral relations

“The visit stems from the fraternal bonds and good neighbourliness between Oman and the UAE. It also reflects the keenness of the two countries’ leaderships to enhance joint ties and push them towards wider horizons.

“The visit will explore areas of the existing cooperation between the two countries in various spheres and means of promot-

ing them to serve interests of the Omani and Emirati peoples and meet their current and future aspirations for further progress and prosperity.

High-ranking delegation
“During the visit, His Majesty the Sultan will be accompanied by a high-ranking official delegation comprising HH Sayyid Shihab

bin Tarik Al Said, Deputy Prime Minister for Defence Affairs, HH Sayyid Bilarab bin Haitham Al Said, Sayyid Khalid bin Hilal Al Busaidi, Minister of the Diwan of Royal Court, Gen. Sultan bin Mohammed Al Nuamani, Minister of the Royal Office, Sayyid Hamoud bin Faisal Al Busaidi, Minister of Interior, Sayyid Badr bin Hamad Al Busaidi, Foreign Minister, Dr.

Hamad bin Said Al Aufi, Head of the Private Office, Abdussalam bin Mohammed Al Murshidi, Chairman of Oman Investment Authority and Qais bin Mohammed Al Yousef, Minister of Commerce, Industry and Investment Promotion. May the Almighty Allah protect His Majesty the Sultan and guard him as a source of pride for his nation!” — **ONA**

IN AL WUSTA GOVERNORATE

OQ and its partners spent \$2. 82bn on goods, services to boost in-country-value

MUSCAT: The global integrated energy group, OQ, and its partner are working on enhancement of the socio-economic development in Al Wusta Governorate as part of the group’s corporate responsibility (CSR).

OQ and its partners invest in the programmes that boost the growth and development of local companies and contribute to creation of job opportunities for the supply of goods and services from the local supplier.

The group and its partners in Al Wusta Governorate spent on the goods and services from local suppliers over \$2. 825 billion in a bid to boost the in-country-value (ICV) as part of the strategy of the group and its partners.

The report issued by OQ showed that Duqm Refinery, one of the joint venture between the group and Kuwait Petroleum International spent on the services and the goods during the phases



of the construction of the project of Duqm Refinery \$2. 534 billion including \$475 million on the SMEs, \$1.70 billion on services from local companies and \$84 million on foreign products from local suppliers registered in the Sultanate of Oman besides the supply of products of national industries to Duqm Refinery at \$265 million.

As part of its corporate responsibility, Duqm Refinery has committed to award of 10 percent of

the works of the project to SMEs mainly to the establishments operating in Al Wusta Governorate.

The company executing the three packages of the project is also obligated to allocate 20 percent of the total value of purchases of the project to the goods locally manufactured and the services offered by the local suppliers.

Duqm Refinery is also committed to investment in the basic structure and services that contribute to improvement of

the lives of the local community members. Duqm Refinery has also worked on development of the national cadre and enhancement of the local communities and has spent over \$5. 4 million for the finance of social projects, mainly in the fields of education, health and environment preservation.

Duqm Refinery has adopted valuable initiatives and programmes for the development of the English language for students at the schools in Al Wusta Governorate.

Duqm Refinery has also made available 476 training scholarships for employees and 186 training opportunities for the national cadre.

OQ has recently signed with the Ministry of Health an agreement for the finance of construction of an emergency and accidents unit at the health centre in the Wilayat of Al Duqm in Al Wusta Governorate. — **ONA**

INTERNATIONAL INNOVATION EXHIBITION

Omani innovators shine at Geneva global exhibition

Times News Service

MUSCAT: Sumaya bint Saeed Al Siyabiyah of Oman won the grand prize at the Geneva International Innovation Exhibition while her compatriot Razan bint Hamad Al Kalbaniya bagged silver. The exhibition witnessed competition from more than 1,000 innovators from 40 countries around the world.

Sumaya Al-Siyabi explained to the Oman News Agency that her participation was aimed at showcasing her scientific innovation in the field of “bioanalysis of microplastics” using nanotechnology.

She pointed out that her innovative project offers a promising solution to eliminate and dispose of microplastics in a safe and environmentally friendly manner using microbial confinement and catalytic agent (nano zinc oxide).

For her part, Razan Al-Kalbani said: “My innovative project is a paint that absorbs X-rays from a natural component, ‘lycopen’,

which is the red pigment found in tomatoes, watermelon, and red fruits and vegetables in general.”

She added that the study of her innovative project is the first of its kind in the world to use a natural compound to shield the x-ray room, as the coating is characterised by 97 percent radiation absorption, 100 percent water and moisture resistance, and 95 percent heat resistance. It also prevents the formation of mold and bacteria.

Razan Al-Kalbani and Sumaya Al-Siyabi expressed their happiness with this achievement and for representing the Sultanate of Oman in this global forum, highlighting the interest they receive and the ability of Omani youth to innovate and compete globally.

It is noteworthy that the Geneva International Innovation Exhibition honours innovations that create solutions to a global problem and contribute to the advancement of innovation on a global scale for the economic and technological development of a country.



ROYAL ACADEMY OF MANAGEMENT

Seven-month programme for Omanis

<FROM A1 She said that the seven-month programme includes four educational units and workshops among other aspects.

She said that the programme would provide the Omanis working in the private sector and entrepreneurs to register for the programme through the website of the Royal Academy of Management. — **ONA**



INAUGURAL EVENT



Embassy of India launches ‘Marhaban Yoga’ in run-up to 10th International Day of Yoga

Times News Service

MUSCAT: The Embassy of India in Muscat launched “Marhaban Yoga,” a special initiative leading up to the 10th International Day of Yoga (IDY) on 21st June 2024.

The inaugural event, which included an exclusive yoga session, saw the participation of over 150 yoga enthusiasts from various yoga organisations across Oman.

Celebrated annually on June 21st, the International Day of Yoga aims to raise awareness about the many benefits of yoga for physical and mental well-being. It highlights yoga’s universal appeal and its potential to contribute to a healthier and more harmonious world.

Amit Narang, Ambassador of India to the Sultanate of Oman, unveiled the essence of the 10th IDY celebration in Oman under the theme “Health, Healing & Harmony.”

This theme underscores the



transformative impact of yoga in nurturing holistic well-being. Building on the successes of “Muscat Yog Mahotsav” in 2022 and the “Oman Yoga Yatra” in 2023, “Marhaban Yoga” aims to further promote the practice of yoga in Oman as a health discipline.

Ambassador Amit Narang emphasised the profound significance of yoga, describing it as a journey of self-discovery and inner peace.

“Yoga is the journey of the self, through the self, to the self,” he remarked, highlighting its signifi-

cance in promoting overall health and harmony in daily life.

Embassy of India in Muscat is collaborating with esteemed yoga organisations in Oman, such as Art of Living, Yoga Shaala, Vyaniti Yoga, Aasana Yoga Studio, Yoga City, International Yoga Professionals, Natural Path Heartfulness, Sahaja Yoga, Rajayoga Centre for Self Development, ISHA Foundation, Sanskriti Yog Group, Yog Parivar, and Adventure Oman for the success of “Marhaban Yoga”, aimed at promoting yoga as a discipline for health, harmony, and healing.



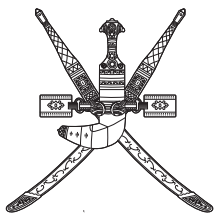
INDIAN SCHOOL MULADHA

(Affiliated to the CBSE, New Delhi, No. 6130007)
P.O. 42, P.C. 314, Al Muladha, Sultanate of Oman
Ph. 26811234 / 26811184, Email: islmoman@gmail.com

TENDER NOTICE

Sl.No	Description
1.	Interlock (Near Canteen)
2.	Exterior Design & Painting (KG Block)
3.	AMC for Air Conditioner repair & maintenance

- Tender details will be received from the School Office. • Sealed quotations are invited from the Companies. • A nominal charge of R.O 10/- will be collected with tender. • Last date of tender submission – 28th April 2024
- The School reserves the right to reject any tender without providing any reason whatsoever.





Ministry of Social Development

Tender Announcement

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

Tender No.	Tender Subject	Grade	Last date for obtainment of tender document	Last date for tender submission	Tender Document Price (non-refundable)	
					Small and Medium companies	Local companies
167/2024	Establishing a warehouse in the Department of Social Development at the Wilayat of Bidiya	Companies specialized in the field of building contracting + interior decoration implementation works registered with the General Secretariat of the Tender Board at the fourth degree	Sunday 12-5-2024 02:00 PM	Sunday 2-6-2024 10:00 AM	10 R.O	25 R.O

- ❖ Specialized Companies, registered with the **Tender Board** may obtain the Tender documents at the Tender Board e-tendering digital portal link (<https://etendering.tenderboard.gov.om>), on Sunday 21/4/2024
- ❖ 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 through the e-tendering website (reg@tenderboard.gov.om) Tel. (24402200)

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

www.mosd.gov.om

Oman claim 8 more medals as overall tally rises to 32



National athletes bagged five medals while chess teams also won three at the inaugural GCC Youth Games in the UAE

Times News Service

MUSCAT: Oman's athletes signed off the track and field events at the inaugural GCC Youth Games on a high on Saturday as they claimed five more medals in Dubai, UAE. While a gold eluded the athletes, the five medals along with three medals won by the national chess

teams helped Oman's medals kitty swell to 32 on Saturday. On the final day of the athletics competition Kultham Al Jabri clinched a silver in shot put while Moayad Al Badri settled for a bronze medal in the 400m race. Azza al Hinai won bronze in the 200m race while the boys' and girls' 4x100m relay quartet also

won bronze medals in their respective events. While the athletes excelled in Dubai, the national chess players made the Sultanate proud at the Sharjah Cultural Chess Club. The U14 girls' team won a silver while the U18 girls' side claimed a bronze. The boys' U18 matched their girls' counterpart as they also won a bronze. **U17 football: Kuwait beat Oman** In Abu Dhabi, Oman U17 football team suffered a shock 1-0 defeat against Kuwait at the Al Wahda Club's Al Nahyan Stadium on Friday night. The all-important goal was scored by Fawaz al Dawood in the 65th minute of the match. Kuwait now lead the table with six points from two wins while Oman has three points from their opening match 2-1 win against the hosts. In another match, UAE routed Bahrain 6-1 to open their account while Bahrain remained at the bottom with two defeats. Elsewhere at the Abu Dhabi Marine Sports Club, Oman sailors competed in Optimist, ILKA4 and ILKA6 classes and remained in contention for medals on the final day on Sunday. The Optimist sailors had already won a gold medal in the class last week. In volleyball, Oman lost their opening match against UAE at the Al Nassr Club in Dubai 15-25, 23-25, 16-25.



Printed and published by:
Muscat Media Group
Post Box 770,
Postal Code: 112

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

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

BABYLON PROVINCE



Several injured in Iraqi military base 'bombing'

BAGHDAD: An explosion rocked a military base in Iraq overnight into Saturday, news agencies reported, citing security sources. The blast hit the Calso military base in Babylon province south of the capital, Baghdad. The base houses a coalition of pro-Iranian armed groups. The groups are Iraq's Popular Mobilisation Forces, or Hashed al-Shaabi, AFP news agency cited an Interior Ministry source and a military official as saying. There was no immediate claim of responsibility and US Central Command (CENTCOM) added that it was "not true" that American forces had carried out a strike. The Interior Ministry source said the "aerial bombing" killed one person and wounded eight others, while the military source reported three Iraqi military personnel were wounded in a strike. Hashed al-Shaabi wrote in a statement that an "explosion" had inflicted "material losses" and casualties, without specifying the number of wounded. The group confirmed that its premises on the military base had been hit and that investigators had been sent to the site. The international community has voiced concerns that the war between Israel and Iran-backed Hamas is turning into a wider, regional conflict. On Friday, strikes blamed on Israel targeted a military base near the city of Isfahan in central Iran. The attack was likely retaliation for Iran's drone and missile attack on Israeli territory last weekend. The blasts, notably, took place at a site belonging to the Popular Mobilisation Units (PMU), as per Muhannad Al-Anazi, a member of the Security Committee in Babylon Governorate, south of Baghdad. The investigation into the blasts that occurred "at the Kalsu military base in the Al-Mashrou district on the highway, north of the Babylon Governorate," is underway. Israeli and US officials said neither was involved in the blast, a day after a military strike on Iran which has been attributed to Israel. The PMU, in contrast to other organisations in the area, is affiliated with the local administration and has strong ties to Shiite blocs in Iran that have dominated Iraqi politics for a long time, according to CNN. — Agencies

HAITI

Deaths rising sharply as gangs vie for power: UN

PORT-AU-PRINCE: Gang violence led to 1,660 deaths and 850 injuries in the first three months of 2024 in Haiti, a UN report said on Friday. That's a more than 50% increase on the previous quarter's figures, when the BINUH (or United Nations Integrated Office in Haiti) reported 1,104 deaths and 532 injuries. Almost four in every five of the deaths or injuries (79%) took place in the lawless capital Port-au-Prince, as authorities struggle to retain control. The report warned that recent months had also been characterized by more frequent and more organized gang attacks targeting government or law enforcement facilities. It noted the major prison breaks orchestrated by Port-au-Prince gangs when "more than 4,600 inmates escaped from the two main prisons in the capital," and also said that at least 22 police facilities had been looted or set on fire, with 19 police officers killed or injured during the first three months of the year. Haiti had long been plagued by gang violence with a weak government in only partial control of the country and particularly the capital Port-au-Prince. But it descended into even



more unrest in February when a group of gangs joined forces and said they wanted to oust the unelected government. Prime Minister Ariel Henry soon said, under increasing international pressure, that he would step down. Establishing a transitional council to usher in elections turned into a long and drawn out process that was only completed last week. A potential new government or election date remains elusive, with no votes in Haiti since November 2016, almost two months after Henry said he would step aside. The gangs' opposition to Henry's government had also coincided with growing popular dissatisfaction with and protests against the unelected leader's period in power since the assassination of former President Jovenel Moise in July 2021. Henry had argued during his tenure that the security situation was so poor that elections were not possible. — dw

ARMED CONFLICTS

How war impacts child development

NEW YORK: The world is currently experiencing its highest levels of violent conflict in at least 30 years. Along with the ongoing war in Ukraine and the Israel-Hamas war in Gaza, there are at least 110 armed conflicts taking place across Africa, Asia, Latin America and Europe. Many of these wars are being fought in cities and crowded civilian areas. Indiscriminate missile and drone strikes across multiple war zones are affecting civilians, schools, hospitals and children's shelters. Officials warn that, more than ever before in modern history, the biggest victims of these geopolitical battles are kids. UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres has repeatedly warned that children are "disproportionately" bearing the brunt of modern conflicts. Some of that impact is physical. Many kids living in war zones are recruited into conflict. Some experience sexual abuse at the hands of armed attackers. But even without direct physical abuse, children in areas of armed conflict experience severe psychological distress. Children in cities in Ukraine's frontline areas, for example, have spent between 3,000 and 5,000 hours — equivalent to between four to seven months — sheltering underground since Russia's invasion two years ago. "The combination of fear, grief and separation from loved ones is having a massive impact on children as the war drags on. Forty



percent of kids are not attending in-person school," Leah James, a mental health support specialist at the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), told DW. "The consequences are just massive." The result is likely to be disproportionately high levels of mental and psychiatric health issues for millions of people in the future, experts say. In Ukraine, a conflict under close monitoring, psychosocial workers are concerned the protracted nature of the Russia-Ukraine war is causing severe developmental delays in children. Christoph Anacker, a neuroscientist at Columbia University in the US, told DW the science bears that concern out. "Early life stressors can cause specific abnormalities in the development and neural circuit function in adulthood, particularly those involved with stress responses," he said. Anacker explained that trauma in early childhood changes stress and fear responses in the

amygdala, "priming" the brain to be more susceptible to stress in adulthood. Stress hormones are often released more frequently in response to stressors among people who experienced adversity in childhood than those who didn't, he said. Kids who experience this face an increased risk of anxiety and depression disorders and Alzheimer's disease later in life, he explained. Although PTSD will always be a concern for individuals experiencing war, whether they are a child or adult, overall "the adult brain is much more resilient to stressors because it's less plastic," he said. In childhood, the brain goes through so-called sensitive periods of development. Overstimulation due to grief or anxiety of being shelled or deprivation of inputs during these periods, like separation from family or a lack of social and emotional stimulation, can essentially rewire the brain, Anacker said. "There are no effective ways

to reverse the effects of childhood trauma when we are adults," he said. That's why it's so important, he explained, to minimise the exposure of stressors to children when they are in this sensitive period of development. James said UNICEF has been working to reduce the long-term effects of early life stressors for children growing up in Ukraine. "Some of the interventions we do are simple — ensuring kids have a safe space to play and connect with others, teaching basic coping skills to help deal with grief and separation," said James. "But a lot of it is about supporting caregivers so they can act as positive role models for kids. Being a caregiver in wartime is incredibly difficult. Relieving their stress impacts their children too." James said the programs have been particularly helpful for identifying children and families who might need more hands-on assistance. However children in conflicts in other regions are not getting the same support, UNICEF spokesperson Joe English told DW. English explained that "Given the scale of the need in conflicts around the world, and the chronic and critical under-funding of humanitarian appeals in general and child protection more specifically, many children are not able to access the support they may require." — dw

Israeli occupation forces detain 30 Palestinians in West Bank

The detention raids were concentrated in the Nur Shams refugee camp, which is still subject to an ongoing offensive while pointing out that among the 15 people detained from the camp were minor and injured people

RAMALLAH: The Israeli occupation forces Friday and Saturday detained 30 Palestinians from various parts of the West Bank, according to the Prisoners' Affairs Commission and the Palestinian Prisoner's Society.

They said that the occupation forces rounded up 30 people in



multiple raids across the West Bank. Among the detainees, they added, were three women, who were rounded up from Jerusalem and released afterwards, and half of the detainees are residents of the Nur Shams refugee camp.

They added that the detention raids were concentrated in the Nur Shams refugee camp, which is still subject to an ongoing offensive while pointing out that among the 15 people detained from the camp were minor and injured people.

Two of the 30 detainees were identified as a former prisoner from Kafr ad-Dik town, west of the city of Salfit, and another from

Deir Ballut town.

According to the Prisoners' Affairs Commission and the Palestinian Prisoner's Society, the occupation forces have detained some 8,340 Palestinians since October 7, 2023. Such prisoners were detained from their houses, at checkpoints, were forced to turn themselves in or were held as hostages.

The occupation forces frequently raid Palestinian houses almost on a daily basis across the West Bank on the pretext of searching for "wanted" Palestinians, triggering clashes with residents.

These raids are conducted with no need for a search warrant,

whenever and wherever the military chooses in keeping with its sweeping arbitrary powers.

Under Israeli military law army commanders have full executive, legislative and judicial authority over 3 million Palestinians living in the West Bank. Palestinians have no say in how this authority is exercised.

According to the latest figures from Addameer, the Palestinian Prisoner Support and Human Rights Association, there are currently 9,500 Palestinian political prisoners in Israeli prisons and detention centres, including 200 child prisoners and 80 female

prisoners. This number includes approximately 3,660 Palestinians placed under "administrative detention", which allows the detention of Palestinians without charge or trial for renewable intervals ranging between three and six months based on undisclosed evidence that even a detainee's lawyer is barred from viewing.

The mass arrest of Palestinians is nothing new. According to a 2017 report by Addameer, over the past 50 years, more than 800,000 Palestinians have been imprisoned or detained by Israel, this figure is now believed to be closer to 1 million. This means that about 40% of Palestinian men and boys living under military occupation have been deprived of their freedom. Almost every Palestinian family has suffered the imprisonment of a loved one.

people who sustained live ammunition injuries in addition to four others, who sustained injuries as a result of being beaten by the Israeli troops.

The injuries were described as being light to moderate.

The Ministry also confirmed its medical crews were informed there was an unidentified number of Palestinian fatalities and injuries in the camp, which remains besieged by the military, which continues to prevent ambulance crews from reaching them.

The ongoing large-scale offensive has resulted in the killing of two Palestinians, including 15-year-old Qais Fathi Nasrallah, while eyewitnesses from inside the camp said that five people were killed by Israeli army gunfire.

The bodies of the fatalities continue to be withheld by the army.

Earlier on Saturday, the Palestine Red Crescent Society (PRCS) said its crews managed to evacuate seven casualties from the camp to a nearby hospital.

It added that Israeli soldiers obstructed PRCS emergency ambulance crews from helping injured people in the camp, forced the casualties out of ambulances and inspected their identity cards.

— Wafa

Cannes Film Festival 2024 poster unveiled

WASHINGTON: The Cannes Film Festival has unveiled the official poster for its 77th edition.

The poster features a scene from 'Rhapsody in August', a Japanese classic by the late Akira Kurosawa, which premiered out of competition in Cannes in 1991, according to The Hollywood Reporter.

In Kurosawa's last picture as a filmmaker, a grandmother who was a victim of the Nagasaki bombing passes on her trust in love and integrity against war to her grandkids and American nephew. The poster fits very well with the Japanese motif that is emerging during this year's Cannes festival. — ANI

‘India’s national election is Maha Kumbh Mela of Democracy’

VIRGINIA: Congratulating the people of India, American diplomat, and the President of US-India Business Council (USIBC), Atul Keshap has said that the country's national election is the Maha Kumbh Mela of Democracy.

Heartiest congratulations

In a post on X, Keshap posted a picture of the Indian tricolour and wrote, "Heartiest congratulations to the great people of India as they begin the largest exercise of electoral choice in the entire history of our species."

"With 970 million eligible voters and 1.2 million polling places, India's national election is the Maha Kumbh Mela of Democracy," he added.

The world's largest democratic

exercise kicked off in the country on Friday, with the first phase of polling in 102 constituencies across 21 states and Union Territories.

This Lok Sabha election, being held from April 19 to June 1, is set to be the second longest polling exercise in the country's electoral history after the first general election, which was held over five months between September 1951 and February 1952.

Vote counting on June 4

The last general elections in 2019 were also held in seven phases. Vote counting will be done on June 4.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi is seeking his third consecutive term, while the opposition bloc-

INDIA- a coalition of opposing parties formed to take on the BJP in the general elections, is looking to oust him from power.

The first phase

Those voting in the first phase include seats in Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Bihar, Chhattisgarh, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Rajasthan, Sikkim, Tamil Nadu, Tripura, Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand, West Bengal, Andaman and Nicobar Islands, Jammu and Kashmir, Lakshadweep, and Puducherry.

The second phase will be held on April 26 and the remaining phases will be May 7, May 13, May 20, May 25 and June 1 accordingly. — ANI



KCNA NEWS AGENCY



North Korea says it tested 'super-large' cruise missile warhead

PYONGYANG: North Korea's KCNA news agency said on Saturday the country conducted a "super large" cruise missile warhead test along with a launch of its new anti-aircraft missile in the West Sea of Korea.

Pyongyang tested the "Hwasal-1 Ra-3" strategic cruise missile, and the new "Pyolji-1-2" aircraft missile on Friday, the North Korean government said.

KCNA said the tests were not related to the "surrounding situation."

"Both tests were part of the regular activities of the administration and its affiliated defense science institutes for the rapid development of technologies in various aspects such as tactical and technical performance and operation of new-type weapon systems," KCNA reported.

The agency released photos which showed at least two missiles being fired from launcher trucks. North Korea had reported conducting similar tests in February, but had not specified the names of the missiles.

The strategic cruise missile is said to be designed to carry a nuclear warhead.

The test was not reported by South Korea, Japan or the US, which often detect such large tests.

North Korea's international relations

Pyongyang has ramped up weapons tests in recent times, as tensions between Seoul and Washington have risen. In response, the US and South Korea have also increased their military drills in the region.

North Korea has several ballistic missiles, including intercontinental ones which are directed at the continental US. North Korea also has a growing cruise missile collection.

North Korea's Kim Jong Un and Russian President Vladimir Putin are close allies with deepening ties. Pyongyang could benefit from military cooperation with Moscow, especially in regards to its anti-aircraft missile technology, analysts say. — DW

TOWN OF MYAWADDY CAPTURED

Anti-junta rebellion enters new stage in Myanmar

NAYPYIDAW: Myanmar's military is stretched thin and facing multiple defeats across the country, analysts have told DW, after a crucial town near the Thai border fell to pro-democracy forces.

The town of Myawaddy was captured by the Karen National Liberation Army, the armed rebel wing of the Karen National Union (KNU), part of Myanmar's broad anti-junta alliance.

The loss of Myawaddy is perceived as both a symbolic and economic defeat for the military regime. The battle saw the KNU and its allies force the surrender of over 600 soldiers and their family members.

At the same time, Myawaddy is vital to trade between Thailand and Myanmar, with billions of dollars worth of goods crossing the border each year.

Rebels are also pressuring forces controlled by the junta's State Administration Council (SAC) in other parts of Myanmar.

"On the ground the SAC is in retreat in multiple locations, in Kachin, Arakan, and Karenni and Shan," independent Myanmar analyst David Scott Mathieson told DW.

Protests against the military coup

The protests against the military coup in February 2021 first escalated into an armed insurgency and then a full-blown civil war as various political and ethnic groups in Myanmar took up arms against the junta.

In October 2023, an alliance of opposition forces launched a large offensive in Myanmar's northern Shan state. Dubbed "Operation 1027," for the date it was launched, the counterattack saw the capture of dozens of townships and hundreds of junta-held posts. The offensive has lent momentum to other opposition groups, with



fighting escalating nationwide.

Zachary Abuza, a professor at the National War College in Washington who focuses on Southeast Asia politics and security, said the multiple battles are stretching the junta.

"Opposition forces are fighting across eight distinct battle zones across the country. It's not that any one group is that strong or sophisticated, but the military is spread thin, unable to divide and conquer," Abuza told DW. "That has allowed the Kachin Independence Army (KIA), AA, KNU, and other ethnic groups to make significant territorial gains. The military has [been] significantly attrited and there have been significant breakdowns in logistics, which make rapid troop redeployment and resupply very difficult," he said.

"The military has not been able to recapture any significant amounts of territory that it has lost since Operation 1027 began, though they have focused their efforts in the Bamar heartland of Sagaing and Magwe. That remains their priority; the ethnic regions are secondary," Abuza added.

In Rakhine, the Arakan Army (AA), the armed wing of the Unit-

ed League of Arakan ethnic group, has made gains after a previous cease-fire agreement ended in November. The AA have captured at least six townships in the state and continue to fight for more territory.

Even before the fall of Myawaddy, rebels controlled over 60% of the country, according Myanmar's National Unity Government (NUG), the anti-junta organization, which claims to be Myanmar's legitimate administration.

And this is likely to increase if the rebels take the fighting to urban areas previously unscathed by the conflict. This month, they launched rocket and drone attacks on Nanypyidaw, Myanmar's heavily fortified capital, hitting a junta base near the city's airport.

"Attacks in Nanypyidaw are meant to show that there is no place where the generals are safe. I think it will be important for opposition forces to increase the number of attacks in urban areas," said Abuza.

With the conflict putting the military on the backfoot, the junta is scrambling to boost its ranks and armed personnel. It has recently reintroduced conscription, which will see men and women

called up into the military for at least two years. Out of a population of 56 million, 14 million qualify for military service.

The military aims to draft 60,000 new recruits a year, and 5,000 by the end of April. This potential influx, together with the junta's significant firepower, means that the regime is not out of the fight yet.

"The military has a large country to retreat into, with a network of bases and arms production. They may be losing but this doesn't indicate they're finished just yet. This is a regime that has always seen scorched earth tactics as ordinary behavior, not an extreme measure," Mathieson said.

Padoh Saw Taw Nee, a spokesperson for the KNU rebel faction, admitted being wary of the military response expected to come after the capture of Myawaddy.

"We need to be very concerned from SAC side. Whenever they have lost like that, usually they make a heavy retaliation with the airstrikes. They always say that, whenever you take a place, it doesn't matter — we just have to destroy the place so you can't set up your administration."

— DW

SPORTS

Oman on the brink of history

Hosts meet UAE in the final of 2024 ACC Men's T20I Premier Cup today with a victory securing Duleep Mendis' men maiden berth in the Asia Cup event

MUSCAT: Oman cricketers stand on the verge of making history as a victory on Sunday against the UAE in the final of 2024 ACC Men's Premier Cup T20I will secure Duleep Mendis' men a maiden berth in the coveted 2025 ACC Asia Cup. The final will begin at the Oman Cricket Academy ground at 2.30pm.

Oman aim to extend their impressive winning streak in the ongoing tournament, having triumphed in all five of their previous matches. However, they remain cautious of their neighbours, who boast previous experience in qualifying for the T20I Asia Cup back in 2016.

Earlier, hosts Oman and UAE recorded contrasting victories in the semi-finals played at the Oman Cricket Academy ground on Friday.

Oman rode on all-rounder Aqib Ilyas' brilliance, who hit a responsible unbeaten half-century and bagged three wickets, to defeat Hong Kong by five wickets in the second semi-final while UAE upset favourites Nepal earlier in the morning by six wickets.

The victories also assured Oman and the UAE a spot in the 2024 ACC Emerging Teams Asia Cup, scheduled to be held in November-December in Sri Lanka.

On Saturday, Hong Kong defeated Nepal by four wickets in the third place playoff match to seal the third and final spot in the Emerging Teams Asia Cup.

The winner of Sunday's title clash will join continental powerhouses India, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Afghanistan, and Bangladesh in the third edition of the Asia Cup in 2025.

On Friday, chasing 131 to win



after Hong Kong were restricted to 130/9, Oman had a disastrous start with opener Kashyap Prajapati caught behind off the first ball from Ayush Shukla and Naseem Khushi back in the hut in the next over after a four-ball 10 with a six and a boundary.

At 19/2, Ilyas and Pratik Athavale stopped the slide with a 23-run stand before the latter departed for 11 and the hosts struggled at 42/3. Skipper Zeeshan

Maqsood and Ilyas saw through the powerplay overs without any further damage and Oman's 50 came off in 6.4 overs as the duo counter-attacked before Oman's captain departed after a 23-run stand in the ninth over, the second wicket for Aizaz Khan.

With the match swinging like a pendulum and Oman 67/4, Ilyas and Ayaan Khan stitched a 26-ball stand cautiously before Ayaan became Aizaz's third victim. Oman



needed 40 with five wickets in hand in 30 balls and a lot was on the shoulders of Ilyas who along with Khalid Kail got Oman past 100 in 16.2 overs.

Ilyas reached his deserving half-century off 47 balls that included just two boundaries and a six. The pair batted sensibly to set a thrilling finish with Oman needing nine off the last over and Ilyas with Kail at the crease.

Ayush Shukla was handed the

responsibility to defend eight runs but Ilyas blasted a huge six off the first ball to bring the equation down to three off five balls and wrapped up an exciting finish with a boundary off the next ball for a five-wicket win with four balls remaining.

Ilyas stayed unbeaten on 62 off 51 balls with three boundaries and a six to deservedly earn him the player of the match award for his all-round display, having earlier

picked three wickets. Kail was unbeaten on 16.

Earlier, Zeeshan Ali and Babar Hayat made crucial contributions to help Hong Kong reach 130/9 with both batters out in 30s. Ilyas' double strike in an over including the key wicket of skipper Nizakat Khan (19) in the ninth over was the turning point with the score at 59/4 after the team sped to 52/2 in powerplay. Ilyas also claimed the prize wicket of Hayat, who was stumped by Athavale for 33 off 37 balls.

Bilal Khan and Fayyaz Butt then dismissed the tailenders with Zeeshan unbeaten on 25-ball 36.

Ilyas and Bilal took three wickets apiece while Maqsood, Kaleemullah and Butt picked a wicket each.

UAE down Nepal

On Friday morning, United Arab Emirates (UAE) claimed a six-wicket victory over Nepal in the first semi-final.

Nepal, batting first, went into the match as favourites, being unbeaten with four successive wins. They struggled to build momentum and were restricted to just 119/ 9. Their innings was hampered by tight bowling from the UAE, particularly Junaid Siddique and Ali Naseer, who took crucial wickets early on. Sundeeep Jora was a lone bright spot for Nepal, scoring a resilient 50 from 40 balls.

In response, UAE chased down the target comfortably, finishing at 123 for 4 in just 17.2 overs. Alishan Sharafu scored an unbeaten 55, steering his team with a composed innings. Despite some initial wobbles, UAE's middle order managed to overcome Nepal's bowling, led by Gulshan Jha who picked up two wickets.

Brief scores (Semi-finals): Hong Kong 130/9 (Zeeshan Ali 36*, Babar Hayat 33; Bilal Khan 3/36, Aqib Ilyas 3/14) lost to Oman 132/5 in 19.2 overs (Aqib Ilyas 62*, Khalid Kail 16*; Aizaz Khan 3/16).

Nepal 119/9 (Sundeeep Jora 50; Junaid Siddique 2/26, Ali Naseer 2/28, Basil Hameed 2/4) lost to UAE 123/4 in 17.2 overs (Alishan Sharafu 55*, Vishnu Sukumaran 28; Gulshan Jha 2/21).

Third place match (Saturday): Nepal 139/8 (Dipendra Singh Airee 44*, Sundeeep Jora 22; Ayush Shukla 3/17) lost to Hong Kong 140/6 in 19.3 overs (Anshu Rath 65*, Babar Hayat 26; Sompal Kami 3/33, Dipendra Singh Airee 2/27).

Season of Generosity

Enjoy 5 years Peace of Mind

EVEREST

TERRITORY

TAURUS

Instalment starts from RO 249

Instalment starts from RO 144

Instalment starts from RO 199

5

Service*

Manufacturer's Warranty**

Ford Roadside Assistance***

YEARS / 100,000 KMS

Registration®

1 Year

Offer valid from 10th Mar'24 – 9th May '24 on all models sold for personal use. Instalment pricing worked with 20% down payment, 6% annual interest for a period of 84 months; subject to approval from Finance company / bank. *Includes 5 years /100,000 kms service, **5 years /100,000 kms manufacturer warranty, ***5 years /100,000 kms road side assistance. @First year registration of all models. This offer is not valid with any other promotions, on taxis, driving school, Rent-a-car usage, companies and any form of commercial usage and government purchases. Cash Gift option available.

Take a test drive today!

Ford

For enquiries visit our showrooms / get in touch with us today:
MUSCAT-98959452, MAWALEH-99385022, SOHAR-99477913, SUR-25546190,
SALALAH-93220476, For fleet enquiries: 99886271

Arabian Car Marketing Co. LLC C.R.No:1052055

PET INDUSTRY SHOW

The second edition of the region's pioneering pet industry show, Pet World Arabia, is all set to open its doors from April 22-23 at the Dubai International Convention & Exhibition Centre in the backdrop of the continuing surge in Middle East and Africa pet food industry, poised to grow over \$6 billion by 2028.

MARKET
BUSINESS & FINANCE



NET PROFITS OF FIRMS

The net profits of public joint stock companies listed on the Muscat Stock Exchange rose in the first quarter of this year to OMR212.7 million, compared to OMR187.3 million in the same period last year, recording a growth of 13.5 percent.

Omani rial effective exchange rate index rises by 3.1%

The total foreign assets of the CBO increased by 7.8 percent, reaching OMR6.74 billion at the end of January 2024 compared to OMR6.25 billion at the end of January 2023



MUSCAT: The effective exchange rate index for the Omani rial at the end of January 2024 rose by 3.1 percent to reach 116 points.

Preliminary statistics issued by the National Centre for Statistics and Information (NCSI) showed that local liquidity (M2) in the Sultanate of Oman increased by 14 percent at the end of January 2024 to record OMR23.37 billion. The data further indicated a

decrease in the total cash issued by 1.6 percent, reaching OMR1.57 billion at the end of January 2024 compared to OMR1.60 billion at the end of January 2023.

On the other hand, the narrow money supply (M1), which consists of the total cash outside the banking system, in addition to current accounts and demand deposits in the local currency, increased by 9.2 percent, reaching OMR6.90 billion at the end of January 2024,

compared to OMR5.57 billion by the end of January 2023.

The total foreign assets of the Central Bank of Oman (CBO) increased by 7.8 percent, reaching OMR6.74 billion at the end of January 2024 compared to OMR6.25 billion at the end of January 2023.

Private sector deposits in commercial banks and Islamic windows increased by 11.6 percent to OMR19.55 billion at the end of January 2024 compared to

OMR17.53 billion at the end of January 2023.

Total loans and financing in commercial banks and Islamic windows at the end of January 2024 increased by 3.8 percent to reach OMR30.48 billion, compared to OMR29.35 billion at the end of January 2023.

The average interest rate on total loans increased by 4.5 percent, reaching 5.546 percent at the end of January 2024. - **ONA**

Oman's Islamic banking sector assets reach OMR7.5 billion



MUSCAT: The total assets of Islamic banks and windows increased by 16.3 percent reaching about OMR7.5 billion by the end of January 2024.

This represents 17.6 percent of the total assets of the banking sector in the Sultanate of Oman.

Data issued by the Cen-

tral Bank of Oman (CBO) showed that the total balance of financing granted by the Islamic banking sector increased by 12.7 percent to reach about OMR6.2 billion. Deposits at Islamic banks and windows also recorded an increase of 14.9 percent, reaching about OMR5.6 billion. - **ONA**

NCSI DATA



Electricity production increases by 14.1%

MUSCAT: The Sultanate of Oman's total electricity generation recorded an increase of 14.1 percent to reach 2,609.3 gigawatts per hour by the end of January 2024, compared to 2,287.2 gigawatts per hour during the same period last year.

Statistics issued by the National Centre for Statistics and Information (NCSI) showed that the governorates of North and South Al Batinah and Al Dhahirah recorded a total generation of 1,660.1 gigawatts per hour until the end of January 2024.

Total production in Muscat Governorate decreased by 114.3 percent until the end of January 2024, reaching 1.7 gigawatts per hour, and in Dhofar Governorate, it fell by 2.0 percent, reaching 297.2 gigawatts per hour.

The total electricity generation in the North and South Al Shar-

qiyah Governorates increased by 30.5 percent until the end of January 2024, reaching 627.9 gigawatts per hour, while the total generation in the Al Wusta Governorate decreased by 93.5 percent, reaching 1.4 gigawatts per hour. In the Musandam Governorate, the total electricity generation increased by 14.2 percent, recording 24.4 gigawatts per hour.

Statistics indicated that Oman's net electricity generation until the end of January 2024 increased by 17.7 percent to reach 2,608.2 gigawatts per hour.

On the other hand, statistics showed that the total amount of water produced in Oman increased by 1.8 percent to reach about 42.18 million cubic metres by the end of January 2024, compared to 41.42 million cubic metres in the same period in 2023. - **ONA**

IN MARCH

Inflation rate in Oman touches 0.2%

MUSCAT: The inflation rate in the Sultanate of Oman increased by 0.2 percent in March 2024 compared to the same month in 2023, according to data on consumer price index numbers in the Sultanate of Oman issued by the National Centre for Statistics and Information (NCSI).

The data indicated an increase in the prices of the food and non-alcoholic beverages groups by 3.4 percent, the miscellaneous personal goods and services group by 2.9 percent, the culture and entertainment group by 0.4 percent, the tobacco group by 2.4 percent, and the clothing and footwear group by 0.1 percent.

On the other hand, the prices of the transportation group decreased by 4.6 percent, the restaurants and hotels group by 0.1 percent, the furniture, fixtures and household equipment group and regular home maintenance by 0.3 percent, the communications group by 0.3 percent, and the education group by 0.4 percent, while the prices of the rest of the groups remained stable.

In the food and non-alcoholic beverages group, the prices of the fruits group increased by 0.7 percent, the milk, cheese, and eggs group increased by 3.9 percent, the sugar, jam, honey, and sweets group increased by 1.7 percent, the oils and fats group increased by 2.0 percent, the bread and cereals group 1.2 percent, the food group 3.6 percent, the vegetables group 16.2 percent, and the meat group



2.3 percent and fish 2.8 percent.

The North Al Sharqiyah Governorate recorded the highest rate of increase in inflation at the end of March 2024 compared to the same period of the previous year, as the index rose 1.3 percent. Inflation rate

also rose 1.1 percent in the Al Wusta Governorate and 1.0 percent in the North Al Batinah Governorate. The inflation rate increased by 0.8 percent in the South Al Sharqiyah Governorate, 0.6 percent in each of the South Al Batinah, Musandam,

and Al Dhahirah Governorates, and 0.4 percent in each of the Buraimi and Dhofar Governorates, while the inflation rate decreased by 0.4 percent in the Muscat Governorate and 0.3 percent in the Al Dakhiliyah Governorate. - **ONA**

STATISTICS

Oman's natural gas production and imports increase by 3.6%



MUSCAT: The total domestic production and import of the Sultanate of Oman of natural gas decreased by 2 per cent and reached 8.38 billion cubic metres by the end of February 2024 compared to 8.55 billion cubic metres during a similar period of the previous year. Statistics showed that indus-

trial projects accounted for 68.2 percent of natural gas uses in the Sultanate of Oman until the end of February 2024, where uses for industrial projects amounted to 5.72 billion cubic metres.

The total use of natural gas for oil fields reached 1.52 billion cubic metres, for power generation sta-

tions 1.98 billion cubic metres, and for the industrial sector 43.60 million cubic metres.

It is noteworthy that the non-associated production of natural gas, including imports, amounted to 6.71 billion cubic metres, while the associated production reached 1.67 billion cubic metres. - **ONA**

FORECASTS

Global economic growth set to slow to 2.6% in 2024: UNCTAD

GENEVA: UN Trade and Development (UNCTAD) forecasts global economic growth to slow to 2.6% in 2024, just above the 2.5% threshold commonly associated with a recession.

This marks the third consecutive year of growth below the pre-pandemic rate, which averaged 3.2% between 2015 and 2019.

A UN Trade and Development report warns that the prevailing focus on inflation overshadows urgent issues like trade disruptions, climate change and rising inequalities.

It calls for structural reforms and coordinated global efforts, proposing a comprehensive strategy that includes both supply-side policies to boost investment and

demand-side measures to improve employment and income.

Regional economic outlooks: The report highlights an uneven post-pandemic recovery.

Africa: Projected to grow at 3.0% in 2024, up slightly from 2.9% in 2023. Armed conflicts and climate impacts pose significant challenges in several countries. The continent's largest economies - Nigeria, Egypt and South Africa - are underperforming, affecting overall prospects.

South America: Economic growth is slowing, with Brazil expected to grow at 2.1%, hampered by external pressures and commodity dependence. Argentina faces a 3.7% contraction due to inflation and complex debt negotiations.

North America: Growth remains relatively resilient, though challenges continue. The United States is expected to grow at 2.0%, reflecting concerns over high household debt levels.

Asia: China targets around 5% growth in 2024, capitalizing on robust manufacturing and trade. India's economy is buoyed by strong public investment and service sector growth, with a forecasted expansion of 6.5% in 2024. Japan is expected to grow at 1.0% amid export demand challenges.

Europe: Major economies experience economic slowdowns, with France, Germany, and Italy projecting growth of 1.3%, 0.9%, and 0.8%, respectively, due to industrial and fiscal challenges. - **WAM**

MARKET

Profits of Oman’s listed firms surge by 13.5% to OMR212.7mn

The preliminary financial statements announced by the companies on the Muscat Stock Exchange website showed that the financial results of most companies improved

MUSCAT: The net profits of public joint stock companies listed on the Muscat Stock Exchange (MSX) rose in the first quarter of this year to OMR212.7 million, compared to OMR187.3 million in the same period last year, recording a growth of 13.5 percent.

The preliminary financial statements announced by the companies on the Muscat Stock Exchange website showed that the financial results of most companies improved, and 5 companies moved from losses to profits, while five other companies moved from profits to losses. The losses recorded in the first quarter of this



year decreased to OMR17.8 million compared to losses amounting to OMR19.3 million in the same period last year.

Most of the leading companies announced their preliminary financial results, with the exception of Omantel, which is awaiting the financial results of the Kuwaiti Zain Group. The financial results that were announced until the end of last week showed that 67 companies recorded profits during the first quarter of this year, while 24 companies recorded losses.

The winning companies were distributed across various sectors. In the financial sector, 25 companies recorded profits, in the services sector, 21 companies recorded profits, in the industrial sector, 18 companies recorded profits, and in the funds sector, 3 funds recorded profits.

On the other hand, losses were concentrated in the industrial sector with 12 companies, the services sector with seven companies and the financial sector with five companies.

The banks listed on the Muscat Stock Exchange were able to raise their total net profits in the first quarter of this year to OMR124.5 million compared to OMR106.3 million in the same period last year, recording an increase of 17 percent. All banks recorded growth in their profits, and Bank Muscat ranked first. Among the banks with the highest profits, Sohar International Bank ranked second, National Bank of Oman came third, Bank Dhofar fourth, and National Bank ranked fifth with profits of OMR8.6 million. Oman Arab Bank ranked sixth with profits of OMR6.4 million and Bank Nizwa reported profits of OMR3.8 million. - ONA

MSX posted positive gains in weekly trading

Times News Service

MUSCAT: The Omani stock market posted positive gains for the third consecutive week, with the main index rising by 0.43 percent, according to an industry expert.

“Despite geopolitical tensions and falling oil prices, the market managed to maintain its upward trajectory, bolstered by the ongoing first-quarter earnings results for this year,” Daniel Takieddine, CEO MENA at BDSwiss, said.

This week, the financial sector experienced positive momentum, advancing by 0.62 percent following several upbeat earnings announcements from banks, which indicated robust activity in the sector for the quarter. Sohar International was a standout, its stock climbing by 9.82 percent after reporting an 89 percent increase in first-quarter profits, making it one of the most actively traded stocks. Additionally, Global Financial Investment Holding saw a significant rise of 10.94 percent after posting a more than 80 percent profit increase



for the quarter. Oman Emirates Holding also contributed to the sector’s gains with a 2.35 percent increase following a 107 percent profit surge in the first quarter.

Conversely, the industrial sector faced challenges, declining by 1.91 percent. Al Anwar Ceramic fell by 9 percent after reporting an 81 percent decline in net profits for the quarter, while Al Maha Ceramic dropped by 8.88 percent after recording a net loss. Galfar Engineering and Contracting also suffered, decreasing by 11.84 percent after a 54 percent

decline in net profits.

The services sector also experienced a downturn, dropping by 1.38 percent. Ooredoo’s shares declined by 2.61 percent after only a marginal profit increase of one percent for the quarter. Oman Telecom was down by 1.04 percent. Both Al Suwadi Power and Al Batinah Power saw declines of 1.20 percent and 2.50 percent, respectively, following announcements of continued quarterly losses. Renaissance Services was similarly in the red, with a 34 percent decrease in profits for the quarter.

BEATS EXPECTATIONS

Netflix adds 9.3 million new subscribers

WASHINGTON: Netflix’s first quarter report for 2024 exceeded expectations, as it reported 9.3 million new subscribers and profits of roughly \$2.3 billion (around €2.2 billion).

The Silicon Valley streaming company now boasts 269.6 million subscribers in all. North America, with some 83 million, is its biggest market.

“With more than two people per household on average, we have an audience of over half a billion people,” Netflix said in a letter to investors. “No entertainment company has ever programmed at this scale and with this ambition before.”

Crackdown on account sharing, service with ads to boost revenues

Netflix took in more than \$1 billion more in profit than it had in the



same quarter of 2023, according to earnings figures. Similarly, revenue was up by just over \$1 billion.

Nevertheless, the company’s shares dipped slightly in after-

market trading on Thursday.

But the shares have been on a marked upwards trajectory over the past year, amid bids to maximise revenue including a crackdown

on people sharing their passwords across multiple households and the introduction of a lower-cost subscription that includes advertisements. Having stood below \$300 this time last year, the stock recently peaked at just over \$581.

This reflected investors increasingly seeing the company as the relatively clear winner in the fiercely competitive streaming market that includes Apple, Amazon, Disney and Warner Bros. Discovery.

However, Netflix also surprised investors by disclosing in a letter to shareholders that it would stop providing quarterly updates on subscriber numbers starting next year. This will make the company’s progress more difficult to track.

It had posted the regular updates ever since it first went public in 2002, initially as an online rival to DVD rental stores. -DW

PET INDUSTRY SHOW

Regional pet food market set to grow over \$6bn by 2028

DUBAI: The second edition of the region’s pioneering pet industry show, Pet World Arabia 2024, is all set to open its doors from April 22-23 at the Dubai International Convention & Exhibition Centre in the backdrop of the continuing surge in Middle East and Africa (MEA) pet food industry, poised to grow over \$6 billion by 2028.

The two-day comprehensive pets and pet industry show which blends trade with entertainment with pet shows and competitions throughout the expo, has grown double in size compared to its debut show last year.

“Pet World Arabia has truly established itself as a show for both trade and pet owners and aficionados of the UAE and the region thanks to its hybrid format, combining leisure for pet



hobbyists with robust B2B trade and business opportunities in the region. At this year’s edition, we have over 150 participants representing 200 pet industry brands from 22 countries,” said Nadhal Mohamed, General Manager, Al Fajer Information & Services.

The geographical footprints of the participants have also expanded significantly with participants from Belgium, China, Egypt, Indonesia, Italy, India, Kuwait, the Netherlands, Pakistan, South Korea, Switzerland, Russia, Thailand, Turkey, the UAE and USA.

oman
OASIS
BALANCED DRINKING WATER

Ramadan Mubarak

Exclusive
Ramadan & Eid
OFFER

50 AED

HOT & COLD
DISPENSER

PLUS
2 FULL
BOTTLES

PLUS
30 REFILL
COUPONS

20 AED

WHITE TAP DISPENSER
OR
TAP DISPENSER
OR
MANUAL WATER PUMP
OR
CRADLE WITH TAP

PLUS
2 FULL
BOTTLES

PLUS
15 REFILL
COUPONS

Offer valid from 10th March to 30th June 2024.

OASIS WATER COMPANY SAOC
P.O. Box: 87, Rusayl 124, Sultanate of Oman.
CR No: 138562 | 1998 06/10/2024

800 71 222
9275 5522

Winner of
His Majesty's Cup Award
in 2018 & 2019
for Best Five Factories

IRENA

Driving energy transition requires rewriting how international cooperation works

NEW YORK: Renewable energy, if supported by governments, can “truly change the landscape” in terms of achieving equitable access to affordable and clean energy, but only if they can move from “commitment to action”, according to the Director-General of the International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA).

Renewable energy is generally defined as any energy source that is continuously replenished. It includes solar and wind power as well as bioenergy (organic matter burned as fuel) and hydroelectric power.

IRENA chief Francesco La Camera spoke to UN News ahead of the special meeting on transitioning to sustainable sources of energy, which took place on Friday at the UN Headquarters in New York as part of the first-ever Sustainability Week.

Ensuring access to affordable reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all people, wherever they are in the world, is the aim of Sustainable Development Goal 7 (SDG 7).

La Camera said, “There are no difficulties in persuading governments to adopt renewable energy, but from the commitments to the action, there is always something lagging.

“What is important in relation to the countries, with our members, is to support them in finding the right way to translate commit-



ment into action. I think this is the challenge we have to face: how can we move to tripling renewable installation capacity by 2030? Now what is at stake is how we can really achieve this goal.”

Asked about how to ensure that countries commit and take action, the IRENA Director-General explained that, since all the countries have already made commitments, one of the key steps is “to rewrite the way international cooperation works”, where “all different entities involved must make an effort”.

“For example, at IRENA, we have been working with President William Ruto of Kenya to forge a partnership to accelerate the renewable energy deployment in Africa,” La Camera noted. The Accelerated Partnership for Renewables in Africa (APRA) initia-

tive was launched during the first Africa Climate Summit in Nairobi last year, he continued, highlighting the signing of a joint statement by APRA leaders at COP28 to drive the renewable energy transition as a strategic solution to energy access, security and green growth in Africa.

“We now have seven African countries, including Kenya, as well as developed countries such as Denmark, Germany, the US, and we also have the UAE involved. This is an example of how we are trying to rewrite the landscape of international cooperation. We are building the plan and supporting these countries in creating their own plans for fostering renewables. Together we transform to a new international cooperation mechanism to turn their plans into reality.”

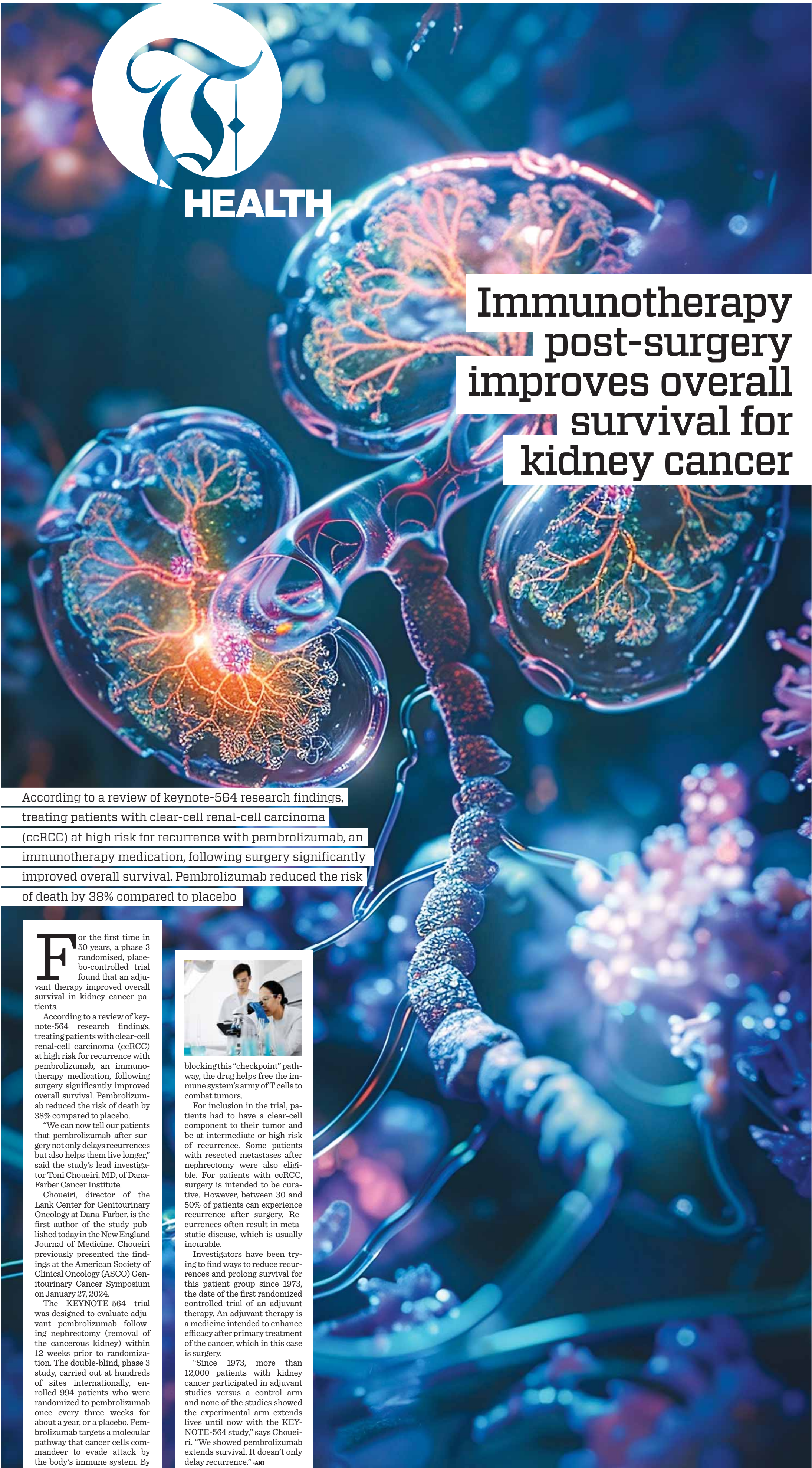
About the notable differences in approaches, commitments and reactions between developing and developed countries when it comes to the energy transition, Francesco La Camera said, “The developed world has to change the system. But, developing countries can leap forward and transition directly to a new energy system as there is a lack of real energy systems. The main difference lies in the status of the energy system in these different parts of the world, which is reflected largely in the existing inequality.

“The other aspect is that the developed countries may have the tools, instruments and financial resources to drive the changes. The developing world needs support in many aspects. Countries require financial and technological support to exchange experiences and technology. These are barriers that need to be overcome today to speed up the transition, especially in Africa.”

“In this respect, Africa is probably the most important powerhouse in the world for renewable energy and green hydrogen [a clean and renewable energy carrier]. But, Africa lacks the infrastructure to make this potential beneficial to its people, which would also benefit the world. Infrastructure such as ports, pipelines and civil infrastructure are decisive and crucial,” the IRENA chief went on to say.” -WAM



Immunotherapy post-surgery improves overall survival for kidney cancer



According to a review of keynote-564 research findings, treating patients with clear-cell renal-cell carcinoma (ccRCC) at high risk for recurrence with pembrolizumab, an immunotherapy medication, following surgery significantly improved overall survival. Pembrolizumab reduced the risk of death by 38% compared to placebo

For the first time in 50 years, a phase 3 randomised, placebo-controlled trial found that an adjuvant therapy improved overall survival in kidney cancer patients.

According to a review of keynote-564 research findings, treating patients with clear-cell renal-cell carcinoma (ccRCC) at high risk for recurrence with pembrolizumab, an immunotherapy medication, following surgery significantly improved overall survival. Pembrolizumab reduced the risk of death by 38% compared to placebo.

“We can now tell our patients that pembrolizumab after surgery not only delays recurrences but also helps them live longer,” said the study’s lead investigator Toni Choueiri, MD, of Dana-Farber Cancer Institute.

Choueiri, director of the Lank Center for Genitourinary Oncology at Dana-Farber, is the first author of the study published today in the New England Journal of Medicine. Choueiri previously presented the findings at the American Society of Clinical Oncology (ASCO) Genitourinary Cancer Symposium on January 27, 2024.

The KEYNOTE-564 trial was designed to evaluate adjuvant pembrolizumab following nephrectomy (removal of the cancerous kidney) within 12 weeks prior to randomization. The double-blind, phase 3 study, carried out at hundreds of sites internationally, enrolled 994 patients who were randomized to pembrolizumab once every three weeks for about a year, or a placebo. Pembrolizumab targets a molecular pathway that cancer cells commandeer to evade attack by the body’s immune system. By



blocking this “checkpoint” pathway, the drug helps free the immune system’s army of T cells to combat tumors.

For inclusion in the trial, patients had to have a clear-cell component to their tumor and be at intermediate or high risk of recurrence. Some patients with resected metastases after nephrectomy were also eligible. For patients with ccRCC, surgery is intended to be curative. However, between 30 and 50% of patients can experience recurrence after surgery. Recurrences often result in metastatic disease, which is usually incurable.

Investigators have been trying to find ways to reduce recurrences and prolong survival for this patient group since 1973, the date of the first randomized controlled trial of an adjuvant therapy. An adjuvant therapy is a medicine intended to enhance efficacy after primary treatment of the cancer, which in this case is surgery.

“Since 1973, more than 12,000 patients with kidney cancer participated in adjuvant studies versus a control arm and none of the studies showed the experimental arm extends lives until now with the KEYNOTE-564 study,” says Choueiri. “We showed pembrolizumab extends survival. It doesn’t only delay recurrence.” -ANI

SPORTS

We just couldn't kick off, says Gaikwad after Chennai defeat

Chennai Super Kings' captain admitted that middle-overs slowdown cost them dear against Lucknow Super Giants on Friday

LUCKNOW: Chennai Super Kings (CSK) suffered their third loss in seven games going down to Lucknow Super Giants (LSG) by eight wickets at the Ekana Stadium on Friday, their total of 176 not stretching the opposition.

Speaking after the game, CSK captain Ruturaj Gaikwad agreed they were short on runs - by about 10-15, he said - and put it down to their middle-overs slowdown.

"I know we finished off really well - couldn't have asked for more - but I think after the powerplay, we couldn't just kick off from the start we got until the 14th or 15th over," Gaikwad said. "We kept losing wickets at regular intervals. I think [we were] 10-15 runs short."

After getting to 51 for 2 in the powerplay, CSK managed only 62 runs in the ten overs after that, losing four wickets along the way. That included a period where they went 34 balls without hitting a boundary, with one in the tenth over followed by another only in the 16th. Five out of the ten middle overs were bowled by LSG's spinners Ravi Bishnoi and Krunal Pandya. Those went for only 29



TODAY'S MATCHES

Kolkata Knight Riders vs Royal Challengers Bengaluru
Kolkata, 2pm

Punjab Kings vs Gujarat Titans
Mullanpur, 6pm

runs, and Pandya bowled a well-set Ajinkya Rahane for 36 off 24 balls and had CSK's Impact Sub Sameer Rizvi stumped for 1.

'Pre-planned strategy' LSG captain KL Rahul said that it was a pre-planned strategy from his side to use a mix of pace and



spin in the middle overs to not allow the opposition batters to get set against "one type of bowling".

"It depends on the kind of wicket we are playing on, and the kind of batters there are [in the opposition]," Rahul said.

"Obviously, there's a bit of time we spend on doing homework, [and] talking about tactics and strategies against the opposition.

And yeah, that was one of our strategies: to use pace, use spin, and make sure that they don't get settled into playing one type of bowling. So [I] tried to mix it around.

"And I think credit goes to the bowlers: I can do all the changing, but if they don't execute, then all of us look stupid as a team. They executed really well. We work really hard at training, and it's good

to see that the team is sticking to the plans."

Despite MS Dhoni thumping 28 not out off only nine balls and Moeen Ali hitting 30 from 20 including three successive sixes in the 18th to raise the tempo at the death, and Ravindra Jadeja playing anchor to hit 57 not out off 40, CSK's total of 176 was chased down with an over to spare.

Gaikwad felt that the pitch was "slightly difficult" to score on in the first innings, and that the presence of the Impact Player meant teams need to have "maybe 20 runs extra".

"Even on these kind of pitches - I felt it was a sluggish one to start off with, with dew coming later [and the pitch] getting better - I still feel 180-190 would have been a good score," he said.

Gaikwad also said that CSK needed to strike more with the ball in the powerplay. Tonight, LSG's openers Rahul and Quinton de Kock did not let them do that, putting on 134 in 15 overs. Overall this season, CSK have taken just seven wickets in the first six overs, which is the second-least by any side behind RCB. Their bowling average of 56.85 in that phase is also the second-worst.

"[That] is the one area where we would like to improve going forward," Gaikwad said. "It really puts the opposition on the back foot if we get wickets in the powerplay - especially when we are about ten runs short - and definitely that is one area we need to work on."

CSK play LSG again on Tuesday, but this time back home in Chennai.

Both teams are now at eight points, level with KKR and SRH and only behind Rajasthan Royals.

LSG captain KL Rahul and CSK captain Ruturaj Gaikwad were fined INR 12 lac each for maintaining a slow over rate during the match. It was the first offence of IPL 2024 for each team. (With inputs from ESPNcricinfo.com)

CHINESE GRAND PRIX 2024



Verstappen revels in 'incredible' 100th pole position for Red Bull

SHANGHAI: Max Verstappen was the man in form at the Shanghai International Circuit on Saturday as he swept to victory in the Sprint race before securing pole position for the Chinese Grand Prix with an emphatic qualifying display.

Verstappen clocked a best time of 1m 33.660s in the decisive Q3 phase to finish a couple of tenths clear of Red Bull team-mate Sergio Perez, with Aston Martin's Fernando Alonso a tenth-and-a-half further back in third.

The Mexican pipped Fernando Alonso's Aston Martin by 0.166secs with McLaren's Lando Norris and Oscar Piastri next. Lewis Hamilton had a dire day, qualifying 18th.

His Mercedes team-mate George Russell was eighth behind Ferrari's Charles Leclerc and Carlos Sainz.

It gave Red Bull the 100th pole position in their F1 history, 37 having been claimed by the Dutchman, along with 44 by Sebastian Vettel, 13 by Mark Webber, three by Perez and three by Daniel Ricciardo.

Verstappen also became the

first driver since Mika Hakkinen in 1999 to start a campaign with five successive pole positions, as he continues his push for what would be a fourth world title on the bounce.

Discussing those achievements, Verstappen said: "Before I jumped in the car Christian [Horner, Red Bull team boss] told me if you get pole today it could be number 100 for the team, so I was like, 'Okay, that's nice, I'll try and give it a good go'.

"Of course that's an incredible achievement for the whole team. Also a big contribution from Seb back in the day!

"But it's fantastic also to have the one-two in qualifying, it showed that the car is again working really well.

"From my side it's been a really good start to the year and I feel probably very confident in qualifying, even compared to last year. It's just a shame of course that we retired in Melbourne otherwise I think we could have already had a very strong lead, but overall it's still a great start."

As for how his day and qualifying session unfolded, Verstappen

added: "I think after the Sprint race it gave us a few more ideas for the car. I think the car worked even better in qualifying now."

Verstappen heads into the 56-lap encounter with a 15-point advantage over Perez in the drivers' standings, while Red Bull sit 26 points ahead of nearest rivals Ferrari in the constructors' battle.

Verstappen claims sprint Earlier, Verstappen fought past Hamilton and Alonso to win the Chinese Grand Prix sprint race.

Pole-sitter Lando Norris slid wide at the first corner trying to fend off Hamilton's Mercedes.

Verstappen said: "The first few laps were quite hectic. They were pushing quite hard up front and I had Carlos behind with new tyres and it was very difficult to keep him behind.

"Then as the race went on we became stronger and I felt more comfortable with the balance of the car and could look after my tyres. Very pleased with that."

The win gave him another eight points towards a fourth championship that already appears inevitable. - Agencies

TENNIS

Swiatek breezes past Raducanu to reach semis at Stuttgart Open

STUTTGART: World No.1 Iga Swiatek staved off a tough fight from Emma Raducanu before prevailing in the quarter-finals of the Stuttgart Open on Friday.

Britain's Raducanu, who is continuing her comeback from an injury-hit 2023 season, lost 7-6 (7-2), 6-3 against the clay-court specialist from Poland.

Swiatek is on a 10-match winning run in Stuttgart, having won the last two editions of the WTA 500 tournament.

She will face Kazakhstan's fourth seed Elena Rybakina next.

Raducanu, 21, has enjoyed a return to form over the past week, helping Britain beat France in the Billie Jean King Cup at the weekend before wins against three-time major winner Angelique Kerber and Linda Noskova.

Her run to the quarter-finals in Stuttgart will see her rise up the world rankings after dropping to 303rd following wrist and ankle operations in 2023.

Swiatek is bidding to become the first player to win three straight Stuttgart Open titles since Maria Sharapova between 2012 and 2014.

"It was a pretty intense match so I am happy I was able to keep the intensity even though we played tough games for over two hours," Swiatek said. "It wasn't easy, I had a lot of break points that I couldn't convert."

Earlier on Friday, Rybakina booked her last-four spot by defeating Italy's Jasmine Paolini 6-3, 5-7, 6-3.

On the other side of the draw, Wimbledon champion Marketa Vondrousova knocked out world No.2 Aryna Sabalenka with a 3-6, 6-3, 7-5 win.

Sabalenka has failed to go beyond the quarter-finals of a tournament since her Australian Open triumph in January.

The Belarusian, a runner-up in the last three Stuttgart tournaments, committed 48 unforced errors and converted just six of her 15 break points.

Vondrousova, the Czech sixth seed, will play Marta Kostyuk next after the Ukrainian secured her second straight top-10 win



against US Open champion Coco Gauff.

American Gauff sped through the first set in 36 minutes, but Kostyuk, who knocked out China's fifth seed Zheng Qinwen on Thursday, fought back from a break down in both the second and third sets to win 3-6, 6-4, 7-6 (8-6).

Tsitsipas survives scare

Elsewhere, Britain's Cameron Norrie missed out on a semi-final spot at the Barcelona Open with defeat by Tomas Martin Etcheverry. There was little to separate the pair, but the Argentine stormed through the tie-breaks to win 7-6 (7-4), 7-6 (7-1).

On the other side of the draw, Greek Stefanos Tsitsipas survived a scare against Argentina's Facundo Diaz Acosta.

In a thrilling encounter that lasted for two hours and 31 minutes, the fifth seed saved two match points before securing a

4-6, 6-3, 7-6 (10-8) triumph.

Tsitsipas, who won the Monte Carlo Masters earlier this month, will take on either French 16th seed Arthur Fils or Dusan Lajovic of Serbia in the semi-finals.

British No.2 Jack Draper also fell at the quarter-final stage of the Bavarian International, losing to American third seed Taylor Fritz.

Fritz fought back from a set down to claim a 4-6, 6-3, 7-6 (7-1) victory and will face Chile's Cristian Garin after the world No.106 knocked out German top seed Alexander Zverev with a 6-4, 6-4 win.

Holger Rune of Denmark continued his bid for a third straight Bavarian International title by beating Switzerland's Marc-Andre Huesler in straight sets.

Norwegian third seed Casper Ruud, who claimed a straightforward 6-4 6-3 win over Italy's Matteo Arnaldi, awaits Argentine Etcheverry. - Agencies

Oman Banks Association celebrates Global Money Week to promote financial literacy

The Oman Banks Association (OBA) celebrates Global Money week by promoting financial literacy and inclusion among its youth. Through this campaign, OBA's goal is to spread the required knowledge and skills to society on how to make financial decisions and navigate through the modern economy by conducting a series of engaging activities and initiatives.

Global Money Week is an international campaign launched by the OECD (Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development) that is held every year and aims to equip the youth with the knowledge and skills they need to manage their finances effectively and responsibly, where organizations worldwide run series of activities and initiatives coordinated by financial institutions to spread financial knowledge.

The week-long campaign will be under the theme of "Protect your money, plant your future". The events and activities will be mainly focused on topics related to encouraging saving, budgeting, investing, entrepreneurship, and financial inclusion. The theme was chosen to highlight the importance of safe money management and the importance of adopting a responsible and uniformed approach to personal finances.

Global Money Week plays a crucial role every year in promoting financial literacy and inclusion worldwide, with several key aspects contributing to its importance:

1 Financial Inclusion: The initiative helps promote financial inclusion by reaching out to the communities and ensuring that all young people have access to financial education and resources. Breaking down barriers to financial access and participation, Global Money Week



2 Youth Empowerment: Global Money Week focuses on equipping young people with the knowledge and skills they need to make in financial decisions.

3 Long-term Financial Well-being: By instilling good financial habits and behaviors early in life, Global Money Week sets young people on a path toward long-term financial security. The skills and knowledge gained during the week can have a lasting impact, helping individuals

make better financial decisions, avoid debt, and plan for the future effectively.

4 Economic Development: Global Money Week contributes to building a more economically empowered society by fostering a culture of financial

responsibility, and innovation among young people, which in turn can drive economic growth and stability.

5 Global Collaboration: Global Money Week brings together financial institutions, educators, and other stake-

The week-long events and activities will be mainly focused on topics related to encouraging saving, budgeting, investing, entrepreneurship, and financial inclusion. The theme was chosen to highlight the importance of safe money management and the importance of adopting a responsible and uniformed approach to personal finances.

holders from around the world to collaborate on a shared mission of promoting financial inclusion. This global collaboration enables the sharing of best practices, resources, and experiences, fostering innovation and driving positive change on a global scale.

OBA's continued celebration in Global Money Week reflects its ongoing commitment to foster financial literacy and empowering generation that contributes to the country's economic development through giving the individuals early access to the right financial knowledge. The association helps young Omanis to build the necessary skills and confidence to manage their finances effectively, and plan their future, especially after the recent government initiative that led to kids having access to finances and financial tools at early ages.

OBA aims to extend beyond a single week of the Global Money Week and contribute to long-term improvements in financial literacy and well-being for individuals and communities in the Sultanate of Oman.

Nama Water Services committed to uninterrupted water service during recent exceptional weather conditions

The move reflects the company's commitment to sustainable water management and the well-being of Oman's communities

MUSCAT: Driven by its vision to become a leading provider of water management solutions, Nama Water Services has activated its emergency plan in response to the recent Al Mateer depression. This proactive measure ensures continued water services for governorates affected by the heavy rains. The move reflects the company's commitment to sustainable water management and the well-being of Oman's communities.

Eng. Ahmed Mubarak Al Araimi, Acting Water and Wastewater Operations and Maintenance General Manager said: "Quick action under the company's emergency plan ensured uninterrupted water supply to residents during the recent low-pressure weather conditions. Despite challenges to distribution networks, residents continued to receive potable water thanks to the successful activation of these protocols."

Al Araimi, outlined the company's proactive measures to ensure water supplies and wastewater services remain uninterrupted. "Leveraging past experience and technical expertise, our crisis management team has activated



the emergency plan. This plan ensures key water tanks are filled, providing a 48-hour buffer in case of disruptions to pumping operations." Al-Araimi elaborated "Real-time monitoring of water levels and pumping activity is ongoing through the National Water Monitoring and Control Center. Additionally, emergency wells have been activated, with dedicated water quality teams guaranteeing water safety. Water tankers stand

ready for deployment to address potential shortages or service disruptions reported across governorates." These actions demonstrate the company's commitment to providing reliable water services to its subscribers during any unforeseen circumstances.

Elaborating on the efforts exerted by the company he added: "Nama Water Services implemented a comprehensive preemptive plan in anticipation of



the adverse weather conditions, including, engaging with contractors, including plants operators, associated maintenance personnel, and project contractors, to establish precautionary measures safeguarding facilities, plants, and excavations, prioritizing public safety. Additionally, the company issued informative and cautionary messages to all company staff, disseminating updates on the evolving weather situation in alignment

with directives from the Civil Aviation Authority and pertinent authorities, emphasizing safety protocols at work sites. Nama Water Services has also liaised with relevant entities to rehabilitate roads impacted by soil erosion around reservoirs."

Commenting on the impact of weather conditions on the company's operations and assets, Engineer Ahmed Al-Arimi stated: "A number of the company's assets



were affected by floods and heavy rains despite the precautionary measures taken. A break occurred in the water line feeding the main reservoir in Wadi Bani Khalid, which was promptly addressed by the operations and maintenance teams. Additionally, several breaks occurred in the distribution networks in Mudhaibi Wilayat and several other wilayats. Emergency wells were activated in some wilayats after taking water samples and ensuring their compliance with the approved specifications and standards for drinking water."

Al-Arimi added that the sewage treatment plant in Wilayat Suhar was affected and its operations were suspended due to the flooding. However, the company's efforts were successful in bringing the plant back online within less than 6 hours of its shutdown.

Eng. Ahmed Al Araimi concluded by expressing his gratitude to the company's employees for their continuous efforts to ensure the uninterrupted provision of water services. He further extended his appreciation to the subscribers for their water conservation efforts, which play a vital role in ensuring uninterrupted service.

ROUND-UP

Lincoln Aviator now available with exclusive Wish List benefits

The Lincoln Aviator is stunning luxury SUV equipped with a standard twin-turbocharged 3.0-litre V6 engine that is paired with a 10-speed SelectShift® automatic transmission

MUSCAT: Lincoln Aviator is now available with exclusive Wish List benefits. Customers buying a new Aviator can avail Service 5 Years / 100,000 kms, Registration 1 Year and Manufacturer's Warranty 5 Years / 100,000 Kms. The campaign is valid from 10th March 2024 up to 9th May 2024. (Conditions apply. For details visit a Lincoln showroom Wattayah.)

The Lincoln Aviator is stunning luxury SUV equipped with a standard twin-turbocharged 3.0-litre V6 engine that is paired with a 10-speed SelectShift® automatic transmission. This helps the Aviator dish out an impressive 400 horsepower and 562 Nm of torque for effortless acceleration. The three-row luxury SUV with off-road capabilities.

The Aviator takes driving experiences to new levels with the



Lincoln Drive Modes' five signature settings – Normal, Conserve, Excite, Slippery and Deep Conditions. This feature allows owners to further customise their driving experience, while a 12.3-inch standard configurable LCD instrument cluster confirms their choices with beautiful, easy-to-read dynamic graphics and prompts.

To make every journey fun and

memorable, the Aviator is equipped with available technology that enables Aviator to "see" most potholes or uneven pavement and immediately make suspension adjustments to keep the ride as smooth as possible. Adaptive Suspension with Road Preview uses an advanced forward camera to constantly scan the road, seamlessly adjusting the suspension as needed. All Lincoln

vehicles come standard with a suite of driver-assist features known as Lincoln Co-Pilot360™.

Traffic Jam Assist helps guide the vehicle using adaptive cruise control with stop-and-go, lane centering and traffic sign recognition, adjusting speed based on the information obtained. Evasive Steer Assist offers assistance to the driver to help avoid a collision

with a slower or stopped vehicle; it provides additional steering support when a collision cannot be avoided by braking alone. Reverse Brake Assist can help stop the vehicle while backing up if Aviator's integrated rear sensors and camera detect an obstacle at the rear.

Active Park Assist 2.0 removes the stress from parking by taking over steering, shifting, braking and

acceleration functions with the touch of a button to navigate parallel and perpendicular parking spaces with ease. The boundless allure of flight has long inspired automotive design, and the all-new Lincoln Aviator takes that inspiration to the next level.

In Oman, Lincoln vehicles are brought to you by Arabian Car Marketing Co.

NETWORKING LUNCH



Networking for golfers tee off at Europcar's Oman and Bahrain headquarters

MUSCAT: Recently, golf enthusiasts were treated to a unique networking lunch at Europcar's pristine premises, which boasts state-of-the-art facilities with open workspaces, comfortable breakout areas, plenty of greenery (waterfalls included) and cutting edge technology designed to foster collaboration and connectivity.

Never seen before in the region, our new facility emphasises the company's commitment to promoting a healthy work-life balance and nurturing a positive corporate culture.

'The Boardroom' - a large and airy space with built in audio visual capabilities.

'The Energize Lounge' - a unique gaming centre to boost employee happiness.

'The Wellness Spa' - gym, yoga & meditation studio with lockers & showers...all for our employees well being.

'The Networking Hub' An ideal expansive area for hosting boutique style networking events

that foster meaningful connections and collaboration among professionals.

Europcar's golfers networking lunch served as a prime example of how innovative spaces can elevate traditional networking events, creating a unique and engaging experience for attendees.

With its forward-thinking approach to office design and networking initiatives, Europcar is undoubtedly driving the future of workplace collaboration and connectivity.

"I am thrilled to see the positive feedback regarding our innovative new office space and the recent success of golfers networking event. At Europcar, we take pride in creating a work environment that not only fosters productivity and collaboration but also promotes employee well-being and work-life balance. Thank you to all who attended the event and shared their positive experiences," said Nitin Sapre CEO of Europcar Oman & Bahrain.

WELLNESS TREATMENTS

Movenpick Hotel & Apartments launches The NOVE Spa experience

MUSCAT: Movenpick Hotel & Apartments Ghala Muscat has announced the opening of its first spa experience in the Sultanate. The NOVE Spa is located on the 9th level of the 5-star premium hotel represents a uniquely refreshing escapade for both mind and body. A delightful sensory antidote for the stress and bustle of modern life, the NOVE experience includes a range of lingering full-body therapies and facial treatments for both man and women.

Starting from its tranquil and relaxing ambiance, the spa environment prepares guest to embark on a journey to physical relaxation and mental rejuvenation. To accentuate the indulging experience, NOVE Spa uses a premium range of professional organic wellness products from Italy, most notably the MEI collection featuring ABSOLUTES derived from food grade essential oil from wild plants. NOVE Spa's trained therapists also blend Eastern and Western treatment modalities to offer clients a deeply immersive wellness regimen.

"Every aspect of the NOVE Spa experience is tailored to help our patrons look and feel at their best," said Jovana Miletic, Spa Manager. "In the suave gentleman's section, we have a treatment room, steam and sauna. Of course, the ladies' area is more indulgent, with three private treatment rooms, a sauna, as well as a special Salt Room."

"Besides its deep-cleansing and detoxification properties, the Salt Room offers guests a broad spectrum of therapeutic benefits for stress relief, respiratory and skin



health, immune enhancement, better sleep, and an overall sense of well-being," Jovana explained.

Signature experiences at NOVE Spa also include rituals like 'NOVE Naturale Viaggio' and 'Journey to Arabia'. The former is a specially tailored ultra-indulgent sequence of massages from face to foot, while the latter is a long luxuriating scrub with natural salt, rose and frankincense, followed by a

blissful full-body massage using frankincense oil.

The NOVE Spa menu of services is designed for guests from all walks of life, with body massages ranging from 60 to 90 minutes – including a delicate massage for mother-to-be after their third trimester, expertly rendered by a master masseuse.

Facials range from a refreshing 30 minutes to a fully revitalizing

90 minutes treatment. In addition to the NOVE Spa, the hotel provides a comprehensive wellness experience on the 9th floor. This sanctuary includes a rooftop infinity pool and a fully equipped gym. Guests can select from various annual wellness packages and membership options.

The NOVE spa at Movenpick Hotel & Apartments Ghala Muscat is open from 10 am to 9 pm, every day.



mai alkaline

pH 9.1 to 9.5

Alkaline Ionized Drinking Water

OmanOasis OmanOasisOfficial OmanOasisWater



HYDRATE SMARTLY

- ✓ Ultra-hydrating
- ✓ Revitalizing
- ✓ Energizing
- ✓ Electrolytes

oman OASIS

800 71 222 9275 5522

Est. No. 1596452



LYNK & CO

THIS RAMADAN DRIVE WITH ULTIMATE BENEFITS!

**6 Years/Unlimited
KMs Warranty***

**600 Litres
Fuel#**

**6 Years/60,000
KMs Service****

**Registration
1st year**

**6 Years AAA
Roadside Assistance*****

**Gift Voucher
worth RO 50##**

EMI STARTING FROM
118 OMR
/MONTH



EMI STARTING FROM
168 OMR
/MONTH



EMI STARTING FROM
135 OMR
/MONTH



EMI STARTING FROM
146 OMR
/MONTH



EMI STARTING FROM
196 OMR
/MONTH



Showroom - Ghala Heights, Muscat

Offer valid from 19th February, 2024 to 18th May 2024 & applicable on all models and model variants. *5 Years/100,000 kms manufacturer warranty + 1-year unlimited KMs extended. **Service - Whichever is earlier. *** Applicable for the first 6 years. #Petrol Card worth of 600 litres with every vehicle purchased. Rate calculated as per 0.239 OMR per litre for M 95 petrol. ## LULU gift voucher with every vehicle purchased. EMI mentioned are of the base models, subject to 20% down payment & calculated @ 5.25% reducing interest PA from Bank Muscat for a tenure of 8 years (conditions apply) & subject to approval. Vehicle shown are for illustrative purposes. Specifications subjected to change without notice. For more details, please visit our showroom. Offer valid only for private vehicles. Not available on fleet, Ministry & Taxi / Rental / commercial car purchases.

71611137

lynkcooman.com

lynkcooman





NEW ALFA ROMEO TONALE

CELEBRATE THE HOLY MONTH WITH EXCLUSIVE OFFERS

**STARTING
FROM
OMR 18,995**

**PAY 50% NOW &
50% IN 12 MONTHS
WITH 0% INTEREST**

**7 YEARS /
200,000 KMS
WARRANTY**

**5 YEARS /
120,000 KMS
FREE SERVICE**

**5 YEARS /
100,000 KMS
ROADSIDE
ASSISTANCE**

**FREE FIRST YEAR
INSURANCE &
REGISTRATION**

**WALK IN
& WIN AN
IPHONE**

Alfa Romeo



Offer valid from 4th March to 3rd May 2024 on Alfa Romeo vehicles purchased at the Mohsin Haider Darwish Automobiles LLC dealership by retail customers for personal use only. 0% Interest for 12 Months - Subject to 50% down payment and balance 50% through finance for 12 months loan tenure. Subject to credit approval from selected bank & finance company. 5 Years / 120,000Kms Free Service – Whichever comes earlier. 7 Years / 200,000Kms Warranty – Whichever comes earlier. 5 Years / 100,000Kms Roadside Assistance – Whichever comes earlier. 1st Year Free Insurance for Oman and UAE only. Walk-in & Win iPhone 14 - Customers who walk into the MHD Automobiles Showroom in Al Hail during the promotion period are eligible to enter the raffle draw to win an iPhone 14. 2 Winners will be randomly selected on 5th May 2024 and contacted directly. Image shown is for illustrative purposes only.



mhdalfaromeooman

Toll Free – 800 22 008

www.oman-alfaromeo.com

Rally Your Squad!

Inviting
schools to
participate in



Oman's first
video quiz show!

Register your school
before April 30th 2024

Log on to mmg.om/quiz for more details
Follow us on Instagram @tquizleague



Downe House
Muscat

Venue partner



Associate partner



Event Management



Media partner

Partner with us to fuel young minds: Write to quiz@mmg.om to be a sponsor
