

**OMANI SCIENTIST WINS FIRST
GCC WATER INNOVATION PRIZE**

Dr. Mohammed Zahir Al Abri, Associate Professor of Petroleum and Chemical Engineering at Sultan Qaboos University (SQU)'s Engineering College, won the first edition of the GCC Water Innovation Prize. **>A3**



OMAN, KSA DISCUSS COOPERATION IN RETRIBUTIVE JUSTICE

RIYADH: Nasr Khamis Al Sawai, Attorney General met with Sheikh Saud Abdullah Al Mua'jab, Attorney General of Saudi Arabia. During the meeting, the two sides discussed means of enhancing cooperation in the field of retributive justice and the exchange of expertise in a bid to develop performance and sharpen the skills of public prosecution employees. **-ONA**



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TOP THREE INSIDE STORIES

**OMAN
More schools to open**

1 At least two more Indian schools in Oman are set to resume physical classes by the first week of October. **>A3**

**WORLD
Voting in Germany**

2 Germans started voting on Sunday to elect a new Bundestag, or the federal parliament. **>A6**

**MARKET
Oman-Belgium pact**

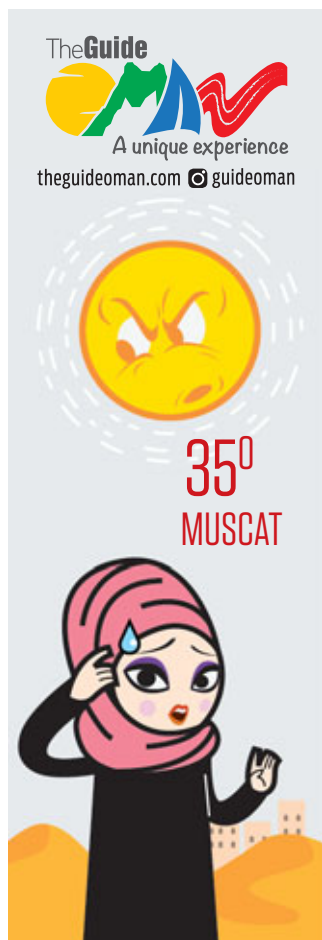
3 Oman and Belgium have signed a pact for cooperation in the field of green energy. **>B1**

EXCHANGE OF VIEWS
Council of Ministers, State Council hold joint meeting



MUSCAT: His Highness Sayyid Fahd bin Mahmood Al Said, Deputy Prime Minister for the Council of Ministers, received members of the State Council's Office, headed by Shaikh Abdulmalik Abdullah Al Khalili, Chairman of the State Council. The meeting was held within the context of cooperation between the Cabinet and the Council of Oman.

The meeting, held at the Council of Ministers, is one in a series of meetings that come within the framework of coordination stated in the Basic Law of the State and in pursuance of the continuous interaction between all institutions of the state. It is an opportunity to exchange views about matters of significance to sustainable development in the Sultanate. **>A4**



**OMAN'S SHOT PUT STAR HOPES
TO BRING MORE MEDALS IN 2022**



OMAN'S PRIDE: The Paralympic medallist, Mohammed Al Mashaykhi, visited the *Times of Oman* office on Sunday. **-Taleb Al Wahibi**

Mohammed Al Mashaykhi is the first ever Omani to win a Paralympic medal

Times News Service

MUSCAT: Oman's first ever Paralympic medallist is hopeful of repeating his medal-winning accomplishments when he takes part in three international competitions next year.

Shot putter Mohammed Al Mashaykhi, who became the first ever Omani to win a medal at ei-

ther the Olympic or Paralympic level, will take part in the West Asia Para Games in February 2022. After that, in August, he will compete at the World Championships, followed by the Asian Para Games in October 2022.

"Every time you reach a particular goal, you are required to work harder to achieve your next objective: that is the demanding nature of sport," said Al Mashaykhi.

His coach Sonya Mustafa, who also serves as the technical director of the Oman Paralympic Committee, said, "Simply put, in 2022, he will be busy. We have set goals for all three of these events."

"While it is very difficult to reach the levels required to participate at the Paralympics, it is even harder to maintain those standards," she added. "Our goals are for him to maintain his performance levels

he is currently at, even during these upcoming tournaments, and hopefully win medals for the country."

30-year-old Al Mashaykhi, who comes from the town of Jalan Bani Bu Hassan in the Sharqiyah region, was infected with meningitis at the age of five.

Although he recovered from the disease, it left him with cerebral palsy and dystonia, a condition in which his hands and neck move involuntarily.

Despite his challenges, he finished third in the seated shot put event at Tokyo 2020, throwing a distance of 10.84 metres that meant he finished behind Li Liu of China and Aleksei Churkin of Russia.

"When we realised he had won a medal at the Paralympics, the feelings we experienced were simply impossible to describe," said Mustafa. **>A6**

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Dhuhr.....12:03pm
Asr.....3:28pm
Maghrib.....6:04pm
Isha.....7:14pm
Fajr (Tomorrow).....4:42am

Times of Oman

VOL 10, NO. 31

MUSCAT, THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 27, 1984 — MUHARRAM 1, 1405

PRICE BAIZAS 200

A new insurance venture Agreement on oil exploration

A hundred thousand shares of a new Omani firm, the Al Ahli Insurance Company, opens for public subscription today.

The shares are valued at RO 10 each and are available for cash at par. A minimum of ten shares must be subscribed for.

The issue closes on November 11.

Al Ahli Insurance Company, whose incorporation was approved by Ministerial Order No. 40/84, issued on

Share issue opens today

August 29, 1984, will be controlled by four Omani companies are the founders - Oman International Development and Investment Company, National Electrical Company, National Gas Company and Oman Investment and Fi-

nance Corporation.

Among the founders, the OIIC has invested a total of RO 700,000 in the new venture, with the other three firms contributing RO 100,000 each towards the paid-up capital of RO 2 million. The remaining RO 1 million will come through the public share offer.

Only Omani nationals or companies fully owned by Omanis are eligible to become shareholders of the new firm. The subscriptions

can be effected through any of the following banks: National Bank of Oman, Oman International Bank, Bank of Oman, Bahrain and Kuwait, Union Bank of Oman and Arab Bank.

The Company will have a Board of Directors with seven members being selected by the shareholders.

The company will deal particularly with life insurance and other related activities in fire, accident, marine and air insurance.

The Sultanate on Tuesday signed an oil exploration agreement with a group of foreign companies.

The consortium, consisting of oil companies from Italy, Spain and Britain, are to explore for oil in Sunainah, near Ibri, North of Natih and Fahud oilfields and North of the Japanese concession zone.

The agreement, which covers a total area of 1,319 square kilometers, was signed by the Minister of Petroleum and Minerals, Saeed Ahmad al-Shanfari and a representative of each of the three companies.

According to the provisions of the agreement, the companies have undertaken to implement the contract through a timetable of 54 months during which they will explore, survey and drill wells.

Oman will have a dividend of 80 per cent from the oil production.

UK courses for 12 language teachers

Twelve Omani teachers of English have been granted scholarships to a 2-year diploma course in the teaching of the English language in Britain. They will be leaving Muscat in the second week of October.

Of them, nine teachers have already completed a year of teaching the language in Omani schools while the other three have passed the Institute of Teachers' examination this year.

Those selected for the scholarships from the Capital Area are: Ali Saeed Mohammad, Iqbal Abdul Qadir, Yahya Juma Rashid, Khamis Saleh al-Balaushi, Mahmood al-Sharafi, Suleiman al-Saadi and Mohammad Hassan. The other five teachers are from the Interior.

They will be studying in different places in Britain and most of them will be staying with British families during their stay in that country.

Municipality reminder on cleanliness

The Capital Municipality has again drawn the attention of the public towards its campaign of beautifying the Capital Area. It has sought the co-operation of citizens in refraining from doing anything that might affect the cleanliness and beauty of the environment.

The reminder issued by the Capital Municipality says that clothes should not be dried on balconies and windows of buildings throughout the Capital Area. Drying is allowed only on the roofs on condition that they are not visible from the street.



Inspection at a road worksite in the Interior.

The Directorate-General of Roads has launched a project to improve the standard of safety on major roads in the Capital Area and on highways

linking Muscat with the major interior towns.

The project, which will be carried out on a priority basis, has already started in the Batinah and Sharqiyya regions.

The Director-General of Roads, Tariq Mohammad Amin al-Mantheri made an inspection visit to the work sites on the Rusayl-Nizwa and Bid-Bid-Sur highways.

by Muzaffar Mohammad

The total cost of the maintenance work entrusted to Desert Line Projects under a contract signed by the Ministry of Communications is RO 866,239.

The maintenance work along the 36 kms of Rusayl-Nizwa highway involves extension of the double service treatment shoulders to 1.5 meter on both sides, asphalt repairs, protection of Irish crossings and culverts, side ditches for drainage and the central road marking.

The maintenance work on the

236 km Bid-Bid-Sur Highway involves asphalt repair, protection of Irish crossings and culverts, central road marking and other allied work.

The work on both the highways will be completed by the year end and will greatly enhance the longevity and durability of roads for the safety of road users.

The fixation of additional road signs and other safety devices and road markings on both the highways will be undertaken by work brigades of the Directorate-General of Roads.

The existing road signs, including reflectors which have faded, will also be replaced on all major highways and on roads in the Capital Area. The work will be carried out on a priority basis.

The Founder and staff of Times of Oman offer their best wishes to His Majesty Sultan Qaboos and the people of Oman on the occasion of the Islamic New Year of 1405.

LATEST

The South African Ambassador to Britain has been summoned to explain why his Government is refusing to allow four South Africans to return to Britain to stand trial on charges of arms smuggling.

The four were out on bail.

Britain has already deplored the action and warned that it would affect the way Britain viewed South African affairs.

South African Prime Minister Pierre Botha said the four will remain in South Africa as a clear reprisal for Britain's refusal to end the sit-in by anti-apartheid demonstrators in its Consulate at Durban.

The Soviet Union has protested to Britain over what it calls maltreatment of a prominent Soviet journalist Mr Oleg Bitov. Bitov alleged that he was kidnapped in Venice last year and kept in Britain against his will.

The authorities in India have decided to withdraw the Army from the Golden Temple complex at Amritsar, which was occupied three months ago after an attack to flush out Sikh terrorists taking refuge there. Government control over entry to the complex will also be lifted.

The details were given by the Indian Prime Minister Indira Gandhi in a broadcast

The announcement came just six days before the date Sikh High Priests had said they would march on the temple unless the troops were withdrawn.

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<FROM A1> Sayyid Fahd praises State Council Office's role for progress of Oman



At the outset of the meeting, Sayyid Fahd commended the leading role of the State Council's Office in fostering fruitful cooperation. The meeting affirmed the need to rally efforts to promote the supreme interests of the state and safeguard the achievements of the country's comprehensive renaissance. The government hopes that the State Council will utilise its expertise in conducting more intensive studies to upgrade the level of public service programmes, said Sayyid Fahd, who laid emphasis on co-operation between the two sides in supporting plans that sustain the

country's progress and prosperity. Shaikh Abdulmalik and members of the State Council's Office valued the meeting between the government and the State Council and underscored the importance of the coordination in the next stage of development. Topics of the agenda were reviewed, among them ways of cementing partnership between the government and the State Council. The two sides agreed that the State Council would pursue social awareness and collaboration in serving the nation under the leadership of His Majesty Sultan Haitham Bin Tarik. -ONA

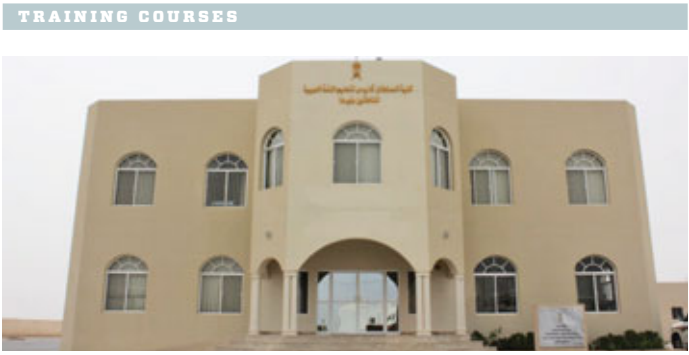




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College in Sultanate promotes Arabic language worldwide

MANAH: The Sultan Qaboos College for Teaching Arabic Language to Non-Native Speakers (SQCTANNS) received 1,048 students during the period from 2012 to 2019 from 55 countries.

The United States topped the list with 209 students, followed by 136 students from the United Kingdom and 113 students from Turkey.

The college continues its message in promoting the Arabic language worldwide and introducing the Omani and Arab culture, as well as deepening the connections between different peoples.

The college strives to turn the Arabic language into a bridge of human communication.

Othman Musa Al Sa'adi, Assistant Director General of Educational Programmes said in a statement to Oman News Agency (ONA) that the college began offering its first training courses for the academic year 2021/2022.

Those online courses target 12 Arabic language teachers from various colleges and universities of Uzbekistan.

Al Sa'adi added that a training programme was set for the teachers as it covers a spectrum of topics, including education, second language learning without using a mediator language, using educational technology in teaching Arabic and introducing the skills of teaching speaking.

It also includes a number of topics and lessons on developmental strategies, classroom activities and self-learning. **ONA**

XSHARJAH INTERNATIONAL FORUM

Omani participation

SHARJAH: The 21st edition of Sharjah International Narrator Forum (SINF) kicked off with the participation of two Omani researchers, namely Ahmed Al Rashdi and Abdulaziz Al Rashdi.

Ahmed Al Rashdi presented a number of works, including reading narratives such as "Stories from Oman" for children, in addition to his contribution to daily seminars on the Omani cultural heritage. As for Abdul Aziz Al Rashdi, he participated, along with a group of Arab narrators. **-ONA**



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Bank name: Bank Muscat SAOG
Account number: 0423 01086 3070 017
Account Type: OMR
SWIFT Code: BMUSOMRX

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Any tender received beyond the above closing time and date or not being supported by bid bond will not be considered.

The last date for purchasing of Tender Documents shall be 5 days before the closing date of tender.

Note: For Tender # 3000000300/21 Offers are invited from reputed manufacturers of paper bags, not distributors or traders or middleman agents.

Submission of offers are specified above closing date, accompanied by a bid bond issued by any local bank in Oman. The bid bond must be active for 90 days starting from the date of submission of offers.

This publication is part of the tender documents

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CRISIS IN YEMEN

Oman's permanent UN representative meets US special envoy for Yemen



NEW YORK: Dr. Mohammed Awadh Al Hassan, the Sultanate's Permanent Representative to the United Nations (UN) in New York met with Tim Lenderking, US Special Envoy for Yemen.

Lenderking asserted the stance of the US Administration to end the crisis in Yemen.

The meeting was held on the sidelines of the 76th session of the UN General Assembly. -**OMA**

MEETING



Indian Chief of Naval Staff arrives in Oman

MUSCAT: Admiral Karambir Singh, Chief of the Naval Staff in the Republic of India, arrived on an official visit to the Sultanate on Sunday.

The Indian guest and his accompanying delegation were received at A'Seeb Air Base by Rear

Admiral Saif Nasser Al Rahbi, Commander of Royal Navy of Oman and a number of senior officers. They were also received by the Indian Ambassador to the Sultanate and the Defence Attaché at the Indian Embassy in Muscat. -**OMA**

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COVID-19

88 new cases reported

MUSCAT: As many as 88 new cases of coronavirus (COVID-19) were registered in Oman during the past 3 days, in addition to 2 new COVID-19-related deaths.

This brings the total number of positive COVID-19 cases to 303,639 in the Sultanate.

The total number of COVID-19-related deaths reached 4,095, the Ministry of Health said.

The Ministry added that 1,359

new cases have recovered, bringing the total number to 296,527 recoveries.

24 are in ICUs

The Ministry also pointed out that 2 cases were hospitalised over the past 24 hours, as the total number of current hospitalised COVID-19-infected patients stands at 41, of them 24 are in intensive care units (ICUs). -**OMA**

OMAN'S FIRST EVER PARALYMPIC MEDALLIST

<FROM A1 Al Mashaykhi has changed opinions people had against disabilities

"That he has come so far is of course a great testament to his determination and character, but it would not have been possible without the blessings of God."

As a young boy fighting disability, Mohammed sadly had to endure a lot of stigma from society, because many did not know enough about his condition. His victory this year helped shatter a lot of myths about handicapped people.

"After I returned to Jalan, I was considered my town's best citizen, because my achievements were a matter of pride for the entire community," he said.

"He has single-handedly changed the opinions people held against disabilities. His achievements are a lesson that we must encourage everyone to do their best, especially those who are handicapped, because all of us have the capability to do something special. In Oman, fortunately there are programmes that help

unlock their potential," Coach Mustafa added.

"Unfortunately, in many parts of the world, there is a lot of stigma still prevalent against handicapped people," she said.

World's biggest stage

"For someone like Mohammed to win a medal at the Paralympics – the world's biggest stage – proves that those with physical and developmental challenges are just as capable as anyone else."

Following his victory at Tokyo 2020, Al Mashaykhi met His Highness Sayyid Theyazin bin Haitham Al Said, the Minister of Culture, Sports and Youth, who told him the true value of his success.

Speaking on behalf of Al Mashaykhi, Sonya Mustafa said, "The minister told him: 'This victory is not just for you, but for all the handicapped people in our country, you are a shining example for all those facing challenges in

Oman, and you have changed the views and opinions of society towards handicapped people."

"Despite his achievements, Mohammed's condition means he gets tired quickly, so it is important to support him physically and mentally."

"Depending on his energy levels, his training patterns are also modified accordingly. It is important, therefore, that he receives all the support possible from his family and trainers."

"There are a lot of exercises he cannot do, so a lot of exercises need to be adapted to his capacity."

"We need to work around his disabilities so that he can overcome them. One of the first things we did was to teach him to hold the shot-put properly, and that required working on his finger movements, because his hands also move involuntarily. We therefore did exercises for him to strengthen his fingers, his wrists and his hand," Mustafa said.

"There is a saying we have in sports: if you want something, you can do it," she explained. "Fortunately, the government of Oman and the Ministry of Culture, Sport and Youth has provided Mohammed a lot of the resources he needs to compete, be it proper training facilities and coaches, or entering him into international competitions. They have done their maximum to ensure he is given all he needs to excel."

First medal

Al Mashaykhi won his first medal in shot put at the World Championships in 2017, where he bagged silver, and followed that up with three more – one gold and two silver, a year later at the CPISRA World Games, which is organised especially for athletes affected by cerebral palsy.

That year, he also won a gold and silver medal each at the 2018 Asian Para Games in Jakarta, Indonesia.



JUSTICE

Haiti PM vows to seek justice for president's assassination

PORT AU PRINCE: Haitian Prime Minister Ariel Henry, in an address to the UN General Assembly in New York on Saturday, vowed to find those responsible for the assassination of President Jovenel Moise.

The highly anticipated speech comes amid reports that could implicate the prime minister himself in the murder.

"I want to reaffirm here, at this platform, my determination to do

everything to find the collaborators, accomplices, and sponsors of this odious crime," he said in a pre-recorded video message.

"Nothing, absolutely nothing, no political maneuver, no media campaign, no distraction, could deter me from this objective: rendering justice for President Moise," he said, in his only allusion to the allegations against him personally.

Henry's address comes days after he fired his chief investi-

gator and prosecutor, who had asked a judge to charge the prime minister in connection with the assassination.

Port-au-Prince prosecutor Bed-Ford Claude also asked that Henry be barred from leaving the country.

According to the prosecutor's report, Henry had communicated with a key suspect in Moise's killing on the night of the assassination.

"The judicial inquest is going

difficultly," Henry said on Saturday. "It's a transnational crime. And, for that, we formally solicit mutual legal assistance. It is a priority of my government for the entire nation."

Henry also addressed the migrant crisis at the US-Mexico border where tens of thousands of people, mostly Haitians, have arrived since early September.

In his address to world leaders on Saturday, Henry said that

migrants would continue to try and reach prosperous countries despite the disturbing images of Haitians being detained at the US border.

"In recent days, the images of the treatment of several of my compatriots on the border between Mexico and the United States have shocked more than one," he said.

Scenes of US border guards on horseback aggressively rounding up the migrants have drawn wide-

spread condemnation of President Joe Biden's administration.

"Human beings, fathers and mothers, are always going to flee poverty and conflict. They will always strive to offer better living standards to their children," Henry said. "Migration will continue as long as there are areas of prosperity on our planet while most of the world population lives in precarity, sometimes extreme, with no prospect of a better life." **dw**

END OF AN ERA

Germans start voting for new federal parliament marking end of Merkel era

BERLIN: German voters started to cast their ballots on Sunday to elect a new Bundestag, or the federal parliament, on which to form a new government for the next four years and usher in the post-Merkel era.

According to the Federal Returning Officer, around 60.4 million citizens are eligible to vote. Polling stations will be open on Sunday from 8 AM to 6 PM (local time). However, at least 40 per cent of eligible voters have cast their ballots by post, compared to 28.6 per cent in the last election in 2017. Polling institutions will interview voters anonymously at the exit of selected polling stations, and the initial results will be published exactly after the election ends through public broadcasters.

The election is of great importance as incumbent Chancellor Angela Merkel will no longer run for reelection after almost 16 years in office. As she will retire from her political career, Germany and, to some extent, the Euro-



pean Union will enter a new era with unclear prospects.

The competition is so fierce that it is difficult to predict which party will garner the most seats in the Bundestag. According to the latest opinion poll results, the latecomer Social Democratic Party, with Finance Minister Olaf Scholz as its chancellor candidate, tops the list by only one to four percentage points ahead of Merkel's Union Party, whose chancellor

candidate is Armin Laschet, minister-president of the North Rhine-Westphalia state.

Opinion poll results also showed that the Greens will probably become the third-largest party, while the other three parties in the current Bundestag, the Free Democratic Party, the Left Party and the right-wing Alternative for Germany are likely to cross the five per cent threshold for entering the Bundestag. **ANI**

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PARLIAMENTARY ELECTION

Hundreds protest in Moscow over election result

MOSCOW: A crowd of around 1,000 people turned out in capital city Moscow on Saturday to protest the result of Russia's parliamentary election.

Police detained a number of demonstrators at the unauthorized rally.

Results released on Friday showed President Vladimir Putin's ruling United Russia party winning a sweeping majority in parliament at legislative polls.

But the three-day vote took place amid a crackdown on the opposition.

Opposition and independent election observers complained of numerous violations and systematic fraud.



What happened at the demonstration?

The demonstration was held in Pushkin Square in Moscow. It was organized by the Communist Party, the second-largest group in the Duma.

They were arguing that they were cheated of victory.

The crowd chanted "Putin is a

thief!" and called for the release of political prisoners.

A number of protesters carried signs demanding a recount, others expressed support for jailed Kremlin-critic Alexei Navalny.

Some people at the rally said they did not support Communism as a political ideology but showed up to express their anger over electoral fraud.

The protest attracted a heavy police presence. Police erected barriers and had prisoner transport vehicles standing ready.

Russian authorities also warned against taking part in unauthorized protests ahead of Saturday.

But officers opted to play music over loudspeakers rather than carrying out mass detentions seen during rallies in support of Navalny earlier this year.

Protest monitoring group OVD-Info said it was aware of over 50 cases of people involved in the protest subsequently experiencing official harassment.

The Communists claimed about 60 of their activists had been detained ahead of the demonstration.

are the second-largest faction with 57 seats, up from their previous 42.

Despite the gains, members of the Communist Party have argued that they were cheated by an online voting system that reversed Communist Party candidates' strong leads.

Russian President Vladimir Putin on Saturday praised last week's parliamentary elections as "free and fair."

Putin met with party leaders on Saturday and pointed out that Duma would have five parliamentary groups instead of four for the first time since 1999. That was, he said, a sign of "the democratic development in our country."

BILATERAL SUMMIT

Ties with India destined to be stronger, closer and tighter, says Biden

WASHINGTON: US President Joe Biden, who recently held the first in-person bilateral meeting with India's Prime Minister Narendra Modi, said the ties between two of the world's largest democracies--India and the US-- are destined to be "stronger, closer and tighter".

On Friday, Biden hosted PM Modi at the White House for the bilateral meeting and discussed a wide range of priority issues, including combating COVID-19, climate change, trade and the Indo-Pacific. PM Modi described the bilateral summit with Biden as "important" as they're meeting at the start of the third decade of this century.

He also held one-on-one meetings with the chief executives of Qualcomm, Adobe, First Solar, General Atomics and Blackstone and discussed a number of issues ranging from drones to 5G, semiconductor, and solar power.

US and India are committed to taking on the toughest challenges both countries face together.



"This morning, I hosted Prime Minister Modi at the White House as we launch a new chapter in the history of U.S.-India ties. Our two nations are the largest democracies in the world, and we're committed to taking on the toughest challenges we face -- together," Biden tweeted.

Prime Minister Modi, who was on a three-day visit to the US, held his maiden bilateral meeting with US President Biden and attended the Quad leaders Summit.

Since January, PM Modi and Biden have participated in three summits. Two of them were hosted by President Biden - the Quad virtual summit in March and the Climate Change Summit in April which was also held virtually.

Prime Minister Modi on Saturday concluded his itinerary-packed 3-day visit to the US.

Biden and Modi started their talks with comments on the promise of the India-US relationship, the areas they would work on like COVID-19 and climate and the importance of the Diaspora. Their opening remarks were

sprinkled with jokes and laughter, interspersed with a serious outlining of the discussions ahead.

Modi said that under Biden's leadership the seeds had been sown for India-US relations to expand and that they were entering a "transformative phase". In this context, he mentioned the growing importance of people-to-people ties and said Indian talent would be a "full partner" in this relationship.

Besides holding talks with US President Biden, the Prime Minister also met with United States Vice President Kamala Harris and Prime Ministers of Australia and Japan on Thursday.

On September 24, US Vice President Harris met PM Modi to reaffirm the strategic partnership between the two countries, the White House informed in a statement.

"They discussed the COVID-19 pandemic and collaborative efforts to respond and recover, including cooperation on vaccine production under the Quad Vaccine Partnership," said White House.

According to the statement, Harris welcomed India's commitment to resume vaccine exports and the progress of its domestic vaccination campaign. Both US Vice President and Prime Minister Modi agreed that ambitious action to combat climate change was imperative in the face of the climate crisis.

"They each emphasized a commitment to democratic values and discussed the need to strengthen democracy at home and abroad. They supported expanding bilateral security cooperation in the face of modern threats, including terrorism and cybercrime," the statement said.

Earlier in the day, Foreign Secretary Harsh Vardhan Shringla said both PM Modi and US Vice President Harris appreciated the India-US bilateral relationship, which they felt were on strong footing with given the shared values, common interest in growing strategic convergence.

PM Modi returned to New Delhi after concluding his three-day US visit. **ANI**

FLOW OF FOOD AND MEDICINE

Taliban welcome US measure to allow humanitarian assistance to Afghanistan

KABUL: The Taliban on Sunday welcomed the US recent measure of allowing the flow of humanitarian assistance to Afghanistan.

"The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan (IEA) welcomes the recent decision by US Treasury Department allowing US government agencies along with international and non-governmental organisations and banks to facilitate the flow of food and medicine to the IEA," said the ministry's spokesman Abdul Qahar Balkhi in a statement, reported Xinhua.

The war-torn nation is in complete turmoil and is in a state of chaos after the takeover of the Taliban and is in dire need of humanitarian assistance.

On Friday, the United States issued general licenses, allowing the US government, NGOs and certain international organizations to engage in transactions that are necessary to provide humanitarian



assistance to Afghanistan.

Earlier this month, UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres warned that the possibility of a complete economic collapse in Afghanistan was "serious," highlighting an urgent need for funding support to Afghans.

He also appealed to the countries pledging 1.2 billion US dol-

lars in relief for Afghanistan to take action quickly.

Amir Khan Muttaqi, acting Foreign Minister of Taliban caretaker government, on Thursday said that Afghanistan wants to have friendly relations with the international community, including the neighbouring and regional countries. **ANI**



Sultanate of Oman
MINISTRY CULTURE, SPORTS and YOUTH

MINISTRY OF CULTURE, SPORTS and YOUTH, Muscat, hereby give notice of tenders for the following projects

TENDR. No.	Project Category	Location	Grade In Tender Board Registration
20/2021	Construction and Maintenance	Construction of Sport Hall at Oman Club (MUSCAT governorate)	First Grade

Companies, which are registered with the Tender Board and engaged in same category with experience in and same Grade as noted above, can obtain the Tender Documents at the Tender Board E-tendering digital portal link (<http://etendering.tenderboard.gov.om>) until 09/10/2021.

The last date of tender submission on above E-tendering site at 09:00am 08 /11 /2021

A Tender Bond equivalent to 1% of the tender sum issued from a registered bank, in the prescribed form, in Sultanate of Oman and valid for 90 days should enclosed with the tender.

Any tender without the bond will be reject and the tender committee is not bound to accept the lowest or any tender received.

INTERNAL TENDER COMMITTEE OF MINISTRY OF CULTURE, SPORTS and YOUTH

Any participants have doubt in adopting e-tendering can contact over the phone 24402200 or through email etenderhd@ita.gov.om

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MM/04/651/2021

Oman score big victory over Papua New Guinea

Chasing Oman's 250 for 7, PNG could only crawl their way to 140 before being dismissed in the 43rd over

Times News Service

MUSCAT: Left-arm spinners Zeeshan Maqsood and Ayaan Khan left Papua New Guinea (PNG) in tatters as Oman started another round of World Cricket League (WCL) 2 campaign with a massive 110-run win here at Oman Cricket Academy Ground 2 in Al Amerat on Sunday. Chasing Oman's 250 for 7, PNG could only crawl their way to 140 before being dismissed in the 43rd over, captain Zeeshan did the bulk of early damage, picking up 4 for 28 in 10 overs. Ayaan came on to seal the tour-



ists' fate with a superb purchase of 3 for 12 in 7.2 overs. Only Jason Kila and Assad Vala made notable contributions with the bat, scoring 36 and 27 respectively. Oman showed a lot of maturity to reach 250 on a pitch that always seemed to have something for the bowlers. Spinners in particular looked more threatening as the ball gripped, turned and bounced, doing everything to keep the batters on the guard.

Suraj Kumar's topscore of 62 not out was of much more value considering the life wasn't all that easy in the middle. Ayaan (44) and Aqib (34) looked equally impressive in their stay on the pitch, exhibiting focus and flourish at the same time. Zeeshan and Naseem Khushi chipped in with useful contributions of 27 and 26 respectively. The tournament will resume after Monday's rest day when Oman takes on fancied Scotland

on Tuesday in what promises to be an intriguing contest. Brief scores: Oman 250 for 7 in 50 overs (Suraj Kumar 62 - 2x4, 2x6, Ayaan Khan 44 - 5x4, Aqib Ilyas 34 - 5x4, Naseem Khushi 27 - 4x4, Zeeshan Maqsood 26 - 3x4, Kabua Morea 2-50) thrashed PNG 140 all out in 42.2 overs (Jason Kila 36 - 2x4, 1x6, Assad Vala 27 - 1x4, Zeeshan Maqsood 4-28, Ayaan Khan 3-12, Aqib Ilyas 2-34) by 110 runs.

FORMULA 1



Lewis Hamilton clinches 100th F1 win at Sochi

SOCHI: Lewis Hamilton took his 100th Formula 1 Grand Prix victory in the Russian GP that started in dry conditions and ended under the rain at Sochi on Sunday. The Mercedes driver made a late switch to intermediate tyres to take the lead when pole-sitter Lando Norris agonisingly slid out of the lead with just two laps left. Max Verstappen made it from P20 to P2, and Ferrari's Carlos Sainz took third having started second. The pole-sitter Norris eventually finished seventh having pitted at the very end but will find himself at the mercy of the stewards after crossing the pit entry line twice on his way in. Verstappen, from 20th on the

grid, finished an incredible second after switching from hard to mediums midway through the race and cruising through the field. And it was Ferrari's Sainz who took the final podium place - having briefly led over Norris - with an early switch to hards from mediums. Valtteri Bottas started 16th but took fifth having pitted for mediums just after Verstappen, while Fernando Alonso started sixth and finished there with a long first stint on hard tyres. Kimi Raikkonen kept his cool to make up places in the late wet conditions and finished eighth - leaving Sergio Perez and George Russell to take the final points for Red Bull and Williams, respectively. **ANI**

INTERNATIONAL GT OPEN

Fifth place for Al-Zubair, Soucek at GT Open race in Italy

Times News Service

MONZA: Al-Faisal Al-Zubair and Andy Soucek finished the first of the weekend's International GT Open races at Italy's Monza circuit in fifth position. After starting the dry 70-minute race from sixth on the grid, the Lechner Racing Team's Porsche 911 GT3 R crew were never able to make in-roads into the top three places in a race where Martin Kodrić and Ethan Simioni reached the chequered flag 2.713 seconds clear of Michele Beretta and Frederick Schandorff in their Vincenzo Sospiri Racing Lamborghini. Reno Racing's Marco Bonanomi and Jacopo Guidetti were third in a Honda NSX. Al-Zubair said: "I am actually quite happy with P5. I think we did a strong job. Three out



of the four ahead of us were guest drivers and that is pretty good for my championship to get back into second place. It was not the easiest of races. Hopefully we will have a better second race. "Unfortunately, we lost around 4.5 seconds in the pits and that didn't help and trying to undercut with the Porsche Cup traffic didn't pay off

well. Despite that, P5 is a good result and we hope to do better in race two." The Lechner Racing crew qualified in sixth for the first of the weekend's races with a best lap of 1min 47.278sec. Pole position fell to their main series rivals, Beretta and Schandorff. Bonanomi and Guidetti were second. Soucek took the wheel of the

Porsche for the first stint and lined up in sixth. He managed to squeeze into fifth on the opening lap and held position through the first 10 minutes of the race, with Beretta continuing to lead from Bonanomi. Soucek moved up to fourth soon afterwards and was closing in on the top three when the yellow flag was raised and the safety car was briefly deployed. Martin Kodrić managed to overtake Bonanomi to snatch second place behind Beretta. Al-Zubair replaced Soucek after 15 laps and 41 minutes of the race to run and was the first of the leaders to make a drive change with the exception of Guidetti replacing Bonanomi. The Omani slipped to 13th position, climbed back to 10th when some of the front-runners also pitted and rose to fifth when the remainder made

their driver changes. Twenty-eight minutes remained for Al-Zubair to move further up the leader board, with Ethan Simioni leading from Guidetti, Fabrizio Crestani and Schandorff. Schandorff climbed to third on lap 23 and Al-Zubair reduced the gap on fourth-placed Crestani to 3.456 seconds. Al-Zubair reduced Crestani's grip on fourth place to 2.28 seconds heading into the final 19 minutes and to 1.585 seconds heading into the last 17 minutes. The gap was just 1.51 seconds after 29 laps with 13 minutes to run, but Al-Zubair was not able to hunt down the Ferrari 488 driver and had to settle for fifth place a mere 0.987 seconds behind the Italian at the end. Simioni held off Schandorff to seal the win, with Guidetti demoted to third on the closing laps.

None of the Pro category cars took to the track for the practice session on Thursday afternoon that was won by Pro Am section's Loris Spinelli and Florian Scholze in their Mercedes AMG GT3. The Lechner Racing crew made a subdued start to their Monza weekend and were down in seventh at the end of the first one-hour practice session on Friday morning. The fastest time in that stint fell to Martin Kodrić and Ethan Simioni in a Mercedes AMG GT3. Spinelli and Scholze topped the times in the third practice session with a best run of 1min 48.444sec. Al-Zubair and Soucek only ran for 13 laps and were down in 11th. Second qualifying for GT Open teams takes place on Sunday morning and the second one-hour race starts at 14.30hrs.

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SCAN TO VIEW

BILATERAL TRADE TIES
UAE and India commenced their discussions on a Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement to outline how the two nations can accelerate bilateral trade, investment and economic opportunity.

MARKET

BUSINESS & FINANCE



MSX INDEX ENDS HIGHER
The MSX index closed at 3,928.52 points, up 0.04 per cent from the previous close. The Sharia Index ended down by 0.11 per cent at 579.37 points. Oman Refreshment was the top gainer, up by 19.92 per cent, while United Finance, down 1.72 per cent, was the top loser.

Oman signs pact to promote green energy

A Memorandum of Understanding was inked to enhance and develop cooperation between Oman and the Kingdom of Belgium in the field of green energy

Times News Service

MUSCAT: An agreement has been signed between Oman and the Kingdom of Belgium for cooperation in the field of green energy, the Ministry of Energy and Minerals said.
“A Memorandum of Understanding was signed to enhance



COLLABORATION: The agreement calls for implementing standards for green certification of grid electricity, the interaction between universities, scientific research institutions and the private sector of both countries. - Supplied picture

and develop cooperation between Oman and the Kingdom of Belgium in the field of green energy,” the ministry said in a statement on Sunday.

The MoU states that the parties encourage collaboration relating to the anchor project HYPOT Duqm. The agreement also calls for implementing standards for

green certification of grid electricity, the interaction between universities, scientific research institutions and the private sector of both countries.

SEMICONDUCTOR SHORTAGE

Tesla Shanghai expected to produce 300,000 cars despite chip shortage

BEIJING: Tesla Inc’s Shanghai factory is expected to produce 300,000 cars in the first nine months of the year, capped by a delivery rush at the end of the July-September quarter, despite a global semiconductor shortage, two sources said.

The factory makes the electric Model 3 sedans and Model Y sport-utility vehicles for domestic and international markets, including Germany and Japan, a media reported.

Around 240,000 vehicles were shipped from the factory in the first eight months, including many for export, according to data from the China Passenger Car Association. Tesla has not announced details on the factory’s production.



DATA: Around 240,000 vehicles were shipped from the factory in the first eight months, including many for export, according to data from the China Passenger Car Association. - BNA

Anonymity
The sources requested anonymity, as they were not allowed to speak

to the media. Tesla did not immediately respond to a request for comment. In August, an official in the area where Tesla’s factory is lo-

cated said it is expected to produce 450,000 vehicles this year, including 66,100 for export.

Tesla is hiring managers for le-

gal and external relations teams in China as it faces public scrutiny in the country over data security and customer service complaints. -BNA

10-YEAR BILL



HOUSE BUDGET COMMITTEE: The Democratic-dominated panel, meeting virtually on Saturday, approved the measure on a near party-line vote, 20-17. - BNA

Panel clears Democrats’ \$3.5 trillion bill, crunch time for Biden agenda

WASHINGTON: Democrats pushed a \$3.5 trillion, 10-year bill strengthening social safety net and climate programmes through the House Budget Committee, but one Democrat voted “no,” illustrating the challenges party leaders face in winning the near unanimity they’ll need to push the sprawling package through Congress.

The Democratic-dominated panel, meeting virtually on Saturday, approved the measure on a near party-line vote, 20-17. The passage marked a necessary but minor checking of a procedural box for Democrats by edging it a step closer to debate by the full House. Under budget rules, the committee wasn’t allowed to significantly amend the 2,465-page measure, the product of 13 other House committees, a media reports.

More important work has been happening in an opaque procession of mostly unannounced phone calls, meetings and other bargaining sessions among party leaders and rank-and-file lawmakers. President Joe Biden, House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, D-Calif., and Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer, D-N.Y., have led a behind-the-scenes hunt for compromises to resolve internal divisions and, they hope, allow approval of the mammoth bill soon.

Pelosi told fellow Democrats Saturday that they “must” pass the social and environment package this week, along with a separate infrastructure bill and a third measure preventing a government shutdown on Friday. Her letter to colleagues underscored the pile of crucial work Congress’ Democratic majority faces in coming days and seemed an effort to build

urgency to resolve long-standing disputes quickly.

“The next few days will be a time of intensity,” she wrote.

Republican Scott Peters, D-California, joined all 16 Republicans on the Budget Committee in opposing the legislation.

His objections included one that troubles many Democrats: a reluctance to back a bill with provisions that would later be dropped by the Senate.

Many Democrats don’t want to become politically vulnerable by backing language that might be controversial back home, only to see it not become law. That preference for voting only on a social and environmental bill that’s already a House-Senate compromise could complicate Pelosi’s effort for a House vote this week.

Peters was among three Democrats who earlier this month voted against a plan favoured by most in his party to lower pharmaceutical costs by letting Medicare negotiate for the prescription drugs it buys.

Party leaders have tried for weeks to resolve differences among Democrats over the package’s final price tag, which seems sure to shrink. There are also disputes over which initiatives should be reshaped, among them expanded Medicare, tax breaks for children and health care, a push toward cleaner energy and higher levies on the rich and corporations.

Democrats’ wafer-thin majorities in the House and Senate mean compromise is mandatory. Before the measure the Budget panel approved even reaches the House floor, it is expected to be changed to reflect whatever House-Senate accords have been reached. -BNA

REPORT

China’s digital economy reaches \$6.07 trillion in 2020

HANGZHOU: China’s digital economy grew to 39.2 trillion yuan (about \$6.07 trillion) in 2020, accounting for 38.6 per cent of the country’s total GDP and up 9.7 per cent year-on-year, according to a report.

The report on the development of the internet in China was released by the Chinese Academy of Cyberspace Studies at the World Internet Conference Wuzhen Summit, which opened Sunday in Wuzhen, in east China’s Zhejiang Province.

e-commerce transactions

In 2020, the volume of e-commerce transactions recorded in China reached 37.21 trillion yuan, up 4.5 per cent from 2019, while the operating income of the e-commerce service sector reached 5.45 trillion yuan, an increase of 21.9 per cent year on year, according to the report.

The digital economy has become a key option for countries around the world seeking to hedge against the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and to speed up economic and social transformation, said a report on global internet development concurrently released on Sunday, adding that new information infrastructure has gradually become a new driving force for global economic growth. -Xinhua

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MARKET

MSX index ends higher

Oman Refreshment was the top gainer, up by 19.92 per cent while United Finance, down 1.72 per cent, was the top loser

MUSCAT: The MSX index closed at 3,928.52 points, up 0.04 per cent from the previous close. The Sharia Index ended down by 0.11 per cent at 579.37 points. Oman Refreshment was the top gainer, up by 19.92 per cent. While United Finance, down 1.72 per cent, was the top loser. Shares of Bank Muscat were the most active in terms of the number of shares traded as well as in terms of turnover.

A total number of 217 trades were executed during the day's trading session, generating a turnover of OMR0.95 million, with more than 4.3 million shares changing hands. Out of 35 traded securities, 9 advanced, 9 declined and 27 remained unchanged. At the session close, GCC & Arab investors were net buyers for OMR72,000 while local investors

were net sellers for OMR45,000 followed by foreign investors for OMR26,000 worth of shares.

Financial Index closed at 6,240 points, up 0.12 per cent. Prices Global Investment Holding was the only gainer by 1.56 per cent. United Finance, Muscat Finance, Taageer Finance and Al Anwar Investment were down 1.72 per cent, 1.69 per cent, 1.33 per cent and 0.88 per cent respectively.

Industrial Index closed at 6,013.31 points, up 0.37 per cent. Prices of Oman Refreshment, National Aluminum Product and Voltamp Energy were up 19.92 per cent, 2.11 per cent and 1.48 per cent respectively. Al Maha Ceramics and Oman Cement were down 1.57 per cent and 0.44 per cent respectively. Services Index was down by 0.42 per cent before closing at 1,675.03 points. – **United Securities**

OMAN STOCKS

MUSCAT STOCK EXCHANGE

INDICES

Index	High	Low	Value	Prev. Value	Diff	Diff%
MSX 30 INDEX	3,929.08	3,925.73	3,928.52	3,927.08	1.44	0.04
FINANCIAL INDEX	6,240.59	6,239.37	6,239.37	6,240.59	-1.21	-0.02
Industry Index	6,137.55	6,013.31	6,126.26	6,013.31	112.96	1.88
Services Index	1,677.81	1,673.04	1,677.81	1,675.03	2.78	0.17
MSX Shariah Index	580.32	579.37	579.37	579.98	-0.61	-0.11
MSX TR INDEX	4,722.35	4,718.32	4,721.67	4,719.95	1.73	0.04

Trading Summary

Volume	Turnover	Trades	Market Cap	Up	Down	Equal	Sec. Traded
4,314,544	947,997	217	21,971,405,823	9	8	18	35

SHARE PRICE BULLETIN FOR SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 26

ISIN	SECURITY NAME	VOLUME	TURNOVER	TRADES	OPEN PRICE	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE PR.	PREV. CLOSE	DIFF (RD)	DIFF %	LAST PD	LAST BID	LAST OFFER	PDA VALUE	MARKET CAP
REGULAR MARKET																
OM0000003968	OOREDOO	5,200	1,986	3	0.382	0.382	0.382	0.382	0.378	0.004	1.058	0.382	0.380	0.382	0.100	248,660,696
OM0000001160	NATIONAL GAS	2,000	284	1	0.142	0.142	0.142	0.142	0.140	0.000	0.000	0.142	0.140	0.141	0.100	12,070,000
OM0000001400	OMAN FLOUR MILLS	60,474	45,960	7	0.760	0.760	0.760	0.760	0.760	0.000	0.000	0.760	0.760	0.764	0.100	119,700,000
OM0000001533	OMINVEST	77,120	23,907	7	0.310	0.310	0.310	0.310	0.310	0.000	0.000	0.310	0.310	0.312	0.100	250,408,422
OM0000002200	AHLI BANK	295,523	31,916	8	0.108	0.108	0.108	0.108	0.108	0.000	0.000	0.108	0.108	0.109	0.100	210,565,006
OM0000002796	BANK MUSCAT	1,085,528	479,826	16	0.442	0.444	0.442	0.442	0.442	0.000	0.000	0.442	0.442	0.444	0.100	1,579,917,858
OM0000003026	OMAN TELECOM	54,282	40,588	3	0.748	0.748	0.748	0.748	0.748	0.000	0.000	0.748	0.736	0.748	0.100	561,000,000
OM0000003398	SOHAR INT. BANK	731,482	67,296	14	0.092	0.092	0.092	0.092	0.092	0.000	0.000	0.092	0.092	0.099	0.100	275,085,731
OM0000003620	VISION INSURANCE	392,700	31,023	10	0.079	0.079	0.079	0.079	0.079	0.000	0.000	0.079	0.079	0.080	0.100	7,900,000
OM0000001749	OMAN CEMENT	103,000	23,075	6	0.224	0.225	0.224	0.224	0.225	-0.001	-0.444	0.224	0.224	0.225	0.100	74,115,487
OM0000002226	ALJAZEERA SERVICES	12,000	4,608	3	0.384	0.384	0.384	0.384	0.386	-0.002	-0.518	0.384	0.382	0.384	0.100	23,502,441
OM0000001772	ALANWAR INVESTMENT	163,370	18,276	15	0.112	0.113	0.111	0.112	0.113	-0.001	-0.885	0.111	0.110	0.111	0.100	22,400,000
OM0000001525	OMAN INVST & FIN.	87,045	11,821	14	0.135	0.137	0.134	0.136	0.138	-0.002	-1.449	0.136	0.134	0.136	0.100	32,232,000
OM0000005005	ALMAHA CERAMICS	21,542	10,771	5	0.500	0.500	0.500	0.500	0.508	-0.008	-1.575	0.500	0.500	0.506	0.100	27,500,000
OM0000001590	MUSCAT FINANCE	266,600	15,463	11	0.058	0.058	0.057	0.058	0.059	-0.001	-1.695	0.057	0.057	0.058	0.100	17,814,487
Total	15	3,357,846	806,802	123												
Parallel Market																
OM0000004126	OMAN REFRESHMENT	9,802	15,634	1	1.595	1.595	1.595	1.595	1.330	0.265	19.925	1.595	0.000	0.000	0.100	79,750,000
OM0000001152	OMAN NAT. ENG.	252,896	23,710	25	0.092	0.094	0.092	0.094	0.091	0.003	3.297	0.094	0.094	0.094	0.100	12,220,000
OM0000003963	PHOENIX POWER	47,003	2,155	4	0.046	0.046	0.046	0.046	0.045	0.001	2.222	0.046	0.046	0.046	0.100	67,279,667
OM0000001319	ALUMINIUM PROD.	43,000	6,217	9	0.143	0.147	0.142	0.145	0.142	0.003	2.113	0.145	0.144	0.146	0.100	4,867,960
OM0000007811	MUSANDAM POWER	99,200	32,736	6	0.330	0.330	0.330	0.330	0.324	0.006	1.852	0.330	0.330	0.330	0.100	23,228,700
OM0000003125	GLOBAL INV. H.	6,500	423	1	0.065	0.065	0.065	0.065	0.064	0.001	1.563	0.065	0.064	0.065	0.100	13,000,000
OM0000003861	VOLTAMP ENERGY	6,000	822	1	0.137	0.137	0.137	0.137	0.135	0.002	1.481	0.137	0.137	0.145	0.100	11,152,177
OM0000001178	MUSCAT GASES	7,000	1,162	2	0.166	0.166	0.166	0.166	0.166	0.000	0.000	0.166	0.166	0.000	0.100	4,980,000
OM0000001483	NATIONAL BANK OMAN	87,600	16,206	5	0.185	0.185	0.185	0.185	0.185	0.000	0.000	0.185	0.185	0.190	0.100	300,800,076
OM0000001517	HSBC BANK OMAN	204,048	18,364	11	0.090	0.090	0.090	0.090	0.090	0.000	0.000	0.090	0.090	0.094	0.100	180,028,151
OM0000002549	BANK DHOFAR	75,100	8,862	4	0.118	0.118	0.118	0.118	0.118	0.000	0.000	0.118	0.118	0.119	0.100	353,568,469
OM0000003521	GALFAR ENGINEER	40,662	3,131	6	0.077	0.077	0.076	0.077	0.077	0.000	0.000	0.076	0.076	0.080	0.100	15,629,956
OM0000004420	BANK NIZWA	3,053	291	2	0.095	0.096	0.095	0.095	0.095	0.000	0.000	0.096	0.094	0.096	0.100	212,510,538
OM0000004768	MADINA TAKAFUL	13,500	1,391	4	0.103	0.103	0.103	0.103	0.103	0.000	0.000	0.103	0.102	0.104	0.100	18,025,000
OM0000004925	ALBATRAH POWER	1,400	71	2	0.051	0.051	0.051	0.050	0.050	0.000	0.000	0.051	0.050	0.051	0.100	33,744,372
OM0000006912	AHLIA INSURANCE	3,800	1,008	1	0.360	0.360	0.360	0.360	0.360	0.000	0.000	0.360	0.324	0.370	0.100	36,000,000
OM0000003281	TAAGEER FINANCE	35,034	2,598	6	0.075	0.075	0.074	0.074	0.075	-0.001	-1.333	0.074	0.074	0.075	0.100	18,765,660
OM0000002374	UNITED FINANCE	10,100	576	2	0.058	0.058	0.057	0.057	0.058	-0.001	-1.724	0.057	0.057	0.058	0.100	19,901,231
Total	18	944,698	135,355	92												

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COMPREHENSIVE ECONOMIC PARTNERSHIP

UAE, India discuss bilateral trade

ABU DHABI: The United Arab Emirates and India commenced their discussions on a Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement with Dr Thani Al Zeyoudi, Minister of State for Foreign Trade, meeting Piyush Goyal, India's Minister of Commerce and Industry, to outline how the two nations can accelerate bilateral trade, investment and economic opportunity.

Dr Al Zeyoudi also held pro-

ductive talks with Jyotiraditya Scindia, Minister of Civil Aviation, Ashwini Vaishnaw, Minister of Electronics and Information Technology, and Nirmala Sitharaman, Minister of Finance, where the potential for deepening ties in investment, technology and aviation were discussed.

The UAE delegation arrived in India on September 21 for a four-day visit to the Indian capital New

Delhi, as the two sides seek ways to strengthen their economic ties through a Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA). The talks mark the beginning of a new era of strategic cooperation between the two countries, which it is hoped will broaden economic and investment opportunities and push bilateral trade beyond \$100 billion in five years. -**WAM**

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IN SEPTEMBER

UK retail sales growth slows to 6-month low

LONDON: British retailers reported much slower growth in September after strong demand over the summer months, though shops expect a rebound in October despite growing supply chain difficulties, the Confederation of British Industry said.

"Low stock adequacy remains a concern across the distribution sector," CBI economist Ben Jones said, a media reported.

"Respondents to our survey have told us that they do not expect the transport and production issues that are causing these shortages to ease significantly until at least next year and, in some cases, beyond," he added. -**BNA**

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RESTAURANT OPERATIONS MANAGER

Responsibilities:

- To manage operations and production of the restaurant.
- To liaise with the respective Government/ Statutory Authorities to procure the necessary licenses and documentations.
- To lead the operations and production team to deliver within specific standards and schedules required.
- To manage overall costs including material, equipment, manpower, etc.
- To manage production planning, forecasting, purchasing and stock control.
- To maintain and improve the overall performance of the restaurant on a regular basis including cost analysis and monitoring of processes.
- Provide on-job coaching and guidance to team members, managing their performance to ensure a smooth operation
- To work along with the Marketing team to develop Marketing Strategies and Promotion plans to successfully market the restaurant in the relevant media platform.
- Manage and supervise the food & beverage staff to ensure maximum utilization of the manpower allocated.
- Ensure strict compliance with all relevant Hygiene and Safety legislation and requirements.
- To maintain close, professional and effective links with all external contractors/suppliers to ensure that they deliver to mutually accepted

agreements and highest quality levels.

- To handle responsibilities for the special orders made at the restaurant. It involves all planning associated with each event, right through to delivery.

Educational Qualifications & Experience:

- Post Graduate/Graduate or equivalent qualification.
- Minimum 05 years of experience in a supervisory level at F&B, Catering, Hotels and Hospitality establishments.
- Knowledge of food hygiene and Health and Safety requirements.
- A good understanding of quality assurance, procedures and protocols.
- Excellent communication skills both verbally and written English/ Arabic.

Key Skills Required:

- Excellent co-ordination skills
- Strong presentation and communication skills, verbal and written.
- Effective planning, management and organizing skills.
- Strong interpersonal skills to work with internal teams and external suppliers and customers.
- Must possess neat and pleasant grooming habits.
- Proactive approach to problem solving.
- Change orientated to make business improvements.

If you feel you are right for the position and for any further information, please write us at oman2020marketing@gmail.com

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Responsibilities:

- Contact potential clients to describe advertising opportunities. This usually takes the form of cold calling over the telephone but may involve face to face contact as well.
- Contact existing clients to arrange the placement and design of advertisements they have agreed on and ensure an ongoing relationship.
- Research client needs and explain the benefits of buying advertising space, responding to any objections.
- Explain pricing costs to potential clients and negotiate a fee, if necessary.
- Account manage an existing client

to ensure their needs are satisfied and they are happy with the service.

- Work with production teams to ensure that agreed advertisements are carried in the right place and at the right time.
- Track purchases and keep record of sales, contacts and deals.
- Work to maximize sales and meet targets.
- Deliver sales reports to management.

Key Skills: Excellent telephone manner, ability to persuade clients, outgoing, and sociable

Education: Any degree, candidates with marketing background will be preferred.

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Key Skills	Availability and prompt response, ability to persuade clients, and Excellent telephone manner	Superb interpersonal, research, and record-keeping skills.
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Timing	Flexible (target based)	4 hours

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Indian male having 20+ years' experience in Oman seeks suitable job in HR/Admin. Contact 95425764

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B.Tech Civil Engineer With 11.5 yrs Exp, Seeking Suitable placement (Construction/Consultancy), having Omani D/L and NOC available, Contact 78365008

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B.E Electrical/MEP Engineer, having 13+Yrs experience in construction industry is looking for suitable placement. NOC available. Contact 97238959.

B.E civil engineer having 13 yrs Oman experience mainly in building construction looking for a suitable position. Contact 72132426

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FIND THE PERFECT SPORTS SUNGLASSES



Did COVID-19 change the way you exercise? Though most people value an active lifestyle, 2020 saw folks unable to go to the gym or gather in indoor spaces. Due to mitigation efforts and quarantine, people took to the outdoors to run, walk, and hike in record numbers.

If you're one of those people who went from the gym to the hiking trail during COVID-19 and fell in love, you know you need adequate eye protection. Unlike in the gym, the sun is a constant factor. A pair of sports sunglasses is a must.

You may think they're not for you, but you couldn't be more wrong.

The sunglasses you need for a round of golf are far different than for a long bike ride. Golfers need clarity and glare reduction as they stare out into manicured fairways and deep green rough.

Anglers need lenses that allow for the best vision into deep water, while cyclists will want eye protection along with Bluetooth capability.

Bluetooth glasses give cyclists and runners the option of comfortable frames without the need for uncomfortable headphones. Stream music, podcasts, or lectures through these high-quality frames and leave the earbuds at home.

LENS MATERIAL

If you're spending a considerable sum, you want to make sure your lenses are strong and durable. Glass and polycarbonate are the two most common lens materials. Glass offers more clarity than polycarbonate and is less likely to scratch. The downside to glass is its inability to withstand impact. Lenses made from polycarbonate are far less likely to shatter during high-impact scenarios.

WEIGHT

You also want lenses that won't weigh too much. Weighty glasses during outdoor exercise inhibit performance. Glass lenses weigh

far more than polycarbonate. Frame materials also contribute to weight. Lightweight frames made from flexible plastics will make it feel as though you're not wearing glasses at all.

LENS TYPE

Sports sunglasses, like all other types of sunglasses, feature different types of lenses. These lenses all serve different purposes and tend to match with a variety of outdoor activities. The best thing about them? The lenses, no matter the type, offer the same amount of UV protection.

POLARIZED

Polarized lenses are perfect for activities where you need glare reduction. Water sports, fishing, and boating are all instances where glare reduction is necessary. Glare reduction is also beneficial in sports like golf, baseball, and softball. These lenses are the difference between hitting the pin or catching that fly ball for a third out. Be aware, though, that polarized lenses can interact poorly with some windshield tint. If you have a tinted windshield on your car or motorcycle, you may experience blind spots or lose the ability to see some LCD signs.

PHOTOCHROMATIC

These lenses adjust to light conditions. The lenses grow darker in

bright light and lighter in lower-light conditions. These lenses work great for cyclists who experience a variety of light conditions while on the trail. Photochromatic lenses are not for cold-weather activities like skiing, snowboarding, or snowmobiling. They don't adjust to cold climates as rapidly. Use polarized lenses for these outdoor diversions. Please note that they also will not transition while you're driving. Car windshields restrict the UVB rays that trigger the photochromatic transition.

INTERCHANGEABLE

Some sports sunglasses come with a set of lenses you can swap. These lenses allow you to choose what colour and tint type you'll need. These are wise investments. Rather than buying multiple pairs, you can utilise one for every possible light.

TINT

The colour of your lens affects how much light reaches your eye. The tint will also affect the contrast and how your eyes perceive other colours. The lens tint you should choose depends on the visibility conditions.

DARK COLOURS

Brown, green, and grey tints are suitable for most everyday outdoor activities. These tints cut glare and shield your eyes from

bright light. Green and grey tint won't distort colours, though you should expect minor distortion from brown lenses.

LIGHT COLOURS

Yellow, gold, and amber tints are perfect for lower light conditions. They also provide the wearer with excellent depth perception. Use them for moving outdoor activities like skiing, snowboarding, and motorcycling where you need high contrast and enhanced visibility.

THE FIT

No matter their purpose, the best sports sunglasses must fit perfectly. You don't need them sliding from the bridge of your nose or reducing visibility when they're supposed to enhance it. Here's how to make sure your sunglasses fit:

- Tight fit on nose and ears without pinching
- Even weight distribution
- Eyelashes shouldn't touch the lenses

It's best to wear a pair before you buy them, but most people love the convenience of online shopping. Look for face size fit descriptions when choosing.

SMART CAPABILITY

We love our smart devices, and these days, most of what we own has smart capabilities. Sports sunglasses are no different. Modern sports sunglasses come with a variety of features that suit an active outdoor lifestyle:

- Bluetooth connection
- Built-in speakers that eliminate the need for earbuds
- Camera on frames
- Controls on arms

You may wonder why you need smart sports sunglasses. They allow you to consolidate all your accessories while you exercise! You won't need earbuds, nor will you have to fish for your phone with the perfect photo-op arrives.

-ARTICLECITY



FEATURE

#SeeYouInCourt: CLIMATE LITIGATION HEATS UP

With politicians failing to take climate action, activists from Asia to South America to Europe are taking governments and polluters to court in a last-ditch bid to reduce emissions — and global heating.



As the pivotal COP26 climate conference nears, there is a sense of betrayal within the climate movement that setting more targets is becoming futile. The Paris climate agreement not only lacks ambition, but commitments are simply not being met. Fossil fuel companies meanwhile have been able to maintain business as usual, even if some have set net-zero emission targets for 2050.

Communities on the front line of climate change, and of fossil fuel pollution, feel that they have been left with little choice but to sue the polluters in court.

Following the landmark judgment against Shell in May that forced the fossil fuel giant to cut emissions by 45 per cent by 2030, a tidal wave of climate litigation is set to crash on courts globally.

The recent launch of the #SeeYouInCourt campaign by the International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH) — a federation of 192 human rights groups in more than 100 countries — is part of a coordinated litigation action against polluting corporations.

Chilean NGO Observatorio Ciudadano and two other organisations are filing a protection action against climate impacts and incidents of massive intoxication caused by coal-fired power plants owned by AES Gener (now AES Andes).

In Colombia, CAJAR, a human rights organisation, is working alongside a group of local communities to file a complaint with the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights regarding the

diverting of the Arroyo Bruno River — part of a plan to expand the largest open-pit coal mine in Latin America, the Carbones del Cerrejon.

“Today is a day that many companies will remember. Those who violate human rights, deface the planet, and aggravate climate change now have a special place waiting for them: the courts,” said Jose Aylwin, director of Observatorio Ciudadano, which is an FIDH member organisation.

These cases have emerged from grassroots communities who are seeking recourse in the courts because of the failure of environmental authorities to adequately control emissions.

“Multinationals play a major role in climate change, but this role does not correspond with any form of accountability for the harm done,” said Clemence Bectarte, an attorney who is co-

ordinating the FIDH Litigation Action Group.

Environmental litigation takes climate focus

Conservationists have long used the courts to stop environmentally harmful fossil fuel projects that impact water and air quality. Just this week, the European Court of Justice fined Poland €500,000 (\$586,000) a day in response to the country’s refusal to shut down the Turów open-cast lignite mine near the Czech border on pollution grounds.

But the latest wave of climate litigation cases are different in that they do not rely on existing biodiversity legislation or air quality leg-

islation. They instead “place climate change at the very heart of the case,” explained Catherine Higham, a policy analyst and coordinator of the Climate Change Laws of the World project at the London-based Grantham Research Institute on Climate Change and the Environment.

Higham also co-authored the Global Trends in Climate Change Litigation: 2021 Snapshot report, which found that the number of climate change-related cases has more than doubled since 2015 — about 800 cases were filed between 1986 and 2014; over 1,000 cases have been brought in the six years since.

Underlining the quest to set new precedents in climate litigation is the consolidation of climate science, and “the now well-established connection between climate change and human rights,” noted Higham.

Fighting climate litigation on the basis of human rights

Proving the negative impact of the climate crisis on human rights has been key in an increasing number of high-profile environmental lawsuits.

In a landmark 2019 case, the Dutch Supreme Court cited the European Convention on Human Rights when it ruled in favor of the Urgenda Foundation environmental group and 900 citizens while ordering the Dutch government to reduce its greenhouse emissions by at least 25 per cent by the end of 2020.

Meanwhile, the young people who will be marching globally on Friday for the latest climate strike have successfully initiated climate litigation on the basis of their human rights.

A high court told Australia’s Environment Ministry that it owes a duty of care to Australian children who could suffer potential “catastrophic harm” from approving an extension to a coal mine. So too in Germany, young people successfully argued in the Constitutional Court in April that federal climate law was insufficient to protect their future and therefore unconstitutional — the court forced Germany to increase its 2030 emission reduction targets as a result.

This month, teenagers and young adults, in coordination with youth climate activists Fridays for Future, are going back to the Constitutional Court to challenge the climate policy of five German states that do not have a climate protection law.

So, too, in the cases being filed today in Chile and Colombia, the lived experience of individuals and communities and their “right to a healthy environment” is central to the claimants’ strategy, Bectarte reiterated.

“We need to provide a human rights lens in the fight for corporate accountability for climate change,” she said. “It’s

not only the planet being impacted but also communities.”

Following today’s launch, the #SeeYouInCourt campaign will continue to “place affected communities” at the center of planned litigation in Asia, Africa and Europe, Bectarte added.

Big Oil using courts to limit climate action

Climate litigation remains a double-edged sword, however, as fossil fuel companies also go to court to block climate action, or to be compensated for coal phaseouts — as occurred when German energy giant RWE sued the Netherlands for €1.4 billion in February.

But such “anti-climate” lawsuits may struggle to be an equal counterweight to a rising wave of activist climate litigation. The European Court of Justice (ECJ) decided last month that EU energy companies can no longer sue EU governments using the Energy Charter Treaty (ECT), via which RWE sued the Netherlands for its coal phaseout by 2030.

Though the impact of the decision is yet to play out in the courts, these lawsuits will be more difficult to prosecute, says Paul de Clerck, economic justice coordinator for Friends of the Earth Europe.

“It seems that the recent ECJ ruling will only provide more ammunition to countries to no longer accept ISDS cases based on the ECT,” he said, referring to the Investor-State Dispute Settlement arbitration tribunals, which could potentially protect €345 billion worth of fossil fuel infrastructure in Europe.

But arbitration settlements outside the EU will still be prosecuted by Big Oil. “The problem remains that arbitration panels outside the EU continue to ignore all of this and just go on making their rulings,” De Clerck said.

Climate litigants tipped for more success

The Grantham Research Institute report on climate change litigation notes that 58 per cent of the cases brought against companies and governments, excluding in the US, had outcomes favourable to climate change action. Only 32 per cent had unfavourable outcomes.

Higham expects this success to continue. “The broad trend towards favourable outcomes for the climate in judicial proceedings is one that I would expect to continue to grow in the coming years as the scientific and political consensus around the urgent need for climate action continues to grow.”

She added that increasing evidence of extreme climate impacts, such as the recent global wildfires and flooding, will only strengthen the hand of litigants desperate to prevent catastrophic global heating. **ow**



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ROUND-UP

Popular Toyota Prado available with exclusive summer surprises

From its powerful build quality to its performance and excellent capability, the Prado is an SUV that excels on all levels

MUSCAT: Toyota Prado, the all-terrain capable and powerful SUV is available with exclusive benefits including Service 2 Years/20,000km (whichever is earlier; prospective buyers may be advised that the benefits vary between model variants, model year and manufacturing year. Terms & Conditions apply.) The campaign is valid up to October 21. Visit the showroom for exact details.

The Prado is an icon that has made its impressive mark across varied terrains. From its powerful build quality to its performance and excellent capability, the Prado is an SUV that excels on all levels. Visually stunning, the new Prado features a unique design that appears even more dynamic, yet maintains three core strengths essential to the Prado's celebrated 'go-anywhere' credentials.

These are 'Total Practicality' – with headlamps and cooling openings positioned to maximise both



protection and wading depth; 'Total Durability' – with the power-train and all functional parts well-protected and 'Total Capability' – with the tight turning circle and generous ground clearance essential for even the most demanding off-road driving.

The Prado's class-leading features complement its thrilling power and performance. Presently Prado has two petrol engine variants - 4.0 Litre delivering 271 HP

and 2.7 Litre delivering 163 HP. It offers 6-speed Automatic Transmission on Petrol models along with Full-Time 4WD with Centre Differential Limited Slip Differential. Available in either 17", 18" or 19" Alloy Wheels, the Prado has LED Type Headlamp & Clearance Lamps and Moonroof.

Toyota Prado's refined interior has plenty of room to comfortably accommodate up to seven adults. It is also equipped with a host of

High-end Luxury features including a Cool Box. Cushioned Seats offer wonderful Under-thigh Support. Second-row seats fold in a 60:40 Split offer Enhanced Utility with a Slide Function and Walk-in Accessibility for facilitating Easy Ingress/Egress for the Third-row Seats. The Third-row Seats, fold in a 50:50 Split.

The Prado also offers Power Tilt & Telescopic Steering Column, Smart Entry & Push-button Start

& Retractable Outer Mirrors (With Turn Signal). The Prado also has Front Sensors and Rear Parking Sensors, a 9" Navigation System, Leather Seats, Cruise Control, Rear View Camera and Steering with Audio & Bluetooth Switches.

Reinforcing Prado's broad, powerful stance, the sharply Trimmed Lower Section minimises the effect of the Front Overhang on the vehicle's Off-road Driving Approach Angle, thus enabling the model's

outstanding off-road abilities.

Prado also has Airbags for drivers, Front Passenger and Curtain, Side (Front). The Prado's Strong Chassis offers excellent impact protection while the long wheel-base and wide wheel track give excellent handling and stability. The Prado's unparalleled 4WD prowess is apparent on smooth as well as rough terrain. It has the power to hold its own and the performance to 'Reach the Unreachable'.

ELITE CLIENTELE

Bank Muscat's Asalah Priority Banking offers unparalleled benefits and privileges

MUSCAT: In line with its vision 'To serve you better, everyday' and commitment to customer service excellence, Bank Muscat continues to innovate and launch new services and benefits for its Asalah Priority Banking customers.

Asalah Priority Banking reflects the bank's continued commitment to remain the bank of the first choice in the Sultanate by providing its elite clientele with innovative and exclusive benefits and features. From lifestyle benefits, savings and financing options to elite wealth management, Asalah Priority Banking offers an unsurpassed range of benefits.

Abdulnasser Al Raisi, Deputy General Manager - Premier Banking, said: "In line with our customer-centric vision, Bank Muscat's Asalah Priority Banking offers a large number of exclusive and innovative products and services. In line with global banking trends and customer-centricity, Asalah continues to launch new services and benefits. The recently launched exclusive WhatsApp service for Asalah customers provides one



more channel of communication with the bank and helps customers quickly get answers to their various queries. Backed by an excellent customer service team, Asalah Priority Banking is working to further enhance benefits and ease of banking for its valued clientele."

Asalah customers enjoy a range of unrivalled benefits including access to a team of dedicated Relationship Managers, 35 Asalah Centres across Oman and a dedicated 24/7 Asalah Call Centre.

Exclusive lifestyle benefits include the Asalah Entertainer App, which has more than 3,500 "Buy 1 Get 1 free" offers in Oman and at international destinations as well as rewards of indulgence and merchant discounts across fine dining, entertainment, leisure, and the beauty and wellness segments. The Asalah debit card offers access to 50 lounges worldwide and has a higher ATM withdrawal limit of RO 1,000.

Asalah VISA Signature credit cardholders can enjoy airport lounge access at more than 1,000 lounges worldwide, and a 24/7 global concierge service. The Credit Card also offers 1% cash back on purchases as well as free multi-trip travel insurance for customers and their direct family members. Cardholders can also enjoy complimentary chauffeur service to and from the Muscat International Airport.

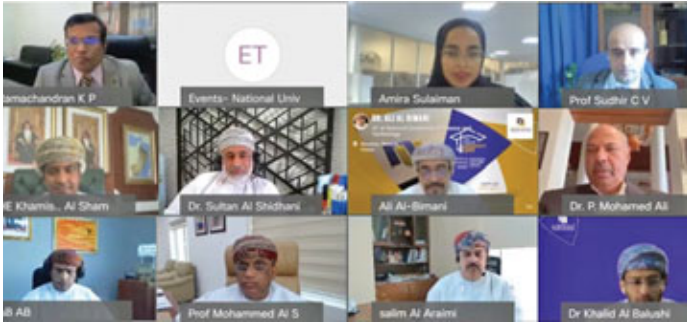
It must also be noted that a large number of high-value prizes have been reserved for Asalah customers in the Al Mazyna 2021 prize draw scheme including 10 month-

ly prizes of RO 25,000 each and 10 End-of-Year prizes of RO 50,000 each. Asalah customers maintaining RO 30,000 or more in their savings accounts will also be automatically entered into the draw for two mega prizes of RO 250,000 each during the upcoming End-of-Year draw.

Asalah customers also enjoy access to an integrated wealth management platform that allows them to invest in global asset classes through a single touchpoint. They get the latest updates and reports on local and international investment opportunities and can also make use of tablet banking for banking requirements such as account opening, credit card applications, consumer and auto finance and bancassurance products.

Notably, Bank Muscat has been offering several promotions this year to extend more benefits to its exclusive clientele. These offers include discounts on annual rental fees for safe deposit lockers and a chance to earn up to RO 2,000 by referring friends and family members to Asalah.

NATIONAL UNIVERSITY



NU organises first annual Research Day

MUSCAT: The first Research Day of the National University was inaugurated by Eng. Khamis bin Mohammed bin Abdullah Al Shamakhi, Undersecretary of the Ministry of Transport, Communications and Information Technology for Transport, on September 21.

NU is making concerted efforts to support and promote research and innovation activities of students and faculty.

The research day is organised to encourage and foster research from various colleges and departments of National University to present their work to various stakeholders including industries and the community.

In his inaugural address, Dr P Mohamed Ali, Chairman of the University Executive Board and Pro-chancellor highlighted the importance of research & innovation and the relevance of research in solving the ongoing challenges of pandemic diseases, as millions of life are saved due to the relentless efforts of researchers.

He added that National University faculty and student researchers must think creatively and work beyond disciplines to solve the challenges we are facing in this rapidly changing world.

The day was started with the welcome address by Dr Ali Saud Al Bimani. He mentioned that NU research and innovation efforts are continuously evolving and making steady progress.

National University has achieved considerable success in terms of funded research projects, student and staff research publications, scholarly activities, and research collaborations. He added that Research Day is an important calendar event of the University as it provides students and faculty with a forum to present their research and innovation work.

Dr Sultan Al Shidhani, Petroleum Engineering Function Director, PDO, in his keynote address,

The research day is organised to encourage and foster research from various colleges and departments of National University to present their work to various stakeholders including industries and the community

highlighted the need for efforts by academia, industries, to transfer research results swiftly onto societal and industrial applications. He added that Industries would be looking for a graduate with the right knowledge, nourished with practical skills and research aptitude that can provide smart solutions in a quick time.

This research day is featured by presentations from both faculty and students researchers from the College of Engineering, College of Pharmacy, and College of Medicine and Health Sciences. The most outstanding presentations and best research work under faculty and student categories were considered for awards and prizes.

Dr Salim Khamis Al Araimi, the Deputy Vice-Chancellor and Provost in his concluding remarks stated that NU is always committed to excellence in research and education for building the intellectual capital of Oman.

LUCKY WINNERS

Alizz Islamic Bank brings joy to 3 winners in Bushra Prize Savings Account monthly draw

MUSCAT: Three lucky winners of Alizz Islamic Bank won a total of 25,000 OMR each in the monthly draw of the popular Bushra Prize Savings Account. The draw was held at the bank's Mabelah branch.

The bank has given away OMR 91,000 as prize money, including the monthly prize of OMR 75,000 split among three winners, with OMR 25,000 each.

The rest of the prize money – OMR 16,000 – was distributed equally among 32 winners (16 men and 16 women); with one winner from every branch of Alizz Islamic Bank throughout the Sultanate.

The Bushra Prize Savings Account has proven to be a bestseller, as it continues to bring hope and happiness to a host of customers, many of who have won in the Bank's regular draws, which have changed their fortunes and relieved their stress. But what makes these wins all the more attractive is the fact that the draws are not dictated by the amounts saved, and this has translated into good



tidings for several account holders, some of who have been able to build their dream home, while others have realised set goals.

As was announced by Alizz Islamic Bank earlier in the year, the prize money, incorporated within Bushra Prize Savings Account – with its daily, weekly, monthly, quarterly, half-yearly and annual prizes – has been increased from OMR 1.8 million in 2020 to OMR 2 million this year. In addition, the

annual grand prize will amount to OMR 150,000, and OMR 100,000 was designated as the half-yearly prize. Besides, three winners will be picked in the quarterly draws, with each winner getting a whopping OMR 50,000. These prizes and measures are in tune with the Bank's plans to implement different initiatives that cater to customers, more so during the pandemic, with the provision of a bouquet of prizes.

Interestingly, customers can double their chances of winning by doubling their balance.

Alongside the prize scheme, customers of the popular Bushra Prize Savings Account also benefit from the services that are pegged on to the opening of the account at the Bank, including instant debit card, online and mobile banking, and SMS alerts for any transaction. As for the Bushra Account, it is based on the principle of Mudaraba, wherein the funds are placed in an investment pool in a manner that is in accordance with the provisions and principles of Islamic Sharia.

This, in turn, helps customers to achieve the best possible returns; besides, customers can avail opportunities to win cash prizes as gifts from the shareholders' funds in the daily, weekly, monthly draws, including the quarterly, annual grand prizes and special prizes. To enter the draw, a Bushra account must be opened with a minimum balance of OMR 100 only.

ROUND-UP

Ahli Islamic launches Children's Account

Offering a wide range of benefits, the Ahli Islamic Children's Account will help parents efficiently manage their child's accounts while inculcating a savings habit amongst them from a young age

MUSCAT: A bank that is invested in the growth and prosperity of its clients, Ahli Islamic has initiated various schemes to encourage its customers to save wisely and plan for the future.

Advocating this habit even amongst the younger generation, the bank has expanded its product

offering by launching a special account dedicated to children. Offering a wide range of benefits, the Ahli Islamic Children's Account will help parents efficiently manage their child's accounts while inculcating a savings habit amongst them from a young age. The new Children's Account which is targeted at children



up to 18 years of age is tailor-made to suit the varying requirements of the younger population.

"Whether for adults or children, all our banking solutions follow Islamic guidelines and are Sharia-compliant. Addressing the changing needs of our diverse client portfolio, we continue to come up with innovative ways to service our customers," said Yousuf Al Rawahi, DGM and Head of Ahli Islamic.

amic. "The minors along with the youth, make up a significant portion of the Omani population and are the future of the nation. It is imperative that we instil the right values, ethics and culture in them when they are young so they are able to contribute positively to the economy when they're older."

"The Ahli Islamic Children's Account is a step in that direction. By giving parents of young children the opportunity to open bank accounts for their greater good and long-term security through effective fund management, we introduce a sense of responsibility amongst this young customer segment. In addition to this, our generous draws under Qitaf will further serve the objective of inculcating a savings culture amongst them which will help them achieve their future goals and aspirations."

RECOGNITION



National Finance receives 4 awards

MUSCAT: Being recognised for its innovative financing and leasing solutions, and notable achievements in digitalisation, the Sultanate's largest finance company, National Finance, recently won four awards at the Oman Banking & Finance Awards 2021 which was co-located at the sixth edition of the New Age Banking Summit Oman.

National Finance was honoured with coveted titles including the 'Best Non-Banking Financial Corporation', 'Excellence in Customer Experience in Finance & Leasing', 'Excellence in Mobile App based Finance & Leasing Services' and 'Excellence in Fintech'.

Tahir Al Amri, the Executive President of the Central Bank of Oman (CBO), was the chief guest of the event and presented the awards to Ali Al Mani, Deputy Chief Executive Officer of National Finance, at an event that took place in the Majan Ballroom, Al Bustan Palace, Muscat.

Ali Al Mani said, "These prestigious awards add yet another feather to our cap. They recognise our objectives in achieving excellence in customer experience and uplifting the finance sector in the Sultanate. These achievements cement our leading position in the market and strongly aligns with our robust growth strategy

that focuses on the clients as a priority. The company will continue marching toward market excellence and innovation to deliver high-end services and add value to its clients."

This accomplishment is exemplary of National Finance's outstanding performance that is backed by unique solutions for customers and a diverse portfolio of easily accessible products. Over the last three decades, the company has worked unceasingly towards providing easy, fast and flexible solutions that meet the client's various requirements.

Aspiring to enhance customer engagement, the company has been ahead of the curve in adopting digital solutions that focus on ease and convenience. It invested in several technologically advanced solutions to enhance its e-channels such as the mobile app and website.

"These accolades serve as a testament to National Finance's efforts in not only creating value for retail clients but also supporting local entrepreneurs and SMEs. Such efforts resonate with national priorities that seek to stimulate economic diversification and achieve Oman Vision 2040, ultimately creating a diversified and sustainable economy," Al Mani added.

PROMOTING THAI CULTURE

'Thai Festival' to be held from September 29

MUSCAT: The Royal Thai Embassy is joining hands with Water-Front in organising a truly happening 'Thai Festival' in the beautiful city of Muscat, starting from Wednesday, September 29 - Friday, October 1, from 5 pm - 9pm, at the Water Front square (free entry).

Once entering the festival, the visitors will be blending into the essence of Thainess reflected by the colourful Thai bazaar decorated with locally crafted lanterns, lights and enchanted by the melody of Thai music, with the panoramic sea view of the Water-Front square. Supported by our Thai community in Oman together with the Royal Thai Embassy, the festival brings to you the real experience from Thailand, showcased by tailor-made cultural performances, live cooking demonstrations



and a variety of selected products across the country.

The Thai festival aims at promoting the Thai culture and identity, by introducing the local products reflecting the way of life of Thai people and their culture. The handicrafts and textiles made

by villagers, traditional herbal balms and ointments, as well as well-known local fruits such as durian, mangosteen, sweet mango etc., along with household grocery items i.e. cooking ingredients, beauty products and Thai delicacies, will be on display.

To cherish five decades-long strong diplomatic relationships between the Sultanate of Oman and the Kingdom of Thailand and the close tie between the people of the two friendly countries, the art competition "Amazing Thailand" will be exhibited in parallel with the festival, at Art & Soul Gallery of Water-Front. Starting from 29 September - 2 October 2021, the exhibition offers to exchange of views and the story of Thailand through the eyes of talented Omani and foreign artists.

We are looking forward to welcoming you to the festival to witness Thai hospitality and Thailand at a glance.

For more details, please follow us @ThaiEmb.Muscat

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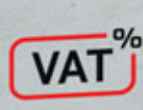
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