

**REGISTRATION FOR NATIONAL
RESEARCH AWARD BEGINS**

The Ministry of Higher Education, Research and Innovation on Sunday invited interested researchers and specialists to submit applications for the 10th round of the National Research Award (NRA). **>A5**



**HM GREETES CHAIRMAN OF YEMENI
PRESIDENTIAL LEADERSHIP COUNCIL**

MUSCAT: His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik has sent a cable of greetings to President Dr. Rashad Al-Alimi, Chairman of the Yemeni Presidential Leadership Council on his country's National Day. In the cable, His Majesty expressed his sincere sentiments and best wishes of good health and happiness to President Al-Alimi, praying to Allah the Almighty to grant him success to achieve all hopes and aspirations for the Yemeni people. — **ONA**



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HIS MAJESTY, EGYPTIAN PRESIDENT HOLD DISCUSSIONS TO BOOST BILATERAL TIES

His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik and Egyptian President Abdel Fattah el Sisi discuss ways to promote joint interests

CAIRO: His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik and President Abdel Fattah el Sisi of the Arab Republic of Egypt held an official session of talks at Al-Ittihadiya Palace in Cairo on Sunday evening. At the outset of the session,

the Egyptian President reiterated his heartfelt welcome for His Majesty the Sultan as a dear guest of Egypt and its people. He wished His Majesty the Sultan and his official delegation a happy stay. On his turn, His Majesty

the Sultan reciprocated the kind sentiments, thanking the President for the warm welcome and sincere hospitality.

Deep-rooted relations

The two leaders reviewed the distinguished relations and the deep-rooted historical bonds binding the Sultanate of Oman and the Arab Republic of Egypt. They also explored various aspects of the existing bilateral cooperation in all fields and contemplated ways of consolidating the joint interests in a manner that generates bounty and benefits to the two countries' peoples.

His Majesty the Sultan and

the Egyptian President also exchanged views on various developments at the regional and international arenas.

The session of talks was attended from the Omani side by HH Sayyid Shihab bin Tarik Al Said, Deputy Prime Minister for Defence Affairs, Sayyid Khalid bin Hilal Al Busaidi, Minister of the Diwan of Royal Court, Gen. Sultan bin Mohammed Al Nu'amani, Minister of the Royal Office, Sayyid Badr bin Hamad Al Busaidi, Foreign Minister, Sultan bin Salim Al Habsi, Minister of Finance, Dr. Hamad bin Said Al Aufi, Head of the Private Office, Abdul

Salam bin Mohammed Al Murshidi, Chairman of Oman Investment Authority (OIA), Qais bin Mohammed Al Yousef, Minister of Commerce, Industry and Investment Promotion and Abdullah bin Nasser Al Rahbi, Ambassador of the Sultanate of Oman to the Arab Republic of Egypt and its Permanent Representative to the Arab League.

From the Egyptian side, the meeting was attended by General Mohamed Zaki, Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces and Minister of Defence and Military Production, Sameh Shoukry, Foreign Minister, Major Gen-

eral Abbas Kamel, Head of the General Intelligence, Dr. Hala El-Said, Minister of Planning and Economic Development, Dr. Mohamed Moait, Minister of Finance, Dr. Assem Al Jazzar, Minister of Housing, Utilities and Urban Communities (Head of the Mission of Honour), Eng. Ahmed Samir, Minister of Trade and Industry, Khalid Radi, Ambassador of Egypt to Oman and Ahmed Fahmy, Spokesman of the Presidency.

After that, His Majesty the Sultan and the Egyptian President held a closed-door session. **-ONA**

SEE ALSO >A2-A3

TOP THREE INSIDE STORIES



**OMAN
Omani novelist wins
prize for Arabic fiction**

2 Omani poet and novelist Zahran Al Qasmi was named the winner of the 16th edition of the International Prize for Arabic Fiction for 2023 for his book 'The Exile of the Water Diviner' on Sunday. **>A6**

**OMAN
Oman and ICESCO
explore cooperation**

1 Dr. Madiha Ahmed Al Shaibani, Minister of Education, Chairperson of the Omani National Commission for Education, Culture, and Science received Dr. Salim Mahmood Al Malik, Director-General of ICESCO. **>A5**

**MARKET
Opaz begins digital
transformation plan**

3 The Public Authority for Special Economic Zones and Free Zones (Opaz) said on Sunday that it is proceeding with its strategic plan for the digital transformation programme. **>B1**

TRA

98% of population to be covered by mobile networks in Oman by 2025

MUSCAT: The Telecommunications Regulatory Authority (TRA) is committed to developing the telecommunications services in the Sultanate of Oman and has envisaged covering a total of 98 percent of the population by mobile networks by the end of 2025.

The ambitious goals set by TRA to be completed by 2025 also aims to have an infrastructure covering 75 percent of buildings by fibre optic services. It also aims to have 85 percent of buildings covered by fixed broadband networks and hopes to reach 100 percent in the total number of stations that support 4G and 5G services.

The targets were revealed by the TRA on Sunday during a dialogue held on telecommunications infrastructure expansion projects in 2023.

1,221

Government schools have been covered by telecommunication services until 2022

The meeting discussed the quality of services, basic measurement indicators for evaluating the quality and prices of telecommunications services in Oman along with the investments made during the past five years.

The TRA said that the percentage of mobile phone subscriptions (as compared to the population)

grew by 140 percent, while the percentage of fixed broadband coverage reached 80 percent (as against the total number of buildings).

It also said that 12 regulations were issued, including on regulating communication towers. The bylaws regulate the rights of users of telecommunications services and the quality of communications services. The regulations will help streamline the implementation of services in the field of telecommunications and standardise the introduction of voice or video communication services via the Internet Protocol.

The TRA stated that the number of government schools that have been covered by telecommunication services until 2022 stood at 1,221, of which 1,146 schools

were covered by 5G fibre optic network. It represented 94 percent of the total schools covered.

A project is underway to transfer subscribers from 3G service to the 4G and 5G services. With effect from 2024, all stations operating with the 3G service will be upgraded to stations operating with 4G and 5G.

During the meeting, TRA affirmed that its department is keen to establish a sustainable competitive environment for telecommunications services. It hopes to achieve the goal by monitoring the prices of services in telecommunications companies and ensuring the implementation of the principle of transparency in the case of services rendered by telecom firms to the service beneficiaries.

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HIS MAJESTY'S OFFICIAL VISIT TO EGYPT

His Majesty the Sultan, Egyptian President exchange decorations



CAIRO: His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tariq and President Abdul Fattah el Sisi of the Arab Republic of Egypt have exchanged orders at Al-Ittihadiya Palace in Cairo on Sunday evening, marking His Majesty's visit to Egypt.

The Egyptian President conferred on His Majesty the Sultan the "Order of the Nile", which is Egypt's most supreme accolade. The conferment of the Order demonstrates the President's deep appreciation for His Majesty the Sultan and incarnates the deep-rooted historical relations

binding Oman and Egypt. Meanwhile, His Majesty the Sultan decorated the Egyptian President with "Oman First Order". The conferment of the Order manifests His Majesty the Sultan's appreciation for the Egyptian President and reflects

pride over the depth of fraternal relations between the two countries' peoples. The exchange of orders was attended by the official delegations of the Omani and Egyptian sides, as well as senior officials in Egypt. -ONA



IN HONOUR OF HM THE SULTAN, PRESIDENT OF EGYPT HOSTS DINNER

Cairo: President Abdul Fattah el Sisi of the Arab Republic of Egypt hosted an official dinner at Al-Ittihadiya Palace in Cairo on Sunday evening, in honour of His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tariq. The dinner was attended by the official delegations of the Omani and Egyptian sides.

GLC'S INAUGURAL ROUNDTABLE 'CHANGE THROUGH TECHNOLOGY' PROVIDES INSIGHTS FROM OMAN'S INNOVATION LEADERS



From left, Mr Mujahid Said Al-Zadjaly, Mr Asaad Al Saadi, Mr Talal Al Mamari, Mr Maqbool Al Wahaibi, Mr Tariq Atiq, Mr Badr Al Mandhari. – Photos bt Shabin E/TIMES OF OMAN



Gulf Leaders Circle (GLC) is an exclusive business platform that aims to enhance the understanding of industry trends in the GCC

MUSCAT: The Gulf Leaders Circle (GLC), Muscat Media Group's (MMG) latest offering, organized an inaugural roundtable on the theme of "Change Through Technology" on Thursday at Intercontinental Muscat – Oman's premier event space.

The first-of-its-kind roundtable in partnership with Microsoft, brought insightful information about new technologies and how the leading companies of Oman are incorporating them to provide better services.

The panel comprised of Oman's leading tech giants who discussed the role of new technologies in the development of various sectors. The esteemed speakers at the "Change Through Technology" roundtable included Mr Talal Al Mamari, CEO of Omantel, Mr Maqbool Al Wahaibi, CEO of Oman Data Park (ODP), Mr Asaad Al Saeedi, CEO of data2cloud, Mr Mujahid Said Al Zadjaly, GM - IT & Operations at Bank Nizwa, Mr Tariq Atiq, Chief Digital Banking Officer NBO, and Mr Badr Al Mandhari, VP Strategy, ITHCA. The panel was moderated by GLC's representative and Publishing Director, Ms Paula Colard.

In alignment with Oman's Vi-



Gulf Leaders Circle

sion 2040, the discussion focused on the role of emerging technologies and how they can be used as a catalyst to boost the country's economy.

The panel shed light on Oman's commitment to digital transformation and investing in new technologies to improve the lives of its citizens. The industry leaders discussed how the functioning of their respective sectors has improved with technology and how they plan to incorporate it further into their growth strategies. Importance was placed on leveraging new technologies in our industries.

The panel acknowledged the impact of technology on the banking sector including improved customer service and efficiency through digital transformation. Linked to the banking sector, the



discussion also covered the security aspects of technology integration. The need for trustworthy cloud providers to securely host banks' financial data was emphasized.

Cybersecurity was highlighted as another vital connection to the

banking sector and the need to ensure robust cybersecurity measures to protect the sensitive financial information of the clients was called to attention. Contributions of the telecom industry in the industrial growth of the Sultanate were also shared.

Moreover, the role of small and medium enterprises (SMEs) in diversifying the economy was also an area of discussion. The panelists discussed how larger companies in Oman can support SMEs through incubators and other support programs. Further comments were made on the existing support strategies for SMEs.

The "Change Through Technology" panel provided valuable information from Oman's leading persons from the fields of Cybersecurity, Cloud, Telecom, Fintech and Digital Banking. This event was the first of the many such events that will be organised by GLC.

About GLC

Gulf Leaders Circle (GLC) is the latest addition to Muscat Media Group's (MMG) portfolio. It is an exclusive business platform that aims to enhance the understanding of industry trends in the GCC. GLC's unique strategy is to develop a knowledge database by conducting interviews with influential personalities in the GCC region.

GLC aims to strengthen business relations among the Gulf countries and hopes to drive their business growth and success.

Commenting on the 'Change Through Technology' panel, Paula Colard said, "It was an enriching discussion about how technology is paving the way for a new era across industries. GLC is a platform for idea-exchange and getting our industries future ready."

Talking about the future plans, Colard further added, "We will be organising a second roundtable in July under the title 'Sustainable Oman, Powering the future with green energy.' It will be focused on Sustainability and the oil and gas sector."

For full coverage of the first edition of the round table and details about upcoming events, visit: www.gulfleaderscircle.com.

VISION 2040



IN ALIGNMENT WITH OMAN'S VISION 2040, THE DISCUSSION FOCUSED ON THE ROLE OF EMERGING TECHNOLOGIES AND HOW THEY CAN BE USED AS A CATALYST TO BOOST THE COUNTRY'S ECONOMY



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COMMENTARY

When my math teacher walked into my path

SALEH AL-SHAIBANY

I stopped half way to my car to watch and old man shuffling along with uncertain steps. He was very familiar and I walked away from my car to get a closer look. He noticed a movement behind him and stopped to look back. For a minute, our eyes locked as we looked at each other. There was no recognition on his face but I knew who he was. Memories flashed back of a tall, smartly dressed man with a spring in his walk.

I also remembered a booming voice giving instructions from the black board and I could almost feel the sharp pain of a chalk thrown on my face at a ferocious speed. He was my old maths teacher. I stretched a hand and he hesitated for a moment until I introduced myself. He peered at me, frowned and then his wrinkled old face broke into a smile. "Of course, it is you," he gave me a wide toothy grin, "you have not changed a bit, except for that funny little moustache!"

We spent the next five minutes talking about the old days and the following years. Before he climbed into his son's car, he said, "I now see

you are writing in newspapers. I sincerely hope all the maths equations I taught you have not gone to a waste."

I assured him his maths classes were a great help but his advices on life in general was much more useful. His face lit up like the full moon above us. He said, "No equation in the world can solve personal problems but I am glad I have been of help in other ways."

His son pressed the accelerator pedal and I watched the car joining the highway.

I returned to my car feeling somehow disturbed. Was not I glad to see the old teacher? I could not understand it and I kept thinking about it all the way home. Then it hit me as I sat in my garden alone looking at the stars. I was sad to see one of the most influential persons in my life decaying. I think we all prefer to hang on to the memory of the people who helped us shaped our future as we knew them before they grew old. Teachers have powerful effect long after the squeaky boards and the clamour of a classroom atmosphere have long faded.

We also remember the words of parents and other

relatives said to us after many years have passed. Not all the memories are good, of course, but it is important to remember people who had been around when you were growing up. Death, I thought that evening, is never a finality in itself. I am not playing god but my old teacher would soon go to his maker leaving his students nothing but memories. As I looked up at the night sky, I saw a cloud passing on the face of the moon blocking its light. On that moment, I saw stars shining brighter than before. It was momentarily. When the cloud moved away from the moon, the moonlight ruled the sky again and the stars faded in the background.

That's it! I thought, a good background is like the moonlight. It suffers a temporary setback and but never fades away. There are always "the little stars" around to lend support during the dark moment but a firm background stemming from a solid foundation stays alive. My teacher may go to his maker soon but his mathematical equations will live forever with me. Did the theory of the night cheer me up? Not really but it gave a new revelation.

REVIEW MEETING

Oman, ICESCO explore cooperation

MUSCAT: Dr. Madiha Ahmed Al Shaibani, Minister of Education, Chairperson of the Omani National Commission for Education, Culture, and Science received in her office on Sunday Dr. Salim Mahmood Al Malik, Director-General of the Islamic World Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (ICESCO), who is currently visiting the Sultanate of Oman.

The two sides discussed means of enhancing cooperation between the Sultanate of Oman and ICESCO in various fields of education, science, culture, communication and information. They also reviewed a number of future proposals related to preserving heritage in the Islamic world and utilising technologies of the artificial intelligence in education. They also discussed the topic of

providing the organisation with young cadres qualified to lead the various sectors and programs supervised by the organisation, strengthening the role of national committees in member states, and supporting cooperation with external centers of the organisation such as the Centre for Civilizational Dialogue, the Centre for Strategic Foresight, and others.

— ONA

EDUCATION MINISTRY

Start of registration for National Research Award announced

MUSCAT: The Ministry of Higher Education, Research and Innovation on Sunday invited interested researchers and specialists to submit applications for the 10th round of the National Research Award (NRA). The competition, which encourages scholarly research in six sectors, will be open for contestants till 20 July 2023.

The NRA is granted for research in two categories: (1) The best published research for holders of the doctorate degree and its equivalent and (2) the best published research for emerging researchers (those who do not hold a doctorate). The award covers the following six domains: "education and human resources", "information and communication systems",

"health and community service", "culture, social sciences and basic sciences", "energy and industry" and "environment and vital resources". The ministry introduced the NRA to achieve a number of objectives: (1) to motivate high quality research focusing on national priorities, (2) hone the skills of national cadres and (3) explore national research output from academic institutions, with a view to advancing their integration with each other.

Since its inception in 2014, the NRA has seen a high rate of competition. Last year it was contested by 307 competitors, among them 209 were holders of the doctorate degree and its equivalent and 98 were junior researchers. — ONA

Oman's first Transforaminal Endoscopic Discectomy performed at Apollo Hospital

Apollo Super Speciality Hospital, Al Hail's Orthopedic and Spine Surgical Center of Excellence performed Oman's First Transforaminal Discectomy Endoscopically (Key Hole), marking a significant technological advancement for spine surgery in the Sultanate.

The surgery was performed by a team led by Dr Sulian Al Kalbani, Department of Orthopedics, Spine, and Sports Medicine at Apollo Super Speciality Hospital. The department offers a comprehensive range of services for patients with joint, spine, and sports-related injuries.

"The team and I at Apollo Hospital Al Hail managed to do the first surgery performed in Oman using this technique in April of this year. The patient had previous surgery 10 years back and came to us with recurrence. The traditional open surgery would have been extensive, which would have included putting screws and rods. The recovery would have taken weeks and patient would have suffered from chronic back pain. After doing the endoscopic surgery the patient

had immediate pain relief and was discharged the next day," said Dr Kalbani.

Transforaminal endoscopic discectomy is a recent development in spine surgery. It can be performed through a small incision using no muscle dissection. The advantage is that the patients would have very minimal surgical pain and can return to work immediately.

The patient had foraminal disc prolapse, causing severe compression of spinal root. He is extremely happy, grateful and has returned to his normal daily activities.

"This surgery can be done for most paracentral disc prolapses. It is especially useful for foraminal and extraforaminal disc herniation in which traditional surgery includes instrumentation (metal work) while with endoscopy there is no need for instrumentation saving the patient from extensive muscle dissection and pain,"explained Dr Al Kalbani, who is also currently the president of Oman Spine Society.

The Spine Care Center within the Department of Orthopedics, Spine, and Sports Medicine at Apollo Super Speciality Hospital offers a comprehensive range of services for patients with joint, spine, and sports-related injuries. The department with a team of highly trained orthopedic surgeons include sports medicine specialists, physiotherapists, and rehabilitation experts who are dedicated to delivering the best possible care to patients.

Back problems are unfortunately becoming more prevalent, especially due to sedentary lifestyle. Dr Kalbani's advise to everyone is to maintain good amount of physical activity, at least 10k steps per day.

"Play at least half an hour or indulge in cardio exercises like running or swimming every other day. It is important to maintain healthy weight and avoid sitting for longer than half an hour without stretching," Pointed out Dr Kalbani.

US AND SAUDI MEDIATORS

Sudan’s warring groups agree on 7-day cease-fire

KHARTOUM: Sudan’s warring factions reached an agreement Saturday on a seven-day cease-fire, as announced by the US and Saudi mediators. Previous attempts to broker a lasting truce had been unsuccessful.

During a meeting held in Jeddah, the Sudanese army and the Rapid Support Forces officially agreed upon a seven-day cease-

fire scheduled to commence on Monday at 9:45pm local time in Sudan, according to a joint statement issued by the United States and Saudi Arabia. The possibility of extending the cease-fire will be considered if both parties mutually agree.

The joint statement said, “Both parties have assured the Saudi and US facilitators of their com-

mitment to refrain from seeking military advantage during the 48-hour notification period after signing the agreement and prior to the commencement of the cease-fire.”

Previous discussions in Jeddah resulted in an agreement between the conflicting sides to protect civilians and facilitate the delivery of humanitarian aid to those affected by the conflict.

However, prior ceasefire arrangements faltered as both parties accused each other of violations.

The Monitoring and Coordination Committee will consist of three representatives from the United States and Saudi Arabia, as well as three representatives from each of the involved parties.

— DW



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G7 summit: Zelenskyy pushes Ukraine peace plan in Hiroshima

Zelenskyy spent most of the morning in meetings with world leaders, and later in the day laid wreaths with Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida at the Hiroshima Peace Memorial Park



HIROSHIMA: Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy appealed for diplomatic and military assistance in Japan’s Hiroshima on Sunday, as he spoke with G7 allies and a few nations that have refrained from condemning Russia’s invasion.

“The more we all work together, the less likely anyone else in the

world will follow Russia’s insane path. But is this enough?” he said in a tweet.

Zelenskyy spent most of the morning in meetings with world leaders, and later in the day laid wreaths with Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida at the Hiroshima Peace Memorial Park.

The site commemorates the victims of the atomic bomb the US military dropped in 1945.

Zelenskyy clarified in a press

conference at the end of the summit that Russian forces weren’t controlling Bakhmut, saying the town “is not occupied by the Russian Federation as of today.”

Zelenskyy made the comments after confusion over whether the city had fallen to Russian forces.

The Ukrainian leader had earlier in the day conceded that little remained of the city, telling reporters that they “have to understand there there is nothing” because

Russian forces have “destroyed everything.”

Biden announces Ukraine military aid

US President Joe Biden met Zelenskyy earlier in the morning at the summit and announced an additional \$375 million (€347 million) military aid package for Kyiv to assist it in the fight against Russia. The move comes a day after US said it would train Ukrainian pilots

to use F-16 fighter jets and would allow its allies to supply the planes.

Biden said in a press conference at the end of the summit that Kyiv’s allies “will not waver, Putin will not break our resolve as he thought he could.” He said the Ukrainian leader had provided him “a flat assurance” that Kyiv would not use F-16s to attack Russian territory.

Zelenskyy then met other leaders, like South Korean President Yoon Suk Yeol, on the sidelines of the summit as well.

The Ukrainian leader thanked Yoon, whom he met for the first time, for the “humanitarian and non-lethal assistance to Ukraine, in particular, for demining vehicles.”

Zelenskyy rallied countries around a ten-point peace plan, saying the plan was built to ensure that “everyone in the world can choose the track they can contribute to.”

One of the skeptical leaders present at the summit is Brazil’s President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva, who has accused the West of “encouraging the war.” Lula did not meet the Ukrainian president.

India’s Prime Minister Narendra Modi, who has avoided outright condemnation of Russia, spoke with Zelenskyy on Saturday, expressing sympathy for the Ukrainian leader and his citizens.

Zelenskyy expressed optimism about the encounter Saturday, believing that India “will contribute to the restoration of the rules-based international order that all free nations clearly need.”

Western allies pledge continued support

Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau said his country would support Ukraine for as long as it takes and continue training Ukrainian military. Canadian forces have been training Ukrainian military and security personnel in advanced skills since 2015 French President Emmanuel Macron lauded Zelenskyy’s trip to Japan as “a pathway to peace,” considering it an “honor” to have provided the plane that transported the Ukrainian leader to Hiroshima. — DW

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Omani novelist Al Qasmi wins top Arabic fiction prize

Times News Service

MUSCAT: Omani poet and novelist Zahran Al Qasmi was named the winner of the prestigious 16th edition of the International Prize for Arabic Fiction (IPAF) for 2023 for his book “The Exile of the Water Diviner” on Sunday.

The novel was named as this year’s winner by Chair of Judges Moroccan writer and novelist Mohammed Achaari during a ceremony in Abu Dhabi that was also streamed online, according to an IPAF statement on its website.

Besides Achaari, the panel of judges included Egyptian academic and novelist Reem Bassiouney, Algerian novelist, researcher and journalist Fadhila El Farouk, Swedish university professor and translator Tetz Rooke, and Omani writer and academic Aziza Al Ta’i – as well as Yassin Adnan, an IPAF Trustee, and prize administrator Fleur Montanaro.

Al Qasmi won \$50,000 as prize money and will also receive funding for an English translation.

Published in 2021, The Exile of the Water Diviner is Al Qasmi’s fourth novel.



“The novel by Zahran Al Qasmi explores a new subject in modern fiction: water and its impact on the natural environment and the lives of human beings in hostile regions. Blurring the boundaries of reality and myth, the novel’s precise structure and sensitive poetic language are the conduit for compelling characters like the water diviner, who plays an essential role in people’s lives, yet simultaneously inspires their fear and revulsion,” Achaari, Chair of the 2023 Judges, said in the statement.

“The Exile of the Water Diviner transports us to the world, lit-

tle known in the Arabic novel, of the riverbeds and the aflaj (water channels) of Oman, showing how natural forces influence the relationship between individuals, environment and culture,” Achaari added.

Zahran Al Qasmi is an Omani poet and novelist, born in Dima Wattayeen in the Sultanate of Oman in 1974. He has published four novels: Mountain of the Horseradish Tree (2013), The Sniper (2014), Hunger for Honey (2017), and Exile of the Water Diviner (2021), as well as ten poetry collections and Biography of the Stone 1 (short story collection, 2009) and Biography of the Stone 2 (non-fiction, 2011).

The Exile of the Water Diviner was selected by the judges from those submitted to the prize as the best novel published in Arabic between July 2021 and June 2022. It was chosen from a shortlist of six by authors from Algeria, Egypt, Iraq, Libya, Oman and Saudi Arabia. The six shortlisted finalists before the winner was announced were Siddik Hady, Ahmed, Azher Jirjees, Najwa Binshatwan, Miral al-Tahawy, Fatima Abdulhamid, and Zahran Al Qasmi.

We will make an impact at the World Cup Qualifier: Mendis

Oman bank on their strong display in World Cricket League Division 2 to eye a ‘dream spot’ in ODI World Cup

MUSCAT: He has been a manager of a World Cup-winning squad and has already led Oman to two T20 World Cups. A coach who certainly knows what it takes to go to a World Cup, Duleep Mendis has a challenge that he is relishing as Oman prepares for a dream mission – a spot in the ICC Men’s World Cup.

The ODI World Cup is scheduled to be held in India in October-November later this year and with eight teams already confirmed, the stage is now set to decide the remaining two spots for the World Cup, which would be decided during the forthcoming ICC Men’s World Cup Qualifier in Zimbabwe from June 18-July 9.

Mendis will be leading Oman at the Qualifier and sounded confident of Team Red’s chances in Zimbabwe that will feature four-Test playing nations along with six Associate nations vie for the two berths at the ICC ODI World Cup.

Two-time World Cup winners West Indies, Sri Lanka, the team which won the World Cup in 1996 with Mendis as manager, hosts Zimbabwe and Ireland are the four teams that along with Netherlands finished as bottom five of ICC Cricket Super League.

The quartet will be joined by Scotland, Oman and Nepal who finished as top-three nations in the World Cricket League Division 2 and UAE and USA, who made it through Qualifier playoff.



Oman coach Duleep Mendis watches as Aqib Ilyas bats at the nets



Madhu Jesrani, OC secretary

With the format for the World Cup Qualifier and groupings yet to be announced, Mendis said: “It has been a remarkable journey over the past four years during which we played 36 ODIs and finished second in the seven-nation Division 2.

“The forthcoming World Cup Qualifier will be a great opportunity for our boys to showcase their potential and I am confident that our team can do well. The recent performance at the ACC Premier Cup, an Asia Cup qualifier, in Nepal where we finished third gave us a good insight what our players can do.

“The batting didn’t click initially but did well in the later stages in Nepal. If our batters can perform as they did in the later stages, I am confident we can do well. Bowling has been our forte and if our batters play to their potential, we stand a chance.”

Mendis said: “Oman are not going to make up numbers in the Qualifier in Zimbabwe. We will make an impact and the 10-12 warm-up camp in Durban, South Africa, will do us a world of good. We will play five warm-up games against top teams there.

“Our boys have been training hard here but weather is definitely a big obstacle these days. We hope to acclimatise to conditions similar to Zimbabwe during the Durban trip.”

The Sri Lankan great said: “On our day we have the ability to beat the best. I tell my boys that they should never fear their rivals, be it any side, Test-playing nation or Associate.”

“There is no place for negativity in my coaching style. The players will go out and fight hard, be it any



Duleep Mendis (left) and assistant coach Mazhar Saleem Khan

opposition. Our main aim is to get into the next round of Qualifier, and we can create few upsets,” he added.

Journey of pride and passion, says Jesrani

While Mendis expressed hope and optimism, the man who has been one of the longest-serving managers of any Associate team in the world, Madhu Jesrani, who is also the secretary of Oman Cricket, (OC) was full of emotions while recollecting the team’s journey since the start of the 21st century.

Jesrani said: “We have reached World Cup Qualifiers twice in the past, first in 2005 in Ireland and then in 2009 in South Africa. We had few amazing results though the 2009 trip to South Africa was disappointing. The current team has done brilliantly to finish second in Division 2 and we are proud of their journey.”

“I still remember how our team prepared for the previous World Cup Qualifier. We didn’t have even turf wickets or grass grounds. Oman Cricket has come a long way, thanks to the yeoman contribution of our former Oman

Cricket chairman Late Sheikh Kanak Khimji.

“We all miss him, and it was under his guidance that we have come so far. This has been a journey of pride and passion for us,” said Jesranias his voice choked with emotions.

Jesrani said: “The team under Duleep Mendis has made tremendous progress and though the going will be very tough in Zimbabwe, we have a good chance.

“The recent Premier Cup display in Nepal and the second-place finish in Division 2 has given our boys lot of confidence. We will carry the confidence into the World Cup Qualifier.”

He added: “The boys have become matured while competing over the past four years in the Division 2 and our bowling attack is one of the best among Associate nations.

“The team comprises experienced players and they have been delivering. We hope they can raise their game one notch up and create history by qualifying for the World Cup for the first time. This is something I am living for- to watch Oman play in the World Cup.”

LSG VS KKR

There was a lot of pressure, says Krunal



KOLKATA: Lucknow Super Giants (LSG) recorded a thrilling one-run victory over Kolkata Knight Riders (KKR) at the Eden Gardens on Saturday night to secure a spot in the IPL 2023 playoffs.

LSG became the third team to book the spot after Gujarat Titans and Chennai Super Kings. Speaking after the game, LSG skipper Krunal Pandya said he is satisfied and happy with the win while also adding that there was a lot of pressure on the team throughout the game.

“First reaction is satisfaction. Just really happy with the way we have played, there was a lot of pressure while batting and bowling, but if you focus, you can pull it off,” said Krunal at the post-match presentation ceremony.

Chasing 177 to win, KKR were struggling at 136/7 after 18 overs. However, Rinku Singh kept the hosts in the hunt as he slammed an unbeaten 67 off 33 balls to take his team to 175/7 in their allotted 20 overs. LSG’s spin trio of Ravi Bishnoi (2-23), Krishnappa Gowtham (1-26) and Krunal Pandya (1-30) did well with the ball.

A 74-run stand between Nicholas Pooran (58 in 30 balls) and Ayush Badoni (25 in 21 balls) helped LSG reach a competitive total of 176/8.



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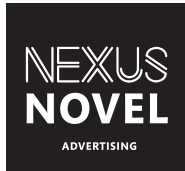
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QUALIFIER 1

Tuesday, May 23

Gujarat Titans

VS

Chennai Super Kings

6pm, Chennai

POINTS TABLE

TEAM	P	W	L	NR	NRR	PTS
GT	14	10	4	0	+0.809	20
CSK	14	8	5	1	+0.652	17
LSG	14	8	5	1	+0.284	17
MI	14	8	6	0	-0.044	16
RR	14	7	7	0	+0.148	14
RCB	14	7	7	0	+0.135	14
KKR	14	6	8	0	-0.239	12
PBKS	14	6	8	0	-0.304	12
DC	14	5	9	0	-0.808	10
SRH	14	4	10	0	-0.590	8

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



Mumbai Indians beat Sunrisers Hyderabad but had to wait for Gujarat Titans' win over Royal Challengers Bangalore to advance

BENGALURU: On a day when a total of three centuries were scored in the concluding games of IPL 2023, it was Gujarat Titans' Shubman Gill's ton that knocked out Royal Challengers Bangalore (RCB) from the playoffs and helped Mumbai Indians (MI) seal the final spot.

Gill emulated Royal Challengers Bangalore's Virat Kohli to hit his second successive hundred in the IPL 2023 as Gujarat Titans

(GT) recorded a six-wicket victory to break the tens of thousands of hearts at Chinnaswamy Stadium.

Earlier, Kohli hit his second successive century with an unbeaten 101 in 61 balls to lead RCB to 197/5. Chasing the target, Gill also smashed his second consecutive century with an unbeaten 104 off 52 balls in his team's victory. Vijay Shankar contributed with 53.

Gill, who became the first GT player to register a hundred in the

history of IPL against Sunrisers Hyderabad in the previous match, raced to his half-century in just 29 balls. He used another 23 balls to bring up his second consecutive hundred.

Titans' victory allowed Mumbai Indians to make it to the playoffs, who had earlier in the day defeated Sunrisers Hyderabad (SRH) by eight wickets at Wankhede Stadium in Mumbai.

Cameron Green had smashed his maiden IPL century (100) off 47 balls in Mumbai Indians win.

Along with skipper Rohit Sharma, who hit 56 off 37 balls, Mumbai chased down Sunrisers score of 200/5 as they reached 201/2 in 18 overs. The result eliminated Rajasthan Royals, who needed MI and RCB to lose to stand a chance of progressing.

Sunrisers, who finished bottom of the IPL, mainly had openers Mayank Agarwal (83) and Vivrant Sharma (69) to thank for reaching 200 as the pair put on 140 in 13.5 overs. Akash Madhwal was the pick of the bowlers as he claimed 4/37.

MI, needing a win to have a chance of making it into the top four playoff spots, lost Ishan Kishan early before Rohit and Green put their side in control.

The duo stitched a 128-run stand before it was broken by Mayank Dagar who dismissed Rohit.

Green reached his 50 off just 20 balls and, in making his first IPL century, hit eight sixes and eight fours.

IPL playoffs from Tuesday

Gujarat Titans, as the group-stage winners, will face Chennai Super Kings in Qualifier 1 on Tuesday.

The winner of that game will go into the final on Sunday.

Wednesday will see Lucknow Super Giants take on the fourth-placed Mumbai Indians - in the Eliminator, with the loser going out.

The winner of the Eliminator will face the loser of Qualifier 1 on Friday in Qualifier 2 for the second place in the final.

Brief scores: Sunrisers Hyderabad 200/5 (Mayank Agarwal 83, Vivrant Sharma 69; Akash Madhwal 4-37) lost to Mumbai Indians 201/2 in 18 overs (Cameron Green 100 n.o., Rohit Sharma 56; Bhuvneshwar Kumar 1-26).

Royal Challengers Bangalore: 197/5 (Virat Kohli 101 n.o., Faf du Plessis 28; Noor Ahmed 2/39) lost to Gujarat Titans 198/4 in 19.1 overs (Shubman Gill 104 n.o., Vijay Shankar 53; Mohammed Siraj 2/32).

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BUSINESS FORUM 2023

Oman Electricity Transmission Company (OETC) hosted the Business Opportunities Forum, connecting current and potential consultants, contractors, and suppliers who are interested in learning more about the company's future projects.

MARKET

BUSINESS & FINANCE



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MONDAY, MAY 22, 2023



MSX INDEX ENDS HIGHER

The MSX index closed at 4,713.92 points, up by 0.37 per cent from the previous close. The Sharia Index ended down by 0.02 per cent at 469.94 points. Al Omaniya Financial Services, up 9.84 per cent, was the top gainer while Barka Water & Power Company, down 8.33 per cent, was the top loser.

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STRATEGIC PLAN

Opaz proceeds with its digital transformation plan

Times News Service

MUSCAT: The Public Authority for Special Economic Zones and Free Zones (Opaz) is proceeding with its strategic plan for the digital transformation programme, including setting June 30 as the last day for receiving and sending paper-based transactions, except for some special government correspondence.

This reflects Opaz's efforts and initiatives to make the most of modern technologies and to achieve a major objective of Oman Vision 2040 towards digital transformation in government transactions and services provided to investors and beneficiaries.

Mahmood bin Hamoud Al Rawahi, General Manager of Planning and Information Technology at the Public Authority for Special Economic Zones and Free Zones, stressed Opaz's commitment and endeavour towards implementing the strategic directions of the National Programme for Digital Transformation, adopting digital best practices and benefiting from modern technology to improve and increase the efficiency of the provided government services. Thus, Opaz has set June 30, as the last day for receiving and sending paper-based transactions, except for some special government correspondence.

Al Rawahi said, "Opaz strives to simplify the procedures for investor services and re-engineered all licenses, permits and approvals necessary to operate any investment project. It also participated in "Manajm" laboratories to simplify the procedures of government services supervised by the Ministry of Transport, Communications and Information Technology, which had an impact on raising the level of quality of services provided to investors."



"Opaz is going on to develop the centralised platform for investor services in all the zones affiliated to Opaz. This platform will provide all services online in the economic zones, free zones and industrial cities, considering the integration between this platform and other national platforms related to the services provided by government bodies. Opaz held several meetings with the government parties concerned to ensure full integration with its digital platforms, reflecting the national strategic directions to maximise the use of the infrastructure available to these entities," he stated.

He further added, "Opaz will soon announce launching the first version of "Etizim" system, which is one of the electronic applications that assists the different concerned departments to perform their regulatory role interactively with companies."



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Duqm Power Company S.P.C.

Tender Announcement

Introduction

Duqm Power Company SPC (herein the "Employer" or "DPC") invites proposals from qualified, experienced Tenderers to undertake the provision of Maintenance of 132KV O-H Transmission system (~8CKM) owned by DIPWP (an integrated CCGT Power and SWRO plant) at Duqm/Raz Markaz. The Company invites Bidders who are **registered and certified by OETC** to submit their proposals as described below.

Tender Number	Tender Title	Tender Description	Tender Fees	Tender Sale Closing Date	Bid Submission Date
DPC-RMT-00-000-LE-TND-0002	Maintenance of 132 KV Transmission Line	The Tenderer shall be experienced in providing preventive and corrective maintenance of 132KV overhead electrical Transmission systems. The Tenderer shall be registered with OETC and has certification from OETC for maintaining HV electrical overhead transmission line. The contract shall be valid for two (2) years period, on call off or fixed rate basis.	25 OMR	04.06.2023	22.06.2023

Request for proposal

The RFP will be made available in electronic form only from **9:00 AM, 22nd May 2023** Oman time until **4th June 2023 12 pm**.

Contractor Minimum Qualifications

Contractor must hold valid registration with OETC for electrical works of this nature and have necessary experience and resources in Oman with track record in electricity transmission for the provision of 132KV transmission line Maintenance Services. We particularly encourage contractors currently operating in Duqm area (Al Wusta Region). Interested Bidders shall contact DPC via email to tender@marafiq.om with the subject heading **"Maintenance of 132KV Transmission Line"** to receive further instructions related to payment of tender fee and collection of RFP Package.

P.O.Box: 80 P.C: 102
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www.marafiq.om



CONTRACTS



Housing Ministry signs land lease pacts worth OMR70mn

MUSCAT: The Ministry of Housing and Urban Planning signed 10 usufructs (land lease) contracts with an investment value exceeding OMR70 million.

The contracts cover commercial, industrial, health and agricultural sectors in the governorates of Muscat, Al Dhahirah and South Al Batinah. The total area of the projects is 1.3 million square metres (sqm).

Most of the contracts were awarded for projects in the Governorate of Muscat. These include a land usufruct contract for the construction of a specialised hospital on an area of 40,000 sqm in the Wilayat of Al Seeb at an investment cost of OMR65 million.

A second usufruct contract in Al Seeb provides for the setting up of a cement factory on an area of 3,000 sqm for OMR1.2 million.

In the Wilayat of Ibri in Al Dhahirah, a usufruct contract was signed for an agricultural project.

In South Al Batinah, a usufruct contract was signed for the establishment of an industrial project for OMR1.2 million. The contracts were signed by Eng. Hamad Ali Al Nazwani, Undersecretary of the Ministry of Housing and Urban Planning for Housing, and representatives of companies and establishments investing in the respective projects. — OMA

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MARKET

MSX index ends higher



Al Omaniya Financial Services, up 9.84 per cent, was the top gainer while Barka Water & Power Company, down 8.33 per cent, was the top loser in Sunday's trading session

MUSCAT: The MSX index closed at 4,713.92 points, up by 0.37 per cent from the previous close. The Sharia Index ended down by 0.02 per cent at 469.94 points. Al Omaniya Financial Services, up 9.84 per cent, was the top gainer while Barka Water & Power Company, down 8.33 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 402 trades were executed during the day's trading session, generating a turnover of OMR1.41 million, with more than 6.39 million shares changing hands. Out of 52 traded securities, 16 advanced, 14 declined, and 22 remained unchanged. At the session close, foreign investors were net buyers for OMR120,000 while GCC & Arab investors were net sellers for OMR79,000, followed by domestic investors for OMR42,000 worth of shares.

Financial Index closed at 7,654.24 points, up 0.82 per cent. Prices of Al Omaniya Financial Services, Taageer Finance, Ahli Bank, National Bank Oman and Oman United Insurance were

up by 9.84 per cent, 3.41 per cent, 2.78 per cent, 2.50 per cent and 0.38 per cent respectively. Prices of Al Madina Investments, Al Anwar Investment, Muscat Finance, United Finance and Sohar International Bank were up by 4.76 per cent, 2.25 per cent, 1.72 per cent, 1.70 per cent and 0.97 per cent respectively.

Industrial Index closed at 6,086.08 points, up 0.2 per cent. Prices of Construction Materials, Dhofar Cattle Feed, Raysut Cement, Voltamp Energy and Galfar Engineering were up by 7.14 per cent, 3.18 per cent, 2.92 per cent, 1.82 per cent and 0.53 per cent respectively.

Prices of Jazeera Steel Products, Al Anwar Ceramics and Oman Cables Industry were up by 1.36 per cent 0.70 per cent and 0.26 per cent respectively.

Services Index was down by 0.2 per cent before closing at 1,702.40 points. Prices of SMN Power Holding, Muscat Desalination and Oman Telecom were up by 1.18 per cent, 1.03 per cent and 0.41 per cent respectively. Prices of Sembcorp Salalah and Ooredoo were up by 1.96 per cent and 0.55 per cent respectively.

— United Securities

MUSCAT STOCK EXCHANGE

INDECIES						
Index	High	Low	Value	Prev. Value	Diff	Diff%
MSX 50 INDEX	4,762.91	4,698.12	4,713.92	4,696.61	17.31	0.37
FINANCIAL INDEX	7,699.60	7,591.84	7,654.24	7,591.84	62.40	0.82
Industry Index	6,108.20	6,075.59	6,086.08	6,073.86	12.22	0.20
Services Index	1,707.94	1,701.17	1,702.40	1,705.86	-3.46	-0.20
MSX Shariah Index	4,707.46	4,68.98	4,69.94	4,70.04	-0.10	-0.02
MSX TR INDEX	6,261.81	6,176.63	6,197.40	6,174.65	22.76	0.37
FINANCIAL TR IDX	8,387.47	8,270.08	8,338.05	8,270.08	67.98	0.82
SERVICES TR IDX	1,877.57	1,870.14	1,871.49	1,875.29	-3.80	-0.20
INDUSTRIAL TR IDX	6,525.08	6,493.45	6,501.45	6,488.40	13.06	0.20

Trading Summary						
Volume	Turnover	Trades	Market Cap	Up	Down	Equal
6,395,116	1,411,269	402	23,779,446,789	16	14	22
						52

SHARE PRICE BULLETIN FOR SUNDAY, MAY 21

ISIN	SECURITY NAME	VOLUME	TURNOVER	TRADES	OPEN PRICE	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE PR	PREV. CLOSE	DIFF (RD)	DIFF %	LAST PR	LAST DR	LAST OFFER	PRN VALUE	MARKET CAP
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REGULAR MARKET

OM0000001483	NATIONAL BANK OMAN	370,087	104,311	16	0.280	0.287	0.280	0.287	0.280	0.007	2.500	0.287	0.287	0.285	0.100	466,646,604
OM0000004248	SMN POWER HOLDING	40,650	3,415	3	0.084	0.086	0.084	0.086	0.085	0.001	1.176	0.086	0.083	0.086	0.100	17,168,662
OM0000003026	OMAN TELECOM	67,875	67,322	11	0.996	0.996	0.984	0.988	0.984	0.004	0.407	0.988	0.988	0.992	0.100	741,000,000
OM0000001087	OMAN UNITED INSURANCE	6,020	1,585	2	0.265	0.265	0.265	0.265	0.264	0.001	-0.079	0.265	0.264	0.265	0.100	26,500,000
OM0000001152	OMAN NATIONAL ENGINEERING & INVESTMENT	29,256	3,101	5	0.106	0.106	0.106	0.106	0.106	0.000	0.000	0.106	0.105	0.106	0.100	15,900,000
OM0000001517	HSBC BANK OMAN	271,088	42,019	6	0.155	0.155	0.155	0.155	0.155	0.000	0.000	0.155	0.155	0.157	0.100	310,048,482
OM0000001525	OMAN INVESTMENT & FINANCE	172,056	20,267	8	0.110	0.112	0.110	0.110	0.110	0.000	0.000	0.110	0.110	0.112	0.100	27,372,500
OM0000001533	OMINVEST	94,008	35,849	13	0.382	0.382	0.378	0.382	0.382	0.000	0.000	0.382	0.380	0.382	0.100	25,315,593
OM0000001881	OMAN EMIRATES HO.	5,903	437	1	0.074	0.074	0.074	0.074	0.074	0.000	0.000	0.074	0.074	0.075	0.100	9,018,750
OM0000001749	OMAN CEMENT	36,104	11,840	7	0.328	0.328	0.316	0.328	0.328	0.000	0.000	0.316	0.316	0.316	0.100	108,526,249
OM0000002440	AL SHARGIA INVESTMENT HO.	58,632	4,397	4	0.075	0.075	0.075	0.075	0.075	0.000	0.000	0.075	0.075	0.076	0.100	6,750,000
OM0000002549	BANK DHOFAR	26,178	4,627	2	0.163	0.163	0.176	0.176	0.176	0.000	0.000	0.176	0.000	0.190	0.100	527,257,653
OM0000003125	GLOBAL FINANCIAL INVESTMENT HO.	79,090	4,904	1	0.062	0.062	0.062	0.062	0.062	0.000	0.000	0.062	0.060	0.062	0.100	12,400,000
OM0000003224	RENAISSANCE SERVICES	117,330	45,044	7	0.384	0.384	0.376	0.384	0.384	0.000	0.000	0.376	0.376	0.376	0.100	90,781,440
OM0000004768	MADINA TAKAFUL	34,813	7,053	9	0.083	0.084	0.083	0.083	0.083	0.000	0.000	0.083	0.083	0.089	0.100	14,525,000
OM0000002796	BANK MUSCAT	1,519,783	408,646	54	0.289	0.270	0.287	0.288	0.289	-0.001	-0.372	0.287	0.287	0.288	0.100	2,011,714,413
OM0000003968	OOREDOO	261,450	95,670	18	0.366	0.366	0.364	0.364	0.366	-0.002	-0.546	0.364	0.364	0.366	0.100	236,943,700
OM0000002168	AL ANWAR CERAMIC	125,748	35,585	19	0.283	0.283	0.282	0.283	0.285	-0.002	-0.702	0.283	0.287	0.283	0.100	62,260,000
OM0000003398	SOHAR INTERNATIONAL BANK	50,000	5,100	4	0.102	0.102	0.102	0.102	0.103	0.000	0.000	0.102	0.102	0.107	0.100	448,196,354
OM0000002176	JAZEERA STEEL PRODUCTS	2,500	725	4	0.290	0.290	0.290	0.290	0.294	-0.004	-1.361	0.290	0.274	0.290	0.100	36,220,408
OM0000002374	UNITED FINANCE	253,733	14,717	12	0.058	0.058	0.058	0.058	0.059	-0.001	-1.695	0.058	0.054	0.062	0.100	20,655,383
Total	21	3,656,575	913,563	206												

Parallel Market

OM0000002077	AL OMANIYA FINANCIAL SERVICES	195,000	24,510	10	0.125	0.134	0.125	0.134	0.122	0.012	9.836	0.134	0.134	0.134	0.100	41,228,370
OM0000001368	CONSTRUCTION MATERIAL INDUSTRIES	3,063	167	3	0.060	0.060	0.053	0.060	0.056	0.004	7.143	0.060	0.054	0.060	0.100	3,750,000
OM0000003281	TAAGEER FINANCE	15,297	1,391	3	0.088	0.091	0.088	0.091	0.088	0.003	3.409	0.091	0.091	0.091	0.100	24,008,988
OM0000001301	DHOFAR FOODS AND INVESTMENT	500	33	2	0.065	0.065	0.065	0.065	0.063	0.002	3.175	0.065	0.060	0.065	0.100	5,255,250
OM0000001418	RAYSUT CEMENT	50	9	1	0.176	0.176	0.176	0.176	0.171	0.005	2.924	0.176	0.165	0.185	0.100	35,200,000
OM0000002200	AHLI BANK	236,138	43,686	9	0.185	0.185	0.185	0.185	0.180	0.005	2.778	0.185	0.171	0.185	0.100	360,688,631
OM0000008447	OMAN REIT FUND	100	8	1	0.082	0.082	0.082	0.082	0.080	0.002	2.500	0.082	0.074	0.085	0.100	38,637,284
OM0000002661	VOLTAMP ENERGY	140,741	15,762	7	0.110	0.112	0.110	0.112	0.110	0.002	1.818	0.112	0.110	0.112	0.100	9,117,106
OM0000007084	MUSCAT CITY DESALINATION	29,482	2,888	5	0.098	0.098	0.097	0.098	0.097	0.001	1.031	0.098	0.088	0.098	0.100	15,243,939
OM0000008868	THE PEARL REIF	5,000	605	2	0.121	0.121	0.121	0.121	0.120	0.001	0.833	0.121	0.119	0.125	0.100	51,397,196
OM0000003521	GALFAR ENGINEERING & CONTRACTING	169,000	32,766	6	0.194	0.194	0.190	0.190	0.189	0.001	0.529	0.190	0.186	0.190	0.100	38,567,425
OM0000001160	NATIONAL GAS	95,781	9,777	7	0.102	0.103	0.102	0.103	0.103	0.000	0.000	0.103	0.102	0.103	0.100	8,753,000
OM0000001400	OMAN FLOUR MILLS	167	89	1	0.530	0.530	0.530	0.530	0.530	0.000	0.000	0.530	0.530	0.572	0.100	83,475,000
OM0000002028	GULF INTERNATIONAL CHEMICALS	47,279	3,688	5	0.078	0.078	0.078	0.078	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.078	0.078	0.078	0.100	1,638,000
OM0000004420	BANK NIZWA	432,841	40,254	12	0.093	0.093	0.093	0.093	0.093	0.000	0.000	0.093	0.093	0.093	0.100	208,038,632
OM0000004776	TAKAFUL OMAN	59,825	2,934	4	0.049	0.050	0.049	0.050	0.050	0.000	0.000	0.050	0.050	0.051	0.100	12,500,000
OM0000004925	ALBATINAH POWER	9,196	273	6	0.030	0.030	0.029	0.030	0.030	0.000	0.000	0.030	0.029	0.030	0.100	20,246,623
OM0000004933	AL SUWADI POWER	1,052	32	2	0.030	0.030	0.030	0.030	0.030	0.000	0.000	0.030	0.029	0.030	0.100	21,432,190
OM0000005982	PHOENIX POWER	4,208	275	2	0.067	0.068	0.067	0.067	0.067	0.000	0.000	0.067	0.065	0.068	0.100	97,994,298
OM0000008934	ABRAJ ENERGY SERVICES	120,578	34,891	28	0.288	0.290	0.288	0.290	0.290	0.000	0.000	0.290	0.290	0.290	0.100	223,358,000
OM0000001707	OMAN CABLES INDUSTRY	43,616	84,991	15	1.950	1.950	1.945	1.945	1.950	-0.005	-0.256	1.945	0.000	1.945	0.100	174,468,500
OM0000007910	OMAN REAL ESTATE	28,031	2,663	3	0.095	0.095	0.095	0.095	0.096	-0.001	-1.042	0.095	0.095	0.095	0.100	19,000,000
OM0000001590	MUSCAT FINANCE	30,000	1,735	3	0.057	0.058	0.057	0.057	0.058	-0.001	-1.724	0.057	0.055	0.060	0.100	17,507,241
OM0000004735	SEMBCORP SALALAH	558,308	55,831	5	0.100	0.103	0.100	0.100	0.102	-0.002	-1.961	0.100	0.100	0.103	0.100	95,457,195
OM0000001772	ALANWAR INVESTMENT	290,885	25,588	8	0.088	0.088	0.087	0.087	0.089	-0.002	-2.247	0.087	0.088	0.088	0.100	17,400,000
OM0000001982	BARKA WATER AND POWER	80	1	0.040	0.040	0.040	0.040	0.042	-0.002	-4.762	0.040	0.040	0.040	0.040	0.100	1,000,000
OM0000003141	BARKA WATER AND POWER	22,400	1,478	4	0.066	0.066	0.066	0.066	0.072	-0.006	-8.333	0.066	0.066	0.066	0.100	10,560,000
Total	27	2,540,518	386,402	155												

BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES

Forum connects current and potential consultants, contractors and suppliers

Times News Service

MUSCAT: Oman Electricity Transmission Company (OETC) hosted the Business Opportunities Forum 2023, connecting current and potential consultants, contractors, and suppliers who are interested in learning more about the company's future projects and expressing their sincere desire to collaborate with OETC.

This forum aims to present the company's future plans and provide information regarding upcoming tenders and projects to be launched shortly. It also includes procedures for tender submission, ensuring that the tendering process adheres to the applicable laws and standards. Moreover, the forum aims to familiarise contractors and consultants with the recent changes in tendering systems and procedures. Being aware of these changes will enhance their chances of participating in the



company's tenders, aligning with the specifications, regulations, and policies in place.

Regarding this forum, Ali Saif Al-Reesi, Chief Financial Officer in OETC and a member of the Tenders Committee, emphasised the company's keenness to provide clear details about the projects it is working on to contractors and

consultants. This ensures that the tasks and projects are more transparent and guarantees the participation of the best companies in the tenders, as well as addressing any inquiries raised by the attendees. Al Reesi added: One of the objectives of this forum is to share the last plans and developments with stakeholders to reduce challenges

encountered during tendering and to enhance the quality, clarity and accuracy of the data, ensuring that the work progresses following the specifications, standards and applicable laws. Such meetings also help to increase contractors' and consultants' awareness in the field of tenders.

TAKE THESE



LIFESTYLE

To get on the right track, consider these tips and insights from the AMA:

1. Know your numbers. Hypertension is diagnosed when your systolic blood pressure is greater than 130 mmHg or your average diastolic blood pressure is greater than 80 mmHg. Visit [ManageYourBP.org](#) to better understand your numbers.

2. Monitor blood pressure. Once you learn your blood pressure numbers, take and keep regular records using an at-home blood pressure monitor. For an accurate reading, the CDC says to sit with your back supported for 5 minutes before starting and wait at least 30 minutes after drinking or eating a meal. You should also avoid stimulants for at least 30 minutes beforehand, as the CDC says that smoking and drinking caffeine can elevate your blood pressure. If you take medication for hypertension, measure your blood pressure before your dose. Share your numbers with your health care provider.

3. Eat right. Reduce your intake of processed foods, especially those with added sodium and sugar. Eat less red meat and processed meats, and add more plant-based foods, such as vegetables, fruits, nuts, seeds and olive oil to your diet. Also, reduce your consumption of sugar-sweetened beverages and drink more water instead. Drinking sugary beverages, even 100% fruit juices, is associated with a higher all-cause mortality risk, according to a study published in JAMA Network Open.

4. Be more physically active. Do at least 150 minutes a week of moderate-intensity activity, or 75 minutes a week of vigorous-intensity activity. Be sure to include a mix of cardiovascular exercise, strength training and flexibility. Obtain guidance from your doctor if you aren't sure if it is safe for you to exercise.

5. Maintain a healthy weight. If you are overweight, losing as little as 5 to 10 pounds may help lower your blood pressure. Consult your doctor about safe ways to maintain a healthy weight. **-Statepoint**

STEPS TO MANAGE YOUR BLOOD PRESSURE

”

Unmanaged hypertension can have life-altering consequences,” says Dr. Resneck. “The good news is that there are many ways you can take control of your blood pressure and your health.”

High blood pressure, also known as hypertension, affects nearly half of adults in the United States, and only about 1 in 4 with this condition have it under control, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Hypertension can be dangerous and in many cases, fatal. In 2020, it was a primary or contributing cause of more than 670,000 deaths nationwide. Medical experts say that controlling your blood pressure is possible and it starts with having the right information.

“Nearly half of all American adults have high blood pressure, and many don't even know it. High blood pressure is a 'silent killer,' often having no overt symptoms, but increases the likelihood of heart attack, stroke and other serious health risks. I urge you to know your numbers and make the simple lifestyle changes that can help you control your blood pressure and live a long and healthy life,” says Jack Resneck Jr., M.D., president of the American Medical Association (AMA).



City crowned champions

Nottingham Forest upset Arsenal to hand the English Premier League title to Pep Guardiola's team

LONDON: Manchester City were confirmed as the 2022-2023 English Premier League (EPL) champions on Saturday without having to kick a ball as Arsenal were beaten 1-0 away to Nottingham Forest.

Taiwo Awoniyi's 19th-minute goal gave Forest a 1-0 win over the side second in the Premier League, that not only assures his side's survival on their return to the top-flight but means that Arsenal can't catch Man City in the title race.

The Gunners' loss left City with an unassailable lead of four points at the top of the points table over Arsenal, who just have one match remaining this season.

City are at the top with 27 wins, four losses and four draws in 35 matches. They have a total of 85 points. On the other hand, Arsenal have 25 wins, six losses and six draws in 37 matches and have a total of 81 points. It was City's seventh Premier League title.

Five days after booking their place in the Champions League final by beating Real Madrid 4-0, City now have the chance of an impressive treble, given that they face Manchester United in the FA Cup final on June 3.

Newcastle United can secure their place in the next season's Champions League with a draw at home to Leicester City on Monday night, while Manchester United need just a point from their last two games to confirm a top-four finish after United claimed a scrappy 1-0 win away to Bournemouth and Liverpool were held at home by Aston Villa.

Casemiro's impressive early volley was enough to give Manchester United a narrow win away to Bournemouth, who had already assured their top-flight survival.

The Brazilian volleyed the only goal of the game in the eighth minute and that was enough to



Action from the match between Arsenal and Nottingham Forest on Saturday



City coach Pep Guardiola and Jack Grealish congratulate each other



Man City players celebrate at the club's training centre on Saturday

give the visitors three vital points.

Roberto Firmino scored an 89th-minute equaliser to give Liverpool a 1-1 draw to Aston Villa in his last appearance at Anfield before leaving the club in the summer.

Aston Villa confirmed their good form in 2023 with Jacob Ramsey's 27th-minute opener, which came after Ollie Watkins had previously missed a penalty for the visitors.

A win for Villa in their last game should assure them a place in next season's Conference League for next season after Tottenham's season ended in a downbeat manner as they lost 3-1 at home to Brentford.

Although Harry Kane put Spurs ahead in the eighth minute, Brentford, who were without the suspended Ivan Toney, fought back with two second-half goals from Bryan Mbeumo and one from

Yoane Wissa to end a miserable season at White Hart Lane.

Yerry Mina scored a 99th-minute goal, stabbing the ball home from close range, to give Everton a vital point away to Wolverhampton, who had led through Hwang Hee-chan's first-half opener.

Everton lost key striker Dominic Calvert-Lewin through injury, but now sit two points above Leeds United, who visit West Ham on Sunday, and three above Leicester City, who have to play in Newcastle.

Finally, Fulham and Crystal Palace drew an entertaining game 2-2 in a match between two sides who have nothing to play for. Aleksandar Mitrovic scored two more goals for Fulham, while Odsonne Edouard and Joe Ward netted for Palace. - [Xinhua](#)

The pain is intense, says Arsenal manager

LONDON: Following his side's Premier League title loss after months of staying at the top of the points table, Arsenal manager Mikel Arteta said that the "pain is intense" after their title ambitions were shattered following poor performances in the final few games of the league and they will need some days to heal from this loss.

"First of all, congratulations to City on winning the Championship. Obviously, it is a really sad day for us after everything we have done in the season, but now we have to face the reality," Arteta told Sky Sports.

"Today, we gave a goal away and we were not good enough to break them down. We could have played here for three hours. So, face it, it is my responsibility and I have to take it."

"The pain is very intense. It is a very sad day because we have been working for 11 months with one aim and, being on top for so many days and building that enthusiasm, that



belief and that quality that is necessary to compete against Manchester City, we have done it but in the end we did not have enough for many factors."

"Now, heal. Heal for the next few days. It is very painful and extremely sad. I have to find

a way to lift the players. We have a difficult week ahead of us and we have a huge responsibility, playing in front of our fans [against Wolves]. They have been incredible all season and they deserve a really good match," concluded the boss. - [ANI](#)

BUNDESLIGA

Leipzig stun Bayern Munich; Hertha Berlin relegated

BERLIN: Bayern Munich dropped crucial points in the title race after Leipzig came from behind to clinch a stunning 3-1 away victory on Saturday.

Bayern opened their account in the 25th minute when Serge Gnabry made the most of Thomas Muller's build-up work to break the deadlock from the edge of the box into the near post corner.

After the restart, Bayern handed over control and got punished at the hour mark when Konrad Laimer finished off a counterattack with a hammer into the roof of the net to level the scores.

Leipzig gained momentum and turned the tide as Bayern defender Benjamin Pavard fouled Nkunku inside the box, allowing the Frenchman to make it 2-1 with the subsequent penalty.

Things went from bad to worse in the closing stages as Nussair Mazraoui handled the ball inside the box. Szoboszlai stepped up and made it 3-1 to put the game to bed in the 85th minute.

With the result, third-placed Leipzig secured a UEFA Champions League berth for next season with one round to spare whereas Bayern's title defence is in danger as Dortmund can take the lead with a win over Augsburg.

Elsewhere, Hoffenheim secured vital points in the relegation battle after seeing off Union Berlin 4-2.

Hertha Berlin was relegated for the seventh time in the club's history as the Old Lady were held to a late 1-1 stalemate by relegation-threatened Bochum.

Werder Bremen remain in Germany's top flight after sharing the spoils with Cologne following a 1-1 draw.

Sebastian Polter's late equalizer secured Schalke a 2-2 tie with Eintracht Frankfurt while Freiburg edged Wolfsburg 2-0 already on Friday. - [Xinhua](#)

LA LIGA

Real Sociedad spoil Barca's title party



Barcelona coach Xavi is tossed in the air as players celebrate

BARCELONA: Real Sociedad took a big step towards ensuring a fourth place in La Liga when they beat this season's champions Barcelona 2-1 in the Camp Nou Stadium on Saturday night.

Real Sociedad formed a guard of honour for Barcelona's title and then opened the scoring when Mikel Merino put them ahead after some careless defending from the home side.

Martin Zubimendi, who Barcelona have made no secret of their interest in signing, had a big hand

in the second goal when he set up Alexander Sorloth to make it 2-0 with 20 minutes left to play.

With the fans in Camp Nou chanting "Messi", Robert Lewandowski netted a last-minute consolation for Barca.

Real Sociedad have now won four times in Camp Nou in their history, with three of those wins coming after they formed a guard of honour for Barca.

The win keeps Sociedad five points above Villarreal, who took another step towards assuring at



Barcelona players celebrate as captain Sergio Busquets lifts the La Liga trophy at Camp Nou on Saturday

least a Europa League place with a 2-1 win away to Girona.

Although Nicolas Jackson didn't score, he was vital for Villarreal, helping Jeremy Pino open the scoring in the ninth minute with a race forward to leave the winger with an open goal.

David Garcia equalised in the first half for Girona, but another sprint from Jackson in the 93rd minute saw him cross for Gerard Moreno to volley the winning goal into an empty net.

Goals from Inaki Williams and Alex Berenguer moved Athletic Bilbao into seventh place above Girona, as the Basque side ended a run of five games without a win at home to Celta Vigo.

Williams scored an early header, while Berenguer curled a 54th-minute shot into the corner of the Celta goal, just four minutes after Strand Larsen had nodded Celta level.

On Friday night, Theo Bongonda scored two second-half goals to give Cadiz three vital points in

a relegation dogfight at home to Valladolid.

The result saw Valladolid drop into the bottom three on Saturday after Getafe drew 1-1 at home to the bottom of the table Elche.

Lazaro Vinicius scored a hat-trick for Almeria as the side from the far southeast of Spain beat Mallorca 3-0 to take a huge step towards survival. As they climb four points above the bottom three with three games left to play. - [Xinhua](#)

SERIE A

AC Milan bounce back with Giroud's hat-trick

ROME: AC Milan bounced back in Serie A as they crushed already-relegated Sampdoria 5-1 at San Siro on Saturday, with Olivier Giroud completing a hat-trick.

The Rossoneri were looking for a response following a dismal run as they headed into Saturday's game with three consecutive defeats on all fronts, including an exit in the Champions League with a

3-0 loss on aggregate against Inter Milan in the semi-finals.

The home side broke the deadlock just nine minutes into the game as Braham Diaz's looped pass sent Rafael Leao clear who finished with a low strike.

Sampdoria got back on level terms in the 20th minute as Alessandro Zanolini burst down the right to pull back for veteran Fa-

bio Quagliarella to sweep it in.

However, it only proved to be a temporary balm for the Blucerchiati as Milan restored the lead three minutes later when Diaz delivered another assist for Giroud to head in, minutes before the Frenchman added another through a penalty.

Milan extended the lead in the 63rd minute when Sandro Tonali

squared for Diaz to tap in from a point-blank range. Giroud put the icing on the cake five minutes later as the hitman got his third to round out the scoreline.

With the win, Milan kept their top four finish alive as they rank fifth with 64 points. Elsewhere, Bologna humiliated Cremonese 5-1, while Atalanta conquered Hellas Verona 3-1. - [Xinhua](#)



IN PICTURES



2023 National Restaurant Association Show kicks off in Chicago
Visitors sample food during the 2023 National Restaurant Association Show at the McCormick Place in Chicago, the United States. *Xinhua*

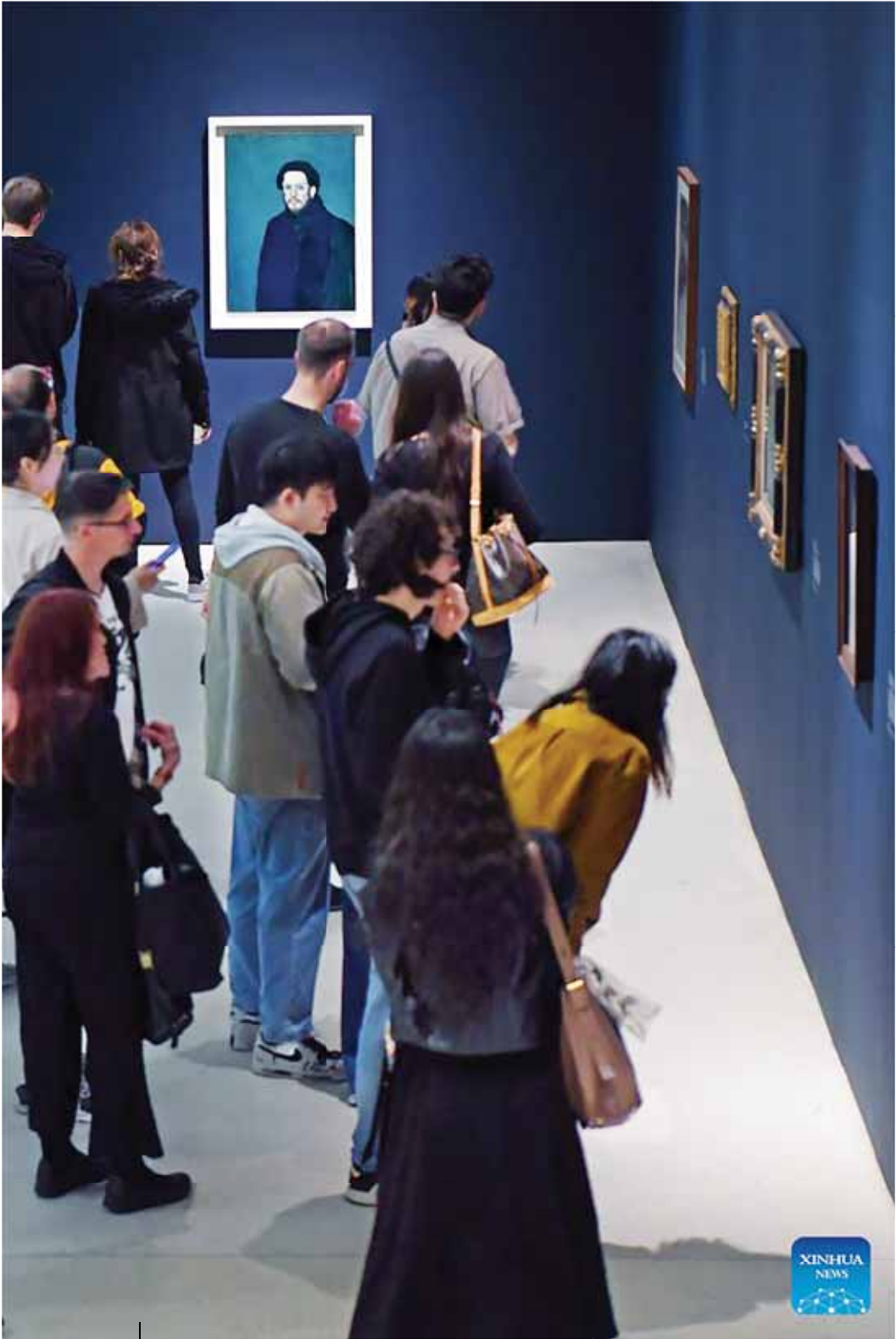


Blue-tailed bee eaters in China's Xiamen
A male blue-tailed bee eater (merops philippinus) (right) feeds a female blue-tailed bee eater in Xiamen, southeast China's Fujian Province. The blue-tailed bee eater is under Class Two national protection in China. *Xinhua*

Chinese Culture Festival held in Mississauga, Canada
People watch a dance during the Chinese Culture Festival in Mississauga, the Greater Toronto Area, Canada. Lion dances, operas, traditional wedding shows were displayed at the annual event. *Xinhua*



FIBA 3x3 World Tour Manila Masters 2023
Ikhbayar Chuluunbaatar (centre) of MMC Energy goes for a layup during the Pool D match between MMC Energy from Mongolia and Beijing from China in the FIBA 3x3 World Tour Manila Masters 2023 in Makati City, the Philippines. *Xinhua*



Young Picasso in Paris exhibition held in New York
Visitors view Pablo Picasso's artworks during Young Picasso in Paris exhibition at Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum in New York, the United States. Coinciding with the 50th anniversary of Pablo Picasso's death, the exhibition, explores a critical juncture in his artistic development, as he encountered novel contemporary subjects and styles. *Xinhua*



St. Petersburg to mark 320th founding anniversary on May 27
A girl visits a show of vintage vehicles on a street in celebration of the 320th founding anniversary of the city, in St. Petersburg, Russia. St. Petersburg is going to mark its 320th founding anniversary on May 27. *Xinhua*

ROUND-UP

Bestune B70S crossover comes with impressive design, pioneering tech

The model, which offers class-leading handling experience in its segment, comes in two powertrain options including 2.0-litre and 1.5-litre turbocharged engine respectively



MUSCAT: Gulf Great Sands (Bestune Oman) has recently launched the stylish coupe Bestune B70S crossover.

Customers looking to purchase the sleek Bestune B70S can enjoy an exceptional low EMI rate of OMR 135 for six years (terms and conditions apply). This offer is based on a 20% down payment for six-year loan tenure and is subject to credit approval. This exclusive deal is only valid for models intended for personal use.

The model, which offers class-leading handling experience in its segment, comes in two powertrain options including 2.0-litre and 1.5-litre turbocharged engine respectively.

A spokesperson for GGS LLC said, “We are thrilled to showcase our newly launched model B70S crossover and customers has the opportunity to avail low EMI on the incredibly sporty, stylish, and spacious B70S crossover, which boasts a long list of safety features, innovative technology, roomy seats, intelligent connection, and an exceptional driving experience. The Bestune B70S also offers excellent control and stability.”

Visit the showroom in Al Watayyah and test-drive the newly

launched model.

B70S Comes with 2 model variants the 2.0-litre turbocharged engine generates 215 horsepower and 340 torque equipped with a six-speed transmission. The 1.5 Litre turbocharged engine produce 158hp and mated with 7-speed Dual Clutch Transmission. The Bestune B70S is constructed on the FMA architecture and boasts several active safety technologies, with a length of 4,555 mm, width of 1,850 mm, and height of 1,515 mm, the Bestune B70S has a 2,750 mm long wheelbase.

The Bestune B70S features a sleek coupe SUV design with an overall agile and futuristic appearance. The front of the car is characterized by a robust build and a super-sized trapezoidal lower grille, accentuated by sharp headlights that create an impressive visual effect. The wide and flat tail further enhances the sporty vibe of the car, contributing to its trendy and stylish design.

The Bestune B70S is not only stylish but also packed with a range of impressive features, including a panoramic sunroof, LED combination headlights, LED daytime running lights, LED taillights with rhythm, automatic headlights, electrically adjustable exterior rearview mirrors, automatic

folding mirrors, intelligent rain-sensing technology for sunroof closing, rear window heating and defrosting, front windshield intelligent camera, rear wiper, and welcome lights (for the main driver).

The Bestune B70S boasts an impressive range of safety features, including front airbags, front seat airbags, side air curtains, electronic stability program (ESP), electric park brake, automatic parking (Auto Hold), anti-lock braking system (ABS), electronic brake-force distribution (EBD/EBV), emergency brake assist (BA), traction control system (TCS/ASR/TRC), hill assist control (HAC), front parking radar, rear parking radar, and a 360° panoramic image.

Offering supreme comfort, the interior of the B70S has a top-grade feel and offers customised leather, driver's seat six-direction power adjustment, front passenger manual four-direction seat, heated front seats, driver's seat memory, automatic rear sliding of driver's seat.

The dashboard comes with 12.3-inch full-color HD central control screen plus 7-inch LCD instrument cluster. It also has adaptive cruise control (ACC), automatic parking, mobile phone wireless

charging and Bluetooth key.

Gulf Great Sands (GGS) LLC represents Bestune Brand, a popular automotive global brand, in Oman. Bestune Brand is owned by the Chinese automaker FAW Group which is ranked 66 among global fortune 500 companies. Bestune is positioned as a mid-to-high-end brand in the mainstream automobile market. FAW Group produces and distributes passenger cars, commercial trucks and buses. Established in 1953, the company is China's oldest and largest automotive company.

Bestune - Mena region parts warehouse in Oman

FAW Group will utilise Suhail Bahwan Automobiles Trading LLC Sohar Free Zone Warehouse facility for storage and supply of FAW- Bestune vehicle parts in the region. Bahwan group has good experience in the MENA region for operations of aftersales (Service and Spare Parts).

FAW Group regional parts operation partnership in Oman will therefore go a long way in setting up timely parts availability and enhance customer satisfaction for buyers of Bestune brand in Oman and across MENA region.

According to a spokesperson for Bahwan International Group: “This signing ceremony is historic and highlights the growing importance of Oman as a regional hub for global brands. We are pleased to have been chosen as partner to open a warehouse for FAW Group, and we look forward to supporting their supply network in the Middle East and North Africa region.”

He added very soon all the Bestune Brand spare parts will be available in Sohar Freezone, This is first time ever a manufacturer stocking Mena region spare parts in Sohar FZE, which also gives peace of mind to all Bestune vehicle owners in Oman.

A spokesperson for FAW Group said: “We are excited to establish a regional parts warehouse in Oman, a vital regional hub for many industries. This agreement underscores FAW Group's commitment to expanding our global footprint and enhancing our customer experience. Through our partnership with Bahwan International Group, we will be able to provide our customers in the Mena region with faster access to our high-quality vehicle parts.”

FAW Group is China's oldest and largest automotive company, established in 1953. The company

employs over 131,000 people globally, and its products are sold in over 70 countries. FAW Group is a diversified automaker, including passenger cars, commercial trucks, and buses, with a cumulative global sales exceeding 40 million vehicles.

Bestune, a popular global automotive brand, is owned by FAW Group and positioned as a mid-to-high-end brand in the mainstream automobile market. Bestune brand is present in 30 countries, including Latin America, Middle East, Europe, Asia, and Africa. With a factory covering an area of 270,000 square meters and a production capacity of 200,000 vehicles per year, Bestune has won several prestigious automobile awards, demonstrating its strong comprehensive strength in performance, research, and development.

The partnership between FAW Group and Bahwan International Group marks a significant development in the automotive industry in Oman and the Middle East and North Africa region. With the establishment of a regional parts warehouse in Oman, FAW Group will be able to provide faster and more efficient access to its high-quality vehicle parts, enhancing its customers' experience and facilitating its expansion into new international markets.

FAW- Research & Development

Following the principle of “developing original and innovative technologies”, FAW Group has continuously infused powerful technology vitality into new Bestune brand and established a global R&D. FAW has established a global R&D layout and organized a global R&D team with more than 5,000 top technologists.

The R&D system is seen in nine regions of three countries in the world, focusing on innovations and breakthroughs in pioneering design, new energy vehicles, artificial intelligence, 5G application, new materials and process, and intelligent manufacturing.

SUMMER PROBLEMS

Aster Royal Hospital’s doctor shares tips for safer summer life

MUSCAT: The common summer problems faced by adults and children in countries with a hot summer are:

Sunburn- Adults and children can have summer health problems. Children love to play outside if they aren't hooked to their phones. Playing outside for hours means exposing skin to direct sunlight for long duration. The skin becomes red and discoloured because of the harmful sun rays when sunburn happens. Adults too if exposed to sunlight is a risk of sunburn.

Dehydration- When children play outside, they don't think about the heat. They get so engrossed in their games that they don't even take a break and drink water, which can lead to dehydration. So, watch out for the signs of dehydration in your child. Even adults should stay well hydrated when working outside during summer. Dehydration can manifest with thirst, less-frequent urination, skin dryness, fatigue, light-headedness, dizziness, dry mouth, and mucous membranes. However, everyone may experience symptoms differently.

If a child or adult gets exposed to high temperatures for a long time, they are at risk for heat exhaustion or heat stroke which may need immediate medical attention. Heat exhaustion comes with many unpleasant symptoms, including increased pulse, dizziness, fatigue,



Dr Dilip Abdul Khadar- Chief of Medical Services at Aster Royal Hospital, Muscat, Oman

muscle cramps, nausea and headache. Heat exhaustion can lead to heatstroke, a more severe condition that calls for emergency medical attention. Without care, heatstroke can cause damage to vital organs and muscles. It can even be fatal.

Sun burn can be avoided by keeping your sunscreen lotion handy, applying it to exposed skin at least 30 minutes before going outdoors. Then, reapply every two hours. Choose a product that says “broad spectrum” coverage with a Sun Protection Factor (SPF) of 30 or higher. Limit your time in the sun between 10 a.m.-4 p.m., when its rays are strongest. Wear long-

sleeved shirts. If your skin is sensitive, use an umbrella for shade. Use hats, caps and sunglasses.

Dehydration can be prevented by taking precautionary measures which include drinking plenty of fluids, especially when working or playing in the sun. By making sure you are taking in more fluid than you are losing. By scheduling physical outdoor activities for the cooler parts of the day.

Prevention of heatstroke is more effective than treatment and is certainly easier. In warm weather and especially during heat waves, protective steps should be taken to mitigate the risk of classic heatstroke. These include staying in air-conditioned homes or other air-conditioned premises (e.g., shopping malls or movie theatres), using fans, taking frequent cool showers, decreasing exertion, and increasing social contact to counteract isolation.

In addition, family members, neighbours, and social workers are advised to check on elderly persons frequently to ensure their well-being. Adherence to experience-based preventive measures at both the individual and organizational levels can significantly reduce the incidence of exertional heatstroke. These measures include acclimatizing to changed environmental conditions, matching the level of physical exertion to the degree of physical fitness, avoiding hot times

of the day for training schedules, removing vapour-barrier equipment and clothing that interfere with sweat evaporation, maintaining a proper hydration regimen, and scheduling rest periods during activity; persons with early signs of illness should be prevented from engaging in physical activity.

Avoid going out if temperatures are soaring above 40c. If unavoidable taking precautionary measures. If outside, try to stay under shaded area. Make the exposure short. Use mussar, kummah or caps for men, hijab for women, wear cotton or linen clothes when going outside. Stay hydrated. Make sure the air conditioning in your car works well and cooling is adequate if your job involves driving around during peak summer.

Longer exposure to heat and dehydration can put one at risk for heat exhaustion or heat stroke. Heatstroke is the most hazardous condition in a spectrum of illnesses progressing from heat exhaustion to heatstroke, in which a shared finding is hyperthermia (i.e., the rise in core body temperature when heat accumulation overrides heat dissipation during exercise or exposure to environmental heat stress). Clinically, heatstroke is characterized by central nervous system (CNS) dysfunction with deterioration in consciousness, multiorgan failure, and extreme hyperthermia, usual-

ly with body temperature >40.5°C.

If planning a trip outside during weekends on a peak summer make sure that the exposure is short and limited outside, be under the shade, use sunscreen with a good SPF, stay hydrated, carry enough water to drink on the way.

Wear head gear, cotton or linen clothes. Try not to take infants, small children and elderly or senior citizens along as they are more vulnerable for heat exhaustion. Make sure the car is parked near and the air-conditioning is serviced, and cooling is adequate.

As the Mercury starts rising and drinking gazillion litres of water is not making a difference, the best way to keep your body cool this summer is by keeping your diet right. This will reduce internal heat and make you feel more comfortable with the soaring temperatures. While cold drinks and frozen desserts might seem cooling, they are not. Instead, they affect you adversely.

‘Cool as a cucumber’- heard that one, right? Cucumbers instantly hydrate the body and bring down the body heat. Snack on them as a salad or with your favourite dip.

Watermelons and musk melons sell like hot cakes in summers. Juicy and full of nutrients that the body needs, the melons make for great summer companions. Not only do they hydrate but boost the body with power-packed nutrients

like Vitamin B, magnesium, potassium and fibre. The green leafy vegetables are high in nutrient value, calcium and provide a good cooling effect on the body. They can be had in smoothies, salads or as a side dish in a meal.

Packed with calcium, curd, yogurt or laban should be your go-to option for a healthy summer alternative to cold fizzy drinks. Rich with Vitamin B and gut-friendly bacteria, curd soothes the body from within. Add flavour to it by mixing it with mangoes, strawberries and other fruits.

To boost the protein content in your diet without depending on meats, turn to fish. Rich in good fatty acids, fish, makes for a tasty alternative. Since it generates less heat on consumption, you won't feel lethargic and uncomfortably full, a feeling that usually we associate with after having chicken and meat dishes.

The rise in mercury leaves us irritated and it often results in lack of appetite. While we feel that it is happening because of heat, to an extent our lifestyle and food habits are responsible for the change. Fried food is not easy to digest, which further leaves you bloated and should be restricted. We all know that meat is not an easy to digest food. Excessive consumption of meat in the summer season increases the pressure of the digestive system.





pH 9.1 to 9.5

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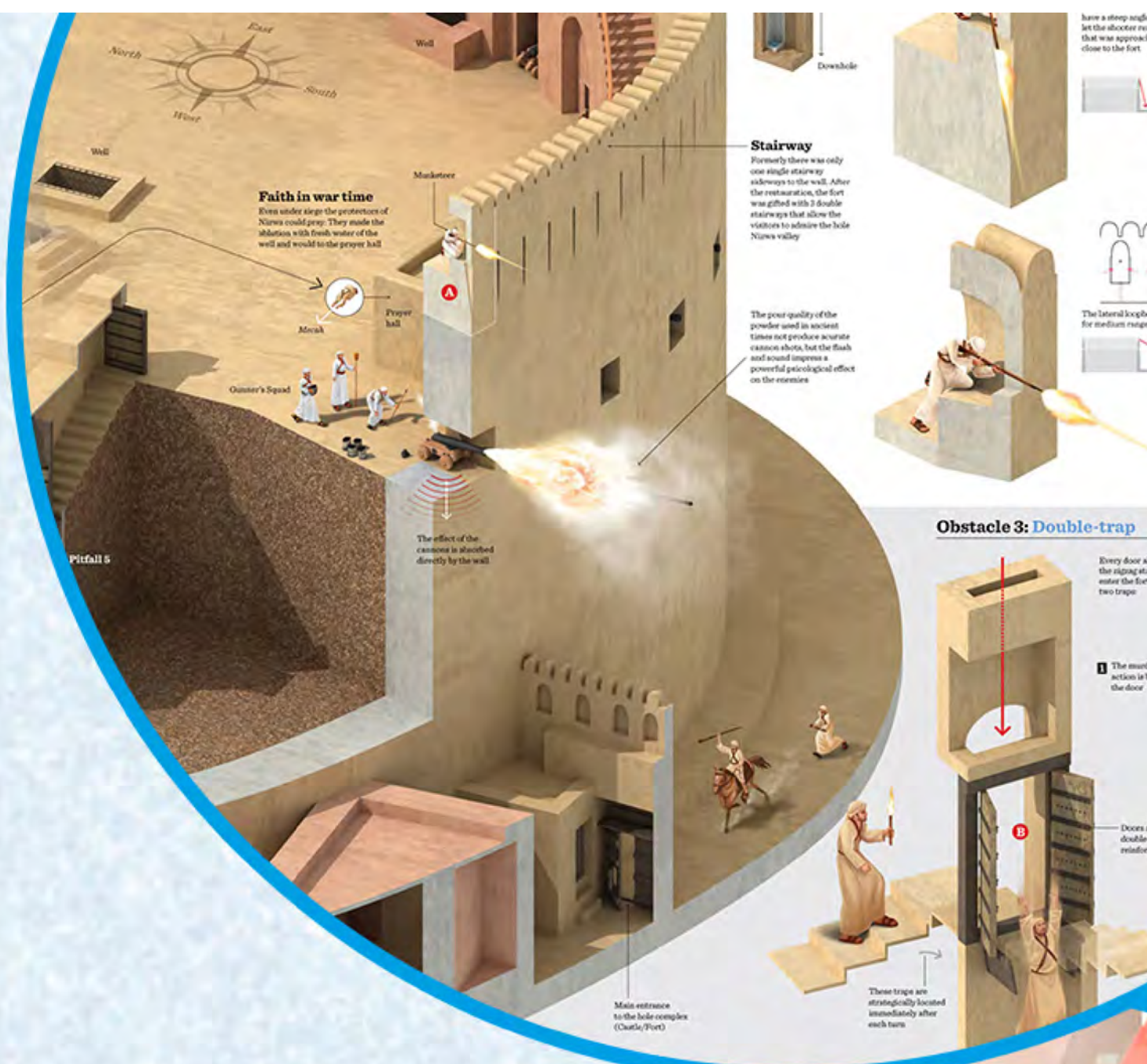
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