

TRAVELLERS FROM 11 COUNTRIES CAN ENTER SAUDI ARABIA

Arrivals coming from 11 countries are allowed to enter the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia as of May 30, 2021, at 1 am, Saudi Press Agency said quoting an official source at the Ministry of Interior. **>A6**



HM CONGRATULATES SYRIAN PRESIDENT

MUSCAT: His Majesty Sultan Haitham Bin Tarik has sent a cable of congratulations to President Dr. Bashar Al Assad of the Syrian Arab Republic on the occasion of him being re-elected as a president of his country for a new presidential term. In the cable, His Majesty the Sultan expressed his sincere congratulations and best wishes of success to President Al Assad in leading the brotherly Syrian people towards further aspirations of stability, progress and prosperity. **-ONA**



Founded 1975 · Volume 46 No. 68 | 16 Pages · Baisas 200 · Subscription OMR63 | ISO 9001:2008 Certified Company | Chairman/Editor-in-Chief: Mohamed Issa Al Zadjali | Printed & Published by Muscat Media Group

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JOB DRIVE GAINS MOMENTUM



Many employment opportunities have been announced in public and private sectors

Times News Service

MUSCAT: Oman's job creation drive to bring more nationals in its public and private sectors continues to gain momentum, following the announcement of additional employment opportunities.

More job opportunities have been announced across a number of fields.

The Sultan Qaboos Academy

for Police Sciences has opened a training course for Omani fresh police recruits who recently joined Royal Oman Police (ROP).

The course is being conducted mainly for holders of the General Education Diploma who passed assessment tests and health check-ups.

The participants will undergo basic training that qualifies them to shoulder the duties and tasks

of the ROP. The training includes basic military disciplines, sports, police sciences and law applications. Precautionary measures to prevent the spread of COVID-19 have been undertaken.

The ROP reaffirms its pledge to receive more batches of nationals in accordance with a modern employment strategy to enhance its services for citizens and residents.

Plans to step up Omanisation

rates in the country's electricity sector have also been put into action. Employment of 800 Omanis under sub-contractors working in this sector is being looked into by the Authority for Public Services Regulation. The jobs are for those sub-contractors that work with licenced companies. A number of private sector companies have also announced employment and training opportunities for Omanis that

meet their requirements. Oil and gas companies have announced 100 new vacancies, while shipping, delivery, and logistics firms are looking to hire a further 785 people.

A number of real estate and construction firms have together announced nearly 125 new openings. 200 opportunities for training and employment for a two-year span have been announced by a leading bank in the country. **>A5**

MINISTRY OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

Over 73,000 people benefit from social security pension

MUSCAT: The number of people benefiting from the Social Security Scheme (SSS) in May 2021 stood at 73,123 individuals and families, with a total of OMR7.78 million distributed to them.

In a statement to Oman News Agency (ONA), Salim Ali Al Oweisi of the Social Welfare Department, the Ministry of Social Development, said that the SSS beneficiaries fall in eight categories and get pay as follows:

Various categories

As many 2,307 cases fall in the category of 'Orphans', with a sum of OMR249,479 disbursed to them monthly; 3,577 cases of 'Widows' (OMR439,358); 11,244 cases of 'Divorced' women (OMR906,682); 31,288 'Elderly' people (OMR3,467,465); 3,184 'Unmarried' girls (OMR274,914); 5,949 cases of 'Disability' (OMR2,416,656); 186 'Families of Imprisoned' supporters (OMR28,327) and 91 cases of 'Deserted' persons (OMR12,464).

Outlining conditions for applying to the SSS Assistance, Al Oweisi told ONA that the appli-



cant should be of Omani citizenship, be among the above-mentioned eight deserving cases or a person not having any regular source of livelihood that covers or exceeds its needs as per the schedule set for pension cases stated in the SSS Law or a person not having any supporter who is capable of bearing the cost of sustaining the case. **-ONA**

TOP THREE INSIDE STORIES



OMAN COMEX 2021 begins

1 Information and communications technology exposition, COMEX 2021, kicked off on Sunday. **>A5**

WORLD Russia-Belarus talks

2 Russian President Vladimir Putin and Belarus strongman Alexander Lukashenko met for a second day of talks. **>A6**

MARKET Project market up

3 After declines over the last several quarters, the GCC project market showed a healthy recovery in the first quarter of 2021. **>B1**

NCSI consumer survey kicks off

MUSCAT: The National Centre for Statistics and Information (NCSI) yesterday began conducting the 30th cycle of the Consumer Confidence Survey for the second quarter of 2021. The survey which targets citizens who are 18 years old and above will run until 10 June, 2021.

The survey aims to identify the

development of the financial status of Omani families between the previous year and this year, the factors affecting the Omani economy both positively and negatively, the future prospects of the Omani economy, the families' purchasing power of household appliances, goods and cars, in addition to the availability of job opportunities at

the present time and their future expectations as well.

The survey includes 1,500 samples, including Omani nationals aged 18 or above, distributed across the governorates of the Sultanate, taking into account the representation of males and females in relation to society, groups and different educational levels. **>A5**

ROP ANNOUNCEMENT

Expat work visa rules modified

Times News Service

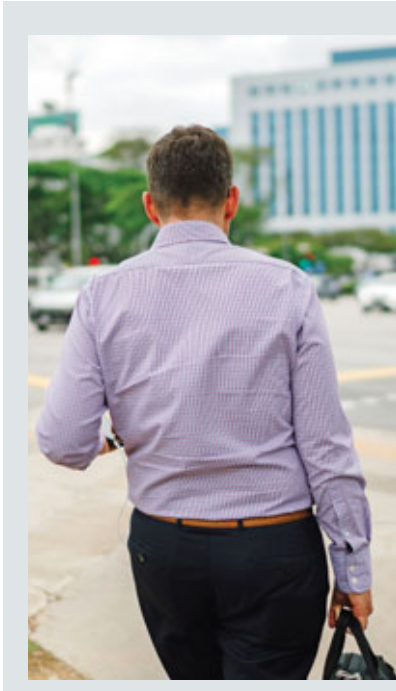
MUSCAT: Expatriates and visitors entering Oman on visit visas can get them converted into work permits, the Royal Oman Police (ROP) has announced.

The rule also applies to those with family joining visas and student visas, among others, provided certain conditions are met.

According to the decision, competent authorities can convert the following visas stipulated in the Foreigners' Residence Law, into a work visa or temporary work visa: "A visit visa issued to residents of GCC countries, a visit visa issued to meet relatives and friends in the country, single-entry tourist visas (valid for up to 10 days or a month), single and multiple entry business visas, express visas, investor visas, student visas, visas provided to sailors serving on-board, or passengers aboard cruise ships, visas for owners of residential units and their family members."

Amendment resolution

The decision comes into effect after the ROP issued a resolution to amend some provisions of the Executive Regulations of the Foreigners Residence Law. Article 1 of



According to the decision, competent authorities can convert specified categories of visas stipulated in the Foreigners' Residence Law, into a work visa or temporary work visa

the resolution states that the last paragraph of Article 10 of the text of the Executive Regulation of the Foreigners Residence Law is to be replaced by the following text: "The competent authority has the right to transfer visas numbers

(3/a, 3/ b, 3/d, 3/e/4, 5, 6, 9, 10, 13, 14, 15, and 16) stipulated in the law to a work or temporary work visa if its requirements are met, in accordance with the regulations set by the competent authority, after paying the required fees."

Dhofar Insurance Launches Oman's First Drive Through Facility in Al Khuwair



Sunil Kohli - CEO

Dhofar Insurance Company has opened the Sultanate's first drive through insurance facility in Al Khuwair, thereby making it easy for customers to obtain insurance services.

The new drive through facility is the latest customer centric

innovation from Dhofar Insurance. Earlier last year, the Company was the first in the Sultanate to offer 'Pay as you use' motor insurance for high end cars and protection against accidental damage to mobile phones. The Company is also the first Insurance Company in Oman to have the facility of printing the vehicle mulkiya after buying motor insurance at select locations across the Sultanate providing one stop solution to customer needs without the need to go elsewhere.

These initiatives are part of an ambitious business transformation program that was embarked upon last year. The drive through facility is located at Al Khuwair Main

Street and is open from 8:00 am to 10:00 pm on all week days.

"We have always looked at ways to enhance the customer experience and this new branch at Al Khuwair is one such step. Apart from being a full-service branch, it also features a unique drive-through facility which will help our customers immensely. Being accessible to our customers at all times is a priority and serving them with a seamless experience is a cornerstone of our product delivery" said Sunil Kohli, CEO, Dhofar Insurance Company.

Dhofar Insurance ended the year 2020 with strong performance registering double digit growth in business on the back of strong customer centric approach.

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Asr.....3:29pm

Maghrib.....6:54pm

Isha.....8:15pm

Fajr (Tomorrow).....3:54am

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PRIZES FOR KIDS, STANDARD & PRIORITY CUSTOMERS

TOTAL NATIONAL DAY PRIZES
OMR **55,000**
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TOTAL PRIZES FOR LADIES
OMR **11,000**
1 WINNER PER BRANCH

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COLUMN

Crafting career paths

Hello Readers,
I hope all of you are safe and keeping well.

Career is a much talked about yet still a vague topic for most people, especially young students. Hence, in the coming weeks and months, we shall be embarking together on an exciting journey to explore the various facets of a career – finding your path and voice, understanding the diverse options ahead of you and mindfully developing your career throughout your life.

When you are still in the throes of adolescence with your own immediate worries and priorities – like experiencing fun and friendships, scoring good grades, and choosing what to study further in college, career as a thought may seem too distant. A word to the wise: begin visualising your future well in advance so that you are able to enjoy a greater sense of involvement and ownership when it comes to choosing your path from the many directions ahead of you. It gives parents great confidence to see their child be an active participant in this decision-making process and select a path that best suits and interests them.

Reports show that an average person spends 90,000 hours at work. Therefore, our choice of study – from senior school to higher education and beyond, determines how we are going to spend a considerable span of our lifetime – our job life. And as we all know, in our world today, the job market prefers individuals who are well-versed and knowledgeable in their fields. This is why at multiple points of your school life, you are asked to choose what you want to do in the future or what you wish to learn in college to pursue your interests.



But by Grace

Dr Baby Sam Saamuel

Begin visualising your future well in advance so that you are able to enjoy a greater sense of involvement and ownership when it comes to choosing your path from the many directions ahead of you

paths do you take?

This dilemma is exactly what career counselling can help you with, and my goal here is to explore with you the ways and means to arrive at your decisions regarding your education, career and life.

How do we do this? I will meet you through this column every week to slowly and steadily understand the ocean of opportunities ahead of you and help you find the right tools and the right mindset to sail this ocean and reach your dream future.

Every week, we will be exploring a different aspect of higher education and employment, beginning with understanding yourself– your interests, abilities and preferences. The series will also feature information on jobs, career pathways and educational avenues available in the world today.

Hop on with me as I take you on a tour of the plethora of opportunities that await you. I hope you shall enjoy treading with me on this journey as much as I do writing to you.

You can reach me at mail@babysam.biz for queries or suggestions.

Dr Saamuel is also the Vice-Chairman, Knowledge Oman and is Ex-Chairman, Indian Schools in Oman.

COVID-19 IN OMAN

Updated on May 30, 2021

ACTIVE CASES >

Number of people who are currently sick

DAILY DEATHS >

Deaths registered in a single day

Source: Ministry of Health

March 1

April 26

May 30

7,546

18,503

14,562

The number of active cases is rising again

24

25

14

5-day average

novagram

MINISTRY OF HEALTH

Workshop focuses on health services

MUSCAT:

A virtual workshop was held on Sunday to discuss the modern criteria of health services with participation of specialists and health workers from various governorates of Oman.

The event was organised by the Ministry of Health (MoH) and represented by the Directorate General of Planning and Studies (DGPS).

Dr Halima Qalam Al Hinai,

DGPS Director-General said that the health policy in Oman attaches attention to providing health services and distributing them equitably for all regardless of the social and economic status. – OMA



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2,399 new COVID cases, 31 deaths reported in Oman

MUSCAT: As many as 2,399 new cases of coronavirus (COVID-19) were registered in the Sultanate during the past three days, in addition to 31 new COVID-19-related death cases. This brings the total number of positive cases to 216,183 in the Sultanate.

The total number of COVID-19-related death cases reached 2,334, the Ministry of Health said. The Ministry added that 2,207 new cases have recovered, bringing the total number to 199,287 recoveries.

The Ministry also pointed out that 100 cases were hospitalised over the past 24 hours, and the total number of current hospitalised COVID-19-infected patients stands at 809 of them 242 are in intensive care units (ICUs). -ONA



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NOTICE FOR ORDINARY GENERAL MEETING

The Board of Directors of MUSCAT GASES (the “Company”) has the pleasure to invite the shareholders to attend the Ordinary General Meeting, which will be held at 03:00 PM on 16/06/2021, via the electronic platform to hold ordinary general meetings which can be assessed through the website of Muscat Clearing & Depository Company (www.mcd.gov.om). If the quorum requirement for holding the Ordinary General Meeting is not fulfilled, a second Ordinary General Meeting shall be held at 03:00 PM on 22/06/2021, to discuss the following agenda:

Ordinary Agendas:

1. Approving the annulment of the decision of the ordinary general meeting held on March 28, 2021 to distribute cash dividends to shareholders on the date of the AGM, at the rate of (20 baisas per share) for the year ended on 31/12/2020
2. Study and approve a proposal to distribute cash dividends to shareholders on the date of the association, at a rate of 0.0138 Omani riyals per share, for the year ended on 31/12/2020
3. Study and approve a proposal to distribute cash dividends to shareholders on the date of the meeting at amount of RO 0.0007 per share, out of the company’s retained earnings for the year ended on 12/31/2020

According to the Company’s Articles of Association and the controls for holding Ordinary General Meetings using modern technology issued by the capital market authority, we would like to draw your attention to the following:

1. Legal person, exclusively, has the right to delegate a natural person to attend the Ordinary General Meeting and vote on its behalf through technical means, provided that this natural person has an investor number in MCDC.
2. Voting on any of the agenda item s begins no more than three days before the date of the Ordinary General Meeting until the voting process ends on the day of the Ordinary General Meeting. If the shareholder’s shares are increased or decreased, the voting process will be canceled, and the shareholder will have to vote again on the day of the Ordinary General Meeting.

For further information please contact on telephone No 91239958
or email: Salim.d@muscatgas.com





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VIRTUAL EXHIBITION

COMEX 2021 begins in Oman

MUSCAT: Information and communications technology exposition, COMEX 2021, kicked off on Sunday under the theme of 'Digital Transformation and Concerted Espousal of Artificial Intelligence Future.'

Ten government firms and 80 private sector companies are taking part in the exhibition, alongside international firms.

It was launched by the Minister of Transport, Communications and Information Technology.

This virtual chapter of the exhibition, which lasts till June 8, sheds light on advancements in Information Communications and Technology (ICT) worldwide and showcases new initiatives and government electronic services in the Sultanate.

Besides, the main show, the activities include an ICT excellence award ceremony and a 6-day conference, with 16 discussion sessions focusing on sectors that embraced the digital revolution most, which are the sectors of health, tourism, banking, finance, mining and education.

The agenda also includes work-



shops and specialised lectures, as well as agreements and memoranda of understanding inked on the sidelines of the event.

The minister said that COMEX 2021 assumes significance from its perspective of highlighting government electronic services and encouraging digital transformation in different fields and sectors.

A key motive is to exchange expertise and review experiences of leading companies in this domain of renewed technologies and innovations.

The minister pointed out that COMEX 2021 figures as the biggest ICT specialised event in the

Sultanate and generates massive reaction in public and private establishments.

Every year the extravaganza focuses on a specific theme in the ICT sector.

Recently, the organising firm focused on artificial intelligence and the role of digital transformation in facilitating human life.

On the sidelines of the event, the participants marked World Communications Day. The speech of the Secretary-General of International Communications Union was presented and a filmed initiative of the Telecommunications Regulatory Authority was screened. — **ONA**

QUARTERLY SURVEY

<FROM A1> Consumer behaviour

Data collection will be done over mobile phones.

The methodology involves a simple arithmetic average of three sub-indicators, namely the current economic conditions index, household income level index, and consumer expectations index.

The Consumer Confidence Index is a reflection of the behaviour of consumers. An increase in customer spending leads to a rise in demand for various goods and services. This results in increased production and a rise in production facilities to meet that demand, which in turn aids the economic recovery process. Accordingly, the Consumer Confidence Index provides a futuristic vision to where the economy is heading.

Starting from the first quarter of 2015, the Consumer Confidence Index (as well as the sub-indices) is calculated as a record

number attributed to the last quarter of 2014.

Whenever the index value exceeds 100 points, this indicates a relative improvement in the index values over the reference period and an increase in the level of optimism regarding economic conditions. The reverse occurs when the index falls below 100. If the index value remains stable at 100, it means neutrality or no change from the reference period.

NCSI carries out quarterly surveys of consumer confidence index, with the first cycle of the same conducted in March 2014. The Fourth quarter of 2014 was picked to be the base period based on the relative stability of indices at that time in comparison to previous periods. The timing was also chosen in order to avoid the effects of unifying the civil sector's salaries which came into effect in January 2014. — **ONA**

RECRUITMENT DRIVE

<FROM A1> Many jobs announced

Besides, a leading utilities provider is looking for 300 people to join its operations. Universities have also announced about 70 new vacancies. Opportunities for training and employment are also available in food and beverage, and hospitality.

The Sultan's Armed Forces will also begin receiving recruits as part of the initiative to employ more locals. The Royal Army of Oman and the Royal Air Force of Oman will, from Monday, 31 May onwards, begin receiving candidates fit for induction into the armed forces. The Royal Navy will begin a day later.

"The Royal Navy of Oman announces that as of Tuesday, June 1, 2021, it will start receiving applications for job seekers who meet the terms of recruitment and want to join the Sultan's Armed Forces," added the ONA.

The armed forces will also pub-

lish announcements regarding recruitment, and employment to various posts in the Defence Ministry via official channels, including local newspapers and websites. In education, 2,733 expatriates will be replaced by Omanis who have cleared the relevant teaching exams during the current and previous years, according to the Ministry of Education.

The Ministry of Labour also held on Friday a joint meeting with the Directors-General of Human Resources at various government bodies to devise ways to employ more citizens across various sectors of the labour market.

The meeting aimed to set a schedule in terms of targets and deadlines for the replacement of expatriates with local manpower, as well as enabling the hiring of workers on temporary contracts, in keeping with the needs of organisations.

MASIRAH BEACH CAMP

Kitesurfing courses

MUSCAT: Masirah Beach Camp is organising international kitesurfing courses.

Masirah Beach Camp overlooks the Arabian Sea in the Wilayat of Masirah, and is approximately 9 kilometres from the city centre.



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NEW MEASURE

Travellers from 11 countries can enter Saudi Arabia

MUSCAT: Arrivals coming from a number of countries are allowed to enter the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia as of May 30, 2021, at 1 am, Saudi Press Agency (Spa), said.

An official source at the Ministry of Interior stated that the arrivals coming from the United Arab Emirates, the Federal Republic of Germany, the United States of America, Ireland, the Republic of Italy, the Republic of Portugal, the



United Kingdom, the Kingdom of Sweden, the Swiss Confederation, the Republic of France, and Japan to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia are allowed to enter the Kingdom.

The source affirmed that the institutional quarantine will be applied on those coming from the aforementioned countries, pointing out that this new measure went into force on May 30, 2021, at 1 am.

The source added that this announcement is based on the Public Health Authority's report regarding the epidemiological situation in a number of declared countries, which showed stability and effectiveness in controlling the pandemic in some of these countries.

This announcement was in reference to the statement issued in February, 2021.

Vladimir Putin hosts Lukashenko amid wave of criticism from West

Saturday's talks had centred on economic cooperation and the coronavirus pandemic



MOSCOW: Russian President Vladimir Putin took Belarus strongman Alexander Lukashenko for a boat trip on Saturday as the pair met for a second day of talks amid outcry over Minsk's decision to force a plane to land last week, and arrest a dissident blogger.

"Yesterday was the day of official talks and today it's informal," Kremlin spokesman Dmitri Peskov told reporters about the meetings in Sochi, a city on the Black Sea.

Putin and Lukashenko took advantage of "the fine weather" and went "on a boat trip," the spokes-

man continued.

Saturday's talks had centered on economic cooperation and the coronavirus pandemic, according to Peskov.

Common ground

Putin was keen to show his long-standing ally support over the lat-

est standoff with the West.

Last Sunday, Minsk forced a Ryanair plane, which was en route to Lithuania, to land in the Belarusian capital, where authorities arrested Raman Pratasevich, a blogger critical of Lukashenko's government, and his 23-year-old girlfriend.

The West has since decried the decision to force the jet to land.

The United States on Friday announced punitive measures targeting the regime while Brussels urged EU-based carriers to avoid Belarusian airspace.

Putin and Lukashenko did not shy away from the events of last Sunday.

"Lukashenko provided his counterpart detailed information about what happened on board the Ryanair aircraft," Peskov confirmed. The Kremlin was "not indifferent to the fate" of the detained blogger's girlfriend, Sofia Sapega, a Russian national, the spokesman added.

Financial help

Meanwhile, it was confirmed Russia will move ahead with a second installment of a \$1.5 billion (€1.23 billion) loan to Belarus.

Moscow gave Minsk the first \$500 million last October, aimed at stabilizing its neighbor, with the second tranche set to be received before the end of June, both the RIA and Interfax news agencies reported. [rw](#)

Times OF OMAN

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



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

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

ROMAN CATHOLIC WESTMINSTER CATHEDRAL

British PM Boris Johnson secretly marries fiancée Carrie Symonds

LONDON: British Prime Minister Boris Johnson married his fiancée Carrie Symonds in a "secret ceremony" on Saturday, according to an announcement from Johnson's Downing Street office.

The Mail on Sunday and the *Sun* reported that the couple wed at the Roman Catholic Westminster Cathedral in London with a small group of friends and family present.

Surprise element

The development comes as a surprise, given that the *Sun* announced a week ago that the couple would be getting married in the summer of 2022.

The tabloid then said on Saturday that the ceremony was "so secret even top aides didn't know about it."

Under current coronavirus restrictions in England, weddings are limited to 30 guests.

First nuptials for a sitting PM in two centuries

Symonds joined the Conservative Party as a press officer in 2009 and later campaigned for



her future husband in the 2010 mayoral selection for the party. She became the party's head of communications in 2018, before relinquishing the position later the same year.

Johnson and Symonds announced their engagement at the end of February 2020 and have a son together, 1-year-old Wilfred.

The pair were due to get married in 2020, but like so many others, had to postpone their plans due to the pandemic.

Johnson is only the second British prime minister to marry while in office, and the first in nearly two centuries, with Robert Jenkinson tying the knot while he was PM in 1822. [rw](#)

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MotoGP rider Jason Dupasquier dies after crash

Dupasquier was involved in a multi-rider incident between Turns 9 and 10

FLORENCE: Swiss Moto3 rider, 19-year-old Jason Dupasquier passed away following a serious incident in the Qualifying 2 session of the Italian Grand Prix. Dupasquier was involved in a multi-rider incident between Turns 9 and 10, with the session red-flagged thereafter. FIM medical intervention vehicles arrived at the site immediately and the Swiss rider was attended to on track before being transferred by medical helicopter, in a stable state, to Carreggi Hospital in Florence. "Following a serious incident in



the Moto3 Qualifying 2 session at the Gran Premio d'Italia Oakley, it is with great sadness that we report the passing of Moto3 rider Jason Dupasquier," MotoGP said in a statement. According to the organisers, despite the best efforts of circuit medical staff and all those subsequently attending to the Swiss

rider, the hospital has announced that Dupasquier has succumbed to his injuries. Dupasquier had made an impressive start to his second season in the lightweight class of Grand Prix racing, consistently scoring points and within the top ten in the standings. **ANI**

Players might get rotated bit more in series against India

LONDON: Pacer James Anderson has hinted that the England and Wales Cricket Board (ECB) might rotate its players a bit more in the upcoming five-match Test series against India. However, the pacer also said that he would like to play all seven Tests this summer (two against New Zealand and then five against India), but it would not be realistic. He also said that he would love to share the new ball with his partner-in-crime Stuart Broad. "I don't feel like I've played that many games. My body doesn't feel old or tired, it's just incredible. Yes, I'd love to play all seven Tests this summer. There are five Tests against India after these two Tests against New Zealand, and then the Ashes after that. So we want to start this summer well. So hopefully, if we do pick our strongest team we [Anderson and Broad] would like to think that we're both in that. And we'd love to share the new ball together, yes," ESPNcricinfo quoted Anderson as saying. "Stuart and I have sent a few texts to each other saying it'd be nice if we did get to play together. Obviously, it's completely down to the coach and captain. But I think, from the team's point of view, we want to get some momentum going into a big summer. The rota-



tion in the winter was completely understandable with the amount of cricket we had and the amount of time in bubbles that we were spending. It's going to be slightly different this summer," he added. Anderson, who would be turning 39 this year, has taken 614 scalps from 160 matches. He is on the verge of becoming England's most capped Test player. "If everything goes well, I think it will start to get relaxed. We won't be in the sort of bubble life that we've experienced in the last 12 months. So there might be not as much reason to rest people. I know it's probably not that realistic to play all seven

Tests. Especially with the depth we have in the bowling group, it makes sense to keep everyone fresh," said Anderson. "So it's just a case of managing workloads. If I played the first Test and bowled 20 overs, then obviously I'd want to play in the second Test. But if it's a game where I bowled 50 overs, then you'd obviously review that. So yes, I'd love to play this first two. I know they're back to back, but there is a bit of a break after them. The five Tests against India might be a different story with back-to-backs in quite quick succession. That might be where people get rotated a bit more," he added. **ANI**

CHAMPIONS LEAGUE

Kai Havertz's sole strike helps Chelsea defeat Man City

PORTO: Sole strike from Kai Havertz helped Chelsea defeat Manchester City in the finals of the UEFA Champions League on Saturday (local time) here at the Estadio do Dragao in Porto. This was the first time that Chelsea had made it to the finals of the Champions League after winning the title way back in 2012. This is the second time that the Blues have managed to win the Champions League. In the match between both these sides, Manchester City held on to the ball for 61 per cent of the match while Chelsea kept the ball for just 39 per cent of the match. However, City was not able to capitalise. City had just one shot on target in the entire match while Chelsea had two shots on target. Havertz's goal finally came in the 42nd minute of the match and this gave Chelsea a 1-0 lead in the match, and this threw Manchester City on the backfoot. City tried their best to get the equaliser but Chelsea's defense managed to hang on and in the end, the Blues walked away with a fa-



CHAMPIONS: This was the first time that Chelsea had made it to the finals of the Champions League after winning the title way back in 2012.

mous victory. This title win is the major shot in the arm for Chelsea manager Thomas Tuchel as he was put in charge of the club just five months earlier. He had replaced Frank Lampard as the coach. Manchester City was playing their first-ever finals of the Champions League. Pep Guardiola's side had earlier won the Premier League and Carabao Cup in the 2020-21 season. **Guardiola rues Champions League final defeat** Lisbon: Manchester City coach Pep Guardiola lamented the loss of the UEFA Champions League to Chelsea on Saturday night. Afterwards, the Spanish coach, who has not won a European tournament for almost a decade, preferred to focus on the efforts of his team. "I did my best to choose the team and tried to choose the best players to win, as I always do. We had a hard time breaking Chelsea's lines in the first half," he explained. Guardiola maintained that the

second part of the game was much better. "It is not easy against a team with a defensive structure like Chelsea. We suffered a little with long balls and second balls. In moments like these, inspiration is needed." However, the coach said that he played "a good final, considering that it was the first time" that Manchester City had reached this stage. "We showed courage, especially in the second half. The players did everything and left everything on the field. I want to congratulate them for the incredible game and for the way they played today," he recalled. According to Guardiola, it was an "exceptional season" for City, who "unfortunately failed to win". "We are going to work even harder to get back here. I don't have enough insight now to think about the next season. This season was very tough for us in the middle of a pandemic and all that. It remains for me to say that we are sad. Congratulations to Chelsea," he concluded. **ANI**

WEST INDIES VS SOUTH AFRICA

Happy with preparations up to this point: Windies coach

GROS ISLET: The West Indies men's squad has returned to full training in two groups at their preparation camp in St Lucia after all members of the squad returned negative RT-PCR tests, following the latest round of testing that was conducted on Thursday. They had team sessions on Friday as well as Saturday morning and afternoon and head coach, Phil Simmons is happy to be able to now finetune his squad's preparation in the build-up to the two-match Test series against South Africa. These matches will be played at the Daren Sammy Cricket Ground for the Sir Vivian Richards Trophy on June 10-14 and June 18-22 and these two are the final matches in the current cycle of the ICC World Test Championship. The Proteas are due to arrive on the island on Tuesday, June 1. The West Indies players will be involved in a "Best v Best" four-day match, at the same venue beginning on Monday, May 31, and the head coach sees this as a great opportunity for all involved. "I am happy that we are back to full training. We are happy with the preparations up to this point and everyone is fully aware of what is required," Simmons said in an official Cricket West Indies (CWI) release., issued on Sunday. "Yes, we had four good Test



matches (vs Bangladesh and Sri Lanka), but at the same time, people need to know that their position is not guaranteed unless they continue to play well. Guys who are out, need to show that they want to get back in by doing well in these games. So, it is a benefit to every one of us," he added. Simmons also praised the facilities provided in St Lucia throughout the camp at the Daren Sammy Cricket Ground, which is overseen by CWI Head Groundsman, Kent Crafton. The West Indies Men are gearing up to begin a busy summer schedule, which includes visits from South Africa,

Australia, and Pakistan before the Caribbean Premier League begins in late August. The players and staff were previously forced to train in small groups, as a result of the positive COVID-19 and isolation of fast bowler Marquino Mindley on Friday, May 22. Mindley, who has already returned one negative PCR test on Thursday, remains asymptomatic and in isolation at the team hotel. The CWI medical team continues to monitor his progress, as he requires one more negative PCR test before being allowed to re-join the squad. **ANI**

BOXING

Mary Kom settles for silver medal at Asian Boxing Championships

DUBAI: Indian pugilist Mary Kom finished her campaign with a silver medal at the 2021 ASBC Asian Boxing Championships after going down fighting against the two-time world champion Nazym Kyzaybay in a high-octane 51kg final in Dubai on Sunday. Both the boxers started the summit clash with an aggressive mindset and soon exchanged powerful blows attempting to unsettle each other. The five-time Asian Championships gold medallist Mary Kom used all her experience against the Kazakh boxer and made her work hard but it wasn't enough as the latter tilted the hard-fought game successfully in her favour and emerged champion with a narrow 29-28, 28-29, 30-27, 29-28, 28-29 scoreline. It is the second silver for Mary Kom at the Asian Championships who has previously won titles on five occasions --2003, 2005, 2010, 2012, and 2017 besides silver in 2008. Later three more Indian boxers--- Pooja Rani (75kg), Lalbat-saihi (64kg), and Anupama (+81) --- will be seen in action in the women finals on Sunday at the on-going prestigious Championships. **ANI**

FRENCH OPEN



Naomi wins opening match at French Open

PARIS: World number two Naomi Osaka got off to a flying start in the French Open last year, is seeking a fifth Grand Slam title, and first on the opening day of the tournament on Sunday. With the victory, the Japanese tennis star also extended her winning streak at the Grand Slams to 15 matches in a row. Osaka booked her spot in the second round by overcoming Tig in a tight second set ending the game which lasted for one hour 47 minutes. The 23-year-old, who has

won her last two consecutive majors but did not feature in French Open last year, is seeking a fifth Grand Slam title, and first on a surface other than hard court. Osaka will now lock horns with another Romanian, Ana Bogdan, who knocked out Italian tennis player Elisabetta Cocciaretto 6-1, 6-3. Earlier this week, Osaka said she would not be taking part in press conferences during the French Open in order to ensure better mental health. **ANI**

BITCOIN FALLS 5.2%

Bitcoin dipped 5.16per cent to \$33,849.47 at 18:00 GMT on Saturday, losing \$1,842.99 from its previous close. Ether, the coin linked to the Ethereum blockchain network, dropped 6.26 per cent to \$2,262.06 on Saturday, losing \$151.11 from its previous close.

MARKET
BUSINESS & FINANCE



MSX INDEX ENDS HIGHER

The MSX index closed at 3,836.35 points, up 0.12 per cent from the previous close. The Sharia Index ended up 0.68 per cent at 553.41 points. National Aluminium Product, up 3.88 per cent, was the top gainer while Global Investment Holding, down 4.00 per cent, was the top loser.

GCC project market shows signs of strong recovery in first quarter

The region has seen a decline in new project awards over the years as even the existing and ongoing projects were thoroughly scrutinised for their viability in a low spending environment

Times News Service

MUSCAT: After witnessing declines over the last several quarters, the GCC project market showed a healthy recovery during the first quarter of 2021 with the value of projects awarded more than doubling quarter-on-quarter to \$26.3 billion, a new report shows.

“This was mainly led by pending project awards from last year, in addition to efforts by governments in the region to vaccinate the bulk of the population and limit the spread of the COVID-19 that affected economic activity across the globe,” Kamco Invest, a Kuwait-based investment, strategy and research firm.

Quoting Bloomberg the research firm said close to 26.5 million doses have been administered with at least the first dose of the vaccine



REPORT: According to a new report, the quarterly trend shows wide variations in the GCC but promising seasonal rebound. In terms of quarterly data on project awards, the GCC region witnessed the normal seasonal spike during Q1-2021 with project awards worth \$26.3 billion, more than double the contract awards during Q4-2020 that stood at \$12.8 billion- Photo used for illustrative purpose only

in the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) out of a total population of 54 million residents.

Most of the countries have already announced easing or no restrictions with an eye on providing uninterrupted business activity.

Historically, however, the GCC project market has remained under severe pressure ever since the crude oil prices started declining and the onset of COVID-19 was essentially only partly responsible for the slowdown that the sector is witnessing recently.

The region has seen a decline in

new project awards over the years as even the existing and ongoing projects were thoroughly scrutinised for their viability in a low spending environment.

With rising debt levels and record high fiscal deficits as revenues declined, governments in the GCC cancelled numerous projects after the fall in oil prices.

This affected the aggregate project market in the region even before the COVID-19 pandemic started and as projects got completed contractors in the region were seeing declining workloads.

The value of projects planned and under execution in the GCC has remained around the \$1.7 trillion mark since 2017.

According to a new report, the quarterly trend shows wide variations in the GCC but promising seasonal rebound. In terms of quarterly data on project awards, the GCC region witnessed the normal seasonal spike during Q1-2021 with project awards worth \$26.3 billion, more than double the contract awards during Q4-2020 that stood at \$12.8 billion.

However, the growth came

mainly on the back of a quarter-on-quarter (q-o-q) increase in project awards in Qatar and Kuwait while the rest of the GCC countries reported declines.

When compared to Q1-2020, only Qatar reported growth in project awards that resulted in a smaller decline at the aggregate GCC level at 3.5 per cent, Kamco Invest report said.

The higher number for Qatar mainly reflects the \$13.0 billion award for the Qatargas -LNG processing trains project. On the other hand, Saudi Arabia and UAE

have seen the biggest absolute fall in project awards during Q1-2021 with declines at \$6.5 billion and \$6.1 billion, respectively. In terms of full-year performance, project awards in the GCC showed a declining trend in the last 6 out of 7 years.

According to data from MEED Projects, total project awards in 2020 reached \$67.4 billion, the lowest recorded level since 2004.

The year-on-year (y-o-y) decline in 2020 stood at \$46.2 billion with Saudi Arabia seeing the biggest decline in the region with a fall of \$34.0 billion followed by UAE with a decline of \$11.5 billion. Kuwait and Oman were the only bright spots during 2020 recording a y-o-y growth in project awards during the year at \$0.9 billion and 0.5 billion, respectively.

The total value of GCC contracts of the construction sector awarded during Q4-20, the largest projects sector in the GCC, sank 50.3 per cent to reach \$4.1 billion against USD 8.2 billion during Q4-19 according to data gathered by MEED.

The quarterly contract awards for the GCC region shows a spike in projects for the gas sector during Q1-2021, mainly due to the Qatargas award in Qatar.

However, sectors like construction, power and transport continue to show promising consistency in awards in the region.

According to data from MEED Projects, the average project award for the construction sector stood at \$5.5 billion during the last four quarters while that in the power and transport sectors showed averages of \$1.2 billion and \$2.4 billion, respectively.

The water sector has also seen regular project awards over the last few years.

OVERSEAS BUYERS

Middle East investors begin to return to UK's property market

Times News Service

MUSCAT: Investors from the Middle East are beginning to return to the UK's property market, according to the latest data compiled by global property consultancy Knight Frank.

The firm's data highlights that 16 per cent of all sales to overseas buyers in the first three months of 2021 were to Middle Eastern buyers, up from less than 10 per cent in the second and third quarters of last year. This is the highest proportion of Middle Eastern interest since the outbreak of COVID-19 in the UK.

Despite early signs of a recovery, the firm says Middle Eastern investment is still some way off pre-COVID levels, yet it expects activity to tick up further as international travel restrictions ease.

The data highlights that buyers from the GCC are currently ranked third most prominent in the UK, only surpassed by buyers from Asia (18 per cent) and Europe (59 per cent).

“International demand for London property has been building over the last 12 months despite global travel restrictions,” said Tom Bill, head of UK residential research at Knight Frank. “It has led to frustration on the part of some prospective buyers, particularly against the backdrop of the UK's successful vaccination programme. Once travel rules are relaxed, we expect normal service to resume, including London's long-standing relationship with buyers from the Middle East.”

Despite lower-than-normal levels of investment from GCC investors, Knight Frank's Global Wealth Ambassador to the Middle East, who works closely with the region's high net worth individuals and family offices, has completed almost £90m worth of sales since the UK went into lockdown.

Moreas Madani, Middle East Global Wealth Ambassador at Knight Frank, said, “There is a par-



DATA: Knight Frank's data highlights that 16 per cent of all sales to overseas buyers in the first three months of 2021 were to Middle Eastern buyers, up from less than 10 per cent in the second and third quarters of last year. - Supplied picture

ticularly high demand from GCC investors for best-in-class new build projects in and around Mayfair.

Steady interest

“We are seeing steady interest from the Middle East; however, the biggest challenge remains restrictions on international travel. As this eases, and post-Ramadan, we are expecting to see more activity from the region as pent-up demand is released.”

Lodha, the developer behind No.1 Grosvenor Square, the former US Embassy and the Canadian High Commission, is witnessing first-hand the uptick in demand from Middle Eastern buyers. No.1 Grosvenor Square offers 44 Grade I listed apartments, through Knight Frank (+44 20 7861 5461).

Gabriel York, Co-CEO of Lodha

UK comments, “We have seen a steady increase in enquiries from prospective purchasers from the Middle East since the start of the new year, and we expect this to continue through the summer as London re-opens and international travel resumes. We are now meeting numerous GCC families and business people who may have previously stayed in a hotel suite when travelling to London but are now looking to acquire a permanent residence in the city.

“They are attracted to No. 1 Grosvenor Square by the prestige and grandeur of the building, the central Mayfair location, the quality of the amenities and the desire for exceptional services that are personalised for them. The unique automated parking system, known as the vault, has also been a partic-

ular draw for customers from the Middle East with special car collections who want a total security for their vehicles.

“Health and wellbeing are increasingly important factors in property decisions, and purchasers are seeking residences close to garden squares and parks with exceptional health facilities and easy access to health services.

“No 1 Grosvenor Square is located on London's second-largest garden square and within walking distance to central London's largest park, Hyde Park.

“The building contains its health and wellness centre, including 25m swimming pool, gym, pilates room, treatment and consultation rooms, and is supported by health advisors from a range of wellness and medical disciplines.”

NEW REPORT

Global tech providers' merger and acquisition activities to top 2018 highs by 2022: Gartner

DUBAI: By 2022, the level of global mergers and acquisitions (M&A) activity involving technology providers will surpass previous highs recorded in 2018, according to Gartner.

Acquisitions of tech providers were briefly impacted in 2020 by the onset of the pandemic, but M&A activity quickly rebounded into 2021 as the economy began to recover.

“Market conditions for deal-making will continue to improve as volatility stemming from COVID-19 subsides,” said Max Azaham, senior research director at Gartner. “Tech CEOs pursuing acquisitions should anticipate increased competition for targets and take steps to gain advantages over other acquirers to earn seller acceptance.”

Acquisition activity was most adversely impacted during the second quarter of 2020, but activity in the fourth quarter was higher than in the last two years. Acquisitions of communications providers led the rebound in the second half of 2020, followed by acquisitions of services and software companies.

Financial acquirers demonstrating growth interest, especially in software providers

Acquisitions of technology providers are met with increasing interest among financial services companies, predominantly private equity firms. Throughout 2020, financial acquisitions of software providers represented over half of all such acquisitions. Despite software already being the largest category, financial acquirers' increasing interest should drive higher activity in 2021. The largest M&A activity gains in the second half of 2020 involved financial acquisition of communications providers (93 per cent growth), and acqui-

sitions of services providers by financial acquirers were 30 per cent higher in the fourth quarter of 2020, compared to the prior two years' average.

Consolidation trends indicating high degree of overlap between acquirers and targets

Consolidation of providers with high degrees of overlap increased by 65 per cent and 40 per cent in services and software markets, respectively, in the second half or 2020, compared to the average number of M&A transactions in 2018 and 2019 (transactions of over \$1 billion in value were excluded).

These consolidation trends suggest tech CEOs must be prepared for competitive landscapes where key competitors merge, especially among service providers.

“Instead of making acquisitions or being acquired, tech CEOs will start to consider partnerships and ecosystems to level the playing field against larger companies resulting from consolidation in their markets,” said Azaham.

M&A impacts on enterprise customers

The expected uptick in M&A activity throughout this year cannot leave existing customers behind. Successful acquirers will consider the implications for end-users and make customer experience a top priority across each stage of the M&A life cycle.

CIO customers of vendors undergoing integration expect minimal service disruptions and transparent communications on the product, pricing and support changes if any. “Without empathy and a deep understanding of what motivates the existing customer base, organisations risk acquiring a customer base that will churn following deal closure,” said Azaham.

MARKET

MSX index ends higher

National Aluminium Product, up 3.88 per cent, was the top gainer, while Global Investment Holding, down 4.00 per cent, was the top loser

MUSCAT: The MSX index closed at 3,836.35 points, up 0.12 per cent from the previous close. The Sharia Index ended up 0.68 per cent at 553.41 points.

National Aluminium Product, up 3.88 per cent, was the top gainer, while Global Investment Holding, down 4.00 per cent, was the top loser. Shares of Madina Takaful were the most active in terms of the number of shares traded while National Aluminium Product was most active in terms of turnover.

A total number of 617 trades were executed during the day's trading session, generating a turnover of OMR2 million, with more than 10 million shares changing hands. Out of 43 traded stocks, 16 advanced, 11 declined and 16 remained unchanged.

At the session close, GCC and Arab investors were net sell-

ers for OMR259,000 while local investors were net buyers for OMR255,000 followed by foreign investors for OMR5,000 worth of shares.

Financial Index remained unchanged at 5,952.39 points, 0.00 per cent. Oman & Emirates Holding, Ominvest, Al Anwar Investment, Al Sharqia Investment and Madina Takaful were up 2.00 per cent, 1.28 per cent, 1.11 per cent, 1.11 per cent and 1.06 per cent respectively. Global Investment Holding, Muscat Finance, Taa-geer Finance, Sohar International Bank and Bank Dhofar were down 4.00 per cent, 2.17 per cent, 1.43 per cent, 1.14 per cent and 0.87 per cent respectively.

Industrial Index closed at 5,516.82 points, up 0.61 per cent.

Services Index was up by 0.31 per cent closing at 1,621.85 points. — **United Securities**

MUSCAT STOCK EXCHANGE

INDICES

Index	High	Low	Value	Prev. Value	Diff.	Diff%
MSX 30 INDEX	3,839.76	3,830.69	3,836.35	3,831.71	4.65	0.12
FINANCIAL INDEX	5,966.09	5,952.09	5,952.39	5,952.37	0.02	0.00
Industry Index	5,516.83	5,492.85	5,516.83	5,483.39	33.44	0.61
Services Index	1,621.85	1,616.05	1,621.85	1,616.76	5.09	0.31
MSX Shariah Index	553.54	550.24	553.41	549.70	3.71	0.68
MSX TR INDEX	4,608.66	4,597.78	4,604.58	4,598.99	5.58	0.12

Trading Summary

Volume	Turnover	Trades	Market Cap.	Up	Down	Equal	Sec. Traded
10,168,393	1,812,677	617	21,138,900,665	16	11	16	43

SHARE PRICE BULLETIN FOR SUNDAY, MAY 30

SECURITY NAME	VOLUME	TURNOVER	TRADES	OPEN PRICE	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE PR.	PREV. CLOSE	DIFF (RD)	DIFF %	LAST PR	LAST BD	LAST OFFER	P/B VALUE	MARKET CAP
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REGULAR MARKET

OM0000000176	JAZEERA STEEL PROD	354,648	132,097	46	0.366	0.380	0.366	0.372	0.360	0.012	3.333	0.374	0.374	0.378	0.100	46,462,041	
OM0000000179	OMAN CEMENT	21,700	5,415	5	0.250	0.250	0.249	0.250	0.242	0.008	3.306	0.250	0.245	0.250	0.100	82,718,178	
OM0000000505	ALMAHA CERAMICS	204,504	66,995	39	0.324	0.330	0.324	0.328	0.318	0.010	3.145	0.328	0.328	0.328	0.100	18,040,000	
OM0000002226	ALJAZEERA SERVICES	433,428	166,290	31	0.378	0.384	0.378	0.384	0.374	0.010	2.674	0.384	0.384	0.384	0.408	0.100	23,502,441
OM0000001160	NATIONAL GAS	85,467	12,661	8	0.149	0.149	0.146	0.148	0.146	0.002	1.370	0.149	0.147	0.149	0.100	12,580,000	
OM0000001533	OMINVEST	103,000	32,598	5	0.316	0.318	0.314	0.316	0.312	0.004	1.282	0.318	0.314	0.320	0.100	255,256,056	
OM0000001772	ALANWAR INVESTMENT	1,019,652	83,253	51	0.091	0.092	0.091	0.091	0.090	0.001	1.111	0.091	0.090	0.091	0.100	18,200,000	
OM0000002440	AL SHARQIA INV.	524,874	47,764	28	0.091	0.091	0.091	0.091	0.090	0.001	1.111	0.091	0.091	0.092	0.100	8,190,000	
OM0000003026	OMAN TELECOM	61,930	48,297	18	0.772	0.788	0.772	0.780	0.772	0.008	1.036	0.780	0.760	0.780	0.100	585,000,000	
OM0000003968	OOREDOO	120,200	47,520	6	0.400	0.400	0.392	0.396	0.392	0.004	1.020	0.396	0.386	0.396	0.100	257,773,915	
OM0000002077	AL OMANIYA FIN.	77,465	8,676	12	0.112	0.112	0.112	0.112	0.111	0.001	0.901	0.112	0.112	0.114	0.100	32,696,739	
OM0000001525	OMAN INVST& FIN.	73,401	7,540	6	0.100	0.100	0.100	0.100	0.100	0.000	0.000	0.100	0.100	0.102	0.100	23,700,000	
OM0000002796	BANK MUSCAT	429,309	169,301	24	0.394	0.396	0.392	0.392	0.392	0.000	0.000	0.392	0.390	0.392	0.100	1,401,194,118	
OM0000003224	RENAISSANCE SER.	205,000	85,680	13	0.416	0.418	0.416	0.418	0.418	0.000	0.000	0.418	0.410	0.418	0.100	98,819,380	
OM0000001418	RAYSUT CEMENT	68,338	19,873	12	0.292	0.293	0.289	0.291	0.292	-0.001	-0.342	0.289	0.289	0.293	0.100	58,200,000	
OM0000002168	AL ANWAR CERAMIC	131,000	62,618	17	0.476	0.478	0.476	0.478	0.482	-0.004	-0.830	0.478	0.470	0.482	0.100	105,160,000	
OM0000003388	SOHAR INT. BANK	110,000	9,600	7	0.088	0.088	0.087	0.087	0.088	-0.001	-1.138	0.087	0.087	0.088	0.100	211,802,086	
OM00000001590	MUSCAT FINANCE	116,500	5,243	7	0.045	0.045	0.045	0.045	0.046	-0.001	-2.174	0.045	0.045	0.046	0.100	13,821,585	
Total		18	4,140,416	1,020,220	335												

Parallel Market

OM0000001319	ALUMINIUM PROD.	1,444,833	194,051	116	0.133	0.136	0.132	0.134	0.129	0.005	3.878	0.135	0.135	0.136	0.100	4,498,574
OM0000000178	MUSCAT GASES	4,000	1,122	2	0.187	0.187	0.187	0.187	0.181	0.006	3.315	0.187	0.185	0.189	0.100	5,610,000
OM0000000169	OMAN EMIRATES HO.	303,552	15,596	15	0.051	0.052	0.050	0.051	0.050	0.001	2.000	0.051	0.047	0.052	0.100	6,215,625
OM0000002372	OMAN OIL MARKETING	12,500	9,150	1	0.732	0.732	0.732	0.732	0.720	0.012	1.667	0.732	0.732	0.732	0.000	44,853,300
OM0000004768	MADINA TAKAFUL	1,643,470	156,030	59	0.095	0.095	0.094	0.095	0.094	0.001	1.064	0.094	0.094	0.095	0.100	16,625,000
OM0000001517	HSCB BANK OMAN	5,773	577	4	0.100	0.100	0.096	0.100	0.100	0.000	0.000	0.100	0.100	0.100	0.100	200,031,279
OM0000001566	OMAN FISHERIES	16,000	1,280	3	0.080	0.080	0.080	0.080	0.080	0.000	0.000	0.080	0.072	0.085	0.100	10,000,000
OM0000001897	MAJAN COLLEGE	150	23	1	0.150	0.150	0.150	0.150	0.150	0.000	0.000	0.150	0.150	0.150	0.100	13,200,000
OM0000002275	SHELL OMAN MRK.	10,439	8,344	6	0.800	0.800	0.800	0.800	0.800	0.000	0.000	0.800	0.780	0.800	0.100	76,000,000
OM0000004420	BANK NIZWA	30,545	2,879	4	0.097	0.097	0.094	0.094	0.094	0.000	0.000	0.094	0.094	0.096	0.100	141,000,000
OM0000004669	SHARGIYAH DESALIN.	3,000	360	1	0.120	0.120	0.120	0.115	0.115	0.000	0.000	0.120	0.115	0.000	0.100	11,247,248
OM0000004735	SEMOB CORP SALALAH	25,000	1,990	3	0.079	0.080	0.079	0.080	0.080	0.000	0.000	0.080	0.079	0.080	0.100	76,365,756
OM0000005260	OMAN ARAB BANK	53,258	8,095	3	0.152	0.152	0.152	0.152	0.152	0.000	0.000	0.152	0.153	0.000	0.100	253,750,320
OM0000005983	PHOENIX POWER	96,000	4,608	5	0.048	0.048	0.048	0.048	0.048	0.000	0.000	0.048	0.047	0.048	0.100	70,204,870
OM0000007043	NATIONAL LIFE INS.	3,300	1,320	2	0.400	0.400	0.400	0.400	0.400	0.000	0.000	0.400	0.400	0.400	0.100	106,000,000
OM0000008447	OMAN REIT FUND	4,000	372	1	0.093	0.093	0.093	0.091	0.091	0.000	0.000	0.093	0.090	0.093	0.100	59,583,064
OM0000002549	BANK DHOFAR	400,000	45,600	10	0.114	0.114	0.114	0.114	0.115	-0.001	-0.870	0.114	0.112	0.114	0.100	341,584,064
OM0000004933	TAAGEER FINANCE	11,555	797	3	0.068	0.070	0.068	0.069	0.070	-0.001	-1.429	0.070	0.068	0.070	0.100	17,497,710
OM0000004983	AL SUWADI POWER	60,572	3,472	8	0.057	0.058	0.057	0.057	0.058	-0.001	-1.724	0.058	0.057	0.058	0.100	40,721,161
OM0000004925	ALBATTINAH POWER	10,820	595	3	0.055	0.055	0.055	0.055	0.056	-0.001	-1.786	0.055	0.054	0.055	0.100	37,118,809
OM0000003521	GLOBAL ENGINEER	306,504	15,137	22	0.050	0.050	0.049	0.049	0.050	-0.001	-2.000	0.049	0.048	0.050	0.100	14,209,051
OM0000003125	GULFAR INV. H.	1,313,915	63,059	3	0.048	0.048	0.047	0.048	0.050	-0.002	-4.000	0.047	0.000	0.047	0.100	9,800,000
Total		22	5,782,977	534,457	275											

CRYPTOCURRENCY

Bitcoin falls 5.2%, Ether down 6.3%



WASHINGTON: Bitcoin dipped 5.16 per cent to \$33,849.47 at 18:00 GMT on Saturday, losing \$1,842.99 from its previous close.

Ether, the coin linked to the Ethereum blockchain network, dropped 6.26 per cent to \$2,262.06 on Saturday, losing \$151.11 from its previous close. Bitcoin, the world's biggest and best-known crypto-

currency, is down 47.8 per cent from the year's high of \$64,895.22 on April 14, according to Reuters.

It has been less volatile in the past week but losses this month have been heavy at 38 per cent, driven by growing regulatory pressures on the sector. It is trading at levels last seen in January and at roughly half its peak value. — **BNA**

STEEL CONSUMPTION

Steel prices in India improve but may face headwinds

MUMBAI: Domestic steel consumption is likely to be low over 1Q FY22 quarter-on-quarter due to the second COVID wave but not at the low levels witnessed over 1Q FY21 when there was a complete shutdown of activities, according to India Ratings and Research (Ind-Ra).

The second wave is likely to impact auto and consumer durable demand and partially delay construction and infrastructure activities.

However, Ind-Ra said the strong international prices and export demand will enable steel producers to increase export levels, although high freight and shipping costs and container availability could be the areas of concern.

India's finished steel consumption in April stood at 6.78 million tonnes, down 23 per cent month-on-month but still 8x year-on-year higher.

On the other hand, crude steel

output was at 8.3 million tonnes. The domestic steel output has been driven by increased exports and higher capacity utilisation levels than last year.

Accordingly, the domestic steel output was 27 per cent year-on-year higher at 30.1 million tonnes over January to April.

Global level

On a global level, crude steel production of 64 countries was 23 per cent higher at 169.5 million tonnes last month, driven by the opening up of economies as the pace of vaccinating citizens against COVID-19 increased, higher government investments and strong steel prices.

Ind-Ra said the fall in Chinese future prices over the last week can partially impact India's export orders and domestic prices over the near term.

"Considering the Chinese government's effort in checking

prices of steel and lower demand expectation due to the lockdown, domestic as well as international prices are likely to face headwinds but will remain higher than pre-COVID levels."

Domestic hot-rolled coil prices increased by 3 per cent month-on-month and 78 per cent year-on-year in mid-May to Rs 65,250 per tonne. Similarly, domestic rebar prices increased Rs 3,000 per tonne month-on-month to Rs 56,000 per tonne.

Domestic steel prices have increased due to higher export orders, leading to a lower supply within the trade segment, strong global demand and high international steel prices and iron ore prices.

However, domestic demand is likely to be subdued due to the lockdowns and increased infection rates, thereby impacting auto and consumer durable demand and consumption levels over 1Q FY22. — **ANI**

REPORT

Pent-up demand, supply constraints fuel US inflation

WASHINGTON: US consumer prices surged in April, with a measure of underlying inflation blowing past the Federal Reserve's 2 per cent target and posting its largest annual gain since 1992, because of pent-up demand and supply constraints as the economy reopens.

The strong inflation readings reported by the Commerce Department had been widely anticipated as the pandemic's grip eases, thanks to vaccinations, and will have no impact on monetary policy. Fed Chair Jerome Powell has repeatedly stated that higher inflation will be transitory, Reuters reported.

The US central bank slashed its benchmark overnight interest rate to near zero last year and is pumping money into the economy through monthly bond purchases. It has signalled it could tolerate higher inflation for some time to offset years in which inflation was lodged below its target, a flexible average.

The supply constraints largely reflect a shift in demand towards goods and away from services during the pandemic. A reversal is underway, with Americans flying to vacation destinations and staying at hotels among other activities. Year-on-year inflation is also accelerating as last spring's weak readings drop from the calculation. — **BNA**

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Indian male B E civil engineer 4 yr experience in site execution ,QS. autocadd. Noc available. Contact [94194752](tel:94194752)

Electrical Engineer 6yrs experience HV-LV transmission line distribution with D/L, & have 4 CEP from distribution company NOC available on request immediately. Contact [93952055](tel:93952055)

Project Manager/Engineer (Electrical) with 10 Years Experience in Oman at (Primary & Distribution Substations and OHL) Tendering ,Estimation and Execution ,Oman D/L & NOC Available. Contact [99092164](tel:99092164)
Email Awilooooo18@gmail.com

MEP Engineer, Indian Male DEEE. Exp 18yrs (12 GCC + 6 India) Building Construction. Visa Transferable. With D/L. Contact [79305045](tel:79305045)
Email: renga4582@gmail.com.

Safety officer (engineer), 5 years experience in GCC, two years in Oil field in Oman, nebosh IGC, valid D.L. Contact [79318246](tel:79318246)

Electrical Engineer with 4 years experience in Oman , LV system , TX maintenance , water transmission line , motors control , with valid visa and driving license. Contact [91936392](tel:91936392)

Fit-out Engineer having 9 years well experience in commercial projects looking suitable position, Contact [93041234](tel:93041234)

Electrical Engineer with 7 years experience in Construction - Infrastructure, Roads, Buildings Available in Oman with valid transferable Visa and Oman DL, seeking new opportunities. Have ability to work as Estimation Engineer, Procurement Engineer, Design Engineer, Site Engineer and QA/QC Engineer in MEP department. Contact [96739500](tel:96739500)

Indian Male B.E Civil - Structural Design Engineer cum Site Engineer with 2 Years of Experience, STAAD Pro, AutoCAD, Quantity Surveying, Experience in Designing Residential & Commercial project as per Muscat Baladia standards. Currently on visit. Contact [94459529](tel:94459529)

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CONNECT

JOB WANTED

Project Director / Contracts Administrator
Indian National, 18 Yrs. of work experience, Graduate Civil Engineer, Master's in Construction Project Management; Construction Law & Dispute Resolution from UK. Having expertise in Project, Contract & Claims Management. Experienced in Handling High End Hospitality, Residential & Commercial Projects from initiation till completion. Seeks Placement as Clients or Consultants representative in Oman.
Please contact – 78022980

Administration & Public Relations
Female, Omani nationality, available to work having 06 years' experience in administration and public relations. Highly motivated, good communication and interpersonal skills, fluent in English and Arabic with a passion to learn and grow and very adaptable. Fluent in Arabic and English. Very professional with a positive attitude.
Contact Ebty420@gmail.com, Tel : 9337 9044

Civil Engineer/Facility Manager
B.E. (Civil) with 24 years expertise (7 years in Oman) in Civil Construction operation, Project Management, Facilities Management looking for suitable placement. Available to join immediately. Omani DL & NOC is available.
Contact: +968-96180303 shiv60769@gmail.com

Finance Manager
BSc, MBA, ACCA, 20 years' experience in Financial Statements, Management Accounts, Risk management, SAP and VAT compliance. NOC available. Can start immediately.
Phone 90213906

Sr Accountant/Financial Controller
(M.COM) Indian Male 32 Year. 11 Years Exp in Finance/Accounts/ VAT/Budget/Payroll Software SAP, Excellent in SAP/MS Office/ MIS. Looking suitable placement having Oman driving licence & NOC.
Contact 94684007 Email: vveer555@gmail.com

Senior BSc Civil Engineer
(Having valid Engineering Visa with Oman D/L) with more than 24 years experience including more than 10 years in Oman (Buildings and Roads) worked for the consultants and contractors available with release for immediate recruitment.
Contact: 96753667 Email ID: mohamedishahan@gmail.com

BE CSE. 10yrs IT exp. Seeking a job in IT (Implementation & Support, Testing), Admin, Office Assistance, Management, HR, Tally or any suitable post. Immediate joining.
Contact: 79865604, 97164823 csekashif@gmail.com

HR & Administration
Indian Female MBA (HR), PGDBM, B.E. 7 Yrs. of experience in HR & Administration (5 yrs in Oman) with Omani D/L Looking for suitable placement.
Contact 92474376

Sr. Accountant (BSc, CA Inter)
Indian (male) with 10 years' experience in Accounting up to finalization. Tally, Focus and excellent in Excel functions. Oman DL.
Contact: 78072563

SR. ACCOUNTANT
Indian Male B. Com, MBA having 14 yrs Exp in Accounts/Finance & Admin, upto finalisation, 0000, ERP, Tally & Online Softwares. Oman D/L, NOC/Release Available.
Email: mq_199820@yahoo.co.in GSM: 99279626

Accounts/Finance/Audit Professional
ACCA,CIA, CRMA and Masters Degree with 9 years of diversified experience and valid Oman driving licence; looking for suitable opportunity in Finance/Accounting /Audit.
Contact No: +96891735780 Email: cia.acca1989@gmail.com

CHARTERED ACCOUNTANT (SRI LANKAN)
CA, CPA, BSc. (Accountancy & Business Finance) Special with 12 years of experience (6th year in Oman) is looking for an opening. DL, NOC are available.
GSM: 78259755

JOB WANTED

HOSPITALITY

BSc Hospitality Management
Graduate from Sunway University, Malaysia. Hospitality experience in Oman and Malaysia. Looking for a suitable long term placement in the Hospitality Industry.
Contact 94575782
Email dhruvatul58@gmail.com

LOGISTIC

Young Indian male B.com graduate, PG Diploma in logistic (Air cargo and supply chain management) and Digital Marketing Valid Oman Driving License. Looking for suitable placement. Contact 79748272
Email: shazil.sadique@gmail.com

Logistics Coordinator, Indian Male, Age 27, with 2 and a half years experience in supply chain and knowledge of ERP looking for a suitable placement. Contact 71423342
Email: zakwansheikh@gmail.com

Logistic officer with 15 yrs experience in oman seeking for immediate placement.NOC/local release available. Contact 95271413

MANAGER

HSE Advisor/Manager With 14 yrs exp. 8 years in Oman with D/L. Expertise in Construction & COVID measures in large scale.Currently in Oman in a reputed company.Available in August. Contact 97477573.
Email hse.muscatoman@gmail.com

Senior Manager having 20+ yrs expertise in Business operations.P&L management,strategy planning& client servicing. Whatsapp 97855808, 96349110

Factory manager (carpentry & aluminum) more than 25 years' experience. D/L available. # 92691841

PURCHASE/PROCUREMENT

Inventory, Accounting, Purchase:
Indian male 31, having 8 years experience in F&B, Customer relations, H&S and various other skills. NOC available. Contact 96219904
Email: khanshah98@gmail.com

Indian male procurement, purchase officer having Bachelor degree in Mechanical engineering,5 yrs experience in UAE in Electrical & Construction company & having UAE D/L. Looking for suitable job. Contact 98227904.
Email: nrangra@rediffmail.com

Logistics Coordinator, Indian Male, Age 27, with 2 and a half years experience in supply chain and knowledge of ERP looking for a suitable placement. Contact 71423342
Email: zakwansheikh@gmail.com

SALES / MARKETING

Indian male experience in Sales and Marketing for 12 years with D/L, looking for suitable placement. Contact 71790238

Indain male kerala 31 with 6 yrs of experience in Oman[FMCG sales and other] Oman D/L looking for any suitable placement [now on visa]. Contact 78104649

Young Indian male B.com graduate, PG Diploma in logistic (Air cargo and supply chain management) and Digital Marketing Valid Oman Driving License. Looking for suitable placement. Contact 79748272
Email: shazil.sadique@gmail.com

Indian 25 yrs male with 2 yrs of experience in Oman seeking for immediate placement. Currently in oman ready to join immediately. Contact 93978831
Email faigmukri@gmail.com

Indian male (30) MBA with Oman experience (FMCG and other) in Sales and Marketing valid Omani D/L on visit. Contact 7975 5795

Indian, BA, looking for a placement 12 yrs Experience in FMCG with Oman DL. Contact 97898905
Email karthilchy@gmail.com

1 year experience in SM Management, Marketing and Content Writing. Looking for opportunities in Marketing (Digital), Brand Development. Advertising, HR. # 92866372

Procurement, Warehouse & Logistics
Pakistani Male, Graduate, Over 15 years experience includes 3.5 Years GCC Experience, Over 7 Years in Managerial Positions. Valid Omani D/L, Looking for Suitable Placement.
Contact: 91257663 E-Mail: waqasmehar1@gmail.com

Office/Admin, Sales & Marketing
Male, 29years, B.E Electronics & communication, 5+ years experience in Oman. With valid GCC D/L.
Contact 94947706

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FEATURES

Flying



WHAT'S THE BIG DEAL FOR THE PLANET?

As travel becomes an option again, the question of to-fly-or-not-to-fly is back on the table, DW asks what all the fuss is about.

ANYONE who's ever had a flying dream will be familiar with that sense of euphoria when their feet finally leave the ground. Maybe it was such nocturnal fantasies of the mind that gave birth to the legend of Icarus or inspired the likes of Otto Lilienthal and the Wright Brothers. Or maybe not.

Either which way, we as a species have long been drawn to journey above the clouds. And our fascination, it seems, endures.

For all the chaos of airport security, overpriced water and pitiful legroom, air travel has never been more popular. During peak holiday periods, the number of planes taking off in a single day can easily exceed 200,000. And in 2018, a monumental 4.4 billion people took to the skies. That's more than half the population of the planet.

Except it's not.

Nothing like it, in fact, because many of those travellers are one and the same. Not clones, or holograms, but frequent flyers, clocking up gazillions of air miles to earn their status — and free flights. In reality, according to recent estimates, a modest 11 per cent of the global population actually boarded a plane in 2018, while fewer than 5 per cent flew internationally.

So what?

Good question. It really is.

And for anyone who was wondering, this is where the environment comes in. See, that same research estimates that the most frequent fliers of all, which together comprise an estimated minuscule 1.5 per cent (yes, ONE PERCENT) of humankind, are likely responsible for more than 50.5 per cent of emissions from passenger air travel.

Fair? Nah, not so much. Worrying? Just a tad.

Because even in transporting such a tiny proportion of the global population (and some freight), the commercial airline industry manages to chug out carbon dioxide to the tune of some 915 million tons each year. For anyone looking blank right now, that equates to more than 2.5 per cent of global CO2 emissions.

It's also about the same amount that fallen-from-green-grace-Germany emits annually. But that's perhaps another story.

Why should I care?

An even better question. Yes, it would be extremely convenient at this point to be like "...I only fly once or twice a year, so it's not my CO2, and besides I'm on Insta now and it's either go places or post pics of my breakfast."

And sure, porridge photos are overrated, but the other side of the coin is that (rather like coins themselves)

flights add up. And the more often we fly off in search of exotic sunsets — or anything else for that matter — the hotter the world becomes, because greenhouse gases trap more heat in the atmosphere. And there is such a thing as too hot.

The average temperature on our planet has already increased by about 1.1 degrees Celsius (1.8 degrees Fahrenheit) since the pre-industrial age. It might not sound like much, but it really is. Science connects that degree of warming to violent storms and wildfires, prolonged heat waves and sudden floods.

Sure, anyone who has not been affected might be thinking "...yeah, but that stuff doesn't happen to me, and did I mention Insta?..." But... and there is a big but here, just because it has happened yet, doesn't mean it won't. As the planet continues to heat, which it will if we don't slash our greenhouse gas emissions however we can, we'll be looking at even more extreme weather in the future.

That sucks. There must someone out there with the answers...

Well, there's no silver bullet. The only options on the table so far — besides not flying, that is — are offsetting programmes that invite passengers to invest in projects designed to reduce emissions and early for-

ays into electric planes and kerosene-based jet fuel. Oh, and unpopular proposals to ban domestic flights or tax tickets and fuel.

Huh?

No kidding. Let's start with cold, hard cash. In some countries, including the EU, certain plane tickets and jet fuel are not taxed, which makes flying cheaper than it would otherwise be. About as cheap as a long-distance bus in some cases. France has proposed tough levies on tickets (up to €400/\$475 for a one-way business class ticket on flights of more than 2,000 kilometres/1,200 miles), but the reception has been lukewarm.

Carbon offsets, on the other hand, are the current darling for passengers seeking to fight flight guilt. And it's not hard to see why.

All they have to do to keep flying with a clean conscience is chuck a bit of cash at emissions reduction projects that plant trees, erect wind turbines or encourage solar cooking, that kind of thing.

For anyone thinking "...awesome, sign me up because I really want to take some Bali beach sunset pics," it's worth making sure the project is legit. But even if it is, not even the cleanest of green schemes prevent emissions in the first place.

That leaves us with the brave new worlds of electric planes and sustainable aviation fuel (SAF).

On the clean fuel front, Boeing recently pitched itself as a glimmer of hope with its professed ambition to make its planes capable of flying on 100 per cent SAF by 2030. That would be one giant step from the International Air Transport Association's 2020 projections of a 0.015 per cent sustainable share of the global jet fuel market.

Electric planes? Yeah, we might be waiting a while for a Tesla of the skies. Heavy batteries are an issue, which means hybrids are more likely in the medium-term. Experts reckon it could be decades before we can fly from New York to Berlin without emitting CO2. Maybe it will happen sooner, but don't put your money on it this summer. Or next.

Where does that leave me?

Quite possibly in a bad mood. Uncomfortable facts can have that effect. The easiest, most obvious thing we can do is to fly less. That's not to say we should never take to the skies again or resort to porridge pics. But it is to say each time we decide not to fly, we are making a positive contribution to slowing global warming. And after a year of being forcibly grounded, we know that not every holiday has to be a plane ride away, or that every international business meeting has to be conducted face-to-face.

We've all grown a little wiser now. Haven't we? -rw

ROUND-UP

GAC Motor GS4 Intelligent: A 4WD exclusively built for Oman

The GS4 i-4WD makes a bold and eye-catching statement with its sleek profile that is enhanced with the ‘Flying Dynamics’ grille design

MUSCAT: GAC Motor’s GS4 Intelligent – 4WD (i-4WD) is powerful, sturdy and exciting in every way. Exclusively built for Oman, the powerful turbocharged GS4 i-4WD stands out in terms of performance, technology, capability and dependability.

The GS4 SUV is available with exclusive benefits like a manufacturer’s warranty of 5 years / 150,000km, assured service of 5 years / 50,000km (whichever is earlier), a cash gift of OMR2,065, comprehensive 1-year insurance (Oman coverage) and ‘3M’ window tint (for 21 YM models). (Conditions apply. For more details, please visit any GAC Motor showroom).

According to a GAC Motor Oman team member, “GAC Motor wanted to offer the people of Oman, a cost-effective, powerful and dependable 4WD solution. To achieve this, they carefully studied various aspects of Oman. Including the varied terrains, climatic conditions, driver behaviour and more. With the GS4 i-4WD, GAC Motor has created a definitive benchmark in the segment. One



which can be believed with a test drive. Anyone wishing to experience the GS4 i-4WD, are welcome to walk into their nearest GAC Motor showroom.”

The GS4 i-4WD makes a bold and eye-catching statement with its sleek profile that is enhanced with the ‘Flying Dynamics’ grille design. The new improved design of the headlights, taillights and alloy wheels makes its overall appeal, contemporary and elegant.

Making every journey outstanding with power-packed moments is the 1.5L, 150 HP, turbo engine. This is paired with a 6-speed automatic transmission. The result is low fuel consumption and quieter

transmission power.

The new eagle-eye projector headlights with LED DRLs provide a greater light distribution, resulting in optimum visibility at night. LED DRLs create a better vision and is comparable to those offered on luxury vehicles. The LED combination taillights are inspired by the arrow fletched with the feathers-like design that makes the GS4 i-4WD easily stand out from the rest.

The interior of the GS4 i-4WD is as interesting as the exterior. A new 10.1-inch HD Touchscreen with Apple CarPlay, Bluetooth Connectivity and other vital features offers a more fun way to stay

connected even on the go. The screen is linked to a wide-angle reverse camera assisted with dynamic guidelines that provide greater convenience and makes parking hassle-free.

Exclusive automatic air conditioning with a built-in air quality system with a negative ion air purifier ensures you and your loved ones breathe fresh and purified air. Dedicated rear AC vents along with USB charging ports keep the rear passengers at ease.

The GS4 i-4WD has impressive storage space that is perfect for your short or long journeys. The large 450L luggage compartment encourages you to make the most

of your experiences. Besides this, there is 24 well-designed storage space in the car to meet multiple requirements of the passenger.

In terms of safety, the GS4 i-4WD stands out with a list of safety features. The tyre pressure monitoring system helps keep an eye on low tyre pressures and high tyre temperatures too. These assist in safer driving experiences. The electronic stability program assists the driver in safe braking in case of any untoward incidents. It also has safety features to avoid slipping/sliding while driving uphill or downhill at low speeds. The latest intelligent 4WD system maintains excellent composure on harsh ter-

rains and lets you also negotiate off-road drives with full confidence. The Central Differential Lock when activated helps you get further by allowing you to tread on the most challenging surfaces with ease.

95% high strength steel bodywork of the GS4 provides maximum safety and stability. A testament to this is the fact that the roof can bear 4.5 times the roof pressure. This along with its rigid body helps the GS4 i-4WD bag a perfect 5-star C-NCAP crash rating, thus, ensuring the safest drives at all times for you and your loved ones.

New World Autos is the distributor for GAC Motor vehicles in Oman.

RESUMPTION OF FLIGHT



Qatar Airways expands US network to 12 destinations and over 85 weekly flights

DOHA: Qatar Airways’ resumption of four-weekly Atlanta flights on 1 June marks the full return of the airline’s pre-pandemic US network increasing its gateways to 12, two more than it operated before COVID-19.

The airline will also be increasing frequencies to Boston, Miami, New York, Philadelphia, San Francisco and Seattle offering more flexible travel options for its passengers with more than 85 weekly flights across the United States. These increased services will provide enhanced connectivity to several of the airline’s global leisure destinations including Cape Town, Maldives, Seychelles and Zanzibar, along with other key traffic flows in Africa, Asia and the Middle East.

Qatar Airways Group Chief Executive, Akbar Al Baker, said, “Despite the challenges of the pandemic, Qatar Airways has remained committed to its passengers and trade partners in the United States, maintaining con-

tinuous services while rebuilding its US network and launching two new destinations - San Francisco and Seattle.

“We have also strengthened our presence in the US through strategic partnerships with Alaska Airlines, American Airlines and JetBlue that have enabled us to connect to more points in the United States than any other airline, providing US travellers with the most convenient way to travel internationally this summer.

“As more of our passengers return to the skies, they can take comfort knowing that they are travelling with the only airline in the world that has, together with our state-of-the-art global hub Hamad International Airport, achieved four 5-Star Skytrax ratings – including the prestigious 5-Star Airline Rating, 5-Star Airport Rating, 5-Star COVID-19 Airline Safety Rating and 5-Star COVID-19 Airport Safety Rating. We are proud to have to lead the industry during this difficult period,

setting the benchmark for innovation, safety and customer service, and look forward to welcoming our customers back on board as they plan their summer travels.”

America’s network enhancements

- Atlanta – Four weekly flights resuming 1 June
- Boston – Increasing to four weekly flights from 3 July
- Miami – Increasing to five weekly flights from 7 July
- New York – Increasing to double daily flights from 21 July
- Philadelphia – Increasing to five weekly flights from 2 July
- Sao Paulo - Increasing to double daily flights from 6 August
- San Francisco – Increasing to daily flights from 2 July
- Seattle – Increasing to daily flights from 8 July

Qatar Airways operates one of the youngest, most fuel-efficient fleets in the sky, and is committed to delivering a sustainable and environmentally responsible travel

experience for its customers. Due to COVID-19’s impact on travel demand, the airline has grounded its fleet of Airbus A380s as it is not environmentally justifiable to operate such a large, four-engine aircraft in the current market. Qatar Airways has also recently launched a new programme that enables passengers to voluntarily offset the carbon emissions associated with their journey at the point of booking.

A multiple award-winning airline, Qatar Airways was named ‘World’s Best Airline’ by the 2019 World Airline Awards, managed by the international air transport rating organisation Skytrax.

It was also named ‘Best Airline in the Middle East’, ‘World’s Best Business Class’, and ‘Best Business Class Seat’, in recognition of its ground-breaking Business Class experience, Qsuite.

Qsuite is available on flights to more than 40 destinations including Bangkok, Cape Town, Maldives, and Singapore.

EXPANSION

National Finance opens new state-of-the-art branch in the Sultanate



MUSCAT: National Finance, Oman’s leading finance company, continues to invest in customer-centric initiatives, catered through an expanding and enhanced branch network across the Sultanate.

The state-of-the-art branches, newly opened and consolidated in the recent past, are driven by the company’s mission to enhance the ease and comfort of clients with value-added services.

The company has recently inaugurated a new branch at Sandan Industrial, one of the busiest commercial cities. The branch brings National Finance closer to its widening customer base, and endeavours to serve them conveniently.

The new approach the company’s taking towards the branch look and feel is based on market trends and customer accessibility. This is evident with the Airport Heights Branch, the Seeb

branch and not mention, the recent inauguration of the Salalah building to pave the way forward towards customer experience.

Highlighting its customer-first philosophy, Ali Al Mani, General Manager, Business, said, “We aim to bring financing solutions closer to the people across Oman; our branch network is a testimony of our intent to stay connected with our clients.”

National Finance, established in 1987, has built a reputation as the market leader trusted by thousands of customers across the Sultanate. National Finance offers a wide range of products targeting both individual customers and Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs).

The company was recently awarded the Best Performing Company in the Large Capital category at the coveted Alam Al-Iktisad (AIWA) awards.



ROUND-UP

Lulu concludes Dream Drive 2021, hands over car keys to 8 winners

Officials representing Lulu Group handed over the keys to the 8 winners who drove home brand new Nissan Patrol 4WDs

MUSCAT: With the successful conclusion of its annual Dream Drive mega promotion, Lulu Oman handed over the keys of Nissan Patrol 4WDs to 8 lucky winners.

The seventh and eighth draws marked the end of this year's mega promotion, which was spread over two months from the 21st of March until the 19th of May 2021 coinciding with Ramadan and Eid.

Officials representing Lulu Group handed over the keys to the 8 winners who drove home brand new Nissan Patrol 4WDs. The eight winners were Mohammed Shareef, Muzna Al Balushi, Jasem Ghaedi, Manoor Al Riyami, Abdul Hakeem Juma Abdullah Al Junabi, Mohammed Hammed, Khalid Al Hathmi and Arun Sinha.

Apart from the grand prize, many others won an array of gift products from Ikon. The registration and draws were digital and the winners of all the draws were selected through the eRaffle Winner Management System under the supervision of the officials from the Ministry of Commerce.

Ananth A V, Regional Director of Lulu Hypermarkets Oman, India & Sri Lanka, remarked, "We are truly excited to conclude this year's Dream Drive promotion on



a very happy note. We would like to congratulate all the winners of this promotion and thank everyone who supported the campaign so far. It is indeed a joy to be part of our customers' proud moments. This promotion is an opportunity to reward our valuable customers

and add more excitement to their overall shopping experience during Ramadan. Like all the previous years, Dream Drive promotion had created lots of enthusiasm and interest among customers and has attracted new shoppers too."

Speaking after the event, Shabeer

KA, Director - Lulu Hypermarkets, Oman, stated "We organise Dream Drive promotion every year to brighten up our customers' festival season and give them another reason to shop with us. We strongly believe that customers are the core of our business, and all our strategies

and initiatives are meant to loudly and boldly announce our commitment to them. We also ensure that we constantly engage with our shoppers on a regular basis through offers, campaigns and promotions. Each and every customer is special, and it is our pleasure to offer them

the best services wherever they are," he added.

With about 210 stores globally, Lulu Group is renowned for constantly striving to cater to the everyday necessities of its shoppers and for contributing to society in every possible way.

DELICIOUS FLAVOURS

A'Safwah's new mascot for flavoured milk, Safwan brings fruit goodness for children

MUSCAT: Oman's oldest and popular milk brand, A'Safwah is back with yet another 'fun in a bottle' offering of its flavoured milk range.

The brand has officially unveiled a new mascot for its strawberry and banana-flavoured milk products, enticing children to experience the delicious flavours of this locally produced milk, enriched with the goodness of fruits. With superhero Safwan, A'Safwah intends to pave the way for an evolving and fast-growing category of milk products, and reach out to its target audience, primarily kids, through creatively engaging ways.

The hero, Safwan, is a fun and energetic child, who derives his superhero-like qualities from A'Safwah strawberry and banana milkshakes. The introduction of Safwan, the oldest and one of the largest integrated dairy company in the Sultanate, reflects its determination for diversification and innovation offered by its high-quality products, which today enjoy wide trust among children and adults alike.

A company spokesperson said, "We launched the flavoured milk with Safwan character, to encourage children to keep drinking milk, taking advantage of its nutrients that boost their body strength and health. We also recognize that the character of the little Omani Safwan will help mothers attract the child's interest in healthy food and stimulate their sense of fun when drinking strawberry and banana-flavoured milk."



Being a 100% Omani brand, A'Safwah has extensive experience in the local market. Through the company's research to meet consumer needs, the company has sought to create an inspiring personality that encourages kids to maintain their body strength and helps mothers offer their children the best healthy drinks.

It is expected that the hero Safwan will contribute to increasing children's love of drinking A'Safwah flavoured milk and boost their utilisation of the nutrition ingredients the product provides in a pack that suit kid's needs.

"We aim to enhance mothers' trust in A'Safwah products as the first choice for their children. This

can be achieved by providing the most benefit possible in our premium products, and this is reflected by blending the benefits of natural milk and fruit flavour into a small 200ml pack, which gives children beneficial nutrients and a feeling of refreshment. We affirm our commitment to provide all consumers with high-quality, fresh, locally produced milk and dairy products," the spokesperson added.

A'Safwah Dairy and Beverages Company has chosen to mix banana and strawberry flavours with milk due to these fruits popularity among most children. Milk and its derivatives have been scientifically proven to be a primary source of calcium and potassium. It is one of the best nutrients for certain vitamins. Furthermore, banana is known to be rich in many nutrients, as it contains antioxidants that may help reduce the risk of many diseases. Strawberries also contain good amounts of vitamin C for children's health and help to maintain blood pressure at normal levels.

A'Safwah dairy began as the preferred brand in the Dhofar Governorate, and with remarkable growth in the brand market, the company's products managed to capture significant market share across Oman. A'Safwah dairy company is proud of its high-end farms and infrastructure, and modern distribution systems including their 8 facilities in Oman that ensure the finest hygienic products are provided with a great and distinctive taste.

FOR APRIL

Bank Muscat customers celebrate Al Mazyona salary transfer draws

MUSCAT: Bank Muscat, the leading financial services provider in the Sultanate, in line with its vision 'To serve you better, everyday' and commitment to partnership in encouraging a savings culture in Oman, recently held its Al Mazyona salary transfer draws for April.

The 20 lucky winners will receive OMR500 per month for a whole year. As the largest financial institution in the country, the bank plays an important role in promoting the concept of savings amongst the bank's customers and the general public, in line with the national goals of promoting financial sustainability, financial awareness and sound personal finance management. It is this pioneering role that has led to Bank Muscat debuting new categories and features in its long-running Al Mazyona savings scheme continuously.

Salary transfer draws are an important category within the Al Mazyona scheme. All customers who transfer their salaries to Al Mazyona accounts are automatically entered into the salary transfer draws. Al Mazyona rewards 10 winners every month from among customers having salaries ranging between OMR 500 and OMR 999. These winners are paid a monthly salary prize of OMR 500 each for a whole year as a reward for choos-

ing Al Mazyona salary accounts. Similarly, 10 winners with salaries of OMR 1,000 or more are chosen from amongst the bank's Al Jawhar Privilege banking customers. These winners will also receive OMR 500 every month for a whole year. It must be noted that in 2021, as many as 240 winners will receive a total of over OMR 1.4 million through Al Mazyona's monthly salary transfer draws over the year.

Al Mazyona is the longest-running savings scheme and offers the biggest prizes in the country. In 2021, the scheme will give away over OMR 11 million to 7,470 winners compared to 6,677 winners in the previous year, with the number of winners going up by 12 per cent. The 2021 scheme features several special draws including the recently-held Eid Al Fitr draw, a National Day draw, a Mid-year draw and an End of Year draw apart from the regular monthly draws for different customer segments. To further promote a good savings habit, special prizes have been reserved for high-saving Asalah and Al Jawhar customers as well as in the regional, women, youth, children and salary-transfer categories. Bank Muscat has called on its customers to increase their savings to get more chances to win exciting prizes through the Al Mazyona savings scheme.

Eid Offer

BUY & WIN 310 Prizes

Get 1 Raffle Coupon for every RO 20 spent. Buy from any of the offers (RO 50 or RO 20) or buy a coupon book worth minimum of RO 20.

10 NOS. 22 CARAT 8 GMS GOLD COIN

20 NOS. 22 CARAT 4 GMS GOLD COIN

200 NOS. 10 OMAN OASIS 5 GALLON WATER COUPONS

80 NOS. LULU GIFT VOUCHERS WORTH RO 10

Register your raffle coupon number at www.omanoasis.com/eid2021 to win.

Oasis Water Co. SAOC
PO Box 87, Rusayl 124, Sultanate of Oman.
www.omanoasis.com

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Offer valid from 1st May 2021 to 31st July 2021. Total of 3 raffle draws will be held at Oasis Water Company, Azaiiba. Draw Dates: 1st June 2021, 1st July 2021 and 2nd August 2021. Winners will be intimated directly. Oasis Water Company employees are not eligible to participate in this promotion. Gifts shown are for illustrative purpose only. Actual may vary.



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Offer valid from 15th April to 6th June 2021 on all models purchased through the CHANGAN Showroom Retail Offer. *Assured Cash Gift amount varies between models, model variants, model year & manufacturing year. For details please contact the CHANGAN showroom. #Whichever is earlier. Periodic Maintenance Service only. Offer includes only 10,000 KMS Service Intervals. ^^Through Fuel Card. @Whichever is earlier. *Easy monthly installments are calculated based on 20% down payment for 6 year loan tenure for the respective CHANGAN basic model inclusive of 5% VAT. Subject to credit approvals from Banks & Financial companies. Vehicle images shown are for illustrative purpose only and actual may vary as per model variant. To know more, visit the CHANGAN showroom.

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