

HIS MAJESTY SENDS CABLE OF CONGRATULATIONS TO AZERBAIJAN
MUSCAT: His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik has sent a cable of congratulations to Dr. Ilham Heydar Aliyev, President of the Republic of Azerbaijan on his country's National Day. In his cable, His Majesty the Sultan expressed his sincere greetings and wishes of good health and happiness to the president and to his country's people further progress and prosperity. — **ONA**



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HM SENDS CONDOLENCES TO JORDAN

MUSCAT: His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik has sent a cable of condolences to King Abdullah II of Jordan on the death of father of Queen Rania Al Abdullah, Dr. Faisal Sidqi Al Yasin. In his cable, His Majesty the Sultan expressed his sincere condolences and sympathy, praying to the Almighty Allah to rest the deceased's soul in peace in paradise and grant His Majesty the King and all family members patience to bear the loss. — **ONA**



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OMR1.2BN ALLOCATED FOR PROJECTS IN 2022

30

As part of economic development initiatives, Madayn is also working on 30 projects distributed over 11 industrial cities in Oman

Development projects are selected on the basis of matrix based on a solid scientific methodology

Times News Service

MUSCAT: OMR1.2bn has been set aside by the Ministry of Economy for development projects for this year, according to Nasser bin Rashid Al Maawali, the Undersecretary of the Ministry of Economy. Stressing that financial allocations for the development budget do decrease from time to time, depending on the financial

and economic developments in the country, the undersecretary added: "The ministry has a matrix for evaluating and selecting development projects for 2022, which aims to enhance the efficiency of development spending. "By using the matrix that is based on a solid scientific methodology that determines the criteria for the selection and quality of development projects, we can ensure the highest level of economic value and social return from liquidity allocated to the development budget."

List of projects

The various entities and institutions involved in development projects in Oman usually provide a list of projects they wish to implement. In accordance with the national priorities, available resources, and the criteria set in the matrix, the Ministry of Economy prioritises these programmes, in collaboration with the Ministry of Finance, and the financial balance programme.



Nasser bin Rashid Al Maawali, Undersecretary of the Ministry of Economy

The matrix used to evaluate development projects for 2023, however, has seen some updates. These include developing new criteria for project evaluation. Proposed development projects for 2023 that are put forward by government agencies will be evaluated and studied by six entities: the Ministry of Economy,

the Ministry of Finance, the financial balance programme, the Office of Government Project Management, the General Secretariat of the Tender Board, and those relevant in implementing the project in question.

Balance

"The Ministry of Economy also takes into account the sectoral and spatial dimensions of development projects at provincial level, to make sure there is a balance between the two dimensions," explained Al Maawali. "This will help support the restoration of the momentum of economic growth, and accelerate the pace of the growth of economic activities, through the implementation of priority development projects within an integrated time-frame, and a regulatory framework that achieves balanced and comprehensive development."

As part of economic development initiatives, Madayn is also working on 30 projects distributed over 11 industrial cities in Oman.

MORE FLIGHTS

Good news for football fans from Oman travelling to Qatar for FIFA World Cup



Times News Service

MUSCAT: Football fans from Oman who intend on travelling to Qatar to watch the upcoming FIFA World Cup now have far more options to travel between the two countries, thanks to a new agreement signed to boost connectivity.

As part of the agreement, 21 daily flights will operate between Muscat and Doha for supporters of the teams playing at the World Cup. The agreement was signed between Oman Air, the flag carrier of the Sultanate, and Qatar Airways. The agreement was signed in the presence of Azzan Qasim Al Busaidi, Undersecretary for Tourism at the Ministry of Heritage and Tourism, Najeeb Yahya Al Balushi, Oman's ambassador to Qatar, Abdulaziz Saud Al Raisi, CEO of Oman Air, and Haitham Mohammed Al Ghasani, Director-General of Tourism Promotion.

The Ministry of Heritage and Tourism is set to head the steering committee of the 2022 FIFA World Cup, under the chairmanship of Al Busaidi, along with

members from the Ministry of Culture, Sports and Youth, the Royal Oman Police, Oman Air, Omran Group and Oman Airports Company.

Al Busaidi said: "The agreement reflects the strong bonds between the two countries and the Sultanate of Oman's keenness to contribute to the success of the World Cup, which, being held for the first time in an Arab country, offers a great opportunity to promote Oman's tourism destinations.

Al Raisi said: "The two sides agreed to treat the 21 World Cup flights as local flights rather than external flights. Tickets for flights between the two countries during the World Cup will be shared by the two airline companies. Oman will be given leverage as a tourism destination, which involves a set of tourism packages at competitive prices for the World Cup public wishing to visit Oman."

"In fact, the FIFA World Cup Qatar 2022 constitutes a golden opportunity for the whole GCC region in general, and the Sultanate of Oman, in particular," Al Raisi added.

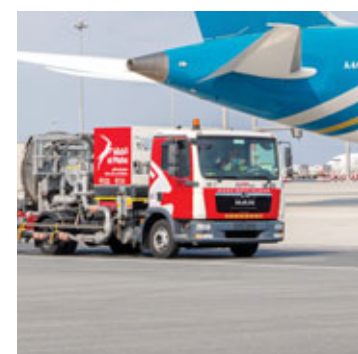
TOP THREE INSIDE STORIES

OMAN Universities, colleges letting students down?

1 It made me think deeper when a group of students told me that colleges and universities are letting them down. Why, I asked them. They told me they get taught outdated theories that have gone past their shelf-life. **>A3**

WORLD 'Shootings a reason to arm, not disarm'

2 During the National Rifle Association's (NRA) annual convention in Houston on Friday, former US President Donald Trump said mass shootings are a reason to arm, not disarm Americans. **>A6**



MARKET Al Maha aircraft refuelling pact

3 Al Maha Petroleum Products Marketing Company signed an agreement with i6 Group for using the world's first end-to-end aviation fuel management platform 'Fusion6'. **>B1**

Oman's population crosses 4.5 million

A2

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ENTERTAINMENT

Lead in Bollywood film 'Anek' starkly different to previous roles, says Ayushmann Khurrana

Times News Service

MUSCAT: Bollywood actor Ayushmann Khurrana has said that the lead character he plays in his new release 'Anek' is starkly different to the ones he has played previously, because of the complexity and subtlety required from the role.

Set in the restive north eastern regions of India, Anek centres around Ayushmann's character Aman, an undercover Indian agent tasked with bringing peace and eliminating the rebel threat that continues to burden the region.

While his objective is complicated enough, Aman is drawn into a tangled web of political deceit and lies, which makes his tasks far harder to achieve.

"It was not just about physicality and body language: this one was starkly different from my previous films," he said. "It was also about the empathy, knowing about the North East, empathising with them and whatever they are going through in life."

TFM

Ayushmann's character befriends local northeasterner Aido, a young

woman who has aspirations to one day box for India at the Olympics. While she yearns to represent India, her father, Wangnao, is the leader of a separatist movement that is fighting for the northeast to secede, and become an independent country. Aido is played by Andrea Kevichusa, who is from the north eastern state of Nagaland.

Ayushmann and Andrea, while speaking to Kay of TFM, explained the intricacies of the characters involved, and the importance of the film Anek, directed by Anubhav Sinha, who has to his name other impactful



works such as *Mulk*, *Article 15*, and *Thappad*.

"Thanks to Anubhav Sinha sir who did a lot of research on that

region. We sailed through, and he's made a very, very important film," said Ayushmann. "This is not a typical film: it does not fit the stereotype or prototype of commercial Hindi cinema."

Great experience

Andrea added: "It was a great experience, and even stepping into it, I had a lot to learn. I picked up a few things...it was amazing."

Anek also marks Andrea's debut, a role for which she was cast when she was just 18. "When I got it, I was pretty hesitant: I was only 18 when I got cast," she admitted. **>A2**

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PRAYER TIMINGS

Dhuhr.....	12:09pm
Asr.....	3:29pm
Maghrib.....	6:53pm
Isha.....	8:14pm
Fajr (Tomorrow).....	3:54am

NCSI DATA

THIS SEASON

VIRTUAL EVENT

Oman’s population crosses 4.5 million

MUSCAT: The Sultanate’s population reached 4,527,446 at the end of December 2021 compared to 4,481,042 during the same period in 2020, an increase of 1.04 per cent, according to the annual bulletin on population statistics issued by the National Centre for Statistics and Information (NCSI).

The statistics showed an increase in citizens by 2.49 per cent compared to the same period in 2020. The number of Omanis stood at 2,804,117 representing 62 per cent of the total population against 1,723,329 expatriates representing 38 per cent, a decrease of 1.25 per cent.

North Al Batinah Governorate topped the five governorates with the highest population where the Omanis amounted to 20.1 per cent, followed by Muscat Governorate (19.7 per cent), Al Dakhiliyah Governorate (13.4 per cent), South Al Batinah Governorate (12.9 per cent) and South Al Sharqiyah Governorate (8.3 per cent), respectively.

The population density in the Sultanate amounted to 14.6 person per square kilometre by the end of December 2021. Muscat Governorate has the highest density of population with 327 persons, 5 persons for each square kilometre, while Al Wusta Governorate has the lowest population density with 0.6 persons for each square kilometre.

The population in the urban areas represented 79.5 per cent while the rural areas’ population represented 20.5 per cent of the total population.

The categories of the youth and children (29 years and below) represented the biggest sector of the population forming two-thirds of the Omani population (63 per cent) while children aged less than 5 years represented 14 per cent of the total Omani population.

The age group 18-29 years is the biggest sector of expatriates’ population with 22.1 per cent males and 17.4 per cent females.

— ONA

Only two camping sites in Dhofar for Khareef visitors

Times News Service

SALALAH: Visitors heading to the Dhofar region to enjoy Khareef festival will be able to camp at two camping sites being set up in the area, and will not be allowed to camp elsewhere.

As the build-up to the Khareef season continues, Dhofar Municipality has said that work on the two campsites is underway.

“Dhofar Municipality has followed with greater interest the voice of the community on social media platforms, regarding camping during the Khareef season,” said the municipality in a statement.

“The municipality states that it is in the process of developing two camping sites with distinctive designs that will be operative throughout the year,” added the organisation.

“The two sites will be equipped with entertainment facilities, camping umbrellas, roads, and parking spaces in front of each unit.”



People will not be able to camp elsewhere during this season’s Khareef. Once one of the two campsites is complete, construction on the second will begin, once an evaluation of the facilities offered at the first has been finished.

The Khareef season runs traditionally from about July to September, and is characterised by unique weather found almost exclusively in the southern Dhofar region of Oman. While the rest of the Middle East swelters under scorching heat and high temperatures, the Dhofar has cool winds, continuous drizzling rain, and low-hanging mists.

As a result, the traditionally brown landscape turns green, and draws tourists from across Oman, the Middle East, and other parts of the world.

Workshop on paediatric asthma held

MUSCAT: The Ministry of Health’s Department of Non-Communicable Diseases (NCDs), represented by the NCD Control Section in the Directorate General of Primary Health Care and in collaboration with AstraZeneca Company, organised a virtual workshop titled ‘Redefine Paediatric Asthma Control Programme.’

Management of asthma

The workshop focused on several areas such as guidance on diagnosing and assessing paediatric Asthma presented by Dr. Sumaya Juma Al Orami, Senior consultant paediatric (Respiratory and Allergy) at the Royal Hospital and the management of asthma in children presented by Dr. Younis Al Balushi, Consultant, Paediatric (Respiratory and Sleep Medicine) at the Royal Hospital.

The event saw the participation of as many as 100 physicians from all governorates of the Sultanate of Oman.

— ONA

APRIL

BOLLYWOOD

Real estate trading tops OMR146mn

MUSCAT: The real estate traded in the Sultanate last April amounted to over OMR146 million and the fees collected exceeded OMR1.5 million.

A report issued by the Ministry of Housing and Urban Planning said that the selling contracts stood at 4,545 for a total value of over OMR72.860 million and the fees collected from it stood at approximately OMR2 million.

The swap contracts amounted to 74 with a total value of over OMR1.140 million and the fees collected amounted to over OMR23,000. The mortgage contracts stood at 1,358 for a total value exceeding OMR72.590 million and the fees collected stood at over OMR 377, 000. The highest real estate activity was concentrated in Muscat Governorate in the Sultanate with over OMR1.5 million, followed by South Al Batinah Governorate with approximately OMR 700,000, North Al Batinah Governorate with over OMR380, 000, respectively. Over 15,168 title deeds were issued in all governorates during the same period out of which 35 title deeds were issued for GCC citizens.

— ONA

<FROM A1 ‘Great fun to film in north east states of Assam, Sikkim and Meghalaya’

“I didn’t know if I was ready to get into the shoes of playing a boxer or an actor, but they said, ‘you’re gonna be crazy if you don’t do this,’ so they were really supportive, and it’s been great,” said Andrea.

North east states

Ayushmann, who has previously been to the north east states of Assam, Sikkim and Meghalaya, also said it was great fun to film in the region, and reserved special praise for its people.

“They are very simple and sweet people,” he revealed. “They have a good sense of music, sense of fashion, it is multicultural also, even in the North East: it is not just one entity. Like any other place in the country or the world, we have people everywhere. It is beautiful to see this part of the country, and experience a different side of the country: while shooting it is different, of course, and when you’re travelling, it is different, so it was fun shooting there.”

Given the espionage aspect of the film, both actors couldn’t help but recollect movies and shows from the spy genre that they enjoy.

“I love thriller and action films,” said Andrea, who counts the character played by Angelina Jolie opposite Brad Pitt in Mr and Mrs Smith as one of her favourites. I love Daniel Craig. There was talk of Idris Elba being the next James Bond – I would have loved that, but I don’t think it is happening.”

Ayushmann added: “I was watching this series where Kate Winslet plays an investigative officer: Mare of East town.”

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Universities and colleges letting students down?

Students fail in job interviews because there is that big gap between what they were taught at colleges and universities and what is practiced in the industry



“It is like buying an expired can of beans or packet of biscuits that are past their due date,” said a student.

SALEH AL-SHAIBANY

MUSCAT: It made me think deeper when a group of students told me that colleges and universities are letting them down. “Why,” I asked them. They told me they get taught outdated theories that have gone past their shelf-life. “It is like buying an expired can of beans or packet of biscuits that are past their due date,” one of them explained. They also explained that most of their teachers are career academics.

Out of touch “They graduated from universities and go straight to teaching. They have never worked in the industries where changes of technology and new methods are taking place. They teach whatever they were taught years ago

because they are not in touch of what is happening in the real world. They constantly miss changes in the industries,” they explained. These students’ thoughts are based from real experience when they go through job interviews and fail just because there is that big black hole from what they were taught at colleges and universities and what is practiced in the industry. Oman is producing over 40,000 graduates a year straight from schools, colleges and universities. Most of us do not bother to ask why some of them cannot get a job. We take for granted because the economy has been hit by the pandemic. But unemployment started to creep in before the onset of COVID-19, not just in Oman but globally. The truth is that no country in the world can guaran-

tee employment to all of its graduates. But with graduates chasing fewer jobs, teaching institutions must fuse a good mix of industry experts and career teachers. It is not enough to ask teachers to go for refresher courses. They just add more theory on their knowledge. Employing experts from the industries cannot be underestimated to plug in the holes created by theories. When I was at the University, a third of my teachers were industry experts from different disciplines. They were a mix of part timers or just guest lecturers.

Practicality

Top universities in the world bend backward to have former CEOs of top companies to be part of their faculty members. That’s how they get practicality infused deep into their curriculum. The students know about this trend. One of them shared an article with me that says former British Prime Minister Tony Blair and retired US President Bill Clinton are both teaching as part timers at the Oxford University. “Why can’t my university have former Omani ministers or CEOs teaching us to share their leadership experience with us?” one of the senior students asked me. You cannot argue with that question. The good thing is that Omani students these days know what they are missing. Also, they know what they need to get a job. Are the colleges and universities really letting their students down or is their claim illegitimate? They know better because they find the hard way that the piece of paper they hold as certificates can be challenged by employers when the go for the interview.

MILITARY RELATIONS SAF Chief of Staff meets British Defence Minister

LONDON: Vice Admiral Abdullah Khamis Al Raisi, Chief of Staff of the Sultan’s Armed Forces (SAF) has met with Ben Wallace, Secretary of State for Defence of the UK, during his current visit there. The meeting reviewed the good bilateral military ties and ways of their further enhancement for the joint interest of both the countries. The meeting also tackled a number of issues of common concern. — OMA



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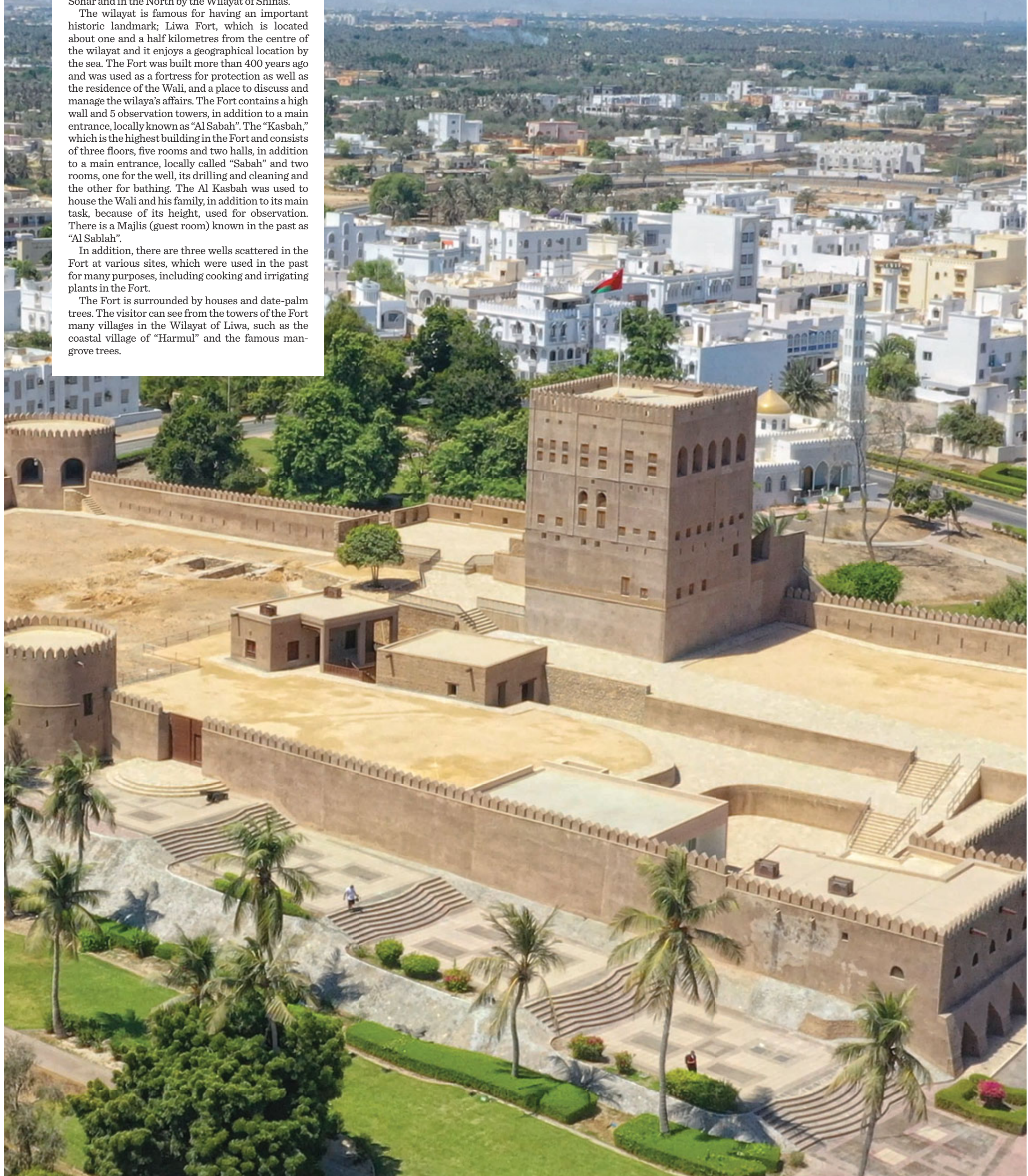
A HISTORIC LANDMARK

The Wilayat of Liwa in the Governorate of North Al Batinah is one of the wilayats of the Sultanate, which is famous for tourist attractions of stunning views, Aflaj “ancient irrigation system or water channels,” valleys, archaeological sites and different heritage. It is located in the North of the Sultanate, bordered in the South by the Wilayat of Sohar and in the North by the Wilayat of Shinas.

The wilayat is famous for having an important historic landmark; Liwa Fort, which is located about one and a half kilometres from the centre of the wilayat and it enjoys a geographical location by the sea. The Fort was built more than 400 years ago and was used as a fortress for protection as well as the residence of the Wali, and a place to discuss and manage the wilaya’s affairs. The Fort contains a high wall and 5 observation towers, in addition to a main entrance, locally known as “Al Sabah”. The “Kasbah,” which is the highest building in the Fort and consists of three floors, five rooms and two halls, in addition to a main entrance, locally called “Sabah” and two rooms, one for the well, its drilling and cleaning and the other for bathing. The Al Kasbah was used to house the Wali and his family, in addition to its main task, because of its height, used for observation. There is a Majlis (guest room) known in the past as “Al Sablah”.

In addition, there are three wells scattered in the Fort at various sites, which were used in the past for many purposes, including cooking and irrigating plants in the Fort.

The Fort is surrounded by houses and date-palm trees. The visitor can see from the towers of the Fort many villages in the Wilayat of Liwa, such as the coastal village of “Harmul” and the famous man-grove trees.





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Omani

350 STUDENTS

Graduation ceremony of Omani students studying in Jordan’s universities held

AMMAN: The embassy of the Sultanate in Jordan organised a graduation ceremony of Omani students studying in Jordan's universities for the academic year 2021-2022. A total of 350 students got doctorate, masters, and bachelor degrees.

Deep-rooted relations

Sheikh Hilal bin Marhoon Al Mamary, the Sultanate's ambassador accredited to Jordan reaffirmed the strong and deep-rooted relations between the Sultanate and Jordan under the wise leaders of both the countries. He also expressed his delight over the graduation of Omani students in a number of specialisations.

The graduation ceremony, which was organised under the patronage of Chairman of Accreditation and Quality Assurance Commission for Higher Education Institutions, Professor Thafer Assarair, included a number of sections. — **ONA**



IN NORTH AL BATINAH

Fire doused

MUSCAT: Firefighters were able to control a fire that broke out in a house in North Al Batinah without registering any injuries.

The Civil Defence and Ambulance Authority said: "The firefighting teams in North Al Batinah Governorate put out a fire that broke out in a house in the Dail Al Abdul Salam area in the Wilayat of Saham without registering any injuries." — **Times News Service**



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Necessary documents will be shared with interested construction companies after receiving expression of interest.

Construction companies are requested to register their expression of interest by e-mail contactus@indianschoolsalalah.com



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A'SHARQIYAH UNIVERSITY

AUCTION ANNOUNCEMENT

A'Sharqiyah University (ASU) is a private higher education institution located in Ibra, north of A'Sharqiyah Governorate of the Sultanate of Oman, about 150 km from Muscat. It was established in 2009 by Ministerial Decision (78/2009) issued by the Ministry of Higher Education.

Auction details:

ASU's Tender Committee has the pleasure to invite the companies to submit their proposals for the following auctions:

Auction No.	Description	Document Collection Deadline	Site Visit Date	Bids Submission Deadline	Document fees for each auction
ASU/04/2022	Providing Popcorn, Fresh Juices & Ice-cream	02/06/2022	06/06/2022 10:00am	16/06/2022	30
ASU/05/2022	Providing meals in food court				
ASU/06/2022	Steam / Water car wash				
ASU/07/2022	Renting a Bookshop to sell stationery, and provide printing and photocopying services				
ASU/08/2022	Providing Vending Machines to sell sweets, refreshments and hot drinks				

- The specialized companies of the above assignment can obtain the auction document from Procurement and Contracts Department at A'Sharqiyah University, Ibra, during the working days from 8:00 am to 02:00 pm.
- Bids have to be submitted in closed sealed envelopes, addressed to (Tender Committee, A'Sharqiyah University - Ibra), bearing the auction subject with its reference number with no indication to the name of bidders.
- The submitting of the main envelope should contain the following:
 - Separate sealed envelope contains technical proposal (1 original copy + 2 copies).
 - Separate sealed envelope contains commercial proposal (1 original copy + 2 copies).
- ASU general terms and conditions of tenders shall apply on all submitted bids.
- http://www.asu.edu.om/downloads/purchase_terms_conditions.pdf
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Tender Announcement

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MEDC 13/2022	Upgrading of Al Hail North PSS (P027) from 2x20MVA to 3x20MVA	08/06/2022	05/07/2022	A	on 14/6/2022 at 9:00 AM in MEDC Head Office	- One Electrical Engineer - One Civil Engineer - One Protection Engineer with Full PPE	1575
MEDC 19/2022	Replacement of Power Transformer at Darsait PSS (P018)	08/06/2022	28/06/2022	A	on 16/6/2022 at 9:00 AM in MEDC Head Office	- One Electrical Engineer - One Civil Engineer - One Protection Engineer with Full PPE	105
MEDC 20/2022	Madinat Al Nahdha PSS – 33kV Load shifting to Amarat Grid	08/06/2022	05/07/2022	A	on 15/6/2022 at 9:00 AM in MEDC Head Office	- One Electrical Engineer - One Civil Engineer - One Protection Engineer with Full PPE	105

The table below shows the instructions for participation: -

Participation

- Companies registered with Tender Board and in I Supplier may obtain Tender documents.
- The amount specified above is including 5% VAT.
- For companies holding valid **Rivada** card, the tender fees will be 25% only from the tender price.
- The amount specified above is Non-Refundable payment (Terms and Condition apply)
- to obtain the tender document and payment procedure , please visit MEDC Website/Vendor/E-Tendering, www.medcoman.com or call 24588600 – Ext: 8577 - 8726

Enquiries

- Any inquiry can be sent to MEDC Website/Vendor/E-Tendering, www.medcoman.com , one week before bid submission date
- Any request for clarification received after the above-mentioned period will not be considered.

Tender Submission Guarantee

Please follow **SUBMISSION OF TENDER** mentioned in clause 20.0 in Prime Document and to the supplier guideline available MEDC Website/Vendor/E-Tendering, www.medcoman.com

- The Tender should enclose a bank guarantee or a certified cheque issued by any bank in the Sultanate of Oman Unconditional and irrevocable and shall be disbursement as soon as it is submitted for the value of (1%) of the tender value valid for a period of at least ninety (90) days from the last date of tender submission and addressed to the CHAIRMAN OF MINOR TENDER COMMITTEE, MUSCAT ELECTRICITY DISTRIBUTION COMPANY S.A.O.C.
- The bid bond should be included in the commercial proposal only.
- Any tender not accompanied by a Tender Bond shall be rejected.

Terms and Conditions

- Tenders received after the deadline stated in the Invitation to Tender, including any extension thereof, for any reason whatsoever will not be considered
- The Tender shall be valid for a period of at least ninety (90) days from the last date of tender submission including any extension thereof.
- If the submission date extended, the bank guarantee or a certified cheque shall be extended in accordance with the bid extension date.
- MEDC is not bound to accept the lowest (or highest) Tenderer.
- Preference of awarding the tender will be given to those bidders who achieved a high percentage of purchasing from Local Products and have a High-level percentage of Omanization
- Muscat Electricity Distribution Company gives priority to award the projects to SMEs companies.
- For projects whose value is less than OMR 10K, the priority to award will be given to registered companies that hold a valid certificate Of Reyadah.
- Failure to comply with the instructions in tender document may lead to disqualification.

Bid Placement

Follow the Supplier guideline available MEDC Website/Vendor/E-Tendering, www.medcoman.com



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MOTORBOAT

26 missing after ferry boat capsizes in Indonesia

JAKARTA: Twenty-six people were missing on Saturday after a ferry boat carrying 43 people on board capsized off Sulawesi island in Indonesia.

Officials said the motorboat ran out of fuel and sank in bad weather. It had left Paotere port in Makassar, capital of South Sulawesi province, on Thursday midnight and was reported missing the next day when it failed to arrive its destination.



"We received information saying that 17 people were found and saved by passing tugboats," Djunaedi, the local search and rescue agency chief said. A group of 40 rescuers were at sea searching for survivors, he added, saying news of the accident only reached officials on Saturday.

On Thursday, Indonesia's weather agency had warned of waves up to 2.5 metres in the

Makassar Strait areas.

Lax safety rules in Indonesia

With some 17,000 islands in the vast archipelago, Indonesia is a country that relies heavily on water transportation. This doesn't come without risks, and maritime accidents with high death tolls are quite common in the Southeast Asian country. **ww**



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Mass shootings are a reason to arm, not disarm Americans, says Trump

Trump urged more spending on school security and law enforcement and suggested allowing teachers to carry firearms



TEXAS: During the National Rifle Association's (NRA) annual convention in Houston on Friday, former US President Donald Trump said mass shootings are a reason to arm, not disarm Americans.

"The existence of evil in our

world is not a reason to disarm law-abiding citizens," he said, just days after a school shooting in the Texan city of Uvalde renewed calls for gun control.

"As the age-old saying goes, the only way to stop a bad guy with a

gun is a good guy with a gun," he later added. During the massacre on Tuesday, 19 children and two teachers were shot and killed in an elementary school. The former president read aloud their names during the convention.

Trump urged more spending on school security and law enforcement and suggested allowing teachers to carry firearms.

He also said every school should have a single point of entry, strong fencing and metal detectors, adding there should also be a police official or an armed guard at all times in every school.

Gun lobby under pressure after the massacre

Outside the convention centre, Becky Pringle, the president of the nation's largest teachers union, rejected suggestions that teachers be armed to thwart future shootings.

"More guns equal more violence," she said outside the meeting. "Assault weapons should be banned."

Protesters gathered outside the event, demanding an end to the pro-gun lobby's stranglehold on US politics.

"Its bad optics, its probably also bad politics. It is incomprehensible," said DW correspondent in Texas Stefan Simons of the decision not to cancel the convention. "For those parents, and the people in Uvalde we talked to... a lot of people are having trouble understanding why the NRA thought it was still a good idea to go forward with this."

This would not be the first time the NRA displayed a lack of sensitivity to it's convention location. In 1999, they held their annual summit in Denver, Colorado, less than two weeks after the Columbine High School shooting in the same state.

Despite the optics, thousands of gun enthusiasts descended on the meeting, the first since 2019, filling a vast convention hall packed with booths of gun and gear manufacturers, walls of semi-automatic rifles and hunting products.

Speakers shrug off calls for more gun control

NRA Executive Vice President and CEO Wayne LaPierre also reflected on the calls for gun control in the wake of the mass shooting in Uvalde.

"Restricting the fundamental human right of law-abiding Americans to defend themselves is not the answer. It never has been," he told the receptive crowd.

Senator Ted Cruz said there have been too many mass shootings in Texas, "we must act decisively to stop them." He said, however, that restrictions on guns would not help, "what stops armed bad guys are armed good guys."

Attendees were banned from bringing "firearms, firearm accessories, knives, and other items," to the firearms convention, reportedly because of security concerns from the ex-president. **ww**

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MONKEYPOX

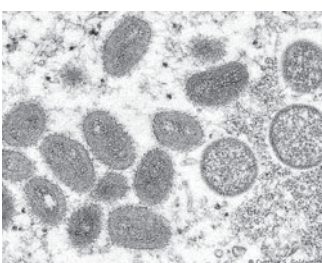
Countries should take steps to contain Monkeypox: WHO

GENEVA : The World Health Organisation on Friday said that countries should take the right measures to contain Monkeypox cases easily and also share data about their vaccine stockpiles.

"We don't know the extent of the disease. But as I said, we as a country should be more vigilant, so that we detect more cases. We think that if we put in place the right measure now, we probably can contain this easily. So that's why, we are making this briefing today and we are trying to raise the awareness because we are at the very, very beginning and it's we have a good window of opportunity to stop the transmission now," said Sylvie Briand, WHO director for Global Infectious Hazard Preparedness.

On the risk to the community spread, she said, "We are afraid that it will be spread in the community but currently it is very hard to assess this risk."

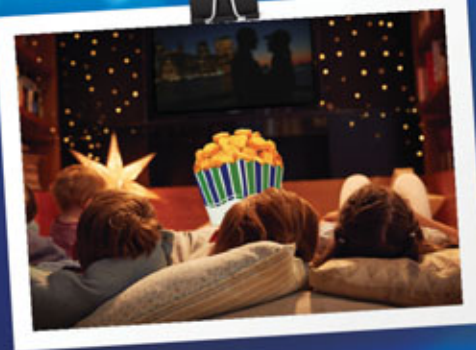
"We have a number of cases in many countries more than 20 in a few days and we have also many unknowns about this disease because we don't know if this unusual situation is due to a virus change. It doesn't seem so because of first sequencing of the virus shows that the strain is not different from the strain we



can find in endemic countries and it's probably more due to a change in human behaviour. But we are also investigating this and trying to understand the origin of this sudden outbreak of monkeypox in non-endemic countries," said Sylvie Briand on the spread of monkeypox in non-endemic countries.

"There is also much uncertainty about the future and this disease because we don't know if this transmission will stop. What we have seen in endemic countries as usually we have self-limiting outbreaks, and so we hope it will be exactly the same with the current one," she added.

According to WHO, Monkeypox is usually a self-limited disease and typically lasts 2 to 4 weeks. It may be severe in children, pregnant women or persons with immune suppression due to other conditions. **ANI**



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FRENCH OPEN

Nadal, Djokovic advance to last 16 at French Open

PARIS: Rafael Nadal and Novak Djokovic both won their third-round matches at the French Open on Friday, while 19-year-old Carlos Alcaraz became the youngest player to reach the fourth round since 2006.

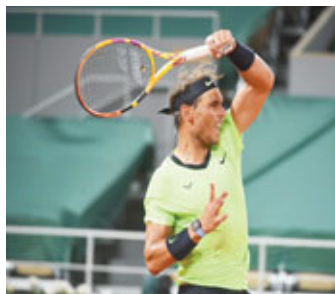
Despite dropped serve in the opening game against Dutch player Botic Van de Zandschulp, Nadal, who had just won his 300th Grand Slam match in the last round broke serve in the second game and dominated the first set 6-3.

The King of Clay faced little opposition in the second set, leading 5-0 before winning 6-2.

Nadal won the first four games of the third set, but Van de Zandschulp won the next three. The two then won a game respectively, with Nadal leading 5-4. In the tenth game, although the Dutchman saved a match point, Nadal, who was serving, scored two straight points to seal the victory.

In the next round, Nadal will face Felix Auger-Aliassime of Canada, who is coached by Nadal's uncle Toni Nadal.

"He (Toni Nadal) is a profes-



sional and he is with another player. I don't know what's going to happen if he's going to stay in the box or not, but I don't care. I have zero problems with that. So it's not a story at all for me," said Nadal.

Defending champion Djokovic quickly took control after 2-2 in the first set, beating Aljaz Bedene 6-3, 6-3, 6-2. The Serbian is aiming to retain his title in Paris after he defeated Stefanos Tsitsipas to capture his second Roland Garros crown last year.

In the evening session, Spanish starlet Alcaraz defeated Sebastian Korda 6-4, 6-4, 6-2. Since Novak Djokovic in 2006, the 19-year-old player became the youngest player to reach the fourth round

of the French Open.

"It's amazing to play in such a great atmosphere. I think the people enjoyed the match and I'm glad to play in front of such a good crowd," said Alcaraz.

"In the early matches, I'm trying to have fun out there. I love playing tennis and playing on these courts, so I'm enjoying every second," he added.

Fernandez beats Bencic; Anisimova in round four

Canadian teenager Leylah Fernandez reached the fourth round of the French Open 2022 after she defeated No.14 seed Belinda Bencic at Court Philippe Chatrier on Friday.

The No.17 seed Canadian defeated Bencic 7-5, 3-6, 7-5 in two hours 49-minute toe-to-toe clash. Fernandez has reached the fourth round at the French Open for the first time. Fernandez will next clash with 20-year-old Amanda Anisimova. Later, No.27 Amanda Anisimova advanced to the fourth round after an ankle injury forced Karolina Muchova to retire trailing 6-7(7), 6-2, 3-0 in the match. *Xinhua/ANI*

PREMIER LEAGUE

Ilkay Gundogan pips Cristiano Ronaldo and others to win Game Changer award

LONDON: Ilkay Gundogan has won the Premier League 2021/22 Game Changer of the Season award.

Gundogan claims the inaugural prize, given to the individual with the single most game-changing performance over the course of the campaign, for his display in a 3-2 win over Aston Villa that helped Manchester City win the title on the final day.

With his team 2-0 down at home and seeing their hopes of



the title slipping away, Gundogan came on as a substitute and scored twice in six minutes to inspire a turnaround win.

It was a season-defining display by the German, who ensured Man City finished above Liverpool and lifted their sixth Premier League Trophy.

Gundogan wins the award after receiving the most votes from the public and a panel of football experts.

The 31-year-old topped a six-man shortlist also including Paul Pogba, Aaron Ramsdale, Steven Bergwijn, Cristiano Ronaldo and Kevin De Bruyne. *ANI*

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OILS HIGHEST PROFIT

Oil India Limited (OIL) has posted a record net profit of Rs 3,887.31 crore for the year ended March 2022, which is 123.20 per cent higher when compared with Rs 1741.59 crore profit recorded in the previous year.

MARKET

BUSINESS & FINANCE



STABLE OUTLOOK

Alizz Islamic Bank announced that the international credit rating agency, Capital Intelligence has affirmed Alizz Islamic Bank's Long- and Short-Term ratings on the Oman National Scale at 'omAA' and 'omA1+', respectively with stable outlook which was improved during the year.

Madayn attracts 30 vital projects worth more than OMR200 million

Madayn, directly or through Mubadrah and Shumookh Investment and Services, is currently implementing more than 30 vital projects of consultancy works and infrastructure projects distributed in over 11 industrial cities with a total cost surpassing OMR200 million



Hilal bin Hamad Al Hasani, CEO of Madayn

infrastructure projects distributed over 11 industrial cities with a total cost surpassing OMR200 million.

The total cost of construction services of the industrial cities' projects exceeds OMR100 million spread across eight industrial cities.

According to Al Hasani, Madayn is completing the infrastructure works for the expansion of phase 7 in Sohar Industrial City at a total cost surpassing OMR13 million. This project, which has reached a 77 per cent of completion rate, involves completing the remaining works of phase 7, setting up water tanks, connecting the main water line, fencing and security gates. Work is also underway to complete the construction of the power plant, implementing irrigation networks, and water and sewage networks.

Moreover, the expansion project of Nizwa Industrial City (Phases 3 & 4), which is valued at OMR5.5



EXPANSION: Madayn is completing the infrastructure works for the expansion of phase 7 in Sohar Industrial City at a total cost surpassing OMR13 million. - Supplied picture

million, has reached a 77.6 per cent of completion rate in infrastructure works on an area of one million sqm. Most road works, electrical connections and remaining excavation works are in progress.

Madayn is also continuing with the infrastructure development project at Sur Industrial City, informed Al Hasani, as the completion rate of this project has reached more than 75 per cent. This project constitutes road construction, surface water drainage, drainage channels, water-supply infrastructure, switchgear system, supply and installation of low voltage cables, supply and installation of solar street light system, and potable water network.

Madayn has also begun to implement infrastructure-related roads and services at Mahas Industrial City at a total value of more than OMR4.5 million. Madayn has completed awarding the

infrastructure development tender in the industrial city of an area of more than 1 million sqm. This project comprises road works, rain drainage networks, sewage networks and water networks.

As for Al Buraimi Industrial City, Madayn is implementing the infrastructure development project in phases 1 and 2 at a total cost exceeding OMR5 million with a completion rate touching 30 per cent. This includes the implementation of a sewage treatment plant with a capacity of 400m2, road rehabilitation works, a water supply distribution network, electrical works, and street lighting (85 lighting poles) for phase 2. Work is underway to complete the sewage plant and rainwater drainage networks.

The CEO of Madayn stated that the project of developing Ibri Industrial City (Phase 1) is valued at OMR9 million and includes road

works, and services networks such as sewage, rain and telecom networks, and wadi protection walls. It should be noted that solar lighting poles are being used in 303 poles. The project is progressing as per the scheduled and approved time by the consultant and Madayn.

Among the key projects that Madayn has commenced to implement is the Ring Road project and its associated services at a total value touching OMR7 million. This project has touched 20 per cent of the completion rate and includes road works, solar lighting, rainwater drainage, sewage network, water network, firefighting system, electrical works, CCTV, and pedestrian and cycling paths. Work is also moving ahead with the construction of the KOM 6 building, which will add more than 40,000 sqm of rentable office space adopting the latest specifications.

Meanwhile, Madayn has com-

pleted several key projects, which include the project of developing the Al Mazunah Free Zone (Phase 1, Package 2 and Phase 2) at a total value reaching OMR6 million. The project includes road construction, sidewalks, water tanks and network, irrigation networks, road lighting, and electricity and drainage networks.

Madayn has also completed an infrastructure construction project at Samail Industrial City with a total value touching OMR40 million. Road works have been completed on a length of 46.290 km, and infrastructure services have been implemented such as water, electricity, and telephone networks, a sewage plant with a capacity of 3600 m3 for phase one, and two water tanks each with a capacity of 2500 m3. The construction of the Facility Building in Samail Industrial City has also been completed on a total area of more than 16,000 sqm.

Additionally, Raysut Industrial City (Raysut 2) expansion project has been completed with a total value of OMR3 million. The infrastructure of the industrial city was developed by constructing roads, sidewalks, pedestrian paths, water networks, firefighting systems, sewage networks, water drainage channels, electrical works for road lighting, sewage plant, irrigation and landscaping works.

Besides, Madayn has initiated Masar Service Centres in all of its industrial cities and they are currently operating and delivering a lineup of services to the investors. Masar presents an integrated platform to meet the requirements of investors for their projects in terms of licenses and approvals under one roof and within a specific timeframe.

Times News Service

MUSCAT: The Public Establishment for Industrial Estates (Madayn) has attracted and localised 130 industrial, commercial and service projects during the first quarter of 2022 with an investment value touching OMR64 million and a total area of 818,000 sqm, informed Hilal bin Hamad Al Hasani, CEO of Madayn.

Madayn, directly or through Mubadrah and Shumookh Investment and Services, is currently implementing more than 30 vital projects of consultancy works and

COLLABORATION



BEST PRACTICES: The agreement with i6 Group provides Al Maha Petroleum with outstanding operational excellence capabilities and access to the state-of-the-art best practices in the aviation refuelling process. - Supplied picture

Al Maha signs pact for aircraft refuelling management platform

Times News Service

MUSCAT: Al Maha Petroleum Products Marketing Company signed an agreement with i6 Group for using the world's first end-to-end aviation fuel management platform 'Fusion6', an into-plane refuelling management platform allowing for complete real-time visibility and management of ground fuelling operations.

Commenting on the agreement, the CEO of Al Maha Eng. Hamed Al Maghdri said, "Our agreement with the i6 group provides Al Maha Petroleum with outstanding operational excellence capabilities and access to the state-of-the-art best practices in the aviation refuelling process. We believe that our stakeholders will benefit from the efficiencies which come with the technology that this platform

provides. I would like to also highlight that Al Maha has always been recognised as a leader of positive changes in the Sultanate of Oman."

Steve Uhrmacher, the CEO of i6 Group Steve added, "We are thrilled to be growing in the Middle East with Al Maha in Oman. Our partnership demonstrates i6 Group's trusted reputation as a truly global and leading fuel management platform and we look forward to further strengthening our partnership with Al Maha over the coming years."

The technology will be rolled out at Muscat International Airport, also expanding i6's presence throughout the Middle East. Other Middle Eastern airports already taking advantage of i6 technology include Dubai International Airport and Bahrain International Airport.

IMPORTANT TOPIC

Financial inclusion is a prerequisite to meeting several UN's Sustainable Development Goals

Times News Service

DAVOS: Financial inclusion remains the first step towards personal and business well-being and is a prerequisite to meeting several goals under the UN's Sustainable Development Goals. Despite this, over half the world is yet to gain equitable access to finance and this remains one of the biggest challenges facing the world today.

The World Economic Forum, which is driving forward the agenda of stakeholder capitalism, has consistently focused on financial inclusion and the role it plays in helping communities thrive.

This all-important topic was a subject of discussion on the second day of the ongoing WEF at Davos, with several global stakeholders convening to discuss this issue.

HM Queen Máxima of the Netherlands opened the session by raising a question on the need for public and private stakeholders to fully understand the purpose of financial inclusion and evaluate how it can result in the better financial health of an individual.

Karabo Morule of Capital Art, South Africa, brought up the subject of financial literacy as a key element in driving better use of access to finance. Her call for financial literacy finds relevance in various research studies which show a significant correlation between financial inclusion and financial education. In fact, developing countries today report a financial literacy level of as low as 30 per cent compared to the average of 60 per cent in developed economies.

Against this background, Morule spoke of how financial literacy would encourage people to invest in insurance, especially among the underprivileged and marginal groups.

Her thoughts on connecting the underprivileged with prudent products were echoed by Adeeb, whose company, Lulu Financial Holdings, is involved in the cross-border remittances and micro-loans segment. With over 1.1 billion people worldwide locked out



SUBJECT OF DISCUSSION: The World Economic Forum, which is driving forward the agenda of stakeholder capitalism, has consistently focused on financial inclusion and the role it plays in helping communities thrive. - Supplied picture

of formal financial channels due to lack of a verifiable identity, Adeeb took the examples of India's Aadhar scheme and UAE's Wage Protection Scheme to drive home the need for better traceability of consumer spending.

According to him, this is important to complement awareness about products suited to the needs of the under-served. Adeeb also suggested that while digitisation has its inherent benefits, financial institutions should remember the emotional aspect at the grassroots level and accordingly bring in a personalised touch to their services to ensure last-mile consumers are onboarded efficiently.

Gelsomina Vigliotti of the European Investment Bank, which works with several developing economies on grassroots level projects, further mentioned that access to finance should come with adequate skill training & development so that the money is utilised

properly. Merely gaining financial access doesn't guarantee growth but having a strong business case to deploy it makes the difference, she added.

Andre Soelistyo of GoTo Indonesia asked for greater public-private involvement to drive down the cost of moving money to zero. According to him, this is necessary to build sustainable solutions that can get people to utilize financial products suited to their wellbeing. He spoke of how his company was able to leverage the potential of digital solutions during the pandemic to onboard millions of motorbike riders in Indonesia, thereby giving them access to the market opportunity.

Central to this point of digitisation, the conversation also touched upon various aspects of cyber fraud, especially with digital newcomers having little awareness of the security involved. Globally, cybercrime is up by 600 per cent as

more people move online, with 67 per cent of financial institutions reporting an increase in cyberattacks over the past year.

Against this backdrop, François Villeroy de Galhau, Governor of the Bank of France, admitted that while this is a concern, there should not be a trade-off between digitisation and regulation in the march towards greater financial inclusion. He expected stakeholders to work together so that both grow in tandem with the demand.

He was also vocal about the need to bring gamification elements into financial literacy campaigns, suggesting strongly that financial literacy cannot be done in isolation.

The conversation, which was moderated by Faisal Islam, Economic Editor of BBC, also touched upon several successful case studies from developing economies such as the UAE, India, Bangladesh, Indonesia and South Africa among others.



MARKET



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Capital Intelligence affirms Alizz Bank's rating with stable outlook

The report emphasised that the credit rating of Alizz Islamic Bank is based on the bank's resilient financing quality metrics, sound liquidity position and a return to net profit in 2021

Times News Service

MUSCAT: Alizz Islamic Bank (AIB) announced that the international credit rating agency, Capital Intelligence has affirmed Alizz Islamic Bank's AIB Long- and Short-Term ratings on the Oman National Scale at 'omAA' and 'omA1+', respectively with stable outlook which was improved during the year as a result of the change in the outlook of Oman Sovereign rating and strengthening of the bank's financial position.

The report emphasised that the credit rating of AIB is based on the bank's resilient financing quality metrics, sound liquidity position and a return to net profit in 2021. The non-performing financing ratio remained moderately low and a more than average provision coverage position compared to the peer banks was maintained. The continued expansion of customer deposits further supports the Bank's sound liquidity position. The bank's return to net profit in 2021 was aided by a wider net financing margin and a rise in fee-based income.

Commenting on the result of this report, Sulaiman Al Harthi, Chief Executive Officer of Alizz Islamic Bank, said, "Strengthening of the fiscal balance and improved macroeconomic indicators resulted in improvement of the outlook for Oman's sovereign rating and will have a positive effect on the banking sector as well."

He added, "The bank will continue its transformation journey and intend to deliver sustainable results based on well-defined strategy and improved economic environment of the Sultanate. Oman is witnessing a gradual recovery in economic activities after the lifting of Covid-19 restrictions. This along with other initiatives taken by the government to support the economy has helped the banking sector to navigate through these challenging times."

"The bank is on the right path to continue its growth momentum with strong support from its shareholders and endeavour to enhance the shareholders' value and emerge as a solid Islamic banking franchise."



“Strengthening of the fiscal balance and improved macroeconomic indicators resulted in improvement of the outlook for Oman's sovereign rating and will have a positive effect on the banking sector as well. The bank will continue its transformation journey and intend to deliver sustainable results based on well-defined strategy and improved economic environment of the Sultanate

Sulaiman Al Harthi
Chief Executive Officer of Alizz Islamic Bank

ISLAMIC BANKING SPONSOR

Bank Nizwa showcases its innovative digital banking offerings to visitors at Comex 2022

Times News Service

MUSCAT: As a firm believer in technological innovation in the banking sector, Bank Nizwa, the leading and most trusted Islamic bank in the Sultanate of Oman, extended its support to Comex 2022, Oman's official technology, communications, innovation and digital transformation show, as the main Islamic Banking sponsor.

The 31st Annual Hybrid Event, at the Oman Convention and Exhibition Centre (OCEC), as well as through virtual support platforms. The event included exhibitions, conferences, awards, workshops, seminars, certified training programmes, gaming, B2B meetings and other attractions.

With Bank Nizwa being at the forefront of Banking and Fintech and being deemed as the 'Most Innovative Islamic Bank', it has always directed its focus on digitalisation and the introduction of dynamic Shari'a-compliant products and services.

Exhibiting at the Comex 2022, the bank showcased its digital banking offerings to visitors, which included a Digital On-

Exhibiting at the Comex 2022, the bank showcased its digital banking offerings to visitors, which included a Digital Onboarding section that enabled visitors to open an account with Bank Nizwa digitally via the use of a QR code

boarding section that enabled visitors to open an account with Bank Nizwa digitally via the use of a QR code. Digital onboarding has allowed the bank to reach bring Islamic Banking closer to a larger audience and simplify the account opening process for prospective customers. Also displayed was a prototype of an Interactive ATM and a Self-Service Card Issuance/Printing Machine.

Visitors could use the machines in real-time to understand their mechanism and receive token cards that allowed them to enter the raffle draw to win exciting prizes, exclusive to Comex visitors. Bank Nizwa has also dedicated an area to showcase its offering to corporate clients allowing them to network and get acquainted

with the bank's unique customer-oriented approach.

Digital future

Elaborating on the bank's commitment to driving the digital future of the banking sector, Khaled Al Kayed CEO of Bank Nizwa said: "Fintech is providing technologies to the banking sector that will make it more efficient than ever before. Banking institutions are adopting digital onboarding that eliminates the need to fill out forms, make over-the-counter payments, and submit documents. To improve customer experience, smartphone applications provide customers with real-time access to their bank accounts and machine learning to protect against fraud."

COOPERATION

Davos UPLink and Saudi Ministry of Economy & Planning sign agreement

DAVOS: The open innovation platform of UPLink, an affiliate of Davos World Economic Forum, has signed, on the sidelines of the event, a cooperation agreement with the Ministry of Economy and Planning of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia in order to expand the zone of most innovative solutions to address the sustainable development challenges.

Faisal bin Fadhil Al-Ibrahim, Minister of Economy and Planning of Saudi Arabia and Borge Brende, President of Davos World Economic Forum signed the agreement in the presence of a number of officials from the two sides.

According to the agreement, the ministry seeks to discuss and study the joint issues in the field of food security, food waste recycling, food stability and climatical smart agriculture within Saudi Arabia's efforts to achieve the agenda for the sustainable development of 2030 locally and internationally. -SPA



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UAE-BASED

Damac Properties makes foray into US real estate market

DUBAI: UAE-based Damac Properties has announced that it has won the \$120 million bid to acquire land in the upscale Miami neighbourhood of Surfside. The Dubai-based developer plans to build an ultra-luxurious, Cavalli branded condominium project.

The property, on Collins Avenue, offers residents 200 feet of direct beach frontage and access to South Beach and Bal Harbour. The land, comprising 1.8 acres, was sold to Damac for \$120 million through the court process.

Commenting on the purchase, Damac Chairman and Founder, Hussain Sajwani, said: "Damac Properties has long been eyeing development opportunities in Miami. We see the city, which is known for being a luxury and fashion centre, as a natural fit for our Company, which has an established reputation for its branded luxury offerings."

Surfside, in recent years, has become a hotspot for ultra-luxury condominium developments, including the Four Seasons Private Residences, the Fendi Chateau Residences, and the Arte Surfside buildings.

OIL INDIA LIMITED

Oil India records highest ever profit in 2021-22 due to high fuel, gas prices

NEW DELHI: Oil India Limited (OIL) has posted a net profit of Rs 3,887.31 crore for the year ended March 2022, which is 123.20 per cent higher when compared with Rs 1741.59 crore profit recorded in the previous year.

Talking to ANI, SC Mishra, CMD, Oil India Limited, said that one of the reasons behind the record profit is high crude oil and gas prices. Mishra said that 8 billion Rubles of dividend from Russian projects is stuck due to the war between Russia and Ukraine.

There is no aggressive plan to buy Russian projects as the government is reviewing the investment prospects in Russia, he said. Talking about the crude oil price outlook, Mishra said oil prices are expected to come down to \$80-90 in some time.

Oil India's turnover of Rs14,530.18 crore during 2021-22 is also the highest ever. The turnover during 2020-21 was Rs 8,604.90 crore.

For Q4 2021-22 also, the Turnover and PAT have increased by 73.85 per cent and 92.32 per cent, respectively over Q4 last financial year. The Earnings Per Share (EPS) for FY22 increased to Rs 35.85/share from Rs 16.06/share for FY 21.

The consolidated turnover of OIL's group companies has increased to Rs 30,011.20 crore in 2021-22 from Rs 22,484.13 crore in the last financial year.



Group PAT of OIL for the year 2021-22 also increased to Rs 6,719.21 crore from Rs 4,145.97 crore in 2020-21.

Average crude oil price realisation for 2021-22 improved to US\$ 78.96/ barrel from USD 43.98/ barrel in 2020-21, an increase of about 80 per cent.

The average natural gas price for 2021-22 was marginally higher at USD 2.35/MMBTU vis-a-vis USD 2.09/MMBTU for 2020-21.

The company has achieved the highest ever natural gas production of 3045 MMSCM in 2021-22, an increase of 15.25 per cent over last year. Natural gas production in Q4 of 2021-22 was also higher by 13.1 per cent over the corresponding period last year.

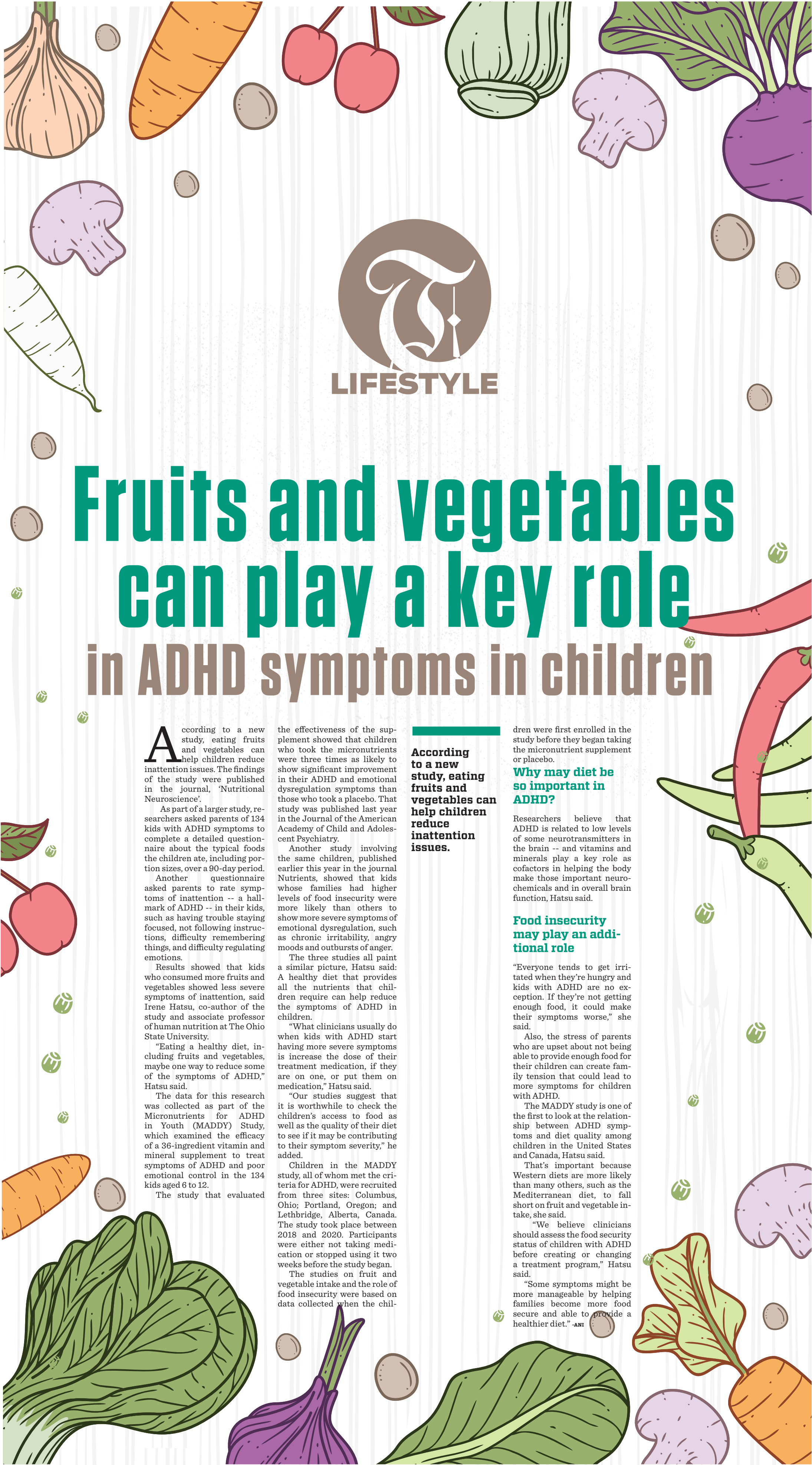
Crude oil production during 2021-22 also increased by 1.6 per cent, from 2.96 MMT in 2020-

21 to 3.01 MMT in 2021-22. The growth in crude oil production in Q4 2021-22 is 4.2 per cent over the corresponding period last year.

Two new hydrocarbon discoveries were made during 2021-22 in Tinsukia district of Assam.

The Board has recommended a final dividend of Rs.5/share for FY22. The Company has earlier paid an interim dividend of Rs.9.25/share for FY 22. The total dividend for the year will be Rs14.25/ share.

Mishra said that four major infrastructure projects were also commissioned in the State of Assam during 2021-22 which will further enhance the oil and gas production capabilities of the company. The company is currently drilling its deepest onshore well at Sadiya in Assam which will be about 6500 M deep. -ANI



Fruits and vegetables can play a key role in ADHD symptoms in children

According to a new study, eating fruits and vegetables can help children reduce inattention issues. The findings of the study were published in the journal, 'Nutritional Neuroscience'.

As part of a larger study, researchers asked parents of 134 kids with ADHD symptoms to complete a detailed questionnaire about the typical foods the children ate, including portion sizes, over a 90-day period.

Another questionnaire asked parents to rate symptoms of inattention -- a hallmark of ADHD -- in their kids, such as having trouble staying focused, not following instructions, difficulty remembering things, and difficulty regulating emotions.

Results showed that kids who consumed more fruits and vegetables showed less severe symptoms of inattention, said Irene Hatsu, co-author of the study and associate professor of human nutrition at The Ohio State University.

"Eating a healthy diet, including fruits and vegetables, maybe one way to reduce some of the symptoms of ADHD," Hatsu said.

The data for this research was collected as part of the Micronutrients for ADHD in Youth (MADDY) Study, which examined the efficacy of a 36-ingredient vitamin and mineral supplement to treat symptoms of ADHD and poor emotional control in the 134 kids aged 6 to 12.

The study that evaluated

the effectiveness of the supplement showed that children who took the micronutrients were three times as likely to show significant improvement in their ADHD and emotional dysregulation symptoms than those who took a placebo. That study was published last year in the Journal of the American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry.

Another study involving the same children, published earlier this year in the journal Nutrients, showed that kids whose families had higher levels of food insecurity were more likely than others to show more severe symptoms of emotional dysregulation, such as chronic irritability, angry moods and outbursts of anger.

The three studies all paint a similar picture, Hatsu said: A healthy diet that provides all the nutrients that children require can help reduce the symptoms of ADHD in children.

"What clinicians usually do when kids with ADHD start having more severe symptoms is increase the dose of their treatment medication, if they are on one, or put them on medication," Hatsu said.

"Our studies suggest that it is worthwhile to check the children's access to food as well as the quality of their diet to see if it may be contributing to their symptom severity," he added.

Children in the MADDY study, all of whom met the criteria for ADHD, were recruited from three sites: Columbus, Ohio; Portland, Oregon; and Lethbridge, Alberta, Canada. The study took place between 2018 and 2020. Participants were either not taking medication or stopped using it two weeks before the study began.

The studies on fruit and vegetable intake and the role of food insecurity were based on data collected when the chil-

According to a new study, eating fruits and vegetables can help children reduce inattention issues.

dren were first enrolled in the study before they began taking the micronutrient supplement or placebo.

Why may diet be so important in ADHD?

Researchers believe that ADHD is related to low levels of some neurotransmitters in the brain -- and vitamins and minerals play a key role as cofactors in helping the body make those important neurochemicals and in overall brain function, Hatsu said.

Food insecurity may play an additional role

"Everyone tends to get irritated when they're hungry and kids with ADHD are no exception. If they're not getting enough food, it could make their symptoms worse," she said.

Also, the stress of parents who are upset about not being able to provide enough food for their children can create family tension that could lead to more symptoms for children with ADHD.

The MADDY study is one of the first to look at the relationship between ADHD symptoms and diet quality among children in the United States and Canada, Hatsu said.

That's important because Western diets are more likely than many others, such as the Mediterranean diet, to fall short on fruit and vegetable intake, she said.

"We believe clinicians should assess the food security status of children with ADHD before creating or changing a treatment program," Hatsu said.

"Some symptoms might be more manageable by helping families become more food secure and able to provide a healthier diet." -ANI



ROUND-UP



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Enjoy rewarding driving experience in Camry

The stylish and popular Toyota Camry is available with a choice of three powertrain options, including a new 2.5-litre four-cylinder dynamic force engine that produces 204 hp and 243 nm of torque and is paired with an eight-speed direct-shift multi-mode automatic transmission



MUSCAT: Toyota's impressive Camry is designed and engineered to offer fine and longer-lasting ownership experiences. The Camry continues to make a mark all across the world with its performance, fuel-efficiency and features.

The stylish and popular Camry is available with a choice of three powertrain options, including a new 2.5-litre four-cylinder dynamic force engine that produces 204 hp and 243 nm of torque and is paired with an eight-speed direct-shift multi-mode automatic transmission; a 3.5-litre V6 engine with D-4S fuel injection system that produces 298 hp and 356 nm of torque and is mated to an eight-speed multi-mode

automatic transmission; and an electrified hybrid system, which combines a petrol engine and two electric motors. The combined power of the two power sources is 208 hp. It is also paired with an Electrically Controlled Continuously Variable Transmission (ECVT), delivering heightened driving pleasure.

The Toyota Camry introduces a level of refinement that exceeds expectations. Thanks to Toyota New Global Architecture, (TNGA), Camry offer a comfortable and stable ride with superior handling characteristics. A new front fascia incorporates a more defined lower-intake area, with grille bars extending dynamically to the sides creating a refined look that is enhanced by chrome-plated ornamentation for a premium feel. The sportier grades

wear a noticeably different body style than the premium grades, with a bold redesigned lower fascia shape featuring a powerfully expressive gloss black mesh grille and larger side vents. This athletic look is further emphasised with new 18-inch bright machined-finish alloy wheels. A subtle rear spoiler lip is paired with a unique rear bumper with distinctive corner lines, as well as new-look combination lamps.

The Camry's interior is stylish and impressive. The dash design has a sporty, cockpit-like feel, while treating both the driver and the front passenger to wider visibility. The exciting interior's distinctive design offers comfort and convenience with a layer of luxury and hosts a range of advanced features. These include a panoramic moonroof, a floating 7-inch or

9-inch multimedia touch screen that comes integrated with Apple CarPlay® and Android Auto, among others.

The vehicle's advanced safety system is complemented by Toyota Safety Sense, an advanced safety technology package that includes Pre-Collision System (PCS), Dynamic Radar Cruise Control, Lane Departure Alert, Lane Tracing Assist and Automatic High Beam. In addition, the vehicle features a comprehensive array of safety features to protect its occupants such as Driver + Passenger + front side and curtain SRS airbags, Vehicle Stability Control (VSC), Traction Control (TRC), Anti-lock Braking System (ABS), Electronic Brake Force Distribution (EBD), Brake Assist (BA), Hill-start Assist Control (HAC), and a rear-view camera, among many others.

SIGNIFICANT DAY



Mazoon Electricity marks World Day for Safety and Health at Work

MUSCAT: Mazoon Electricity Company, the leading electricity provider in Oman, recently observed the World Day for Safety and Health at Work which is celebrated annually to promote the prevention of occupational accidents and diseases globally.

The International Labour Organisation (ILO) first began to observe World Day in the year 2003 to prevent accidents and diseases at work. The day plays a significant role in raising awareness of how to make work safe and healthy. The awareness-raising campaign focuses attention on how promoting and creating a safe and healthy culture can help reduce the number of work-related deaths and injuries.

The observance of the day is an important practice for Mazoon Electricity as the company is committed to the health and safety of all stakeholders and holds high importance to HSE. The project team initiated the event to create awareness about the

importance of health and safety in the workplace.

Mazoon Electricity team together with Al Falahy Company organised a safety camp for contractors. While appreciating the efforts put in by the contractors, the company also awarded good performers with a best HSE performance certificate.

Eng. Saleem Al Mahrooqi, Project Monitoring and Control Manager said, "Mazoon Electricity fosters a working environment where employees are free from hazards and harm. We have a clear HSE policy which helps us maintain a culture of high standard safety practices."

Eng. Said Al Kamli, Extension Projects Manager, said, "It's highly important that all companies takes responsibility for ensuring that every working environment is safe and healthy. Employees must also work safely, protect themselves, safeguard others and always participate in the implementation of protective measures."

INTERVIEW

Majan Electricity keen to provide ideal service with international standards to its subscribers

MUSCAT: Engineer Yousef bin Ibrahim Al Balushi, Senior Director of Projects Department at Majan Electricity Company, said that the company provides energy with the highest international standards. The company provides the required energy without any interruption or effects of loads, even with the advent of summer and increase in consumption and loads. The company's readiness and its projects always made it maintain this distinguished level of providing exemplary service with international standard specifications and high-quality indicators of the services provided.

Al Balushi explained that the company has an annual project plan, and it works to implement this plan, which is approved through the capital projects plan, to achieve the company's goals and obligations towards subscribers and the requirements of the license granted to it by the Public Services Regulatory Authority. Al Balushi added that the company has implemented and launched several projects during this year, the most important of which are:

Enlargement of Al-Multaqa sub-station from 2*20 MVA by extending an electrical feeder for a voltage of 33 kV in North Al Batinah Governorate, to keep pace with the growing growth in the Wilayat of Sohar, strengthen networks and ensure energy continuity.

Also, the Sur Al-Abri sub-station, with a capacity of 2*20 MVA, extending an electrical feeder range for a voltage of 33 kV, was established in the North Al Batinah Governorate, to provide the required energy and strengthen the network to keep pace with urban growth in the new plans in the Wilayat of Shinas.

The electrical transformer with a capacity of 3 MVA was replaced with the Al-Hilshi sub-station and the electrical capacitor with a capacity of 3 MVA was replaced with the Wadi Ahin sub-station in North Al Batinah Governorate to raise the efficiency of the network, avoid interruptions and provide



additional capacity for the mountainous areas in the wilayats of North Al Batinah Governorate.

Al Balushi added that the Al Fulaj sub-station has been enlarged from 2*6 MVA to 2*20 MVA, with a voltage feeder of 33 MVA in North Al Batinah Governorate to keep pace with the growing growth in the region, strengthen networks and ensure energy continuity in the Wilayat of Saham. He stressed that the cost of the launched projects exceeded six million Omani rials.

Projects to strengthen existing networks and protection systems

When asked about other projects undertaken by the Company, the Senior Director of the Projects Department at Majan Electricity Company said: "In addition to network construction and extension projects, the Company strengthens existing networks and raises the level of protection by using the latest technologies and keeping pace with continuous updating and specialised studies. The company has implemented a number of projects, including:

A project to improve the protection system for the Majan electricity network in the governorates of North Al Batinah, Al Buraimi and

Al Dahirah, in order to ensure the efficiency of the network and reduce interruptions.

The protection system and the automatic transmission system were also installed for Majan Electricity Company's sub-stations in the governorates of North Al Batinah, Al Buraimi and Al Dahirah, to ensure network efficiency and reduce interruptions through automatic response to any network malfunctions or accidents.

Projects under construction

As for the projects that are still under construction and when they are expected to be completed during the current year, Al Balushi said: Some projects are still under construction, including:

- Construction of Al-Subaikhi sub-station 2*6 MVA with the connection of 33 KV voltage feeders (Al Dhahirah Governorate) in order to keep pace with the increasing growth and avoid interruptions and provide additional capacity for the area.

- Construction of the 33 KV line from Yanqul (Al Jadeeda) main station to Al Wuqabah sub-station in Al Dhahirah Governorate, and strengthening of the 33 KV network for Al-Waqba and Al-Shuwayya stations to ensure the continuity of the electric current.



- Enlargement of Al-Ghurayfa sub-station from 2*20 MVA to 3*20 MVA in Shinas in North Al Batinah Governorate to keep pace with the increasing growth in the area that represents the centre of the Wilayat of Shinas.

- Enlargement of the Fazah sub-station from 3*6 MVA to 2*20 MVA, connecting 33 KV voltage feeders from the main Shinas station in North Al Batinah Governorate, in order to keep pace with the increasing growth and provide major subscribers with the required energy in the Wilayat of Liwa which is characterized with investments in mining and quarrying sector.

- Enlargement and reconstruction of Sohar Industrial Area-2 sub-station from 2*20 MVA to 3*20 MVA with the construction of a 33 kV voltage feeder from Liwa-2 main station (North Al Batinah Governorate) and supplying major subscribers in Sohar industrial area with the required power to support the infrastructure and services in one of the largest investment areas in the Company's concession areas.

He added: In addition, it is expected that the project of equipping the new network control centre will soon be completed and that the current system will be replaced

by another system that keeps pace with the latest systems used in the field of network control, in order to raise the reliability of the network and monitor its performance, in addition to achieving the highest levels of security and cybersecurity. He stressed that the expected total cost of these projects exceeds seven million Omani Rials.

Upcoming projects

Al Balushi said: The company has a group of projects that are in the final design stage before being floated in tenders. It is expected that these projects will be offered for competition by approved and licensed companies in the field of electrical network construction during the third and fourth quarters of this year to achieve the required readiness in the coming years, keeping pace with the growing demand for electric energy in light of urban growth and stimulating investment.

Health, security and safety

When asked what the company does within the framework of its keenness on health and safety when implementing such projects and the company's business in general, Al Balushi said: The company operates through approved policies in health, security, safety

and environment, through which contractors are involved and continuous support and awareness are provided to ensure their understanding and application by all workers in these projects to ensure the achievement of their objectives. The work teams showed a high commitment to these policies and requirements, which helped in achieving 715 working days without any injuries or interruptions from work

The Project Department is always committed to achieving the highest levels of quality by adhering to quality requirements. The company holds the 55001 quality certificate and applies the approved Project Department manual and the latest management methods in this field.

Rationalisation

The company attaches great importance to rationalisation. The various departments of the Company, through available channels and means, continuously educate the public about the methods and mechanisms of rationalisation. This would benefit the subscribers and the environment through many initiatives adopted by the Company and the management of Nama Group, as the company is one of the group's subsidiaries.



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ROUND-UP



Malabar Gold & Diamonds unveils ‘Sparkling Summer’ offer

Through the Sparkling Summer offer, the brand gives its customers an exclusive chance to enjoy free gold coins with the purchase of diamond and precious gem jewellery

MUSCAT: Malabar Gold & Diamonds, one of the largest jewellery retailers globally with a strong retail network of over 285 outlets spread across the globe has unveiled the Sparkling Summer offer to celebrate the onset of summer. This offer will run at all Malabar Gold & Diamonds outlets located in Oman until June 18. Through the offer, the brand gives its customers an exclusive

chance to enjoy free gold coins with the purchase of diamond and precious gem jewellery. Customers get half gram gold coin on every OMR300 worth of diamond jewellery purchase and a 1 gram gold coin on every OMR500 worth of diamond jewellery purchase. **Exclusive designs** “With the school vacation fast approaching, many of our cus-

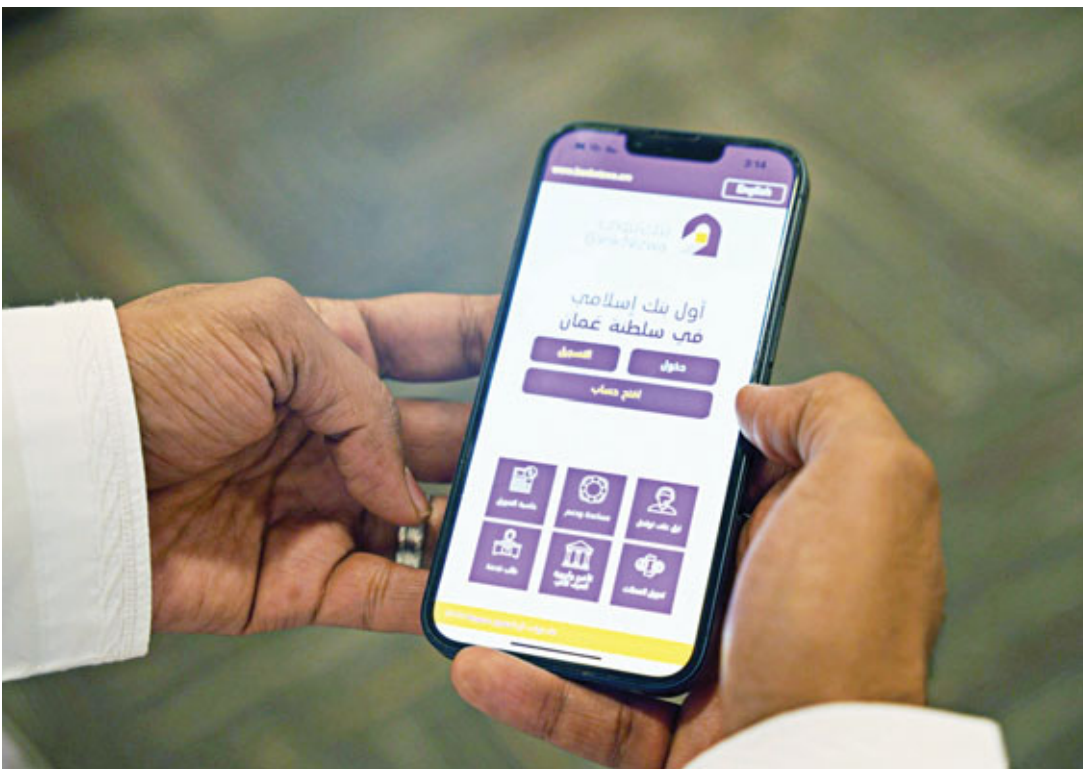
tomers are gearing up to travel to their home country. They will want to gift their loved ones back home or even buy something for themselves to stand apart during a family function. We wanted to treat them to an array of exclusive designs when they are at our showrooms, which is why we have launched new jewellery collections specifically for this season. And with the exclusive offers, we

are sure that we can add an extra value to their purchases,” said Shamlal Ahamed, MD – International Operations, Malabar Gold & Diamonds. To add more glitter to the season, Malabar Gold & Diamonds has also unveiled the latest collection of jewellery in gold, diamonds and precious gems to suit the tastes of their multicultural and multinational customers.

DIGITALISATION

Bank Nizwa enables customers to open accounts from comfort of their homes

MUSCAT: Leading the way for change, Bank Nizwa has been at the forefront of digital transformation and innovation. With the government also encouraging the digitalisation of the banking and financial sector, Bank Nizwa has ensured that it adopts all the measures necessary to create a seamless transition for its customers. In line with its customer-centric vision and values, the bank now enables customers to open their Sharia-compliant accounts from the comfort of their homes through Bank Nizwa's Mobile Banking App. This enhancement provides new customers with a valuable experience as an efficient business tool. Bringing Islamic banking close to the community, the bank incessantly works toward delivering its customers with easy, efficient and secure offerings. Bank Nizwa continually invests and harnesses technology and innovation to offer premium Sharia-compliant financial services. “Bank Nizwa's investment in technology geared towards digitalisation coupled with ongoing product innovations have helped us get closer to our customers and has made banking a more pleasurable experience. By continuously enhancing our mobile app and adding new features to it, we are able to benefit those individuals who might not be able to visit our branches to open an account. Bringing this facility to their homes, we want to be there with our customers every step of the way and give them access to our services round the clock,” said Sadiq Al Lawati, Head E-Channels and Digitalisation of Bank Nizwa. “The Bank Nizwa Savings Account serves as the basic tool to invest and grow an individual's funds and



is based on the principle of profit-sharing under the Sharia concept of Mudaraba. Simultaneously, it also entitles customers to a host of benefits and the convenience of everyday banking,” he added. All Omani nationals and residents in Oman with valid visas who are over the age of 18 years can open an account through the Bank Nizwa Mobile App in just a matter of minutes. Focusing on making the digital processes quick, easy and secure customers need to follow only a few steps to open an account. Customers are first required to download the Bank Nizwa Mobile App, which is available on Google Play Store, Huawei App Gallery and Apple App Store. They are then advised to take a photo-

graph of their national ID or resident card along with a selfie with their ID. After uploading the documents and filling in the remaining details, the final step is making the first deposit, which can be easily done by electronically transferring funds into the new account. Post submission of details, the ATM card linked with the account will be delivered to the customer at the provided address, eliminating the need for them to visit the bank for collection. The all-inclusive app prioritises convenience. The key privileges of having a Bank Nizwa Savings Account include unlimited deposits to the account, quarterly profit pay-out on the monthly average balance, Bank Nizwa MasterCard debit card,

zero minimum balance charges, quick fund transfers and remittances, pay orders, convenient bill payments, an advantage of mobile top-ups and the option to make donations through the account. Aligning itself to the Oman Vision 2040, Bank Nizwa has been successful in attracting and retaining highly-skilled Omani talents who have played an instrumental role in accelerating digitalisation through all its processes. With innovative Sharia-compliant finance solutions tailored to suit the needs of individuals, large corporate companies and SMEs, Bank Nizwa has created a benchmark in the financial industry and changed the face of digital banking in Oman.

PROMOTION

Mercedes-Benz Oman announces special AC summer check limited-time offer



MUSCAT: Mercedes-Benz Oman has announced its AC Summer Check offer, inviting customers to its Mercedes-Benz service centres in Muscat, Salalah and Sohar to get a full AC Summer Check. Starting from OMR 40 incl. VAT, the offer includes AC dust filters change (excluding particulate filter), AC cleaning, AC gas top-up, 10-point health check, and wash and vacuum and runs between June 1 and 30. Shaun Michaels, CEO of Mercedes-Benz Oman, said: “Mercedes-Benz follows a customer-centric approach globally – and we strive to understand and anticipate our customers' needs even better. With rising temperatures across the region, AC systems must be

served at least once a year. This offer is our way of reminding our customers in Oman to keep their vehicles in the best possible shape for the summer while giving them extra value too.” Carried out by Mercedes-Benz certified technicians, customers can be rest assured that their car is in the best possible hands. Utilising the new StarView solution, the vehicle health check is recorded, while a personalised film is shared via e-mail and SMS along with an estimate. The offer is available across all models registered before 1st January 2019, except the Mercedes-Maybach, Mercedes-AMG GT, Mercedes-AMG G-Class, Mercedes-Benz SLR, and the Mercedes-Benz Viano.

13TH EDITION



Al Ahlia's annual Broker Bowling event concludes successfully

MUSCAT: Al Ahlia brought back its signature annual Broker Bowling Event for its partners in the insurance industry after a break of two years – owing to the pandemic. The annual affair was in its 13th edition and due to its simple yet competitive format, had no dearth of avid followers and participants. The event witnessed a turnout of over 100 people from the fraternity with more than 11 teams competing for the coveted top 3 team positions and two individual slots of highest scorer female and male. Like every year the venue was buzzing with energy and activity. While some colleagues were cheering the participants, others kept an eye out for what's the score to beat and emerge victorious. Team Al Ahlia was in full attendance to welcome, cheer the participants and ensure everyone had a good time. Refreshments and snacks all around kept the energy levels high and the engagement on. The back end of the event included yet another popular activity of an on-the-spot pop quiz with interesting audience prizes, followed by the main winners' celebration where teams from RMS Brokers (RMS Strikers), Howden Brokers (Team Howden) & RAY Brokers (Pin Omenion) secured the top three slots respectively. Individual performances were

nailed by Suad Abdullah Humaid Al Kalbani from Khimji Ramdas Brokers and Naser Al Jabry from RMS Brokers. Speaking on the occasion Praveen Kumar, CEO, Al Ahlia Insurance said: “Al Ahlia has always demonstrated a strong affinity towards working with broker partners and this annual event is a fun way not only to express our gratitude but also engage with the wider partner teams who lead client engagements. “We attribute our success to our partners and customers who have stood by us, even in difficult economic times. “This is a perfect opportunity for me to thank all those who supported us. We appreciate and value that loyalty. “We are committed to underwriting Oman's and the regions' progress through our products, services, governance capabilities, and strong capital position.” “It was just amazing to see the enthusiasm of all our partners. It is this spirit of partnership that makes our relationships strong and Al Ahlia - a preferred choice amongst insurers in Oman. “Our sincere thanks to all for their whole-hearted participation and for making this event a huge success. We look forward to a mutually beneficial 2022 with our partners,” added Kiran Sharma – Head of Commercial Lines Trading at Al Ahlia Insurance.



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ROUND-UP



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A'Safwah introduces new Ayran laban drinks in mint, garlic flavours

As a brand that goes the extra mile to understand the evolving market and the dynamic needs and demands of its consumers, A'Safwah launched these refreshing drinks to provide additional beverage options



MUSCAT: With a wide range of products that are of the highest quality, fresh, and local, A'Safwah the largest vertically integrated dairy company in Oman, has become the preferred brand amongst consumers not only in the Sultan-

ate but overseas. In an endeavour to continuously expand its product line, A'Safwah recently launched the new Ayran laban drinks in mint and garlic flavours. As a brand that goes the extra mile to understand the evolving

market and the dynamic needs and demands of its consumers, A'Safwah launched these refreshing drinks to provide additional beverage options. The introduction of the two new flavours is also in line with the company's growth strategy. By continuously sup-

plementing its existing product line with wholesome, tasty, and healthy additions, the company strives to boost customer satisfaction and cater to the taste buds of all its consumers. A'Safwah has always demonstrated a keen focus on promoting

a healthy lifestyle in the community and the introduction of two new laban flavours is a testament to the same. A well-known source of nutrition, laban drinks is rich in calcium, proteins, and vitamins. Regular intake of laban has also been proved to boost immunity and digestion. By introducing flavourful beverages, A'Safwah has always been at the forefront of encouraging individuals to opt for healthier alternatives instead of carbonated drinks. The zesty, tangy, and delicious new laban drinks have been well-received by the local market. The two new flavours were introduced after carefully studying the preferences of consumers, and mint and garlic were the most popular and loved flavours in the local market. A versatile drink that goes alongside any snack, laban provides the

needed refreshment, especially during the hot summer months. A'Safwah's Ayran laban drinks come in 1 l bottles for the whole family to enjoy and 200 ml bottles and 200 ml cups that are easy to carry for those on the go. Its convenient packaging ensures it suits the varying needs of its diverse consumer base. Dedicated to providing farm-fresh dairy products while adhering to the highest quality standards throughout all its operations, A'Safwah takes great pride in its world-class dairy farms, advanced infrastructure, and excellent distribution systems. With decades of knowledge, expertise, and experience in the dairy farming industry it will continue to expand its product portfolio while ensuring that its commitment to quality is uncompromised.

PRODUCT LAUNCH

Shell Oman organises technology seminar to promote innovation

MUSCAT: To showcase Shell's latest developments, Shell Oman conducted the Shell Technology Seminar 2022 that took place in both Muscat and Salalah and saw in attendance business customers, partners, and leading regional experts from Shell.

The event, which was dedicated to showcasing Shell's extensive range of lubricant solutions, also introduced guests to Shell's newly rolled out Lube Advisor.

Responding to the increased reliance on remote technological solutions, Shell's Lube Advisor is a breakthrough in modern technology. A wearable gadget, it supports customers in optimising their lubricant operations by providing remote consultations.

With a keen focus on safety, the Lube Advisor also provides real-time monitoring of field technicians while offering them audio-visual assistance when performing maintenance services. The seminar announced that Shell's customers in Oman and the Middle East can now access the Lube Advisor to enhance the safety of workers, increase on-ground



efficiency, and boost overall operational decision-making. Dedicated to maximising equipment efficiency by reducing downtime and improving efficiency, the seminar also highlighted the various applications of Shell's diverse range of lubricants and how the improved technology could save time, money, and even lives. Commenting on the company's take on innovation in the Lubri-

cants sector, Mahmoud Al Abri, Commercial Lubricants - General Manager, Shell Oman, said, "As a local company with a global brand, Shell Oman is committed to utilising our access to global know-how and share knowledge with our customers and partners, and the Shell Technology Seminar is an ideal platform for us to connect, engage and learn more especially in the presence of the

Shell Lubricants experts and subject matter experts." Shell Oman is committed to working in line with the directions and priorities of Oman Vision 2040 and creating In-country value. This shows evidently in the recognition of the growing demand for sustainable products amongst consumers, where the company has been able to leverage innovation to enhance its product portfolio with a variety of products made in Shell Oman's ISO-certified lubricant plant at Mina Al Fahal. These include the Carbon Neutral Shell Helix range of lubricants, among others. The products are not only being supplied to the local market but also exported to a number of GCC countries and regional markets, offering added benefits of improved engine performance and better fuel efficiency. Shell Oman will continue to power progress in the local community through innovative solutions while staying committed to its energy transition strategy to drive sustainability in the global community.

THIRD ARAB COMPETITION FORUM

Khedmah sponsors Student Challenge

MUSCAT: Oman Investment and Finance Company (OIFC), 'Khedmah', sponsored the Student Challenge, which was held as part of the 3rd Arab Competition Forum. Representing the Sultanate, the Center for Competition Protection and Monopoly Prevention (CPMP) at the Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Investment Promotion (MOCIIP) hosted the forum events on May 24 and 25 at Oman Convention and Exhibition Centre (OCEC).

It was organised by the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for West Asia (ES-CWA), in collaboration with the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, the International Trade Center, the League of the Arab States and the Ministry of Higher Education, Research and Innovation in Oman.

The ceremony was organised to honour the winners of the Student Competition Challenge under the auspices of Dr Rahma bint Ibrahim



Al Mahrooqi, Minister for Higher Education, Research and Innovation, in the presence of Qais bin Mohammed Al Yousef, Minister of Commerce, Industry and Investment Promotion, and a number of local and international officials. Khedmah not only confirmed its belief in public-private partnerships by supporting this competition but also recognized the success of the Forum's first and second editions. It also showcased OIFC's social obligation to strengthen collaboration in order

to create awareness about regional competitiveness policies. The competition has created a dialogue area that brings together national and regional participants to facilitate all contributions that help Oman's economic landscape grow. With the goal of inspiring students to innovate, Khedmah partnered with the forum by providing cash prizes to 3 winning teams of the student challenge. It aims to raise their knowledge and grasp of the competitive landscape, particularly in electronic markets.

SUPER SPORTS CAR



New Maserati MC20 Cielo's global premiere

MODENA: The MC20 super sports car, now also a spyder: Maserati presents MC20 Cielo, a one-of-a-kind car that can deliver the performance of a true super sports car, together with a holistic and immersive driving pleasure the like of which has never been seen before.

MC20 Cielo announces its special features in its very name: MC stands for Maserati Corse ('Racing'); 20 refers to 2020, the year that began the brand's new era; Cielo ('sky') highlights the fact that it is a model devoted to driving pleasure in the great outdoors while maintaining all the prerogatives of the coupé.

Equipped with the revolutionary V6 Nettuno engine, the Cielo offers a perfect mix of sportiness and luxury, courtesy of a specification unique to the segment: the innovative retractable glass roof.

The new spyder acts as a meeting point between Maserati audacity and the infinite sky, featuring a special "sky feeling".

The model is equipped with a state-of-the-art electrochromic (smart glass) window that can instantly be transformed from clear to opaque at the touch of a button on the central screen, courtesy of Polymer-Dispersed Liquid Crystal (PDLC) technology. The roof is also best-in-class in terms of thermal insulation and opening and closing speed (just 12 seconds).

Courtesy of this epitome of technology, MC20 Cielo provides a multi-sensory driving experience: all-encompassing with the roof closed and opaque; unique for the in-cabin brightness when the roof is transparent; holistic with the top down.

Developed at the Maserati Innovation Lab and produced at

the historic plant on Viale Ciro Menotti, the spyder is 100% made in Italy and 100% made in Modena, as is the coupé version. MC20 Cielo is designed for perfection. It weighs just 65 kg more than the coupé, made possible by meticulous, precise work during the stages of the car's design. As well as its outstanding weight-to-power ratio, the carbon fibre chassis (the same for all three configurations to come: coupé, spyder and the future electric version) also guarantees uncompromising torsional rigidity, offering a combination of extraordinary handling on the road and the track.

The new spyder is a car with an elegant yet highly sporty design. Its character and personality are truly eye-catching for the purity of its forms and the refined aerodynamics subjected to 360° testing in a wind tunnel, whether the roof is open or closed.

Nothing is superfluous in the design; everything has its function. The only concession to a surprise effect is the butterfly doors, as in the MC20 super sports car.

The butterfly door provides much easier access into and out of the cabin, as well as showing off the carbon fibre cockpit and the completely unmasked front wheel.

From an aesthetic perspective, the launch version features a new three-layer metallic colour known as Acquamarina, available as part of the Maserati Fuoriserie customisation programme.

At the World Premiere of the new Maserati spyder, the bond with the sky will be the central theme, to take you into a new, holistic dimension: just raise your eyes and look up to the sky.





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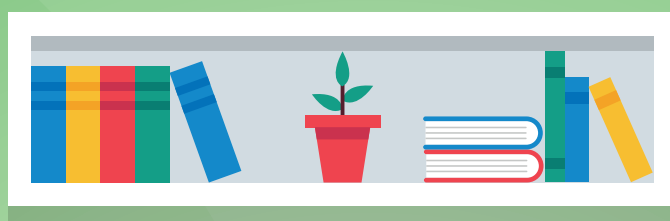


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