

HM SENDS CONDOLENCES

MUSCAT: His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik has sent a cable of condolences to President Joe Biden of the United States of America (USA) on victims of wildfires that broke out in the state of Hawaii. In the cable, His Majesty the Sultan expressed his sincere sentiments to President Joe Biden, families of the victims and people of the USA, wishing the injured a speedy recovery. — **ONA**



HM GREETES PRESIDENT OF PAKISTAN

MUSCAT: His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik has sent a cable of greetings to President Dr. Arif Alvi of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan on his country's Independence Anniversary. In the cable, His Majesty the Sultan expressed his heartfelt sentiments and best wishes of good health and happiness to President Dr. Arif Alvi. His Majesty also wished the people of Pakistan further progress and prosperity. — **ONA**



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TOP THREE INSIDE STORIES

OMAN Oman to be official partner for ITB Berlin

1 Oman, represented by the Ministry of Heritage and Tourism, announced on Sunday its official partnership for the 2024 edition of the International Berlin Tourism Exchange (ITB), one of the largest and most reputed tourism fairs globally. **>A2**

WORLD Bangladesh reports 14 more dengue deaths

2 Bangladesh has reported 14 more deaths due to dengue in 24 hours till Saturday morning, taking the death toll from mosquito-borne diseases in the country to 387, according to media report. More than 2,400 people were admitted to hospital with viral fever, the Directorate General of Health Services said. **>A7**

MARKET Hotel revenues in Oman rise by 32%

3 The revenues of 3-5-star hotels in Oman stood at OMR110 million at the end of June 2023, higher by 32 per cent over the corresponding period in 2022, according to statistics issued by the National Centre for Statistics and Information (NCSI). **>B1**



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39° MUSCAT



OMAN REPAYS OVER OMR1.5BN OF PUBLIC DEBT BY JUNE 2023



The State's General Budget registered a surplus of OMR656 million at the end of the first half of 2023

MUSCAT: Oman has repaid more than OMR1.5 billion of public debt by the end of the first half of 2023, helping it reduce the total public debt to OMR16.3 billion.

The Ministry of Finance said on Sunday that by the end of the first half of 2023, the Ministry did not withdraw from reserves as planned, as a result of generating

additional revenue. The State's General Budget registered a surplus of OMR656 million by the end of the first half of 2023, compared to a surplus of OMR784 million achieved over the same period in 2022.

According to the Fiscal Performance Bulletin issued by the Ministry of Finance, public revenue of the State Budget at the end of the first half of 2023 amounted to OMR6.34 billion, down by 6 percent compared to OMR6.72 billion registered over the same period in 2022.

At the end of the first half of 2023, net oil revenue amounted to OMR3.25 billion, higher by 2 percent as compared to OMR3.18 billion registered over the same period in 2022. The average oil prices amounted to \$83 per barrel while average oil production reached 1,061,000 barrels per day.

OMR **6.34**BN

was the public
revenue of the State
Budget at the end of
the first half of 2023,
according to the Fiscal
Performance Bulletin
issued by the Ministry
of Finance on Sunday

the Integrated Gas Company.

The Ministry of Finance further said that the current revenue amounted to OMR1.96 billion at the end of the first half of 2023, increasing by 9 percent compared to OMR1.79 billion collected over the same period in 2022.

Moreover, at the end of the first half 2023, public spending amounted to OMR5.68 billion, constituting a drop by OMR255 million, or 4 percent compared to actual spending over the same period in 2022. At the end of the first half of 2023, current expenditure amounted to OMR4.07 billion, lower by OMR472 million, or 10 percent when compared to an amount of OMR4.55 billion registered over the same period in 2022.

Development expenditure of civil ministries and government units at the end of the first half of

2023 reached OMR383 million, representing 43 percent of the total development spending.

At the end of the first half of 2023, total contributions and other expenses amounted to OMR775 million, decreasing by 10 percent when compared to an amount of OMR863 million registered over the same period in 2022. The oil product subsidy and transport sector subsidy amounted to OMR155 million and OMR54 million, respectively. Furthermore, an amount of OMR200 million was transferred to future debt obligations budget-item.

The Ministry of Finance by the end of the first half of 2023 repaid more than OMR507 million to the private sector. This reflects the payment vouchers received through the e-financial system, and which have completed the documentary cycle. — **ONA**



10 reasons to
learn scuba
diving in Oman

A4

MUSCAT MUNICIPALITY FLOATS TENDER

Centralised venue for festivals in Muscat to be a reality soon

Times News Service

MUSCAT: The need for a centralised venue for festivals in the nation's capital Muscat has long been felt with the Muscat Municipality Chairman, Ahmed Mohammed Al Hamidi, admitting earlier this year that "it is time to have a permanent venue to hold festivals in future."

Consulting services

Muscat Municipality has recently launched a tender regarding consulting services for the design of the single-venue festival ground in Muscat Governorate. The Municipality has invited all companies classified at the first class level and registered with the Tender Board



to bid for it.

The companies are expected to offer modern designs and ideas, according to international specifications, which keep pace with the organisation of events, and are consistent with the priorities

of Oman Vision 2040 in the development of governorates and sustainable cities.

One integrated site

The single-festival venue aims to gather all the elements of events and activities at one integrated site that has passages, walkways, entrances and exits, lighting, facilities, theatres, exhibitions, restaurants, restrooms, and squares designated for entertainment, promotion and participations.

The tender will also include creating designs for specialised event sites, arena events, performance sites, games, and green neighbourhoods for other diverse programmes and activities. **>A5**

GAS EXPLOSION

18 injured in Mabela blast

Times News Service

MUSCAT: A gas explosion in a restaurant in Mabela left 18 people injured on Sunday morning, said an official at the Civil Defence and Ambulance Authority (CDAA). Speaking to *Times of Oman*, the official said, "Initial investigations reveal that the cause of the explosion at the restaurant in Mabela area was the leaking of cooking gas."

Lieutenant Ali Al Farsi at Civil Defence and Ambulance Authority (CDAA), said: "The authority received a report of an explosion in a building in the Wilayat of Seeb at 7.35 am on Sunday. Immediately, teams went to the site, and on their arrival they found that a huge explosion had occurred, causing damage to more than one building."

The explosion has affected a number of nearby buildings and damaged some vehicles.

Al Farsi said: "As many people were injured, the ambulance, the hazardous materials handling, and search and rescue teams were requisitioned."

When asked about the injuries, Al Farsi said: "18 people were injured in the blast, and one of them is in critical condition. The injured are of Asian nationalities but some Omanis are also injured." "Injured people were evacuated from the nearby buildings, and also from the restaurant. The seriously injured person was extricated from the restaurant," Al Farsi added.



About the loss from the blast, Al Farsi confirmed that the damage was extensive as there were residential apartments. A number of citizens were evacuated with the help of a crane and emergency healthcare was provided to them. "The damage to buildings and vehicles is extensive, but there are no deaths, and most of the injuries were medium to light." "It's not an explosion of a gas

cylinder, but of cooking gas. By nature cooking gas is a heavy gas, and when there is a leak, this moves like water, which means that you are filling the room with large amounts of gas. This gas becomes a time bomb waiting for a spark to ignite. A spark can happen even if someone tries to turn on a light, or open a door. Any spark can cause a massive explosion."



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IN THE FIELD OF EDUCATION

Oman, Turkiye review joint possibility on research projects



MUSCAT: Dr. Rahma Ibrahim Al Mahrouqi, Minister of Higher Education, Research and Innovation, received here on Sunday Prof. Dr. Hasan Mandal, President of the Scientific and Technological Research Council of Turkiye (TUBITAK).

The visit comes within the framework of the Ministry's aim to strike strategic international partnerships that contribute to developing higher education, research and innovation in the Sultanate of Oman. It also boosts the Ministry's role in transferring international scientific experiences and technologies.

Al Mahrouqi highlighted the ca-

pabilities and incentives offered at the Innovation Park Muscat (IPM), as well as the role of the Ministry in supporting research and innovation in Oman.

On his turn, Prof. Dr. Hasan Mandal, President of TUBITAK underscored the bilateral relations between the two countries.

He also expressed his keenness to boost scientific cooperation through an agreement that will be signed in the near future by the two sides.

The two sides discussed areas of cooperation through the draft agreement. They also agreed to form a work team to study the possibility of holding a scientific event

that brings together higher education establishments from Oman and Turkiye.

The two sides also reviewed the possibility of establishing joint research projects and means of benefiting from the Turkish side in terms of transforming innovations into industrial projects.

Meanwhile, the guest and his accompanying delegation toured the Innovation Park Muscat. During the visit they viewed IPM's various facilities. Moreover, the meeting was attended by several officials from the Ministry of Higher Education, Research and Innovation and the delegation accompanying the guest. — **ONA**

TWO-DAY EVENT

Arab, regional experts focus on cybersecurity challenges

SALALAH: The Wilayat of Salalah in the Dhofar Governorate on Sunday hosted 'Hadatha' (Modernity) cybersecurity forum focusing on the extent to which cybersecurity influences economic diversification and the generation of investment opportunities.

The opening ceremony of the two-day forum was held under the auspices of His Highness Sayyid Marwan Turki Al Said, Governor of Dhofar.

The forum was organised by the Arab Regional Centre for Cybersecurity of the International Telecommunication Union, in cooperation with the Middle East Centre for Consultation and Studies.

Digital transition

The event stems from the global trend in realising digital transition and the 4th industrial revolution (4IR), as well as an uptake in cybersecurity risks that threatens the global economy, putting billions of dollars at stake on an annual basis.

This prompted many countries



in the world to consider cybersecurity as one of the pillars of economy.

The forum saw the participation of Arab and regional experts and specialists, who presented their views in two working sessions during the opening programme.

The forum will also discuss other issues, like data security governance, the protection of new digital boundaries, opportunities of self-employment and the development of digital economy in Oman.

In particular, the forum will elaborate on ways of empowering innovation in the field of cyberse-

curity, the platform of ESCWA (United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia) on simulating indicators for policymakers in the Arab region, legal frameworks for cybersecurity services and the criminal responsibility incurred upon committing cybersecurity offences.

The forum offers an opportunity to highlight the role of the cybersecurity industry in providing employment opportunities, promoting technological progress and attracting economic investments, in addition to raising awareness about the importance of protecting digital infrastructure in the aftermath of increased cyber threats.

It is worth noting that the Arab Regional Centre for Cybersecurity of the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) is currently hosted by Oman, represented by the National Centre for Informatics Safety, affiliated with the Ministry of Transport, Communications and Information Technology. — **ONA**

Oman announces official partnership for ITB Berlin 2024

ITB Berlin will be held from March 5 to March 7 next year, with the participation of more than 160 countries and above 5,000 exhibitors



MUSCAT: The Sultanate of Oman, represented by the Ministry of Heritage and Tourism, announced its official partnership for the 2024 edition of the International Berlin Tourism Exchange (ITB), one of the largest and most reputed tourism fairs globally.

The strong representation of the Sultanate of Oman as the official partner of ITB Berlin 2024 comes as an affirmation of the Sultanate of Oman's plans to develop its tourism sector and enhance the country's ranking as a global tourism destination.

ITB 2024 will be held from 5 to 7 March 2024, with the participation of more than 160 countries and above 5,000 exhibitors. Around 7,000 media representatives are expected to participate in the event.

The Sultanate of Oman's partnership for ITB Berlin 2024 is considered an ideal opportunity

to introduce the tourism potential, products, services and tourism experiences that abound in the Sultanate of Oman. It is also an opportunity to promote tourism, increase the flow of tourists and promote multiple investment opportunities.

Haitham Mohammad Al Ghassani, Director General of Tourism Promotion at the Ministry of Heritage and Tourism said: "This partnership represents a platform for strengthening the Sultanate of Oman's status on the global tourism map, and reflects its commitment to expand the base of international visitors. The Sultanate of Oman is diversifying its tourism products and enhancing its economic activities by investing in the tourism sector, highlighting the unique strategic location of the Sultanate of Oman, its natural beauty, stunning scenery and its rich cultural heritage to form an ideal destination for tourists who are looking for unique and amazing experiences.

He added, "Choosing the Sultanate of Oman as an official partner

for ITB Berlin 2024 reflects the appreciation of the organisers of this leading international travel trade show for the continuous efforts made by the Sultanate of Oman in promoting the tourism sector and the positive steps witnessed by this sector. It also affirms Oman's importance in enhancing growth and economic diversification.

Al Ghassani pointed out that the total number of visitors to the Sultanate of Oman by the end of last year reached 2.9 million visitors. Three to five star hotels in Oman by the end of last year recorded an increase in revenues which amounted to OMR186 million. Meanwhile, the number of guests in these hotels reached 1.6 million guests, with the total expected number reaching as many as 3.5 million visitors by the end of 2023.

Al Ghassani emphasised that the partnership of the Sultanate of Oman for this fair aims at maximising the benefits from this global event through the implementation of marketing campaigns before, during and after the participation. — **ONA**

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Pakistan expatriates excited to celebrate Independence Day

A variety of programmes have been planned to mark the occasion

Times News Service

MUSCAT: Pakistan expatriates are all set to celebrate 77th Independence Day on Monday with a variety of programmes, including free distribution of mangoes and prayers, scheduled to mark the occasion.

Times of Oman spoke to few Pakistani citizens in Muscat and they were excited to share the happy occasion of their country's independence.

Ameer Hamza, chairman of Board of directors of Pakistan School Muscat (PSM) and in-charge of the Asian community at the Ministry of Endowments and Religious Affairs (MARA) said: "My day on 14th of August will start with my early prayers for Pakistan. Being a chairman of the PSM's board of directors, I will be participating in the Independence Day programme at Pakistan School Muscat. At the school, we will have the Pakistani community join us to celebrate Independence Day with a cake-cutting ceremony."

For Zahid Shakoor, co-owner of Ravi restaurant, it is a day to share the joy and happiness of the country's independence. "Every year on August 14th, we have a tradition to celebrate Independence Day at our Ravi Restaurant by distributing free mangoes to the Pakistani community. We also have special offers at our restaurant, and also



hold special prayer sessions for the prosperity of our country." One of the veterans of the Pakistani community in Oman and former general secretary of Pakistan Social Club, Syed Aftab Gilani said: "This year, we have a special party arranged at Ravi Restaurant to celebrate the Independence Day. My message to our young expatriate population is that Pakistan is a nation that is built on harmony, peace, prosperity and we should make our country proud. I wish all my Pakistani brothers and sisters a very Happy Independence Day."

Mohsin Sheikh, Managing Director of Lake City Investments LLC, shares the national pride with his friends and also attends events to mark the occasion.

He told *Times of Oman*, "I always celebrate Independence Day by hoisting my country's flag on



the roof of my residence. I also put on specially designed Independence Day clothes on the occasion with my family."

"This year we have multi-forums where I am participating as a speaker. At night we will have a special dinner organised by friends where we will cut the cake to celebrate August 14th."

Mazhar Javed, manager at Bright Travels, said that "a party will be organised with friends and also hold discussions and have debates on ways to see how our country can prosper. This will be followed by a musical evening to conclude the celebrations in Muscat."

"Independence Day is very im-



Ameer Hamza



Syed Aftab Gilani



Mohsin Sheikh



Zahid Shakoor



Mazhar Javed

"At the founding of the nation, Muhammad Ali Jinnah called for a nation built upon unity, faith and discipline, and that is something we want to promote."

Expatriates also hoped this year's Independence Day celebrations will herald a bright future for Pakistan.

"We have seen so much politics and instability that we wish that there be a stable government who could work for the people. Inshallah, we have good governance," said Iqbal Khan, a jeweller.

Khan added: "For most Pakistanis it's a day that we celebrate with family and friends. The atmosphere is amazing back in Pakistan, where it is a public holiday, and a lot of expats tend to go home over the summer and celebrate the day there. For me, an outing with friends will be the way to celebrate tomorrow."

British Embassy's mentoring programme for Omani women continues to gain momentum



MUSCAT: In early June, 46 phenomenal women came together in a spirit of shared learning and collective growth. These women represent the 23 mentor and mentee pairs participating in Phase 1 of the British Embassy's 'Tamkeen' mentoring programme, launched on International Women's Day in March 2023 amidst a gathering of key dignitaries and high-profile guests.

Working in collaboration with UK delivery partners Mowgli Mentoring, Tamkeen provides one-to-one mentoring between experienced women leaders and Omani women who are early in their career. Each Tamkeen phase lasts 6 months, alongside a robust series of workshops and networking events to bolster the benefits and opportunities for participants.

Tamkeen builds on the British Embassy 'Lift as You Grow' mentoring programme, which supported 25 pairs in 2021 and

45 in 2022. Phase 2 of Tamkeen will launch in January 2024, expanding the mentoring support outside of Muscat to deliver a tailored programme for women in Nizwa and Sohar.

The British Embassy continues to actively champion and promote the valuable role women play in supporting the labour market and growth of Oman's economy. There is resounding evidence that women's economic empowerment requires due consideration to enable sustainable economic growth. The Sultanate of Oman has many skilled women, with 73% educated to secondary level. The Embassy will continue to champion this incredible talent pipeline of women to reach their full employment potential. The Tamkeen programme aligns with Vision 2040's ambitions on equal opportunities, which pave the way for Oman's international rankings for women and gender equality to be enhanced even further.

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NEW PLANTS

EA registers 485 species of plants in Al Hajar Mountains

MUSCAT: The Environment Authority has registered 485 species of plants in the Western Al Hajar Mountains range.

The new plants are discovered in the natural vegetation cover, open forests, shrub lands, semi-evergreens and some pastoral areas.

Eng. Sulaiman Nasser Al Akhzami, Director General of Nature Conservation at the Environment Authority, pointed out that the Western Al Hajar Mountains range (Al Hajar Al Gharbi) houses about 33 percent of Oman's plant species that exist at an altitude of more than 1,500 metres above sea level.

Of these, 14 are endemic species that are not found anywhere else in the region, Al Akhzami added.

These types of plants play an important role in providing habitats for wildlife and contributing to ecosystem services, like regulating the flow of surface water and maintaining soil stability.

Tapiscia trees

Such plants, including Tapiscia trees, are also used as raw materials in the field of popular medicines. -ONA



MUSCAT MUNICIPALITY

New festival venue to attract events throughout the year

<FROM A1 The festival venue is expected to attract events that can be organised throughout the year and in different seasons, and to provide the site with various important needs, services, and facilities that serve visitors and tourists.

Aspirations of the community

Muscat Municipality is keen to pay attention to the aspirations of the community in the entertainment industry in the Governorate of Muscat.

It is keen to hold events and activities with diverse content and renewable ideas in various sports, cultural, entertainment, arts, creative and competitive fields, as well as to take care of the participation of youth and community groups through events and festivals.

The tender announcement read: "Muscat Municipality invites the companies specialised in the tender works and registered with the Tender Board to participate and obtain the conditions and specifications from the website via the link (<http://etendering.tender-board.gov.om/>)."

board.gov.om/)." Besides the consulting services for the design of the festival grounds, Muscat Municipality issued other tenders, which are as follows:

- 1: Transporting neglected vehicles.
- 2: Painting of Muscat Municipality vehicles.
- 3: Supplying polymerisation devices for health affairs.
- 4: Road maintenance works in Muscat Governorate.
- 5: Treatment of rainwater catchments in the Qurum region.



Ministry of Defence

TENDER ANNOUNCEMENT

The Ministry of Defence invites MOD registered suppliers to participate in The following tender:

Subject	Tender Number	Last Date for Inquiries	Last Date To Submit The Tender	Tender Documnet Price
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1. Tenders documents and terms may be obtained on payment from the office of the Secretary of the Tender Committee, gate No. 14 of MAM Camp between 0900 to 1300 hrs on the working days.
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OMAN/WORLD

COMMENTARY

Why shouldn't older people get into technology?



Saleh Al-Shaibany



Just because you are older, it does not mean you cannot understand technology as young people would want you to think. With many online variations controlling our lives, it can become quite confusing when you want to interact with the rest of the world.

But many older people do not realize that they have a lot of time in their hands when they retire to get to learn how to be 'techno savvy'. The reason why young people understand more about technicalities because they spend more time on their phones and computers.

Older people have a bigger advantage, not just the time, but the money to spare to buy the latest gadgets and learn to control them. It is not just online purchas-

ing that seems to confuse many older people, but the everyday tasks that now seems to make our lives easier.

For example, the security cameras that protect our houses, navigational systems in our cars or even solar lights that cut down our electricity bills. These items are now part of our everyday lives and young people do not have 'special brains' to understand them. The sooner older people make a better use of their time, instead of snoozing in their living room during the day time, the quicker they can get back to their lives.

After years of working, older people need to get busy to stay alert on their retirement. Otherwise, like a knife that is never sharpened, it can become blunt and it is no use to anyone. For

young people, technology is something that is imposed on them to carry their office tasks to stay employed. Older generations who claim that they do not need to be familiar with smart technology, are wrong.

In order to keep abreast with the world around them to stop the brain wasting away, they need to stay active with the technology. It will keep them mentally alert and in a better mood.

Voice active and home touchpads can do many tasks at home and make life easier for older people who are not very mobile. They can spend time to learn how to operate these devices and have fun while doing it. They can also make retirement very fulfilling instead of doing nothing and waiting for

hours to tick away for another night to go back to bed.

As we get older, safety is of prime importance. It is never difficult to set up a monitoring system in the house to detect gas leaks or electrical shocks. Records of hospitals in Oman show that many accidents at home are caused by faulty wiring or fires in the kitchen. Since older people spend most of their time at home, the risks are high.

There are now many safety warning features that can be set up at home which can be ordered online. With plenty of time in their hands, older people can get busy to learn how to set them up for their safety. It also feels good to set up something that works and will keep you safe.

Staying in shape is another thing older people can get into to make themselves, not only useful, but healthy. Whether jogging or lifting weights, they can get fit by setting up their own home equipment. Again, they are available online.

Getting into technology can boost productivity and ensure fulfilling and enjoyable life in later life instead of staying at home doing nothing and allow the body to decay faster. In conclusion, technology is not built for just young people but for the older generation, too.



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HIGH TAXES

30% booksellers in Afghanistan shut shop

KABUL: The commission to assess the problems of booksellers has revealed that 30 per cent of booksellers in Afghanistan have stopped their business due to a lack of a good market, Afghanistan-based Tolo News reported.

Speaking to Tolo News, Abdul Wodod Mukhtarzada, a member of the commission, said that the booksellers have also complained about high taxes which are difficult to pay as their business has witnessed a decline.

Mukhtarzada said, "We used to sell more than 500 books and we had 200 librarians here but I can say now that their number has

dropped significantly." Several booksellers expressed concern that book reading culture has faded in Afghanistan.

Sharifullah, a bookseller said "There are issues because of the lack of female students' presence in the universities. This issue also affects the book business."

Mansour Qazizada, a bookseller, stressed that the market is down and people lack the capacity to buy. He also spoke about various taxes that the booksellers need to pay. Qazizada said, "You know that the market is down and the people lack the capacity to purchase books." -ANI

ELECTION COMMISSION

PPP wants election in 90 days

ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) on Saturday demanded to conduct the next general elections within 90 days, reported Dawn.

During the meeting of the Council of Common Interest (CCI), PPP supported the approval of the Digital Census, due to which it is almost impossible for the Election Commission to hold elections on time.

They demanded that a fresh delimitation process under the new census should be completed

within 60 days so that the elections could be held within the 90-day time frame.

Senator Nisar Khuhro, PPP Sindh President, said, "If the digital census can be completed within a month, why can't fresh delimitation be held within 60 days."

Press conference
During a press conference at Peoples Secretariat, PPP Provincial Secretary General Senator Waqar Mehdi said, "There's no reason to

delay the polls and the PPP is very clear about this. The polls must be held within 90 days."

He said that it was the primary job of the caretaker set-up and the Election Commission of Pakistan and they hope that they would do their constitutional duty, according to Dawn.

Moreover, Senator Khuhro added that the anti-PPP forces never succeeded in defeating the party through ballot and democratic process.

-ANI

MEGA CAPABILITY BOOST

India inducts strike-capable drones in northern sector

NEW DELHI: In a mega capability boost, the Indian Air Force has inducted its latest Heron Mark 2 drones, which have strike capability and can carry out surveillance along the northern borders.

The four new Heron Mark-2 drones, which can be equipped with long-range missiles and other weapons systems, have been deployed at a forward air base in the northern sector, where Team

ANI witnessed their operations.

The drones with satellite communication capability have given a long desired capability to the Indian Air Force, as its drones can operate at very long distances for close to 36 hours at a stretch and can also laser illuminate enemy targets from very long ranges to assist fighter aircraft. destroy them using their long-range weapons.

"The Heron Mark 2 is a very capable drone. This is capable of longer endurance and has 'beyond line of sight' capability. With this, the entire country can be surveilled from the same place," the commanding officer of the drone squadron, Wing Commander Pankaj Rana, said.

He said the drone can operate in any weather and on any terrain to address its targets. -ANI

سلطنة عُمان
وزارة النقل والمواصلات وتقنية المعلومات
Sultanate of Oman
Ministry of Transport, Communications and Information Technology

إعلان مناقصات
Tender Notice

The Internal Tenders Committee at the Ministry of Transport, Communications and Information Technology invites for the Following Tenders:

TENDER NUMBER	TENDER NAME	DATE OF PUBLISHING	LAST DATE TO PURCHASE TENDER DOCUMENT	SUBMISSION DATE	COMPANIES WHO SHOULD PARTICIPATE IN THIS TENDER	DOCUMENT PRICE
159/2023/MT CIT/HQ-43 (40922)	Delivery of Government Capacity Building Program In Digital Transformation	13-08-2023	28-08-2023	18-09-2023	Experienced Companies Registered In Services Category . With The Secretariat General Of Tender Board (All Grades)	(100/-) One Hundred Omani Rial (For Local) (20/-) Twenty Omani Rial (For SME) (100/-) One Hundred Omani Rial (For Regional) (100/-) One Hundred Omani Rial (For International) Non- Refundable
158/2023/MT CIT/HQ-42	Providing advisory services to evaluate and analyze investment offers of investment in Development, Management, and Operation of the Road Transport Tracking System (IVMS)	13-08-2023	28-08-2023	18-09-2023	Experienced Companies Registered in Consultancy Category . With The Secretariat General of Tender Board (First)	(25/-) Twenty Five Omani Rial (For Local) (10/-) Ten Omani Rial (FOR SME) (25/-) Twenty Five Omani Rial (For Regional) Non-Refundable
157/2023/MT CIT/HQ-41 (40839)	Consultancy Services For Supervision Of Design And Built The Link Road For Oman Palm Development Company (Al Dakhiliya Governorate)	13-08-2023	28-08-2023	18-09-2023	Experienced Companies Registered in Consultancy Category . With The Secretariat General of Tender Board (First)	(62/500) Sixty-Two Omani Rial and Five Hundred Baiza (For Local) (10/-) Ten Omani Rial (FOR SME) (62/500) Sixty-Two Omani Rial and Five Hundred Baiza (For Regional) Non-Refundable
156/2023/MT CIT/HQ-40 (40905)	Manage Oman Startup Hub Platform (OSH)	13-08-2023	28-08-2023	18-09-2023	Experienced Companies Registered In Services Category . With The Secretariat General Of Tender Board (All Grades)	(25/-) Twenty Five Omani Rial (For Local) (10/-) Ten Omani Rial (FOR SME) (25/-) Twenty Five Omani Rial (For Regional) Non-Refundable

Interested Companies registered with the Secretariat General of Tender Board may obtain Tender documents from the E-Tendering website: <https://etendering.tenderboard.gov.om> against non-refundable payment as mentioned above for each set of documents. Tenders should be submitted online on given website

CORRESPONDANCE:
1. Tender Inquiry: All correspondence pertaining to the TENDER Inquiry must be online at e-Tendering System. (<https://etendering.tenderboard.gov.om>)
2. E-Tendering System Inquiry: All correspondence pertaining to the e-Tendering System technical support must be directed to the following helpdesk email address and phone number:
Tel: +968 24402200 e-mail: etenderhd@mtcit.gov.om

INTERNAL TENDERS COMMITTEE
mtcitoman www.mtcit.gov.om

SALALAH MILLS COMPANY SAOG
Salalah-Sultanate of Oman

REPORT OF MATERIAL EVENTS

BALANCE SHEET AS OF 30TH JUNE 2023

Dear Shareholders,

It is my pleasure, on behalf of the Board of Directors, to present to you the Unaudited Financial Statements of Salalah Mills Company for the first half year ended on 30 June, 2023.

Sales
The total sales quantity of flour and concentrated animal feed in local market had increased by 19% during the first half of the current year compared to the first half of the year 2022. While the export quantity decreased by 50.6% due to competition in export markets because of the large decrease of wheat prices in short time. The total quantity sold by Macaroni factory decreased by 3.8% due to competition in the export markets, and the quantity sold by poly propylene bags factory decreased by 15.6% compared to the same period of last year due to the lower demand as a result of the economical situations.

The total sales value during the first half of 2023 was RO 30.7 million, showing a decrease of RO 8 Million that is about 20.8%, compared to the same period of 2022.

The Wheat Subsidy
The company received a letter from the Ministry of Agricultural, Fisheries Wealth and Water Resources dated 2nd of June 2023, declaring the Government decision to extend the Wheat subsidy in the local market for one more year, with effect from 1st of May 2023. The Subsidy amount is included in the financial statement.

The company also received another letter from the Ministry of Agricultural, Fisheries Wealth and Water Resources dated 23rd of July 2023, declaring the Government decision to extend the subsidy of 4 major inputs of Animal Feed production for the local market for 6 months, with effect from 1st January 2023. The Subsidy amount is not included in the financial statement.

The Industrial Bakery
The civil, mechanical and electrical contract was awarded to an Omani company in July 2023. The execution period is 10 months.

Net Profit
The company made a net loss of RO 739,318 during the first half of the current year compared to a profit of RO 224,022 made in the same period of last year, as a result of big decreasing of wheat price in short time which resulted in lower export sales.

Ahmed bin Abdullah Saeed Al Rawas
Chairman

Note: The complete accounts will be sent by mail to any shareholder who requests the company in either Arabic or English as requested within 7 days of receipt of the request at
P.O. Box No. 67, Al Awqadain, P.C. 217, Sultanate of Oman.

	6/30/2023 OMR	6/30/2022 OMR
ASSETS		
Non-current assets:		
Property, plant and equipment	25,243,765	26,903,590
Advance for Capital Goods	4,595,466	
Investment in subsidiary	50,000	50,000
Right of use assets	3,634,413	2,074,999
Total Non-current Assets	33,523,645	29,028,589
Current Assets:		
Inventories	34,355,971	26,457,422
Trade and other receivables	15,859,508	11,849,930
Amounts due from related parties	1,082,685	1,047,871
Financial assets at fair value through profit or loss	354,578	347,673
Cash and cash equivalents	2,056,922	2,651,166
Total Current Assets	53,709,664	42,354,063
TOTAL ASSETS	87,233,308	71,382,653
MEMBERS EQUITY AND LIABILITIES		
Members Equity:		
Share capital	4,996,306	4,996,306
Share Premium	3,587,782	3,587,782
Legal reserve	2,089,103	2,089,103
General reserve	2,891,826	2,891,826
Retained earnings	18,123,787	18,406,343
Total Members Equity	31,688,804	31,971,360
LIABILITIES		
Non-current Liabilities:		
Borrowings-non current	8,778,410	1,845,325
Lease liability- Long term	3,405,554	1,851,690
Staff terminal benefits	604,816	568,686
Deferred tax	914,846	967,008
Total Non-current Liabilities	13,703,627	5,232,709
Current Liabilities:		
Borrowings	37,221,679	30,656,918
Lease liability- Short term	113,443	276,380
Amounts due to related parties	160,828	16,335
Trade and other payables	4,344,927	3,189,415
Provision for Tax	0	39,536
Total Current Liabilities	41,840,877	34,178,583
Total Liabilities	55,544,504	39,411,293
Total Members Equity and Liabilities	87,233,308	71,382,653
Net Assets per share	0.634	0.640

STATEMENT OF INCOME FOR THE PERIOD 30 JUNE 2023

	30/06/2023 OMR	30/06/2022 OMR
Revenue	30,706,213	38,793,071
Cost of sales	(28,259,706)	(35,934,124)
Gross profit	2,446,506	2,858,947
Other income	16,756	115,805
General and admin expenses	(2,316,860)	(1,981,453)
Selling expenses	(42,778)	(58,408)
Profit from operations	103,825	934,891
Finance costs	(843,143)	(671,334)
Profit/(Loss) before tax	(739,318)	263,557
Income tax	0	(39,534)
Profit/(Loss) after tax	(739,318)	224,022
Other comprehensive income for the period	0.00	0.00
Total comprehensive income for the period	(739,318)	224,022
Earnings per share	(0.015)	0.004

WORLD

82,506 DENGUE CASES

Death toll due to dengue in Bangladesh reaches 387



DHAKA: Bangladesh has reported 14 more deaths due to dengue in 24 hours till Saturday morning, taking the death toll from mosquito-borne diseases in the country to 387, Bangladesh-based *The Dhaka Tribune* reported.

During the period, 2,432 people were admitted to hospital with viral fever, the Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS) said.

Of the new patients, 740 were hospitalised in Dhaka and the rest were admitted to hospitals in other parts of Bangladesh, according to DGHS.

A total of 9,830 dengue patients, including 4,423 in Bangladesh, are undergoing treatment at hospitals across the country.

So far, the DGHS has recorded 82,506 dengue cases and 72,289 recoveries.

In 2022, 281 dengue deaths were recorded in Bangladesh. It was the highest on record after 179 deaths recorded in 2018. In 2022, Bangladesh recorded 62,423 cases and 61,971 recoveries.

On August 11, the World Health

Organization (WHO) said that a significant surge in dengue fever cases has gripped Bangladesh, according to the statement released by United Nations.

The WHO called for efforts to control the mosquito vector population and minimise individual exposure like using mosquito repellents and wearing long-sleeved clothes.

The outbreak in Bangladesh, which escalated rapidly since late June, witnessed 69,483 confirmed cases of dengue and 327 related deaths between January 1 - August 7, with a case fatality rate of 0.47 per cent, according to the UN Health Agency. The cases were reported from all 64 districts of Bangladesh.

The WHO said, “The high incidence of dengue is taking place in the context of an unusual episodic amount of rainfall, combined with high temperatures and high humidity, which have resulted in an increased mosquito population throughout Bangladesh.”

In July, 43,854 cases and 204 deaths were reported due to dengue, accounting for 63 per cent of the total cases and 62 per cent of the deaths, according to the statement released by UN. The sharp rise in the number of cases is unprecedented in comparison to the past five years.

Last week, Bangladesh Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina issued five directives to create awareness and prevent dengue amid rising cases of dengue across the country. Awami League General Secretary Obaidul Quader urged all, including party workers, to implement these directives, The Dhaka Tribune reported.

The directives issued by Sheikh Hasina include the use of mosquito nets and no water accumulation, the report said. She instructed that the surroundings must be kept clean and free of mosquitoes.

She said that efforts must be made to create awareness among the public in cities, towns, villages, neighbourhoods, and markets. She directed that mosquito eradication drives must be carried out in all the regions. -ANI



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Advertisement No. 27/2023

Companies specialized in the field and registered with Tender Board, may obtain tender documents for the website through the following link: (<https://etendering.tenderboard.gov.om>) against non-refundable fees as mentioned below starting from the date of this announcement and until the end of deadline stipulated below.

Tender No.	Description of Tender	Last date to collect the tender	Tender return date	Grade
PRE/23/181 2023/MM/HQ-38	Renewing IBM FILENET & CMS Licenses for Record and Document Management System	03/09/2023	24/09/2023	Specialist
PRE/23/161 2023/MM/HQ-39	Supply of Batteries	03/09/2023	24/09/2023	Specialist
PRE/23/182 2023/MM/HQ-40	Hiring of Tankers to provide Drinking Water and Sewage for Labour Camp at Al Musfah - Bousher	03/09/2023	24/09/2023	Specialist
PRE/23/183 2023/MM/HQ-41	Hiring of Sewage Tanker (5000 GLN) for Labour Camp at Ghala - Bousher	03/09/2023	24/09/2023	Specialist
PRE/23/106 2023/MM/QS-59	Construction of Drainage channels and Networks lines to Resolve Water Stagnation at 3 Locations in Al AI Amerat	03/09/2023	24/09/2023	First
PRE/23/065 2023/MM/QS-60	Beatifications , Electrical , Irrigation and Landscape Works for Golden Jubilee Walkway at Al Mawalih	28/08/2023	12/09/2023	Excellent

1. Bidders shall submit their offers electronically.

2. Clarification and Support:

For any inquiries regarding tenders, please visit e-tendering website: (<https://etendering.tenderboard.gov.om>) .

For technical support of e-tendering system please send an email to (etenderhd@mtcit.gov.om) or call (+96824402200).



P.O. Box 369, PC 211, Salalah, Sultanate of Oman

Tel: +968 23220000, Fax: +968 23219236

info@salalahport.com. www.salalahport.com.om

DIRECTOR'S REPORT FOR THE HALF YEAR ENDED 30TH JUNE 2023

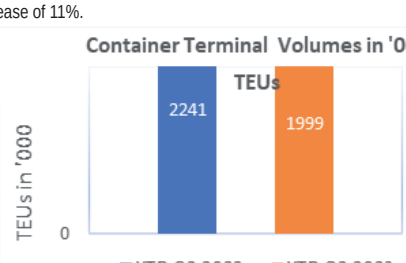
Dear Shareholders,

On behalf of the Board of Directors, I have the pleasure in presenting the unaudited consolidated financial results of your company for the period ended 30th June 2023 (H1 2023).

Operational Overview

During H1, 2023 the Container Terminal (CT) handled 1,999 million compared to 2,241 million TEUs in corresponding period last year, a decrease of 11%.

Container Terminal Volumes in '000



The GCT has handled 11,215 million tons of general cargo during H1, 2023, as compared to 8,896 million corresponding period last year, an increase of 26%. The major commodities handled are limestone, gypsum, methanol, and cement, which are exported from Salalah to nearby markets, and continue to drive the general cargo business.

GCT Volumes in '000 MTs - Commodity Mix



Financial Overview

Consolidated net profit for H1, 2023 was recorded at RO 2,363 million, as compared to the corresponding period last year at profit of RO 1,418 million. Consolidated EBITDA was recorded at RO 8,028 million during H1, 2023, as compared to RO 6,598 million during same period last year.

Total Revenue from Operations marginally increased by 2% compared to the same period last year mainly due to higher GCT volumes.

The general cargo revenue for volumes handled at Berth 31 have been included in the container terminal financials, as in the previous year, due to the conversion of the berth into a container terminal facility.

There was a marginal decrease in total cost in H1,2023 as compared to H1,2022 due to lower maintenance & repair cost and staff cost.

Year 2022	Particulars	1 Jan 2023 to 30th June 2023	1 Jan 2022 to 30th June 2022
4,344	Volume Container Terminal (TEUs'000)	1,999	2,241
15,296	General Cargo Terminal (Tons'000)	11,295	8,896
70,909	Revenue (RO'000)	35,843	35,113
3,924	Profitability (RO'000)	2,781	1,931
3,222	Net Profit before tax	2,363	1,418
	Net Profit/ (Loss) after tax		
4.54	Ratios		
0.03	Net profit / (Loss) (%)	6.59	4.04
0.40	Earnings per share (RO)	0.01	0.01
	Book value per share (RO)	0.42	0.40

Employee Development

Port of Salalah is steadfast in developing and enhancing employees' productivity as people are the primary asset of the company. Various safety, technical, management and administration training courses are offered to the staff.

Safety continues to be maintained as a top priority to ensure that employees continue to perform and deliver their tasks safely. Raising the level of safety performance has encouraged corrective behavior action plans for employees to perform safely at their workplace.

Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR)

The Port of Salalah strongly believes in a CSR program that is aligned with the pillars of sustainability and volunteerism and it is fundamental to our business. Impacting the local Dhofar region and benefiting the larger segments of communities requiring support are the guiding post of the company CSR program.

Future Outlook

The International Monetary Fund (IMF) predicts global economic growth of only 2.8% in 2023 and 3.0% in 2024. Volumes in the first half of 2023 showed negative growth for container shipping as head-haul and regional trade lanes have not yet recovered from the slowdown that began in the second half of 2022. Key container shipping line, in their Asia Pacific market update of June 2023, predicts that the growth in the second half is expected to be much slower than we saw over the previous six months in container shipping.

In the container segment for Salalah, the targets for 2023 for transshipment has been set at -14% compared to 2022 due to the capacity constraints coming out of the Container Terminal upgrade. Looking at the first half, the overall gate volume has increased by 3% over same period of 2022 whereas the laden gate volume (Export & Import full) increased by 8%. We expect this trend to continue in the second half of 2023 for gate volume.

With an ambitious target of 20MMT by end 2023 (a growth of 10% YoY), The General Cargo business is off to a good start in the first half of 2023 with volume exceeding the Year-to-date target by +12%. The main contributions come from dry bulk and liquid bulk. The dry bulk performance is driven by strong demand in key markets in India and other Asian countries. While a marginal slowdown is expected in Q3 compared to Q2 owing to the Khareef restrictions, forecasts are positive for the second half which will help to close the year with good growth over 2022.

Conclusion

On behalf of the Board of Directors and the Shareholders of the company, we record the sincere appreciation and gratitude to His Majesty Sultan Haitham Bin Tariq, for his strategic vision, leadership, and his continued support, without which it would not have been possible to maintain this world-class port.

We also thank our customers, investors, and partners at the Salalah Hub and Ministry of Transport, Communications and Information Technology, and members of the Government bodies we work with.

We place on record our appreciation for the contributions of all our employees, who continue to perform with high distinction.

On behalf of the Board of Directors,

Braik Musallam Al Amri
Chairman
Salalah Port Services Co. SAOG
August 10, 2023

The complete accounts of the company will be delivered or sent by mail to any shareholder who requests them, in either Arabic or English as requested, within seven days of receipt of the request.

UNAUDITED CONSOLIDATED AND PARENT STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION

AS OF 30TH JUNE 2023

Parent Company		Consolidated		Parent Company		Consolidated	
Jun-2022	Jun-2023	Jun-2022	Jun-2023	Jun-2022	Jun-2023	Jun-2022	Jun-2023
US \$ '000	US \$ '000	US \$ '000	US \$ '000	RO'000	RO'000	RO'000	RO'000
ASSETS							
Non Current Assets							
153,141	138,551	153,349	138,733	53,289	58,901	53,358	58,980
22,973	19,024	23,043	19,083	7,318	8,836	7,340	8,863
239	201	239	201	77	92	77	92
546	546	-	-	210	210	-	-
-	26,000	-	26,000	10,000	-	10,000	-
176,899	184,322	176,631	184,017	70,894	68,039	70,775	67,935
Current Assets							
7,592	8,414	7,592	8,414	3,236	2,920	3,236	2,920
5,427	5,758	5,427	5,758	2,215	2,087	2,215	2,087
8,147	8,701	8,147	8,701	3,347	3,133	3,347	3,133
6,639	6,577	6,639	6,577	2,530	2,554	2,530	2,554
31,200	20,601	31,200	20,601	7,923	12,000	7,923	12,000
59,814	82,230	59,814	82,230	31,627	23,006	31,627	23,006
118,819	132,281	118,819	132,281	50,878	45,700	50,878	45,700
295,718	316,603	295,450	316,298	121,772	113,739	121,653	113,635
EQUITY							
46,758	46,758	46,758	46,758	17,984	17,984	17,984	17,984
7,666	7,666	7,666	7,666	2,949	2,949	2,949	2,949
15,584	15,584	15,665	15,665	5,994	5,994	6,025	6,025
118,114	124,326	118,531	124,665	47,819	45,427	47,949	45,587
188,122	194,334	188,620	194,754	74,746	72,354	74,907	72,545
LIABILITIES							
Non Current Liabilities							
21,944	18,218	22,022	18,285	7,007	8,440	7,032	8,470
9,970	11,143	9,970	11,143	4,286	3,834	4,286	3,834
9,970	9,741	9,957	9,729	3,747	3,835	3,742	3,830
41,884	39,102	41,949	39,157	15,040	16,109	15,060	16,134
Current Liabilities							
4,950	5,142	4,950	5,146	1,978	1,904	1,979	1,904
49,254	50,038	48,422	49,254	19,245	18,946	18,944	18,626
10,255	26,318	10,255	26,318	10,122	3,944	10,122	3,944
1,253	1,669	1,254	1,669	641	482	641	482
65,712	83,167	64,881	82,387	31,986	25,276	31,686	24,966
107,596	122,269	106,830	121,544	47,026	41,385	46,746	41,090
295,718	316,603	295,450	316,298	121,772	113,739	121,653	113,635
1.05	1.08	1.05	1.08	0.42	0.40	0.42	0.40

UNAUDITED CONSOLIDATED AND PARENT STATEMENT OF COMPREHENSIVE INCOME

FOR 30TH JUNE 2023

Parent Company		Consolidated		Parent Company		Consolidated	
Jun-2022	Jun-2023	Jun-2022	Jun-2023	Jun-2022	Jun-2023	Jun-2022	Jun-2023
US \$ '000	US \$ '000	US \$ '000	US \$ '000	RO'000	RO'000	RO'000	RO'000
91,284	93,192	91,291	93,192	35,843	35,110	35,843	35,113
(64,100)	(59,128)	(64,100)	(59,128)	(22,742)	(24,652)	(22,742)	(24,652)
(10,908)	(14,532)	(10,923)	(14,548)	(5,589)	(4,196)	(5,595)	(4,201)
(13,737)	(13,552)	(13,750)	(13,565)	(5,213)	(5,284)	(5,216)	(5,289)
123	(76)	123	(76)	(29)	48	(29)	48
1,872	529	1,872	529	204	720	204	720
4,534	6,433	4,513	6,404	2,474	1,746	2,465	1,739
1,344	1,541	1,344	1,541	593	517	593	517
(840)	(743)	(843)	(746)	(286)	(323)	(287)	(324)
5,038	7,231	5,014	7,199	2,781	1,940	2,771	1,932
(1,335)	(1,062)	(1,335)	(1,062)	(408)	(514)	(408)	(514)
3,703	6,170	3,679	6,138	2,373	1,426	2,363	1,418
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
3,703	6,170	3,679	6,138	2,373	1,426	2,363	1,418
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
3,703	6,170	3,679	6,138	2,373	1,426	2,363	1,418
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
3,703	6,170	3,679	6,138	2,373	1,426	2,363	1,418
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
3,703	6,170	3,679	6,138	2,373	1,426	2,363	1,418
0.02	0.03	0.02	0.03	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01

SPORTS

Jaiswal, Gill star in India's win

Hetmyer's fighting fifty led West Indies to 178, but India cantered home with three overs to spare

FLORIDA: India batters Shubman Gill and Yashasvi Jaiswal came together to help India do what no team managed to do in 15 previous T20Is at Lauderhill in Florida - successfully chase down a score greater than 95 on Saturday.

Gill and Jaiswal added 165 for the opening wicket - the joint-highest for India in T20Is - to chase down 179 and draw level 2-2 with West Indies with a game to go in the five-match series.

This was after West Indies' Shimron Hetmyer's 61 - his second successive fifty-plus score in T20Is in Florida - helped his team reach to 178.

Jaiswal bookended the opening over of the chase with fours, slashing the length ball from Obed McCoy through third before lofting one over mid-off. He then greeted Jason Holder with three fours before Gill brought his trademark short-arm jab to deposit McCoy over deep mid-wicket, *ESPNcricinfo* reported.

Jaiswal's back-to-back fours off Romario Shepherd following which Gill tore into Odean Smith in the last over of the powerplay that went for 16. India rolled to 66 for no loss in the powerplay.

The pair did not offer any respite to the West Indies bowlers even after the powerplay, playing out only two non-boundary overs in the phase till their stand was broken. Gill notched up his second fifty-plus score in T20Is before Jaiswal got to his maiden half-century in just his second match.

It was utter domination from the pair that helped them equal Rohit Sharma and KL Rahul's record for the highest opening partnership for India, before Gill picked out deep midwicket with his flick.



Jaiswal, in the company of Tilak Varma, ensured India suffered no more hiccups in keeping the series alive.

On a bright and hot morning, West Indies opted to bat first on a flat surface in the first of back-to-back T20Is in Florida but couldn't get the ideal start. Kyle Mayers started with a couple of fours off

Axar Patel, who opened the bowling for India, before smacking a maximum off Arshdeep Singh over deep midwicket. But Arshdeep exacted revenge next ball, bouncing Mayers out to get him caught behind.

Brandon King continued to bat positively to drive West Indies in the powerplay. He danced down the track to Yuzvendra Chahal's

leg-spin to tonk him down the ground for a maximum before heaving a length ball from Arshdeep over deep midwicket. But once again Arshdeep struck after a boundary ball to have King caught at short third.

When Kuldeep Yadav picked up two wickets in his first over - including having Nicholas Pooran

miscue one to long-on off his first ball of the match - it seemed West Indies would once again flatter to deceive after an attacking first six overs where they scored 55 for 2.

Shai Hope was brought in for his first T20I since March 2022 after Johnson Charles had returns of 3, 2 and 12 in the first three matches. He used his feet to attack



165 runs

The batting pair of Shubman Gill and Yashasvi Jaiswal added 165 for the opening wicket - the joint-highest for India in T20Is

both Axar and Chahal. At the other end, though, West Indies lost three wickets for three runs to go from 54/1 to 57/4 when Hetmyer joined Hope.

After a couple of quiet overs, Hope broke the shackles by hitting Chahal for a four and six in the tenth over. Hetmyer then unleashed a flurry of boundaries - first flicking Kuldeep over mid-wicket before greeting Hardik Pandya into the attack with a six and a four. They added 49 off just 36 balls for the fifth wicket before Hope holed out to long-on.

Hetmyer then changed gears to scoop Mukesh Kumar over short fine leg for a six before freeing his arms to send Kuldeep soaring over extra cover. He walloped Arshdeep into the deep midwicket stands before becoming his third victim, thanks to an athletic effort from Tilak Varma, who charged in from long-on and dove forward to pouch the catch.

Brief scores: West Indies 178/8 (Shimron Hetmyer 61, Shai Hope 45; Arshdeep Singh 3-38, Kuldeep Yadav 2/26) lost to India 179-1 in 17 overs (Yashasvi Jaiswal 84*, Shubman Gill 77; Romario Shepherd 1-35). - *Agencies*

PREMIER LEAGUE

Tottenham held at Brentford



LONDON: Tottenham Hotspur began life after Harry Kane with an entertaining 2-2 draw against Brentford on the opening weekend of the Premier League season on Sunday.

Kane's move from his boyhood club to Bayern Munich was confirmed on Saturday, and goals from Christian Romero and Emerson Royal earned new Spurs manager Ange Postecoglou a point on Sunday.

Brentford, who began the league campaign without talisman Ivan Toney, had taken the lead through Yoane Wissa after Bryan Mbeumo's penalty cancelled out Romero's opener.

Spurs have now failed to win on their three visits to the Gtech Community Stadium, where kick-off was delayed by six minutes because of a water supply issue.

Argentina defender Romero opened the scoring with a guided header from debutant James Maddison's fierce free-kick.

It proved to be Romero's final contribution as he was replaced by Postecoglou. The Bees recovered and won a spot-kick when Spurs' new captain Son Heung-min brought down Mathias Jensen for Mbeumo to convert and stretch his goalscoring run to four consecutive top-flight games.



Wissa was then the beneficiary of Rico Henry's blistering surge down the left-hand side before side-footing the cutback past Guglielmo Vicario, via a deflection off the boot of Micky van de Ven, to dampen their debuts. Royal scored the pick of the goals with a guided finish in the fifth minute of 11 added on at the end of a thrilling first half.

Isak in Newcastle hero

Earlier on Saturday night, Alexander Isak's clinical finishing helped Newcastle United to an emphatic 5-1 victory against Aston Villa.

Newcastle tore into the visitors from the early stages at St James'

Park and new signing Sandro Tonali converted Anthony Gordon's inviting sixth-minute cross.

Moussa Diaby cancelled out his fellow debutant's goal within five minutes. Isak regained the lead for the Magpies as he slid home Sven Botman's cut-back across the box. Isak delicately chipped Emiliano Martinez for his second to give the home side a two-goal cushion.

Callum Wilson added a fourth following a slick passing move and Harvey Barnes raced clear to score on his competitive debut, ensuring the Magpies followed up their 2022-23 campaign with an ideal start. - *Agencies*

Mancini resigns as Italy manager after 5-year reign

MILAN: Roberto Mancini on Sunday resigned as manager of Italy after five years in charge. The Italian, 58, took charge of the team after they failed to qualify for the 2018 World Cup and led them to victory at Euro 2020, beating England on penalties in the final at Wembley.

The team went on a world record 37-game unbeaten run but then failed to qualify for the 2022 World Cup.

The successor to the former Manchester City manager will be named "in the next few days".

"The Italian Football Federation announces that it has taken note of the resignation of Roberto Mancini from the position of coach of the Italian national team, received late yesterday evening," the Italian Football Federation (FIGC) said.

Italy are currently third in their Euro 2024 qualifying group. Former Italy and Sampdoria midfielder Mancini led Manchester City to their first Premier League



title in 2012. In addition to his Euro success in July 2021, Italy finished third in the Nations League in June. He had been under pressure after Italy failed to qualify for the Qatar World Cup in March 2022, losing to North Macedonia in the play-offs.

"Thus concludes a significant page in the history of the Azzurri, which began in May 2018 and concluded with the 2023 Nations League Finals; in between, the victory at Euro 2020, a triumph conquered by a group in which all the individuals have known how to become a team," the FIGC added.

HOCKEY GLORY FOR HOSTS

India coach Fulton lauds players after Asian Champions Trophy triumph

CHENNAI: India men's hockey head coach Craig Fulton hailed the character of his team after India scripted a scintillating comeback to clinch the Asian Champions Trophy (ACT) title on Saturday.

India produced a sensational comeback to overcome a two-goal deficit and clinch the game by 4-3 to become the most successful team in the history of the competition.

With this victory, India became the most successful team in the ACT, ahead of their arch-rival and

three-time champions Pakistan.

"I think what you find is the way that you want these guys to trust each other. The character shown by the group was great. The guys were class, they pressed well, the younger players stood up and so did the older players," South Africa's Fulton said after the final.

The flow of the entire game changed at a key moment when India received a penalty stroke. Skipper Harmanpreet Singh buried his shot past the goalkeeper to reduce

the deficit by one for the hosts.

"It took a really key moment from goal 2 to 3 and I think that took a lot of wind out of Malaysia's sails in a sense and then it was just a matter of time to try and get the winner. We had a really good game against Japan in the semi-final. We did not play that badly but Malaysia controlled the game in the first half. We knew if we get one goal then we can get back in the game," Fulton added.

Fulton demanded his team to

stay grounded. "I think finals are always cagey affairs. So, it is important to have a game like this. So, we have to be grounded. We turned around and showed character."

Harmanpreet Singh said that regardless of the scoreline the Indian team would not have changed their approach.

"We had decided that, whether we are leading or we're behind by 100 goals, our game shouldn't change and we have to be mentally strong," Harmanpreet said. - *ANI*



OMAN AIR CARGO VOLUMES

Oman Air Cargo has released its results for the first half of 2023, recording a remarkable 42 per cent increase in cargo volumes compared to the same period in 2022, primarily driven by capacity expansion. > **B2**

MARKET
BUSINESS & FINANCE



MSX INDEX ENDS HIGHER

The MSX index closed at 4,768.87 points, up by 0.25 per cent from previous close. The Sharia Index ended down by 0.37 per cent at 474.61 points. National Bank Oman, up 1.36 per cent, was the top gainer while Sembcorp Salalah, down 6.67 per cent, was the top loser. > **B2**

Centre for hosting cryptocurrency mining opens in Salalah Free Zone

The first phase of the project reflects the ministry's keenness on promoting digital investment and localising advanced technologies



MUSCAT: The first phase of a project to set up a centre for hosting data processing and cryptocurrency mining was inaugurated at Salalah Free Zone, an affiliate of Asyad Group. The centre belongs to Exahertz International company, a subsidiary of Afaq Advanced

Technologies firm.

The ceremony, which also included laying down the foundation stone of the second phase of the project, was held under the auspices of Eng. Said Hamoud Al Ma'awali, Minister of Transport, Communications and Information

Technology. It was attended by His Highness Sayyid Marwan Turki Al Said, Governor of Dhofar.

Al Ma'awali said in a statement to reporters that the inauguration of the first phase of the project reflects the ministry's keenness on promoting digital investment and localising

advanced technologies. He added that the company in charge of the project is expected to achieve a quarter of the envisaged volume of production before the end of 2023.

Dr Ali Mohammed Tabook, CEO of Salalah Free Zone, underscored the significance of laying down the

foundation stone for the Exahertz Blockchain Data Centre at an investment value of \$348 million on an area of 312,000 square metres.

The ceremony included the inauguration of a pilot facility for the first phase of the project on the centre for data processing and hosting of cryptocurrency mining.

It is worth noting that the new centre is the first project of its kind in terms of imported technological devices in the field of data processing, blockchain applications and financial technologies. This contributes to enhancing economic development and achieving a positive impact on the local market. -ONA

NCSI DATA

Hotel revenues in Oman rise by 32% to OMR110 million



MUSCAT: The revenues of 3-5 star hotels in Oman stood at OMR110 million as of the end of June 2023, up by 32 per cent over the corresponding period in 2022.

Statistics issued by the National Centre for Statistics and Information (NCSI) show that the total number of hotel guests grew by 27.4 percent to OMR943,068 by the end of June 2023, compared to 740,050 during the corresponding period in 2022. Hotel occupancy posted a growth of 10.8 per cent.

As many as 337,682 of hotel

guests were Omanis, according to the NCSI, which indicated that 72,849 of hotel guests were GCC citizens (up by 28.7 percent), 250,151 were European citizens (an increase of 46.3 percent), 29,899 were Americans (up by 3.2 percent), 5,451 were citizens from African countries (41.3 percent up), while the number of hotel tenants from Asian countries increased by 54 percent to 141,007. The number of hotel tenants from Oceania countries surged by 252.2 percent to 21,834. -ONA

ominvest

Jabreen Capital Invests in Healthcare Transaction in KSA

Jabreen Capital, a fully owned subsidiary of Ominvest, has announced a partnership with Sobhi Batterjee, a major shareholder of Bait Al Batterjee, to open a new multi-specialty, state of the art hospital in Jeddah in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. The sponsor was represented by Humania Capital, a specialized asset manager in the healthcare and education verticals. With this anchor partnership, Jabreen Capital continues with its commitment to strategically align with partners and invest in the healthcare sector across the MENA region, alongside reputable and experienced healthcare players. Jabreen Capital intends to build on this investment as an asset manager by partnering with Humania Capital for subsequent investments in the healthcare sector.

This new hospital will be built on approximately 19,000 square metres of land (63,000 square metres BUA) in Jeddah and will have over 300 beds and 90 multi-specialty clinics. The construction is expected to be completed in the next year. The facility will be operated by a respected well known operator brand in the region.

Commenting on the importance of the partnership, AbdulAziz Mohammed Al Balushi, Group CEO at Ominvest, states, "We strongly believe that businesses are a significant catalyst when it comes to enriching societies. The value this partnership brings to the table will not only benefit the immediate community, it is also a step in the right direction for the healthcare sector at large. Committing to work with reputable operators aligns with our focus on meeting strategic ESG goals and profits a much wider audience."



AbdulAziz Al Balushi, Group CEO of Ominvest

Anwar Al Jabri, CEO of Jabreen Capital, adds, "It makes sense for Ominvest, through Jabreen Capital, to expand into markets and industries that are stable yet have room for growth. The healthcare sector has been an area of interest because it allows us to diversify our investment portfolio as well as tap into the overall positive macro-economic trends the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia is witnessing. This marks the start of a meaningful collaboration, of which the new hospital and rehabilitation centre is only the start."



Anwar Al Jabri, CEO of Jabreen Capital

JABREEN CAPITAL

Sobhi Batterjee, Chairman of Bait al Batterjee states "Our partnership with an Ominvest subsidiary represents another important institutional partnership following what we have successfully built with global Development Financial Institutions in North Africa. We look forward to expanding on this partnership with a view to relieving suffering wherever and however possible".

Makarem Batterjee, Vice Chairman Bait al Batterjee and Co-Founder Humania Capital added: "Humania Capital and Jabreen Capital together are poised to play a key role in fulfilling the aspirations of investors and society at large by building and managing a strong healthcare platform"

The partnership with Sobhi Batterjee is also in line with the longstanding bilateral relations between Oman and Saudi Arabia. Ties that were further strengthened with the signing of a memorandum of understanding on the establishment of the Omani-Saudi Coordination Council during the historic visit of His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia in July 2021.

For more information on Jabreen Capital and its investments, please visit www.jabreencapital.com

BANKING SERVICE

BankDhofar's Escrow Account contributes to increasing confidence in real estate sector

Times News Service

MUSCAT: In support of the government's efforts to regulate the real estate sector, BankDhofar offers the Escrow Account for real estate development projects service. This is aligned with the Royal Decree 30/ 2018 and Ministerial Decision 72/2019 issued by the Ministry of Housing and Urban Development and will contribute to increasing confidence in the real estate sector, as BankDhofar will manage the funds as per the terms of the Escrow Account agreement.

Elaborating on that Zaina Al Harthi, Head - Corporate Liabilities at BankDhofar said: "At BankDhofar we make sure to align our strategies with the government

directions and development plans. The Escrow Account contributes to boosting the real estate sector, which serves Vision Oman 2040. This account, which is monitored by the Bank, ensures that the terms and conditions of the transaction between the two parties (i.e. the developer and buyer or project financier) are met before the funds are released. Thus, providing security and protection to both parties involved in a transaction."

The Escrow account will ensure that developers are paid on time based on the agreement, which will increase the investors' confidence. BankDhofar will be the Escrow Agent managing the account on behalf of all parties as per the terms of the Escrow Account

agreement provided by the bank and agreed upon by all concerned to protect the rights and interests of all involved.

Easy steps

BankDhofar customers may open the account in a few easy steps and obtain the Escrow agreement. Additionally, a dedicated Account relationship manager will be available. Customers may also benefit from interest payable on the balance in the account and competitive pricing for end-to-end account management.

BankDhofar has set a clear banking strategy that is in line with Oman Vision 2040 and has effectively contributed to driving the growth of the national economy.

TRANSFER AGREEMENT

Ford reaches deal to move industrial unit to Brazil's Bahia state

SAO PAULO: Ford's Brazilian unit said it reached a transfer agreement with the government of Bahia state to give it ownership of a factory complex closed since 2021.

The automaker said the agreement will provide it with "compensation in amounts compatible with the market," but did not disclose an amount, Reuters reported.

Chinese electric vehicle manufacturer BYD has shown interest in the complex, located in the Camacari industrial park. The automaker has since at least mid-2022 been trying to reach a deal with Ford and the Bahia government to acquire the asset. BYD said in a statement that it "continues with the planning to invest in the Camacari industrial park, maintaining the necessary negotiations with the Bahia government."

It was not immediately clear whether the industrial unit mentioned by the company involves the Ford area. -BNA



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MARKET

MSX index ends higher

National Bank Oman, up 1.36 per cent, was the top gainer while Sembcorp Salalah, down 6.67 per cent, was the top loser



MUSCAT: The MSX index closed at 4,768.87 points, up by 0.25 per cent from previous close. The Sharia Index ended down by 0.37 per cent at 474.61 points. National Bank Oman, up 1.36 per cent, was the top gainer while Sembcorp Salalah, down 6.67 per cent, was the top loser. Shares of Bank Muscat were the most active in terms of number of shares traded as well as in terms of turnover.

A total number of 198 trades were executed during the day's trading session, generating turnover of OMR0.94 million, with more than 3.13 million shares changing hands. Out of 31 traded securities, 8 advanced, 13 declined, and 10 remained unchanged. At the session close, domestic investors were net sellers for OMR281,000 while GCC & Arab investors were net buyers for OMR227,000, followed by foreign investors for OMR54,000 worth of shares.

Financial Index closed at 7,787.81 points, up 0.19 per cent. Prices of National Bank Oman,

Ominvest, Al Madina Takaful, Bank Nizwa, Bank Muscat were up by 1.36 per cent, 1.32 per cent, 1.18 per cent, 1.04 per cent, 0.36 per cent respectively. Prices of Global Financial Investments, Oman Arab Bank, Sohar International Bank were up by 1.70 per cent, 1.39 per cent, 0.94 per cent respectively.

Industrial Index closed at 6,085.61 points, down 0.59 per cent. Prices of Gulf Mushroom Products were up by 0.88 per cent respectively. Prices of Oman Cables Industry, Oman Chromite, Voltamp Energy were up by 4.76 per cent, 3.03 per cent, 2.26 per cent respectively.

Services Index was down by 0.62 per cent before closing at 1,666.91 points. Prices of Oman Telecom, Ooredoo were up by 1.00 per cent, 0.54 per cent respectively. Prices of Renaissance Services, SMN Power Holding, Oman National Engineering, Abraj Energy were up by 1.32 per cent, 1.22 per cent, 0.94 per cent, 0.34 per cent respectively.

— United Securities

OMAN STOCKS

MUSCAT
STOCK
EXCHANGE

INDICES

Index	High	Low	Value	Prev . Value	Diff	Diff%
MSX 30 INDEX	4,768.87	4,743.74	4,768.87	4,757.21	11.66	0.25
FINANCIAL INDEX	7,787.81	7,748.56	7,787.81	7,773.33	14.48	0.19
Industry Index	6,095.12	6,082.93	6,085.61	6,121.89	-36.28	-0.59
Services Index	1,668.93	1,665.66	1,666.91	1,677.34	-10.44	-0.62
MSX Shariah Index	475.49	474.01	474.61	476.36	-1.75	-0.37
MSX TR INDEX	6,275.74	6,242.66	6,275.74	6,260.39	15.35	0.25
FINANCIAL TR IDX	8,497.93	8,455.10	8,497.93	8,482.13	15.80	0.19
SERVICES TR IDX	1,842.29	1,838.68	1,840.06	1,851.58	-11.52	-0.62
INDUSTRIAL TR IDX	6,511.11	6,498.08	6,500.95	6,539.70	-38.75	-0.59

Trading Summary

Volume	Turnover	Trades	Market Cap.....	Up.....	Down.....	Equal.....	Sec. Traded
3,136,058	944,796	198	23,941,785,105	8	13	10	31

SHARE PRICE BULLETIN FOR SUNDAY, AUGUST 13

ISIN	SECURITY NAME	VOLUME	TURNOVER	TRADES	OPEN PRICE	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE PR	PREV. CLOSE	DIFF (KD)	DIFF %	LAST PR	LAST BID	LAST OFFER	PAR VALUE	MARKET CAP
REGULAR MARKET																
OM0000001483	NATIONAL BANK OMAN	120,000	35,600	6	0.290	0.298	0.290	0.298	0.294	0.004	1.361	0.298	0.290	0.298	0.100	484,532,014
OM0000001533	OMINVEST	785	302	1	0.385	0.385	0.385	0.385	0.380	0.005	1.316	0.385	0.360	0.385	0.100	237,320,689
OM0000004768	MADINA TAKAFUL	47,310	4,070	7	0.086	0.087	0.086	0.086	0.085	0.001	1.176	0.086	0.084	0.086	0.100	15,050,000
OM0000003026	OMAN TELECOM	137,350	138,797	11	0.992	1.011	0.992	1.010	1.000	0.010	1.000	1.010	1.010	1.014	0.100	757,500,000
OM0000003968	OOREDOO	24,408	9,139	6	0.373	0.375	0.373	0.375	0.373	0.002	0.536	0.375	0.375	0.374	0.100	244,104,086
OM0000002796	BANK MUSCAT	1,369,284	385,461	29	0.281	0.282	0.281	0.281	0.280	0.001	0.357	0.281	0.281	0.283	0.100	2,109,297,574
OM0000001087	OMAN UNITED INSURANCE	70,010	18,553	6	0.265	0.265	0.265	0.265	0.265	0.000	0.000	0.265	0.265	0.266	0.100	26,500,000
OM0000001681	OMAN EMIRATES HO	58,000	3,944	9	0.068	0.068	0.068	0.068	0.068	0.000	0.000	0.068	0.066	0.068	0.100	8,287,500
OM0000001749	OMAN CEMENT	6,485	2,270	1	0.350	0.350	0.350	0.350	0.350	0.000	0.000	0.350	0.350	0.365	0.100	115,805,449
OM0000001152	OMAN NATIONAL ENGINEERING & INVESTMENT	4,350	461	1	0.106	0.106	0.106	0.106	0.107	-0.001	-0.935	0.106	0.105	0.106	0.100	15,900,000
OM0000003398	SOHAR INTERNATIONAL BANK	73,908	7,808	3	0.105	0.106	0.105	0.106	0.107	-0.001	-0.935	0.106	0.106	0.107	0.100	486,546,603
OM0000004248	SMN POWER HOLDING	131,400	10,768	5	0.082	0.082	0.081	0.081	0.082	-0.001	-1.220	0.081	0.081	0.081	0.100	16,170,484
OM0000003224	RENAISSANCE SERVICES	2,500	938	2	0.376	0.376	0.375	0.375	0.380	-0.005	-1.316	0.375	0.375	0.375	0.100	88,653,750
OM0000003125	GLOBAL FINANCIAL INVESTMENT HO	5,000	290	1	0.058	0.058	0.058	0.058	0.059	-0.001	-1.695	0.058	0.058	0.064	0.100	11,600,000
Total	14	2,050,790	618,401	88												
Parallel Market																
OM0000004420	BANK NIZWA	162,650	15,714	7	0.096	0.097	0.096	0.097	0.096	0.001	1.042	0.097	0.095	0.097	0.100	216,984,444
OM0000002267	GULF MUSHROOM PRODUCTS	306	70	2	0.230	0.230	0.230	0.230	0.228	0.002	0.877	0.230	0.222	0.230	0.100	10,526,134
OM0000001590	MUSCAT FINANCE	75,000	4,050	8	0.054	0.054	0.054	0.054	0.054	0.000	0.000	0.054	0.051	0.055	0.100	16,585,902
OM0000001772	ALANWAR INVESTMENT	44,000	3,696	5	0.084	0.084	0.084	0.084	0.084	0.000	0.000	0.084	0.083	0.084	0.100	17,304,000
OM0000003521	GALFAR ENGINEERING & CONTRACTING	222,200	35,774	21	0.161	0.161	0.161	0.161	0.161	0.000	0.000	0.161	0.161	0.161	0.100	32,680,818
OM0000004689	SHARQIYAH DESALINATION	300	39	1	0.130	0.130	0.130	0.130	0.130	0.000	0.000	0.130	0.000	0.130	0.100	12,714,281
OM0000004825	ALBATINAH POWER	25,000	675	1	0.027	0.027	0.027	0.027	0.027	0.000	0.000	0.027	0.027	0.027	0.100	18,221,961
OM0000005963	PHOENIX POWER	1,000	62	2	0.062	0.062	0.062	0.062	0.062	0.000	0.000	0.062	0.060	0.061	0.100	90,681,291
OM0000008934	ABRAJ ENERGY SERVICES	313,028	93,256	28	0.298	0.298	0.297	0.297	0.298	-0.001	-0.336	0.297	0.297	0.297	0.100	228,749,400
OM0000008447	OMAN REIT FUND	1,000	86	1	0.086	0.086	0.086	0.086	0.087	-0.001	-1.149	0.086	0.000	0.090	0.100	40,532,029
OM0000005260	OMAN ARAB BANK	646	92	1	0.142	0.142	0.142	0.142	0.144	-0.002	-1.389	0.142	0.142	0.000	0.100	237,056,220
OM0000003661	VOLTAMP ENERGY	26,724	3,462	6	0.125	0.135	0.125	0.130	0.133	-0.003	-2.256	0.130	0.130	0.130	0.100	10,582,358
OM0000001020	OMAN CHROMITE	929	4,459	1	4.800	4.800	4.800	4.800	4.950	-0.150	-3.030	4.800	4.800	4.950	1.000	14,400,000
OM0000001707	OMAN CABLES INDUSTRY	6,740	13,399	8	2.000	2.000	1.950	2.000	2.100	-0.100	-4.762	2.000	1.952	2.000	0.100	179,400,000
OM0000004735	SEMBCORP SALALAH	2,000	196	1	0.098	0.098	0.098	0.098	0.105	-0.007	-6.667	0.098	0.098	0.103	0.100	93,548,051
Total	15	881,523	175,031	93												

FIRST HALF OF 2023

Oman Air Cargo continues to achieve growth with 42% increase in volumes

Times News Service

MUSCAT: Oman Air Cargo has released its results for the first half of 2023, recording a remarkable 42 per cent increase in cargo volumes compared to the same period in 2022, primarily driven by capacity expansion.

Between January and June, total cargo revenue surpassed OMR22.3 million, reflecting the resilience of operations amidst challenging market conditions. Despite a dip in yield compared to the previous year, the results indicate healthy growth and the carrier's focus on technology, efficiency and customer service are ensuring it retains its strong position in the market.

Since its inception in 2009, Oman Air Cargo has maintained a remarkable upward trajectory. Having obtained the IATA CEIV Pharma and CEIV Fresh certifications in 2021, it continues to gain significant momentum through



time- and temperature-controlled shipments. While in 2022 it added several new destinations and introduced its innovative 'Cargo-in-Cabin' service to Europe, the Far East and Indian Subcontinent, its 2023 strategy includes the launch of its first-ever freighter to meet growing demand. Furthermore, its

ongoing digitalisation drive continues to make the customer experience simpler and more efficient, with a new Revenue Management System and online booking channels currently in the works.

Leveraging Muscat's strategic location connecting East and West, Oman Air Cargo's state-of-the-

art facilities ensure the seamless movement of cargo through its hub at Muscat International Airport. With bespoke solutions and the highest standards of safety and quality, it remains at the forefront of the rapidly evolving air cargo sector, while solidifying Oman's standing as a key regional logistics hub.

CHALLENGING EXTERNAL ENVIRONMENT

China's foreign trade to sustain growth with resilience, potential

BEIJING: China's foreign trade is expected to maintain steady growth despite a challenging external environment, as the country continues to strengthen endogenous impetus and expand multilateral economic and trade relations, experts have said.

China's imports and exports expanded 0.4 percent year on year to total 23.55 trillion yuan (about \$3.29 trillion) in the first seven months of 2023, according to the General Administration of Customs (GAC).

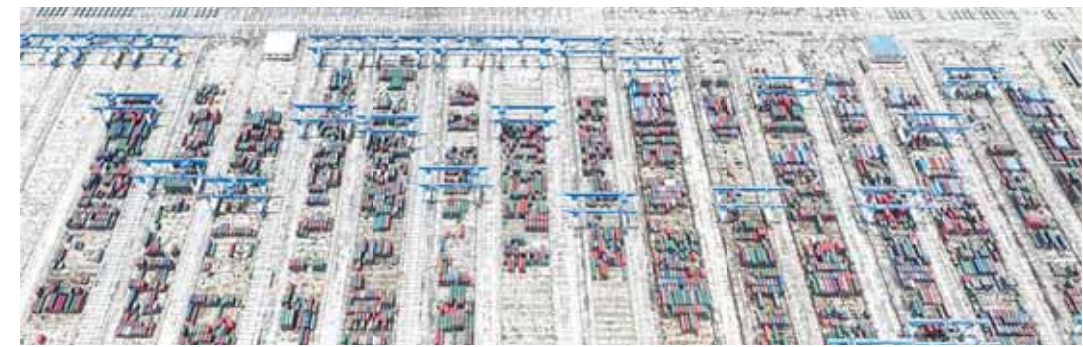
Since the second quarter, the country's monthly trade scale has remained above 3.4 trillion yuan.

In July alone, China's foreign trade totalled 3.46 trillion yuan, up 25.7 percent from July 2019 and 4.5 percent above the 2020-2022 July average.

The latest data was in line with expectations, and China's foreign trade maintained stable operations, GAC spokesperson Lyu Daliang said.

The fundamentals for long-term growth have not changed, Lyu added.

Analysts have said that the fundamentals for long-term foreign trade growth also remain unchanged, citing the country's growing export competitiveness and more diversified market and product structures as its development advantages.



Zhang Jun, chief economist at China Galaxy Securities Co., Ltd., said Chinese export products have climbed up the global value chain after continuous industrial upgrading.

China's general trade, which involves long industrial chains and high added values, rose 2.1 percent to 15.41 trillion yuan in the first seven months of the year. It accounted for 65.4 percent of the country's total foreign trade value, up 1.1 percentage points from a year earlier.

The total export value of China's three major tech-intensive green products -- solar batteries, lithium-ion batteries and electric vehicles -- soared 61.6 percent year on year in the first half of 2023. Together, the three products contributed 1.8 percentage points to the country's overall export growth during the period,

customs data shows.

China has been cultivating its economic and trade relations with Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership member countries, the Association of South-east Asian Nations (ASEAN) and countries along the Belt and Road, providing Chinese companies with more opportunities to explore foreign markets, said Xu Yingming, an analyst at the Chinese Academy of International Trade and Economic Cooperation.

In the January-July period, ASEAN remained China's largest trading partner. China's trade with ASEAN members rose 2.8 percent year on year.

In the first seven months, China's trade with countries along the Belt and Road amounted to 8.06 trillion yuan, jumping 7.4 percent year on year and accounting for 34.2 percent of the

country's total trade value.

Looking at the second half of the year, Ministry of Commerce official Li Xingqian said the situation is extremely grim, citing weak global demand for production, consumption and investment, and "decoupling" or "de-risking" moves from some countries.

However, China will take further steps to help companies secure orders and expand their markets, including hosting trade expos, increasing numbers of international flights and facilitating visas for foreign businesspeople, Li said.

The country has already seen increasing confidence in foreign trade companies. Some 75 percent of the over 3,100 foreign trade companies surveyed by the China Council for the Promotion of International Trade said they were confident about their third-quarter development. -Xinhua

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Protecting the environment can seem like a monumental task, but committing to small, meaningful changes can lead to substantial, positive outcomes. Embracing sustainability can be as simple as making earth-friendly choices when shopping for footwear.

With sustainable shoe selections for every family member, take a look at these four, fun and trendy brands actively participate in making our planet a better place.

WEARING ECO-FRIENDLY FOOTWEAR IS AN EASY WAY TO



ADIDAS

The brand takes a strong stance on sustainability with their “End Plastic Waste” initiative. Their shoes are made with materials like recycled ocean plastic and natural rubber to help reduce waste and protect the environment.



TEVA

Teva’s iconic sandal straps are made entirely from recycled materials, giving new life to plastic bottles that would otherwise end up in landfills. With vibrant styles for men, women and children, you can step into spring and summer with an earth-friendly flair.



BIRKENSTOCK

– Committed to using natural and renewable materials like cork, natural latex and jute, Birkenstock stays true to their eco-friendly principles. Offering a range of stylish and comfortable sandals for the family, you’ll feel good about walking in their classic or modern designs.

Rack Room Shoes understands the importance of promoting sustainability and collaborates with these eco-minded brand partners. To make your earth-friendly shoe shopping experience even more enjoyable, they’ve created a dedicated page featuring shoes made with sustainable materials. Browse and shop at: rackroomshoes.com/cs/sustainablematerial.

Making small, meaningful changes towards sustainability can have a big impact on our planet. By supporting these brands and their efforts to adopt earth-friendly practices, you can feel good about taking that important first step towards a more sustainable future. You’ll not only be making a fashion statement but also actively contributing to a healthier planet. – *StatePoint*

NIKE

Nike’s Court Legacy low sneaker has at least 20% recycled content by weight. With their Move to Zero initiative, the brand is dedicated to achieving zero carbon and zero waste, giving you a stylish and sustainable option.



SPORTS

Ronaldo guides Al Nassr to Arab Club Champions Cup victory

The Portuguese star finished as the tournament's top scorer with six goals in six games

RIYADH: Cristiano Ronaldo scored twice to help Al Nassr win their first Arab Club Champions Cup title despite finishing with nine men after extra-time on Saturday night. The Portuguese forward, 38, played a key role as Al Nassr came from behind to beat fellow Saudi side Al Hilal 2-1. Ronaldo cancelled out Michael's opener before Abdulelah Al Amri and Nawaf Boushal were sent off for Al Nassr. But Ronaldo scored again in the first half of extra-time to seal his first trophy since his lucrative move.

However, the five-time *Ballon d'Or* winner was carted off with five minutes left following a collision, just two days before his side's Saudi Pro League opener against Steven Gerrard's Al Ettifaq.

The former Real Madrid, Manchester United and Juventus forward agreed a move to the Saudi Pro League in December and helped his side finish runners-up last season.

Several more big names have followed him to Saudi Arabia this summer, including new teammates Sadio Mane, Seko Fofana and Marcelo Brozovic.

The trio were all denied by goalkeeper Mohammed Alowais in the first half at the King Fahd Stadium in Riyadh.

Former Barcelona and Zenit winger Malcom crossed for fellow Brazilian Michael to head in the opener on 51 minutes before Al Amri was shown a straight red card on 71 minutes.

Although Ronaldo turned in a low cross by right-back Sultan Al Ghannam to equalise on 74 minutes, Boushal also received a straight red card to put Al Nassr down to nine men.



But eight minutes into extra time Ronaldo pounced on a rebound off the crossbar with keeper Alowais off his line to head home his sixth goal in six games in the tournament. He finished as top scorer in the competition, which included the top clubs from Saudi Arabia,



Qatar, the United Arab Emirates, Iraq, Morocco, Tunisia and Algeria. Al Nassr clinched their first-ever Arab Club Champions Cup. ES Tunis is the most successful title in tournament history, with three titles.

"After playing more than 60 minutes with 10 men, WEEEEEE ARRRRE CHAMPIONS OF King Salman Clubs Cup. YEEEEEE, WE ARE THE CHAMPIONS," tweeted Al Nassr after the win.

Ronaldo also expressed his happiness at winning the trophy with the club.

"Extremely proud to have helped the team win this important trophy for the 1st time! Thank you to everyone in the club that was involved in this great achievement and to my family and friends for always being by my side! Fantastic support by our fans! This also belongs to you!," tweeted Ronaldo.

Ever since joining the Saudi Arabian club from Manchester United in January this year, he has scored 20 goals in 25 appearances. -ANI

OLMO NETS HAT-TRICK

Leipzig lift German Supercup



BERLIN: Leipzig secured their third club title after beating hosts Bayern Munich 3-0 courtesy of Dani Olmo's hat-trick at the 2023 Supercup on Saturday.

The Red Bulls caught a fairy tale start on the road as Olmo broke the deadlock with only three minutes played when he tapped home a low cross from a central position inside the box. Bayern responded well but neither Serge Gnabry nor Mathys Tel could beat Leipzig goalkeeper Janis Blaswich from

promising positions.

The hosts kept it going and were unlucky at the half-hour mark as Leipzig defender Mohamed Simakan almost scored an own goal with a miscued clearance.

Clinical Leipzig doubled their lead and stunned Bayern out of thin air as Timo Werner's through ball allowed Olmo to beat Bayern custodian Sven Ulreich from close range just before the break.

Bayern came out with their guns blazing after the restart, but Leroy

Sane's long-range effort went narrowly wide while Blaswich was again equal to Tel's shot on target at the hour mark.

However, eight minutes later things went from bad to worse for the German record champions as Noussair Mazraoui caused a handball penalty allowing Olmo to seal his hat trick and the win from the spot. The Bavarians pressed frantically but Leipzig's defence stood firm to snatch the second Supercup in the club's history. -Agencies

LA LIGA

Bellingham on target as Real kick off season with triumph

MADRID: Real Madrid began their season with a 2-0 win away to Athletic Bilbao on Saturday but lost defender Eder Militao to what looks like a serious knee injury, just two days after Thibaut Courtois was ruled out for the season with a torn cruciate knee ligament.

Andriy Lunin was in goal for Courtois but had little work to do in a tight first half, which tilted Madrid's way after first Rodrigo and then Jude Bellingham took advantage of some poor defending from the home side.

Rodrigo was given space to fire Madrid ahead in the 27th minute and nine minutes later Bellingham was able to celebrate his league debut with a goal after he was left unmarked at a corner.

He is the first English player to score in a competitive game for Real since David Beckham in 2007. The midfielder mishit his shot but had the fortune to see it bounce up and over Athletic



keeper Unai Simon. Militao had to be helped off in obvious pain after slipping and falling badly early in the second half.

Real Sociedad were held to a 1-1 draw at home to Girona with Take Kubo's first-half opener for the home side canceled out by a 72nd-minute header from Girona's substitute Artem Dovbyk.

Las Palmas' return to the elite ended in a 1-1 draw at

home to Mallorca.

Two first-half penalties which were slammed home by Isi Palazon and Kteka gave Rayo Vallecano and new coach Francisco Rodriguez a flying start to the season with a 2-0 win away to Almeria on Friday evening. Valencia stunned Sevilla with a 2-1 win on Friday, to take the points from the Europa League champions. -Agencies

FRENCH LEAGUE

Star striker Mbappe returns to PSG squad, may sign contract extension



PARIS: Paris Saint-Germain (PSG) forward Kylian Mbappe has returned to first-team training and is likely to stay at the French champions this summer, *BBC Sport* reported on Sunday.

The France forward, 24, had not been training with the first-team squad and was left out of PSG's 0-0 season opener with Lorient on Saturday. He has been in a contract stand-off amid a desire to join Real Madrid but could now extend his contract at PSG. PSG said Mbappe was reinstated after "very constructive and positive" talks.

The France captain watched the

game on Saturday from the stands with France team-mate Ousmane Dembele, who joined PSG from Barcelona. He was also left out of the pre-season trip to Asia.

Mbappe has one year left on his current deal and has so far refused to sign a new contract.

Last month, PSG gave Saudi Arabian side Al-Hilal permission to talk to the player after making a world-record bid. His reintegration has been arrived at following discussions between all parties in the past 12 hours.

PSG chairman Nasser Al Khelaifi has been adamant he

would not let the striker leave for nothing and it is thought some kind of agreement is likely that will see Mbappe sign the one-year extension to his present deal as originally envisaged.

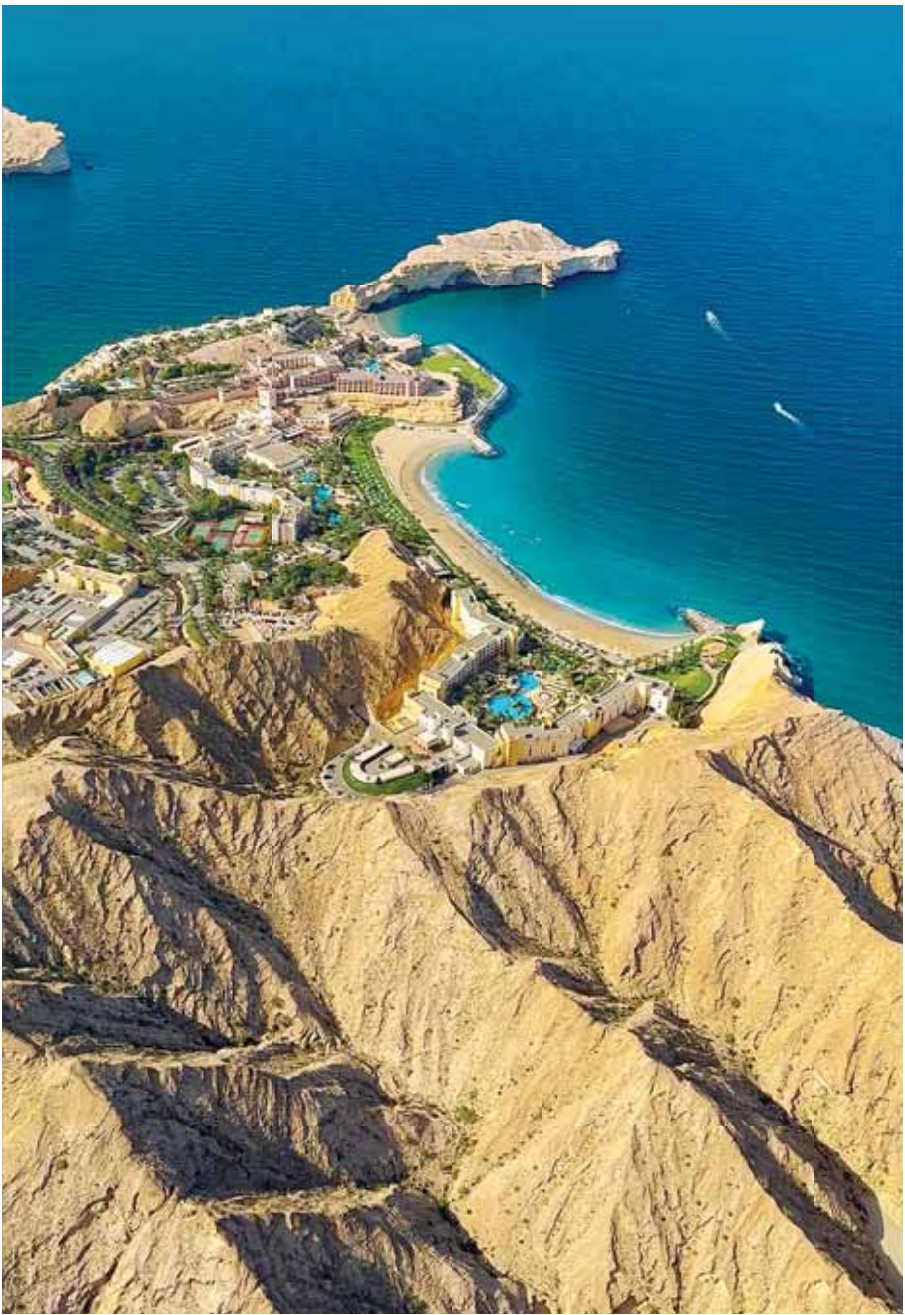
That would run to 2025 and allow PSG to sell Mbappe to Real next summer.

"Following very constructive and positive discussions between Paris St-Germain and Kylian Mbappe before the PSG - Lorient game, the player has been reinstated into the first team training squad this morning," PSG said on Sunday.

Mbappe, who joined PSG in 2017 initially on loan from Monaco before a US\$ 197.3mn transfer, has scored a club record 212 goals in 260 games.

PSG began their Ligue 1 title defence without Kylian Mbappe and Neymar as they were held by Lorient.

The future of the superstar pair is uncertain as both are linked with moves away, and they were left out of the squad for the season opener. PSG missed prize attackers as they dominated possession but struggled to create significant chances. -Agencies



Rene D. Egle, Area General Manager

BEAT THE SUMMER WITH STAYCATIONS AT SHANGRI-LA BARR AL JISSAH RESORT

A kaleidoscope of activities awaits Omani citizens and residents, as the luxury resort offers a series of options and special offers for a unique and relaxing experience tailored to suit everyone in Oman and Shangri-La Circle members



The summer season continues till late August in the Sultanate of Oman and the need for relaxing cool staycation is something that anyone would fancy and look forward to.

The one answer to enjoying an exhilarating staycation in Muscat would be none other than at Shangri-La Barr Al Jissah, a family-friendly resort on the outskirts of Oman's vibrant capital city.

And there are multiple reasons to choose this iconic resort providing a choice between two distinct wings – Al Bandar and Al Waha, accommodating more than 460 rooms, it has everything a family resort could comprise of, as well as its luxury clifftop resort for guests over 16 years old, Shangri-La Al Husn boasts 180 rooms, with majestic views of the Muscat arch.

Nestled amongst rugged mountains and surrounded by 124 acres of lush gardens and a 500m sandy beach, local guests can rediscover Oman's seaside oasis with some amazing packages.

Shangri-La circle members
The hotel had created a dedicated Shangri-La Circle loyalty programme for Oman residents during the COVID-19 period and has retained the programme to benefit the locals and the expatriates in the country to promote the concept of staycation. The loyalty programme includes preferential rate, 20 percent off food & beverage, all spa treatments and up to 30 percent on water sports, provided by Extra Divers.
The local guests gain double benefit as it combines discounts and points through the Shangri-La loyalty programme. The summer offer at Shangri-La Barr Al Jissah (Al Bandar and Al Waha) begins from OMR 60 ++ for two adults and up to 2 kids while the offer at Shangri-La Al Husn starts from OMR

80 ++ for two adults with facilities of an early check in and late check out.

Rene D. Egle, Area General Manager of Shangri-La Barr Al Jissah, said: "We are very much thankful and wish to express our gratitude to the local guests who supported and stood by us during the challenging pandemic times. We are keeping the special Shangri-La Circle loyalty programme, which is an excellent and unparalleled loyalty programme tailored only for residents of Oman staying at ours for staycations and dining at the resort's multiple venues."

He added: "Shangri-La Barr Al Jissah remains one of the preferred venues for day passes, during the weekend or weekdays with a host of offers and facilities that are tailored for families, kids and adventure-seekers. Be it the Lazy River, splash pad, pool slides, multiple swimming pools, movie nights, a complete repertoire of restaurants: Indian, fusion, international, Mexican, the best pizza in town, Italian, south-east Asian, and Mediterranean, we have it all for our guests."

Among the major highlights of the resort is the first ever mountain tunnel built in Oman as guests approach Al Waha, a beach with crystal-clear waters offering guests a tranquil and secluded escape from the world.

Then there is the Splash Pad, a safe and fun place for children to enjoy water play at Al Waha as part of the family-friendly amenities, and the most-loved kids' mascot, Habibi The Turtle.

Large families and groups can also enjoy interconnecting rooms at Al Waha and Al Bandar and still enjoy their own private space.

For family entertainment, there are movie nights as part of kids-friendly activities during the weekend emphasising the resort's goal to make staycation a quality time together in a fun and relaxed environment.

Culinary experiences
The culinary experiences at Shangri-La Barr Al Jissah are unparalleled as they have 12 restaurants offering varied cuisines from authentic Omani food to Indian to Arabic to seafood and grill nights.

There are fine dining options at Sultanah which serves a variety of Mediterranean-inspired dishes using the freshest local ingredients, as well as contemporary Asian and Italian restaurants while also having an authentic seafood dining outlet. The latest addition to the culinary experience is Aangan by Rohit Ghai, the first of its kind in Oman to host a Michelin star chef restaurant in Oman. A sophisticated dining venue with a fresh take on Indian cuisine, critically acclaimed Chef Rohit Ghai is renowned for earning a Michelin star in under a year and has multiple standalone restaurants located from London to Dubai and many key destinations worldwide.

Rene D Egle added: "Aangan is a fine dining restaurant with refined



cuisines served in a sharing style where one can savour multiple dishes. Our objective is to bring new flavours and concepts to Muscat, for our guests' delights."

At Shangri-La Al Husn, the experience is for guests above 16 years old and takes them to the privacy of their own castle. The most exclusive and luxurious of the three hotels in the complex offers guests a range of upscale amenities and services.

Guests are pampering from morning to evening with dining experiences free of charge and which include gourmet breakfast, daily refilled mini bar, afternoon high tea experience to a magical aperitif hour daily with entertainment. Guests at Shangri-La Al Husn have access to a private beach, private sun lounges, an infinity pool, a 24-hour fitness center and the first of its kind the Luban spa offering a range

of treatments and therapies focusing on Frankincense.

The clifftop dining experience takes you to the next level with your loved ones in one of the most exclusive locations of the resort. This unique and unforgettable clifftop dining experience at Shangri-La Al Husn offers guests a magical panoramic view of the sea and the surrounding mountains with a lavish selection of dishes served in the privacy of your own clifftop gazebo.

There is no way you can leave the resort, without trying their snorkeling or paddling underneath the famous landmark located in the city of Muscat- the Muscat Arch. It is a stunning piece of landscape at the private beach front of Al Husn. This is a popular spot exclusively available for Al Husn guests who enjoy this beautiful Instagrammers spot in the city of Muscat and admire its beauty.



ROUND-UP

OAB opens upgraded and relocated Nakhal branch



Located at Nakhal Mall, the new relocated branch is offering customers an enhanced banking experience from a new, more advantageous location and will allow Oman Arab Bank customers to be served more efficiently

MUSCAT: Oman Arab Bank (OAB) celebrated the opening of its upgraded and relocated Nakhal branch under the patronage of Said Al Hakmani, Member of the Municipal Council of Nakhal. Located at Nakhal Mall, the new relocated branch is offering customers an enhanced banking experience from a new, more advantageous location and will allow OAB customers to be served more efficiently. With enhanced digital capabilities, the Nakhal branch will also feature increased privacy for

customers, including personal and business clients. The renovation is part of OAB's ongoing programme of branch improvements across the Sultanate, opening new branches and updating existing branches with new design and customer experience elements. Other recent openings include the enhanced and relocated Ibra and Duqm branches, as well as OAB's new flagship Ruwi branch, with state-of-the-art services offering an improved banking experience for customers.

CITY-BASED SUVs



Explore diverse range of Jetour SUVs at MHD Automobiles

MUSCAT: Mohsin Haider Darwish Automobiles, the official distributor of Jetour in Oman, hosts the lineup of the renowned automobile brand at its showrooms in Mabelah and Azaiba. All the models displayed feature a distinctive characteristic of city-based SUVs that encompass style, sleek design, luxurious space and a host of advanced technology features. Customers can benefit from the exclusive offering of 10 years / 1 million kilometre engine warranty on the purchase of any of the vehicles, namely X70, X70 Plus, X90 Plus and Dashing. Commenting on the Jetour range, MohsinHani Al Bahrani, CEO of MHD Automobiles, said, "Our Jetour lineup reflects our commitment to offering our customers vehicles that host well-crafted design, incredible engineering, cutting-edge innovation and unrivalled space and comfort capabilities. We look to provide them with vehicles that blend perfectly with their lifestyle and a peace of mind driving experience.

I would like to encourage our customers to visit our showroom to take a first-hand look at our lineup, request a test drive or even pre-order them if they choose to. Several salespersons and brand representatives are also present to assist and answer any enquiries." The Jetour X70 boasts a 1.5L turbocharged engine, with a maximum of 156hp and maximum torque of 230N.m. Alongside a 5MT transmission and convenient electronic parking brake system (EPB), it also comprises entertainment and accessibility features such as an infotainment display, digital gauge screen, keyless access, 360-degree vision system and front and rear parking sensors within a spacious interior cabin. The Jetour X70 Plus is a slightly larger variant of the X70 based on the same platform with a redesigned front and rear. Its interior is enhanced with fully functional luxury options including a multi-information display and integrated apps with Bluetooth facilities, alongside a number of high-end safety features.

The Jetour X90 Plus combines intelligent safety and a comfortable driving experience with multi-functional features, a high-strength cage body and luxurious car dimensions and expansive storage space. The vehicle comes with a powerful 1.6TGD1/2.0L turbocharged engine that ensures a smooth and responsive drive for both city and long journeys. The brand's newest addition, the Jetour Dashing hosts a 1.6TGD1 turbocharged 4-cylinder engine, capable of generating up to 197hp and 290N.m of torque, ensuring enhanced power and stability. The futuristic interior encompasses sport-designed seats, a spacious 5-seater cabin configuration, a 15.6-inch smart touchscreen and a Smart Key that integrates keyless Go and remote start facilities. The Jetour brand is created for those who desire modern technology, comfort, adventure and affordable luxury. Jetour commits to creating the best Chinese luxury cars covering SUV/MPV at an affordable price.

ELEVATE YOUR DRIVE

Luxury sports sedan Genesis G70: Reignited and revamped

DUBAI: The luxury sports sedan G70 is back with more agility and powerful driving performance. Genesis Middle East & Africa has announced that the enhanced version of the G70 has started production in the Middle East in August and will be available in our showrooms soon.

The highly anticipated G70 is arriving soon to the Middle East Market. Building upon its resounding success in 2022 and its exceptional performance in 2023, The G70 returns as a new and improved version, featuring interior and exterior upgrades that emphasise luxury and performance. The G70 & G70 Shooting Brake feature a 2.0 turbo engine and high-performance Brembo brakes as standard to ensure strong braking performance, interior and exterior with more details to emphasize luxury, and customer convenience specifications are standardized, and new specifications are added to enhance driving and braking performance and convenience. The G70 will be available in two lineups: a 2.0 turbo and a 3.3 turbo, and the G70 Shooting Brake as a 2.0 turbo. Equipped with a 2.0 turbo engine, the G70 & G70 Shooting Brake provides an agile and dynamic driving experience with driving systems such as 'Sport + (Sport Plus) mode', a driving mode specialized for limit driving. Interior and exterior design that emphasises luxury by adding a sense of luxury and details. The design of the G70 & G70 Shooting Brake inherits Genesis' unique design identity of "athletic

PROMOTION



Lexus campaign with exclusive benefits ending soon

MUSCAT: Owning a Lexus is now even more appealing. Customers can look forward to Service 5 Years / 50,000km (Whichever is earlier) and 1 Year Free Registration. Campaign ends on 16th August, 2023. (Conditions apply. For details visit any Saud Bahwan Automotive showroom). Lexus vehicles in Oman include the UX, NX, RX, GX, IS, ES, LS and LX. The UX reflects the "Yet Philosophy," in many ways, but especially in terms of design, performance and utility. The sleek and stylish NX SUV is equipped with two powertrain options. An inline 4-cylinder, 2.4 L turbocharged engine that produces 275 hp and 6000 RPM and is paired to an 8-speed Direct-Shift automatic transmission (8AT). The stunning all-new RX has been completely reimagined to deliver greater style, comfort, and performance than ever before and comes with a choice of three powertrains, two of which are electrified. The powerful Lexus GX460 is perfect for families who seek no-holds-barred adventure on their

days off, yet also desire an easy-driving, comfortable and versatile luxury SUV for the work week. The flagship LX is available with a choice of two powertrain options, including two newly developed V6 twin-turbo engines. In sedans, the range includes the IS350. This sleek and stylish powerful sedan is equipped with a 3.5-litre engine that's paired to an 8-speed automatic transmission. The flagship LS which is an inspiring luxury sedan, is available in 3.5-liter V6 Multi Stage Hybrid System producing 354 hp, a 3.5-liter V6 naturally aspirated Atkinson-cycle producing 311 hp and 38.7 Kg.M Torque, and a 3.5-liter twin-turbo V6 engine producing 415 hp and 61.2 Kg.M of Torque. Lexus ES emotional design elevated by the new design front grille is a thrilling drive personality imbued by two powertrain options. ES350 is powered by a 3.5 litre, 24 valve, V6 engine that produces 298 hp and 36.3 kg.m. of torque. While the ES250 is powered by high efficiency 2.5 litre, 16-valve DOHC engine that produces 204 hp and 24.8 kg.m of torque.



elegance" while enhancing the driver-centric interior design. The exterior design features a new Genesis emblem decorated with a Guilloché pattern, creating the image of a luxury sedan. In addition, newly designed wheels such as 19-inch dark gray matte wheels, as well as new exterior colors such as VatnaGray and Kawah Blue, have been added to further reinforce its sportiness and luxurious image. The interior space has a functional design improvement that enhances the convenience of operation and details enhance the driver's immersion. Genesis emphasises the sense of luxury by upgrading touch-type climate control display, frameless room mirror, leather steering wheel with new emblem, multifunction switches, door & console garnish patterns, air vents, cup

holders and more to realise the delicate interior sensibility of a luxury sedan. As for the built-in colors, Obsidian black/fog gray two-tone, Obsidian black/vanilla beige two-tone, Forest blue/vanilla beige two-tone are newly added to expand the range of customer choices. The G70 & G70 Shooting Brake retains the existing excellent driving comfort technology and is equipped with new features to provide customers with a pleasant and comfortable driving experience. Genesis has strengthened its marketability by standardizing ventilated front seats for 3.3T model and upgraded USB charging port to Type C for market compatibility which are convenience features that are highly preferred by customers.







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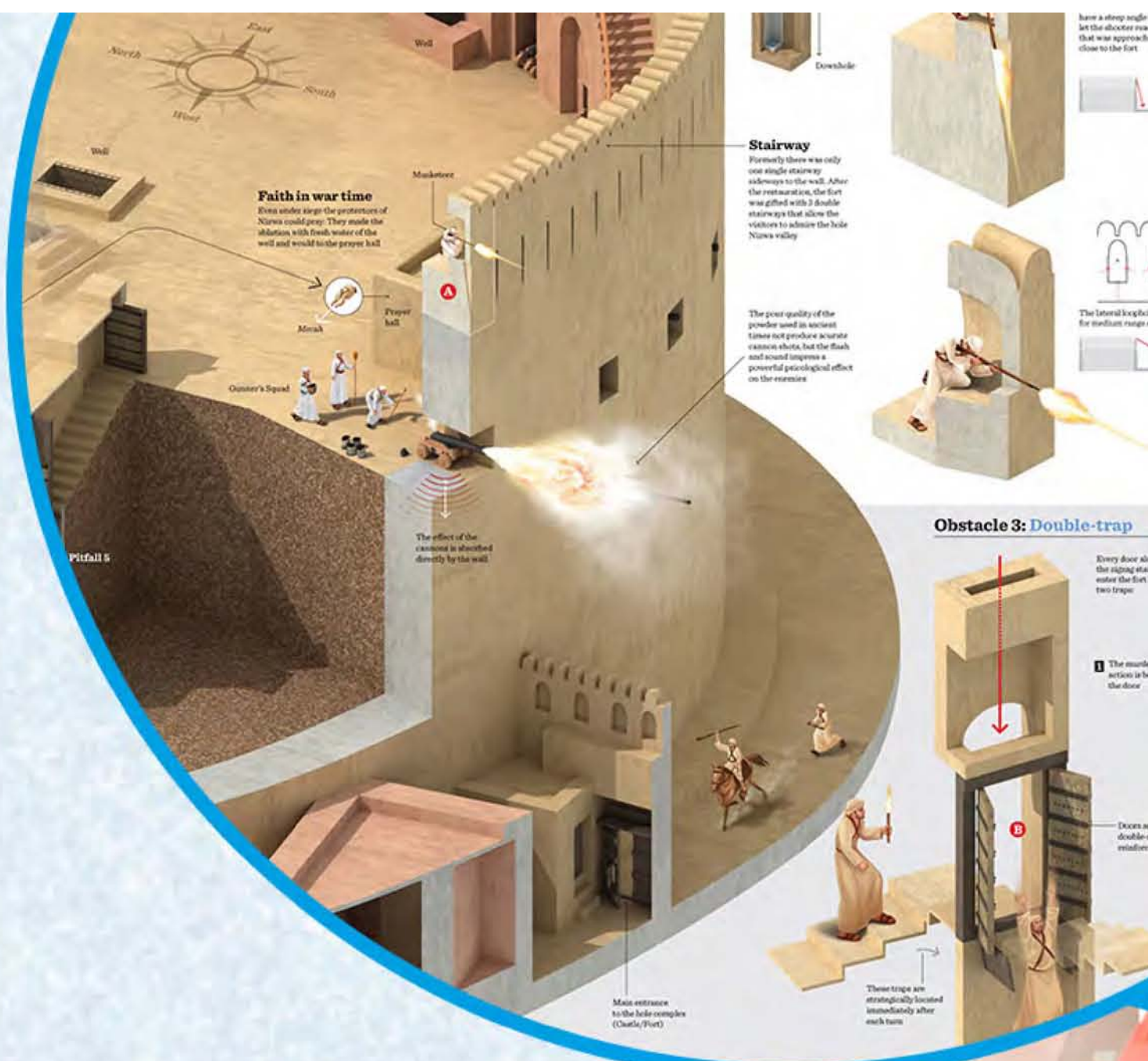
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10 REASONS TO LEARN SCUBA DIVING IN OMAN



MUSCAT: Scuba diving is the perfect hobby to best explore Oman's pristine waters and rich marine life.

Muscat in particular has two different diving locations with numerous dive sites; the most popular are Damaniyat Islands, Fahal Reserve Marine and Bandar Khayran. Scuba diving can be enjoyed all around the year in Muscat. The temperature can vary from 22 degrees in Winters to 32 degrees in Summers.

As the case is with most hobbies, some people are naturally better suited to the pursuit and are therefore going to get more out of the experience than others.

To inspire you and help you decide if scuba diving could become your new favorite hobby, here is a list of the 10 types of people who should learn to dive and consider spending some time under the waves.

1 Water lovers
Quiet simply, if your perfect day involves being on/in/around water, getting to spend time under the water will only be a good thing. No matter whether it's for recreational or professional purposes, a journey into the big blue is never going to leave you feeling blue.

2 Nature Enthusiasts
While much of the life found in the ocean still remains unclassified or undiscovered, the life we are familiar with is pretty special. Getting to see whales, sharks, turtles, dolphins and a plethora of fish and other marine life in their natural habitat is something animal enthusiasts shouldn't miss. For this reason, lovers of the natural world should not pass up the chance to experience marine life up close. Oman is one of the most beautiful and pristine scuba diving destinations. Sea lovers will be able to enjoy micro & macro dives, starting from little shrimps/seahorses to the harmless shark species found in the Indian ocean along with big whale migraters.

3 Bucket Listers
There's no way journeying into the depths of the ocean isn't on everyone's bucket list. Like jumping out of a plane, seeing the northern lights and traveling to Antarctica, breathing underwater is something you simply shouldn't miss during your time on the planet.

4 Adrenaline Junkies
The act of taking a first breath underwater is a unique experience and enough to get your adrenaline flowing. Then, once you're over that hump, more adrenaline-filled adventures await in the form of wreck dives, caves, high-speed currents and the deepest depths. Scuba diving is an addictive activity for adventure seekers. Adrenaline junkies are people who should definitely learn to dive.

5 History Buffs
While it's easy to picture pristine coral reefs surrounded by an array of tropical fish, the underwater world is home to so much more. From cities taken by rising water to wartime fleets claimed by the deep ocean, you could go a lifetime exploring marine life habitats and still have something interesting to see on every dive.

6 Wellness Seekers
If you're searching for a place to forget about social media, focus on the world in front of you and generally enjoy living in the moment instead of worrying about everything else going on in the world, diving may just be the hobby you need. With the right approach and preparation, diving can be a truly relaxing experience.

7 Explorers
From the deepest depths to the narrowest caves, the underwater world still has a wealth of places to explore. There are few activities in the world which offer the lure of being the first person to discover a place.

8 Active people
Carrying a tank on your back before jumping in the water and kicking around for 45 minutes to an hour is certainly enough to check off your exercise quota for a day. Granted, some dives are definitely more relaxing than they are experienced, but a few hours of activity are never a bad thing for those who want to stay active.

9 Environmentalists/Conservationists
There's no doubt that seeing the challenges facing the environment through social media or on TV has an impact. However, seeing these challenges with your own eyes brings a new level of understanding about the need for conservation. Being a diver allows you to take part in coral restoration projects or underwater cleanups, which is definitely worth it if you are motivated to protect and preserve the oceans.

10 People Who Love Challenges
Love taking on activities to test your little one? There's no doubt scuba diving offers both physical and mental challenges to push your boundaries.

From diving deeper to entering full caves or ice-cold waters, the limits of scuba diving stop pretty much where your comfort ends.

So what are you waiting for? This weekend, choose to learn scuba diving to explore Oman's beauty.