

A research team from Sultan Qaboos University (SQU) managed to design a phone application named “Dr Electron” which seeks to provide scientific concepts and to correct misperceptions for students in various scientific fields, particularly physics, chemistry, biology, environmental sciences, geosciences, astronomy and space sciences in a fun and engaging way for learners. The application was funded by the Ministry of Higher Education, Research and Innovation. **DETAILS ON P3**



P13

REGULATORY FRAMEWORK TO SAFEGUARD AGAINST POOR QUALITY POWER SUPPLY IN OMAN



P12

DJOKOVIC CLAIMS SIXTH ITALIAN OPEN TITLE, SWIATEK MAKES IT FIVE IN A ROW



P20

STRENGTHENING BONDS OF FRIENDSHIP WITH JAPAN



■ MUSCAT

HM GREETINGS TO KING OF NORWAY

His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik has sent a cable of greetings to King Harald V of the Kingdom of Norway on his country's National Day. In his cable, His Majesty the Sultan expressed his sincere sentiments and best wishes of good health and happiness to King Harald V. His Majesty also wished the people of Norway further progress and prosperity. — ONA

HM GREET'S SOMALIA'S PRESIDENT-ELECT

His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik has sent a cable of congratulations to President-elect Hassan Sheikh Mohamud of the Federal Republic of Somalia, on being elected as his country's new president. In his cable, His Majesty the Sultan expressed his heartfelt sentiments and best wishes of success to President-elect Hassan Sheikh Mohamud in leading the people of Somalia towards further progress and prosperity. His Majesty also wished the relations between the two countries further development and growth. — ONA



OMAN OBSERVER
FIRST DEDICATED ENGLISH NEWS APP IN OMAN

INSIDE



SWEDEN ENTERS 'NEW ERA' WITH NATO BID | P6



OLIGARCH VILLAS CHALLENGE A 'SILENT CONTRACT' | P8

■ ROYAL WINDSOR HORSE SHOW WRAPS UP WITH OMAN'S PARTICIPATION



HH Sayyid Theyazin bin Haitham al Said attended the closing ceremony of the Royal Windsor Horse Show 2022, held on the occasion of the Platinum Jubilee of Queen Elizabeth II of the United Kingdom of Great Britain, Northern Ireland and Head of the Commonwealth, on Monday. The Sultanate of Oman, represented by the Royal Court Affairs, took part in the Windsor Horse Show which was attended by Queen Elizabeth II. **SEE ALSO P2**

Process for municipal council election begins

SUBMISSION OF APPLICATIONS ENDS ON JUNE 2

ZAINAB AL NASSRI
@zainabalnassri

The submission of applications for the third term of the municipal council membership began on Sunday and will continue until June 2. The Ministry of Interior has revealed that those wishing to contest the forthcoming elections must submit their applications through the website “elections.om” after filling e-form designed for this purpose along with required documents. The ministry clarified that the conditions for candidacy, according to Article 10 of the Municipal Councils Law, stipulate that a member who is not a representative of government agencies must be of Omani nationality, not less than 30 years, be of good conduct and behaviour, not have been ever sentenced to a penalty, or a felony or a crime involving moral turpitude or dishonesty, unless he

Those wishing to contest the elections must submit their applications on the website ‘elections.om’ after filling e-form along with documents

MINISTRY OF INTERIOR

has been rehabilitated, not been mentally ill or imprisoned by a court ruling, in addition to having an educational qualification not less than a General Education Diploma, to be registered in the electoral register for the wilayat of nomination, and not to work in a security or military authority. The conditions include that

the candidate must not be a member of any of the Councils — State Council or Majlis Ash'shura, and not reside or work outside the Sultanate of Oman. Municipal councils are specialised in municipal work and they provide opinions, suggestions and recommendations on everything related to service and development aspects and their development within the governorate, within the limits of the state's general policy and development plans. The term of the council shall be four years, starting from the day following the date of the action of the decision to nominate its members. Elections for the new council shall be held within 90 days before the end of that period. Yet, if elections are not held during the mentioned period for any reason, the council will remain in place until the elections are held. **TURN TO P2**

France gets first female PM in 30 years



PARIS: President Emmanuel Macron on Monday named Labour Minister Elisabeth Borne as his new prime minister, the first woman to head the French government in over 30 years, the Elysee said in a statement. Outgoing French Prime Minister Jean Castex earlier handed his resignation to the president, part of a widely expected reshuffle to make way for a new government in the wake of Macron's re-election in April. The departure of Castex, who was a surprise choice for the role in 2020, enables Macron to reshape the cabinet ahead of crucial parliamentary polls in June. The centrist will need a legislative majority to push through his domestic agenda following his re-election, with a new left-wing alliance and the far right threatening to block his programme. Speculation has been rife in recent weeks about Castex's replacement, with Macron indicating he wanted a woman with left-wing and environmental credentials. — AFP

■ GIANT MOON



Beach-goers and astro-enthusiasts had a feast to their eyes when a giant, full moon was visible in the Sultanate of Oman on Monday after 7 pm. Moon came as close as 367,000 km to the earth, which is considered to be the closest against 400,000 km usual distance from earth. “Full moon is visible in Oman on Tuesday also. However, it won't be as big as it was on Monday, but still big in size,” said Abdul Wahab al Busaidy, member, Oman Astronomical Society. **PHOTO BY NAJAT AHMED AL ISMAILY**

Flexible working hours to benefit employees and public

VINOD NAIR
@vinot_nair

While most employees of the state administrative apparatus have welcomed flexible working hours, this will also be beneficial to the public, as government offices or services will be available for longer working hours.

It may be noted that government services in the Sultanate of Oman will operate between 7.30 am and 2.30 pm on working days. The Ministry of Labour took a decision on flexible working hours and now services are available until 3 pm. “Within the framework of the



application of the flexible working system, the Ministry of Labour would like to inform you that all its offices catering to various public services will be available from 7:30 in the morning until 3 in the evening, while electronic services will operate round the clock.” According to sources, a few

more government units related to public services are likely to reschedule their operating hours and make an announcement in the coming days. The flexible working hours for the employees in the government apparatus came into effect in line with the Royal directives of His Majesty the Sultan. **TURN TO P2**



SAYYID THEYAZIN ATTENDS ROYAL WINDSOR HORSE SHOW FINALE



His Highness Sayyid Theyazin bin Haitham al Said attended the closing ceremony of the Royal Windsor Horse Show 2022, held on the occasion of the Platinum Jubilee of Queen Elizabeth II of the United Kingdom of Great Britain, Northern Ireland and Head of the Commonwealth, in London on Monday. The Sultanate of Oman, represented by the Royal Court Affairs, took part in the Windsor Horse Show which was attended by Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II. — ONA



Ministers offer condolences on demise of Shaikh Khalifa

MUSCAT: A number of Omani ministers on Monday offered their condolences on the demise of Shaikh Khalifa bin Zayed al Nahyan. They were received at the embassy of the United Arab Emirates (UAE) in Muscat by Mohammed bin Sultan al Suwaidi, UAE Ambassador to the Sultanate of Oman and members of the embassy.

The ministers expressed their heartfelt sympathies in the Condolence Book at the embassy, praying to the Almighty Allah to rest the deceased's soul in peace in Paradise. — ONA

Visa-free travel to EU discussed

MUSCAT: Shaikh Khalifa bin Ali al Harthy, the Foreign Ministry's Under-Secretary for Diplomatic Affairs, received Dimitri Giotakos, Head of the Visa Policy Unit in the Directorate General of Migration and Home Affairs at the European Commission and his accompanying delegation on Monday.

The two sides reviewed relations between the Sultanate of Oman and the European Union (EU) and explored ways of strengthening them.

During the meeting, the delegation underscored the significance the European Commission attaches to the topic of exempting Omani citizens from the Schengen visa.

The meeting was attended by Khalid bin Sulaiman BaOmar, Head of the European Union Department at the Foreign Ministry and several officials from authorities concerned in Oman. — ONA



Municipal council election process begins

FROM P1

After the issuance of the Royal Decree No 116/2011 regarding the establishment of Municipal Councils and its executive regulations, the Sultanate of Oman achieved another milestone in democratic path, which came as a continuation of the previous experience of the Majlis Ash'shura.

These councils play an active role in various governorates of the Sultanate of Oman because of their competencies, which amounted to 30, as defined by Article 16 of the Municipal Councils Law.

The Ministry of Interior said that for Omani society to crystallise the desired goals of these councils, it must move realistically in democratic participation, and this can only be achieved through full awareness of democratic culture and leaving the theoretical aspect, which always tends to renew belonging to the family or tribe

in such directions. These councils are an entity of society through which the society enhances its social, developmental, cultural and economic stability. Because of the cumulative experiences of electoral work in the Majlis Ash'shura over the past years, the citizen has acquired a decent culture to exercise his right to vote and to run freely in elections.

The goals are also achieved, according to the ministry, by empowering these councils by giving them more authority, such as fulfilling the ambitions of reducing administrative repetition and giving the governorates the powers of self-administration, and to implement the decisions and recommendations approved by these councils, and giving them the right to choose their chairmen and rapporteurs. All of these powers will contribute in the road ahead for them to reach the matured stage of the experience.

Flexible working hours to benefit employees, public

FROM P1

The Ministry of Labour has issued a decision to implement the Flexible Duty System at the state's administrative units (offices of the public sector) that apply the Civil Service Law and its executive regulation, starting from May 15.

Speaking to the Observer, Khalid al Balushi, an employee of one of the ministries in Al Khuwair, said, "With all employees coming to office or leaving for home at the same time, long hours are spent on roads due to traffic congestion, especially on the busy Muscat Expressway. With this new system, the traffic flow can be regulated with people getting more productive hours. With road works and diversions happening at a number of places, commuting in the scorching

afternoon sun is tiresome."

The head of a HR department in a government unit said: "The benefits of flexible working hours will be visible across the board in the coming days. Both employees and employers will benefit from timings such as 7.30 am to 2.30 pm, 8.30 am to 3.30 pm and 9.30 am to 4.30 pm. Apart from easing traffic woes, it will also offer a window for longer working hours to offer public services."

The system regulates hours of the daily attendance of employees in a streamlined manner, according to the following conditions: The employees must abide by the 7-hour duty within a timeframe from 7.30 am to 4.30 pm.

The units which provide direct services to members of the public must announce the time

designated for the respective services, if the time set for the services is not less than 7 hours a day.

Each unit coordinates with its employees to regulate the workflow in a manner that does not affect their achievement of the tasks/services rendered to members of the public or beneficiaries. The daily duty schedules should maintain the quality of services and accommodate the prescribed meetings, workshops, and training programmes.

Sulaiman, an employee at the Ministry of Education, said: "It is clear in the decision that the authorities have fixed the timings in such a way that the administrative work is not affected." Several working women in the government sector welcomed the decision.

Oman promotion campaign to begin in France, Italy

MUSCAT: Mobile workshops to promote the Sultanate of Oman as a tourist destination suitable for travel all-year round will be held in France and Italy from May 17-19.

The workshops, organised by the Ministry of Heritage and Tourism, will see the participation of ambassadors and a delegation from the ministry.

The delegation comprises the 27 most prominent partners in the tourism, hotel and aviation sectors in Oman.

As many as 200 tourism establishments in Oman, France and Italy will participate in the workshops. — ONA



MUSCAT: Members of Majlis Ash'shura were briefed about the corporate governance charter recently issued by Oman Investment Authority (OIA), on Monday.

Nasser bin Sulaiman al Harthy, Acting Vice-Chairman of OIA, presented a visual display explaining that OIA, established by Royal Decree 61/2020, aims to supplement the state's general budget with revenues, manage and develop the Sultanate of Oman's funds and assets, achieve financial reserves and savings, as well as execute government policies to advance targeted economic sectors and contribute to improving the investment environment and attracting investments to the Sultanate of Oman. A number of programmes that the OIA is currently implementing were highlighted within the framework of the governance of subsidiaries, including the rationalisation programme of salaries and benefits and the Rawabet programme.

The presentation made reference to the policies related to corporate operations including the procurement and tender policy aims to maximising the local added value, empowering small and medium enterprises, supporting Omani products and enhancing the role of the private sector.

The members of the Majlis

Ash'shura raise inquiries about the role of the governance charter in improving companies' performance and boosting the state's general budget, and the extent to which the charter takes into account the nature of companies associated with the OIA and the flexibility in reviewing policies in line with the privacy of each company.

The members inquired about the need for a law regulating the work of companies affiliated with OIA, the extent of corporation commitment to implementing governance policies, and the measures that need to be taken in case of non-compliance with the policies and regulations.

Reference was made to the issue of overlapping specialisations in some institutions and the possibility of merging some of them was discussed.

The members also inquired about the strategic plans that the OIA's subsidiaries are working on in light of the global political changes especially with regard to food security.

The members of Majlis Ash'shura emphasised the issue of adopting a clear policy on dividend distributions and disclosure. They also wondered whether the implementation of corporate governance policy can do away with oversight conducted by other institutions including Majlis Ash'shura.

The OIA specialists emphasised that the corporate governance charter aims to regulate the work of these institutions, improve their performance, and align their plans with sustainable development plans in a bid to strike a balance between the economic and strategic goals and to encourage the efficient use of financial and human resources. It also aims at promoting the principle of accountability as the charter included policies and guidelines for various operations and activities carried out by the OIA's subsidiaries.



Transport cost drives inflation higher

SAMUEL KUTTY
@samkuttyvp

Even as economic growth accelerated in the first quarter of the current year, rising inflation and a slowdown in the global economy loom as downside risks.

Inflation has risen in recent months against the backdrop of higher commodity and global food prices caused by the Russia-Ukraine conflict.

In the Sultanate of Oman, however, transport continues to be the major driver of the rise in inflation, although the country has not become immune to the global trend. Foodstuffs and non-alcoholic beverages rose by 4.9 per cent at the end of the first quarter.

Even though the authorities capped the fuel prices at the November level, transportation showed a jump of 6.6 per cent, followed by education at 5.1 per cent in the March consumer price index.

Surprisingly, the health group recorded only a 2.9 per cent rise in the March inflation data released by the National Center for Statistics and Information. But foodstuffs and non-alcoholic beverages rose by 4.9 per cent.

The state-run statistics agency report said that the lowest inflation rate of 2.9 per cent was recorded in the Governorate of Muscat in March 2022, compared to the same period in 2021.

The costs of housing, water, electricity, gas, and fuel prices went up by 2 per cent. The furniture, fixtures, household equipment, and regular household maintenance costs increased by 1.2 per cent and the restaurants and hotel spending group by 1.1 per cent.

Over 1.5m vehicles registered by March



MUSCAT: The total number of registered vehicles in the Sultanate of Oman reached 1,560,778 by the end of March 2022, according to the latest data issued by the National Centre for Information and Statistics (NCSI).

Vehicles with private registration stood at 1,239,755, comprising 79.4% of the total number of registered vehicles in Oman. Meanwhile, vehicles with commercial registration reached 233,834, constituting 15%.

Taxi vehicles stood at (28,351), comprising 1.8%,

while rental vehicles stood at (24,658), comprising 1.6%.

The number of government vehicles stood at 12,113. Other vehicles include Motorbikes (6,438), tutoring vehicles (5,835), vehicles with temporary registration (temporary inspection, export and import) by 7,647, farming tractors (1,295) and vehicles with diplomatic entity registrations (852).

Among colours, white vehicles in Oman stood at 669,716, followed by silver with 200,236 and gray with 130,033 vehicles.

As for the capacity of vehicles, the number of vehicles with a capacity of 1,500-3,000 cc stood at 837,731, 3,001-4,500 cc with 354,736 vehicles, over 4,500 cc with 203,030 vehicles, less than 1,500 cc with 117,029, while vehicles without engines reached 48,252.

As for vehicles registered per weight, the number of vehicles weighing less than 3 tonnes stood at 1,408,317, over 10 tonnes stood at 70,131, between 3-7 tonnes stood at 45,499 and between 7-10 tonnes stood at 36,831.

— ONA

Even though the authorities capped the fuel prices at the November level, transportation showed a jump of 6.6 per cent, followed by education at 5.1 per cent

challenge for heavily import-dependent countries like the Gulf states", said a recent report by PWC.

The 16th edition of the Arab Economic Outlook Report released by the Arab Monetary Fund (AMF) pointed out that some inflationary pressures are expected to emerge due to the anticipated increase in aggregate demand levels.

"The rise in consumption tax rates in some Arab countries, the depreciation of some Arab currencies against major currencies, and the impact of other inflationary factors that vary from one Arab country to another can cause inflation", the report pointed out.

In the first week of the current month, the central banks of Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, Qatar and Bahrain raised their key rates by 50 basis points (bps). The Central Bank of Kuwait said it increased its discount rate by 25 bps to 2 per cent.

All Gulf countries have their currencies pegged to the US dollar, except Kuwait, which pegs the Kuwaiti dinar to a basket of currencies that includes the dollar.

A quarter of applicants to perform Haj

KABEER YOUSUF
@kabeeryousef

Only one-fourth of the total applicants who have registered with the Ministry of Awqaf and Religious Affairs (MoARA) will be able to perform Haj as the number of online applicants touched 23,474 this year, according to the ministry.

The seven-day online registration process, which ended May 15, saw an overwhelming response from citizens and expatriates.

"The response to our online registration process was overwhelming, and we received 23,474 applications from both Omanis and expatriates but only a fourth of the applicants will be able to perform Haj through the Ministry as our quota is 6,338," said a top official from the Religious Preaching Department at the Awqaf.

There were 21,429 requests from Omanis and 2,045 requests from residents of the Sultanate of Oman to perform Haj rituals for the 1443 AH season through the electronic system. Among expatriates, 1,266 are Arabs, while 779 are non-Arabs.

Male applicants constituted almost 59.8 per cent of the total applicants, while 40.2 per cent were females.

People in the age group of 30-45 are the highest (49.8 per cent) to register online, followed by 45-60 (33.3 per cent), 18-30 (9.5 per cent) and above 60 years (8.4 per cent).

As many as 14 cancer patients are performing Haj this year, while 868 are doing it on behalf of the diseased.

The highest registration is from Al Dakhiliyah Governorate (4,008), and the lowest is from Musandam Governorate (191).

From Al Buraimi (362), North Al Batinah (3, 535), South Al Batinah (2, 039), Muscat (3, 356), North Al Sharqiyah (2, 183), South Al Sharqiyah (1, 686), Al Dhahirah (1, 039), Al Wusta (225) and Dhofar (2,805).

This year's Hajj will begin on Thursday evening (July 7) and end on Tuesday evening (July 12).

Pilgrims quota for the Sultanate of Oman this year is 6,338, including 5,956 Omanis and 200 non-Omanis. The number this year has reduced by 45 per cent due to the repercussions of the Covid-19 pandemic.

— ONA

Number of fish processing factories increases



MUSCAT: A report by the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Water Resources indicates that the total number of fish processing factories in Oman reached 105 by the end of 2021 compared to 97 factories by the end of 2020.

The number of factories which received quality certificates

and are eligible to export their products reached 64.

Fish processing activities vary between projects of processing, packaging and freezing fish fillets, canning fish, and manufacturing various food products from aquatic resources such as fish burgers and fish fingers, among others. — ONA

Learn science from 'Dr Electron'

MUSCAT: A research team at Sultan Qaboos University (SQU) has designed a phone application named "Dr Electron" to provide scientific concepts and to correct misperceptions in various scientific fields, particularly physics, chemistry, biology, environmental sciences, geosciences, astronomy and space sciences in a fun and engaging way for learners.

The application was funded by the Ministry of Higher Education, Research and Innovation. It obtained intellectual property from the Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Investment Promotion.

The research team consisted of Prof Sulaiman bin Muhammad al Balushi, Professor of Curriculums



and Science Education at the College of Education, and Huda bint Ali al Hosani, a PhD student at SQU.

The application comes in response to the recommendations of many international studies that suggest the need for a phone

application based on the concept of gamification in teaching scientific concepts to students.

The researchers hope that the application will contribute to raising the level of educational attainment of learners and increase their motivation to learn. — ONA

ODB funds projects worth RO 19 million

MUSCAT: Oman Development Bank (ODB) achieved positive lending indicators during the first quarter of 2022.

The value of loans recorded an increase by 29% compared to the same period in 2021 to stand at RO 18,887,544, divided into RO 15,127,544 as development loans in various promising economic sectors and RO 3,760 million for agricultural projects for areas damaged by Tropical Cyclone Shaheen.

These indicators come in the framework of ODB's efforts to keep pace with the government's

approach in stimulating the national economy, especially in the recovery from the repercussions of the coronavirus (Covid-19) pandemic.

In terms of sectors, converting industries had the largest share of ODB's lending during the first quarter of 2022 as the total value of loans approved for this sector reached RO 5,358,839, divided into 299 projects that comprise 35% of the total loaned value. The fisheries sector came second by receiving RO 3,935,713, divided into 588 projects, followed by the professional services sector



with RO 1,834,471 divided into 136 projects, the livestock and education sectors with RO 1.4 million each. The ODB also funded loans in various other

sectors, including tourism, health and logistics.

The Governorate of North Al Batinah received RO 4 million, comprising the highest share of

approved loans during the first quarter of 2022. It was followed by the Governorate of South Al Sharqiyah (RO 3,269,915), the Governorate of Muscat (RO 2.5 million), the Governorate of Al Wusta (RO 1,191,700), the Governorate of Al Dakhiliyah (RO 1,087,200), the Governorate of North Al Sharqiyah (RO 867,560), the Governorate of Dhofar (RO 795,600) and the Governorate of South Al Batinah (RO 700,800). They were followed by the governorates of Musandam, Al Dhahirah and Al Buraimi, which received various sums.

Micro-loans constituted the largest proportion in the first quarter of 2022, comprising 33% of the total loans. The value of Micro-loans reached RO 4,964,301, followed by large companies whose lending range reaches RO 1 million, comprising a total value of RO 3,867,000. Operating Capital loans reached RO 3,661,143, followed by loans of small and medium enterprises (SMEs), which reached RO 2,581,500 and seasonal loans allocated for agricultural projects, which reached RO 53,600.

— ONA



FOR A CLEAN CITY

SAMUEL KUTTY
@samkuttyvp

SLOGANS can make a big difference. They can create awareness and motivate people to take actions that would matter. They can help keep the environment clean and hygienic to make the place we live in safe and healthy. One such slogan was 'keep your city clean' by the Muscat Municipality a few years back, asking people not to litter or spit in public areas, including parks and beaches. The slogan was part of the civic authority's efforts to create awareness about the need to keep the city surroundings clean and tidy. Even as the slogan did make an impact, the city's parks, beaches and streets become victims of littering and fly-tipping. Maintaining a clean city involves the idea of removing dirt and anything unnecessary in and around the surroundings.

"It is not just removal of the dirt that matters. People should refrain from littering as they are the users of the public places like beaches and parks", an official at the Community Partnership Department of Muscat Municipality told Observer.

ENVIRONMENTAL AWARENESS

The information and awareness department of the Municipality carries out such initiatives constantly to spread environmental awareness among the local community urging them to give hands with its efforts to mitigate the negative effects and phenomena on the environmental and health levels. Neat and tidy public places, roads, and paths do not only contribute to a good image for visitors and the local inhabitants, but they are also a sign of the local civic body. Moreover, it is a sign that it encourages people to keep the city clean.

The Municipality has placed a number of activities, including hanging clothes visibly on the balconies of buildings, as offences that attract a fine.

Accordingly, leaving garbage at an unspecified location would attract a fine of RO 100, while spitting in public areas can get a fine of RO 20.

Grilling or barbecuing on the grass at parks and other public spaces, including beaches, can also attract a fine of RO 100. Those who set a fire under trees or in recreational areas will get a fine of RO 20.

Even hanging a laundry visibly on the balconies of buildings is a violation and can fetch a minimum fine of RO 50 or a jail term of 24 hours.

CLEAN STREETS

In a recent survey conducted by Bayt.com and YouGov, Muscat was one of the cities rated the highest in terms of clean streets and roads. People in the capital city were found to have been the most happy about their current city of residence at an overall level, with 84 per cent of them stating so.

In terms of recreation factors, sports, arts and culture, the city took the top spot with regard to the availability of natural areas and natural landscape, with 78 per cent giving it a positive.

The Oman National Spatial Strategy is the general framework for directing urban growth till 2040 with a view to achieving a balance between the social, economic and environmental developments, which are spatially embodied in urban development. The strategy also ensures the competitiveness and ability of the cities in the Sultanate of Oman to withstand many variables, as well as its alignment with the United Nations goals for Sustainable Development 2030, as the Sultanate of Oman is among the countries that signed its commitment to apply its principles in all national plans and strategies.

SLOGANS ARE A WAY TO MAKE THINGS HAPPEN AS THEY STAY ON PEOPLE'S MINDS FOR A LONG TIME. ONE SUCH SLOGAN WAS 'KEEP YOUR CITY CLEAN' BY THE MUSCAT MUNICIPALITY A FEW YEARS BACK ASKING PEOPLE NOT TO LITTER OR SPT IN PUBLIC AREAS INCLUDING PARKS AND BEACHES



Grilling or barbecuing

FINE
RO 100



Garbage disposal in unspecified location

FINE
RO 100



Spitting in public areas

FINE
RO 20



Hanging clothes visibly on the balconies

FINE
RO 50

MUNICIPALITY
HAS PROHIBITED
A NUMBER OF
ACTIVITIES



Conference on emotional intelligence skills held

MUSCAT: Deliberations of the 9th annual conference titled “ Future Leaders and Stages of Change: The Art of Utilising Emotional Intelligence Skills” began here on Monday under the auspices of Mohammed bin Said al Balushi, Under-Secretary of the Ministry of Information.

The two-day event, organised by the Ministry of Labour, aims at introducing means of creating leadership management, and evaluating and developing emotional intelligence skills.

It also seeks to highlight skills of solving problems and issues of interest to management.

The conference includes five working sessions that cover a set of papers on characteristics of future leadership and global analyses on emotional intelligence and its impact on job performance, emotional intelligence, decision-making at work and leadership for the future generation in addition to the impact of emotional intelligence on the development of employees’ performance. — ONA

Seminar highlights sound governance in higher education institutions

MUSCAT: The Ministry of Higher Education, Research and Innovation on Monday organised a seminar on “The Governance of Private Higher Education Institutions in the Sultanate of Oman” under the auspices of Dr Rahma bint Ibrahim al Mahrouqiyah, Minister of Higher Education, Research and Innovation.

The seminar aimed at disseminating the culture of sound governance in higher



education institutions and its role in the quality of education.

The event provided a platform for exchanging ideas and devising

visions on the sound governance and rational management of private higher education institutions, in a manner that

guarantees transparency and integrity in accordance with national and international standards.

The seminar included a number of working papers on various topics, including governance and management standard in the evaluation process as compared to institutional standards, governance and its role in the quality of higher education and the protection of stakeholders, and the most prominent challenges and solutions for the governance of private higher education institutions in the Sultanate of Oman. — ONA

GCC anti-corruption agencies meet

RIYADH:

The State Audit Institution (SAI) is taking part in the 23rd specialists’ committee

meeting of the GCC Anti-Corruption and Integrity Protection Agencies.

The 3-day meeting is held at the headquarters of the GCC Secretariat General in Riyadh, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.



The agenda of the meeting includes the status of the GCC in joining the UN’s Convention against

Corruption and the efforts exerted in this regard, as well as highlighting the suggestions pertaining to the GCC award for excellence in anti-corruption and integrity protection, among other topics. — ONA



Tender Number

Re-T-03-2022

Tender Name

SLA - MWASALAT Vessel Fleet & Docking Facilities Maintenance Services.

Project Summary

Within the framework of this tender, MWASALAT would like to have a qualified contractor to provide specialized labourers for Mwasalat Vessels and Land Facilities maintenance and repair Services on call-off basis for 2 years.

Tender Fee

NIL

Grade & Specialty

Qualified & Specialized Companies in the Field

Start date for tender document distribution

Tuesday, 17 May 2022

Last date for tender document distribution

Wednesday, 25 May 2022

Last date for submission

Monday, 6 June 2022

The Tender documents may be shared by email during official working hours between 9:00A.M - 2:00 P.M.

Tenderers are requested to share commercial registration (CR) & business card through email: tenders@mwasalat.com and tender number as the subject of email. Tender Document shall be shared by email

The submission Date / Time shall be on or before the deadline specified in the above table

Participants should submit their offers in the tender box located in the head- quarter National Ferries Company LLC (MWASALAT) at Ghalat, Muscat (Jabal Shams Building 5th floor). Any proposal submitted after the given Date & Time shall be rejected

"Mwasalat"

Head Quarter, Ghalat
P.O.Box: 911 , Al Khuraij, PC: 135, Sultanate of Oman

For more information please send to: tenders@mwasalat.com



شركة المطاحن العمانية (ش.م.ع.)
Oman Flour Mills Company (S.A.O.C)

P.O. Box 566, P.C 112, Ruwi, Muscat, Sultanate of Oman



BOARD OF DIRECTORS' REPORT

RESPECTED SHAREHOLDERS,

On behalf of the Board of Directors, I present Oman Flour Mills Company SAOG (the Parent Company) along with its subsidiaries (The Group's) unaudited financial statements for the quarter ended 31 March 2022.

GROUP PERFORMANCE HIGHLIGHTS:

Revenue: The total revenue recorded is RO 27.88m as compared to RO 23.68m recorded in the previous year i.e. an increase of 17.7%. All sectors achieved increase in the revenues, notably in feed by 27.5% and flour by 9.3%.

Expenses: The group total expenses (COGS, selling and admin) have increased by 38% as compared to the previous year's same period. The main reason for its increase is attributed to the increase in the purchase prices of raw material compared to last year.

Investment income: The group earned total investment income of RO 61k as compared to RO 119k in 2021. The group's investment income has decreased by almost RO 58k in 2022 mainly due to decrease of the value of the company's investment in the Muscat Stock Exchange.

Net Profit: The net profit after the tax recorded for the year is RO 385k as compared to RO 3.3m in 2021. The group's net profit has reduced by 88.3% compared to the previous year.

PARENT, SUBSIDIARY AND ASSOCIATES COMPANIES:

The parent company performance (before tax) along with our subsidiaries and associates is as follows:

- Oman Flour Mills SAOG (OFM):** OFM recorded a profit (before tax) of RO 649k as compared to previous year's profit (before tax) of RO 3.88m. Sales revenue has increased by RO 3.63 million (19%) as compared to last year mainly due to increase in sales volume by 12.5% and increase in sales prices by 6.5%. Further, raw material cost has increased by RO 6.84 million (54%) mainly due to an overall increase in the prices of raw materials (grains) by 47% and 8% decline in cost of material due to volume mix. This has led to an overall decrease in the operating profit by RO 2.9 million (-88.8%) as compared to last year.
- Atyab Food Industries LLC (AFI) (100%):** AFI made a profit (before tax) of RO 161k as compared to previous year's profit of RO 300k. The bakery has decrease in its profitability because of the high purchase of its major raw materials.
- Atyab International Services LLC (formerly Atyab FoodTech LLC) (AIS) (100%):** AIS made a profit (before tax) of RO 56k as compared to the previous year's profit (before tax) of RO 143k. The decrease in profit is due to decrease in the revenue by 11% and increase in cost of sale by 12%.
- Atyab Technical Services LLC (ATS) (100%):** ATS earned a net sponsorship fee (before tax) of RO 80k as compared to RO 60k in the previous year's same period.
- Sohar Flour Mills LLC (SFM) (60%):** The Company has reported a net loss of RO 463k as compared to loss of RO 185k for the same period last year. While sales improved (7%) as compared with Q1 2021, the increase in loss for the period is mainly due to increase in the cost of goods sold (16%) which is linked to the increase in the raw materials.

- Oman Fisheries Company SAOG (OFC):** The share of OFM amounted to 25.1% of the Company's capital as of 31 March 2022. OFC reported a net profit of RO 500k in 2022.
- Food Techno Park LLC (FTP) (50%):** AIS holds 50% stake in FTP. The company has not yet commenced its commercial operations.
- Bio Product Oman LLC (BPO) (33.33%):** Atyab Investment LLC holds 33.33% share of BPO and Nakheel Development Oman holds 66.67% shares. BPO has not yet commenced its commercial operations.
- Atyab IFFCO Poultry (50%):**
 - a. Sohar Poultry Co SAOC (SPC):** SPC has reported a profit after tax of RO 46k as compared to a profit of RO 77k for the last year. The main reason for the decrease in profitability is due to increase in the cost of sale by 51% due to increase in the cost of the raw materials.
 - b. Osool Poultry Co. SAOC:** The share of Atyab IFFCO amounted to 9.93% of the Company's capital as of 31 March 2022. The project commenced commercial activities in the second quarter of 2021. The company has reported a net loss of RO 89k for as at 31 March 2022.
- Arabian Food Production Company SAOC (AFPC) (33.33%):**
 - a. Modern Poultry Farms SAOC (MPF):** MPF has reported a net profit (before tax) of RO 3.6k as compared to a profit of RO 12.3k in the year 2021. The decline in profits is primarily due to increase in the cost of goods sold by RO 18k and administration overheads by 13k as compared to last year This was offset by increase in other income by RO 12k.
 - b. Emirates Poultry Farms (EPF):** The Company reported a net loss of RO 68.6k during the year compared to RO 9.5k in the year 2021. The increase in loss is due to increase in the cost of raw materials.
 - c. Gulf International Poultry Farms LLC (GIPF):** The project is progressing as per schedule. GIF has incurred pre-operating loss of RO 128k in the current period which was offset by other income of RO 64k. The pre-operating loss in the year 2021 was RO 30k.

AWARDS AND ACHIEVEMENTS:

To support local growers in Oman, the company has signed an agreement to continue to procure wheat from growers at harvest. The company add value to this wheat and offer 100% Omani wheat bur flour, to customers. Omani bur flour sale was started in last quarter 2021.

CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY (CSR): In the last AGM held on 31-March-2022, the shareholders have approved a budget of RO 150,000 for CSR activities. Appropriate projects covering a wide range of activities/beneficiaries such as sponsoring schools, youth training, sporting events, SME development, Ramadan initiatives, and other humanitarian aids will be taken up to achieve the objectives of the shareholders.

FUTURE OUTLOOK: Multiple projects are being evaluated across the group. The projects focus on integration across the value chain as well diversification into new ventures.

OFM FUTURE PLANS ARE:

- OFM has opened a company in Australia under the name "OMAUS PTY". The Australian entity is currently drafting a supply agreement and will coordinate a trial shipment with growers.
- A detailed market assessment for Cornstarch, its value added derivatives and by-products was completed. In addition, location feasibility analysis was completed. Currently a go to market plan and financial model is being developed.
- Pre-Mix and New Feed mill expansion – Pre-Mix and Feed Mill expansion are in the implementation phase.
- For the Mini factory cluster, target products have been approved internally. The company is working on a high level design for the cluster. As part of the managements plan to diversify the line of businesses, the company is working of new projects for health bars, French fries and plant based meat. Currently the company is in the process of identifying the right sources and suppliers.
- The company has appointed an expert to develop an investment Manual, the investment manual will develop a gate process for investment and specify detailed investment criteria.
- The company has identified potential partners for bakery retailing, the company is conducting a due diligence on this opportunity

OTHER GROUP COMPANIES

AIS is progressing in the setting up a fully integrated laboratory in Uzbekistan. The Company is established and pre-operative activities are in progress, the construction of the new office is in the final stage for completion.

Atyab Food Industries (AFI), is developing a long term strategies to capitalize on the growth opportunities available in the market and region, a company is formed in UAE. The company will be commencing its operation from 1st May 2022.

THANKS AND APPRECIATIONS:

The Members of the Board of Directors would like to extend their most sincere appreciation and gratitude to the wise government for the continuous support under the leadership of His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik, may God protect and preserve him.

Best Regards,

Salah Hilal Al Maawali
Chairman, Board of Directors

Unaudited group statement of comprehensive income
For the three months ended 31 March 2022

	Group		Parent Company	
	2022	2021	2022	2021
	RO '000	RO '000	RO '000	RO '000
Revenue	27,878	23,681	22,458	18,831
Cost of sale	(24,807)	(17,234)	(20,915)	(14,158)
Gross profit	3,071	6,447	1,543	4,673
Selling & distribution expenses	(1,138)	(1,017)	(104)	(139)
Administration & general overheads	(1,546)	(1,673)	(1,069)	(1,233)
Profit from operations	387	3,757	370	3,301
Finance cost - net	(390)	(190)	(109)	-
Net investment income	61	119	61	55
Other income	360	126	262	76
	418	3,812	584	3,432
Share in Profit/(Loss) of subsidiary	-	-	(61)	431
Share in net Profit/(loss) of associates	97	30	126	19
Net profit before tax	515	3,842	649	3,882
Tax expense	(129)	(541)	(78)	(507)
Net profit for the year	386	3,301	571	3,375
Net profit for the period attributable to:				
Shareholders of the parent company	571	3,375	571	3,375
Non controlling interest in the subsidiary	(185)	(74)	-	-
Net profit for the period	386	3,301	571	3,375
Net profit margin	1.38%	13.94%	2.54%	17.93%

Unaudited group statement of financial position
as at 31 March 2022

	Group		Parent Company	
	2022	2021	2022	2021
	RO '000	RO '000	RO '000	RO '000
Non-current assets				
Property, plant and equipment	51,537	45,312	11,417	11,839
Investment property	37	37	37	37
Investment in Subsidiaries	-	-	19,057	18,669
Investment in associates	10,003	9,217	1,521	1,796
Intangible assets	24	8	-	-
Biological assets	-	-	-	-
Right to use asset	3,461	3,615	56	65
Investment available for sale, non-current	355	355	355	355
Total non-current assets	65,417	58,544	32,443	32,761
Current assets				
Inventories, net	23,159	18,623	20,630	16,222
Receivables and prepayments, net	27,892	21,170	20,481	14,367
Amounts due from subsidiaries-1	-	-	7,858	6,672
Amounts due from related parties	3,357	2,002	3,355	2,002
Investments available for sale	1,571	1,587	1,571	1,587
Short term deposits	5,000	-	5,000	-
Cash on hand and at bank	10,443	17,469	7,602	14,363
Total current assets	71,422	60,851	66,497	55,213
Total assets	136,839	119,395	98,940	87,974
Current liabilities				
Payables and accruals	12,463	7,174	9,565	3,750
Payable to related parties	-	132	25	8
Taxation	1,495	2,317	1,266	2,181
Dividend payable	5,198	7,875	5,198	7,875
Interest bearing loans	18,247	2,286	13,156	-
Total current liabilities	37,403	19,784	29,210	13,814
Non-current liabilities				
Interest bearing loans	24,925	20,489	-	-
Lease Liability	3,944	3,866	63	71
End of service benefits	576	571	36	34
Deferred tax	756	843	210	373
Total non-current liabilities	30,201	25,769	309	478
Minority Interest	(166)	182	-	-
Total liabilities	67,438	45,735	29,519	14,292
Net assets	69,401	73,660	69,421	73,682
Shareholders' equity				
Share capital	15,750	15,750	15,750	15,750
Legal reserve	6,626	6,540	5,250	5,250
General reserve	2,500	2,500	2,500	2,500
Fair value reserve	105	105	105	105
Retained earnings	44,420	48,765	45,816	50,077
Total shareholders' equity	69,401	73,660	69,421	73,682

NOTE: The complete accounts in either Arabic or English will be sent by mail within 7 days to any shareholder who requests for them.

P. O. Box 566, P. C. 112, Ruwi, Oman.
Tele: 24717300, Fax: 24714711, E-mail: info@omanflourmills.com



Sweden enters ‘new era’ with Nato bid

STOCKHOLM: Sweden on Monday officially announced it will apply for Nato membership as a deterrent against Russian aggression, entering a “new era” as it reverses two centuries of military non-alignment.

“The government has decided to inform Nato that Sweden wants to become a member of the alliance,” Prime Minister Magdalena Andersson told reporters a day after neighbouring Finland made a similar announcement.

“We are leaving one era and beginning another,” Andersson said of the dramatic turnaround of her country’s position less than three months after Russia’s attack of Ukraine.

Sweden’s Nato ambassador would “shortly” inform Nato, she said.

Sweden and Finland have both expressed a desire to act in lockstep on Nato membership. They are expected to submit their applications jointly this week.

Russian President Vladimir Putin on Monday warned that Nato’s expansion may trigger a



Sweden’s Prime Minister Magdalena Andersson gives a news conference in Stockholm. — AFP

response from Moscow.

The expansion poses “no direct threat for us... but the expansion of military infrastructure to these territories will certainly provoke our response,” Putin said during a televised summit meeting of the Collective Security Treaty Organisation, a Moscow-led

military alliance. Andersson acknowledged Sweden would be “vulnerable” in the interim period before its application is ratified.

“We can’t exclude that Sweden will be subjected for example to disinformation and attempts to scare and divide us”, she said.

However, Stockholm has

received security assurances from several key partners, including the United States, Britain, Germany, France and the Nordic countries, she added.

She expected “it shouldn’t take more than a year” for the alliance’s 30 members to unanimously ratify Sweden’s membership application.

Sweden’s announcement was expected after Andersson’s Social Democratic party on Sunday backed membership, in a dramatic U-turn after having opposed the idea since the birth of the Western military alliance.

The premier had earlier in the day consulted parliament on the issue by convening a debate, though lawmakers did not vote on the issue. Six of eight parties in parliament, constituting a very broad majority, are in favour of membership. Swedish public support has also risen dramatically to around 50 per cent — with about 20 per cent against.

In Helsinki, support for joining the alliance has surged even more dramatically, with more than three-quarters of Finns in favour

Prime Minister Andersson acknowledged Sweden would be ‘vulnerable’ in the interim period before its application is ratified

of joining, almost triple the level seen before the war in Ukraine began on February 24.

Finnish lawmakers on Monday launched a marathon debate on the issue with over 150 of 200 MPs asking to speak, following a Nato membership proposal presented on Sunday by President Sauli Niinisto and Prime Minister Sanna Marin.

“Our security environment has fundamentally changed,” Marin told parliament.

“The only country that threatens European security, and is now openly waging a war of aggression, is Russia”, she said.

— AFP

Putin warns Finland, Sweden

KYIV: Russian President Vladimir Putin warned Finland and Sweden on Monday to expect a “response” for applying to join Nato as Ukraine braced for a new push by Moscow’s forces in its eastern Donbas region.

Russia, whose war has sparked global outrage, killed thousands and created millions of refugees, warned that Nato’s expansion would have consequences.

The move poses “no direct threat for us...but the expansion of military infrastructure to these territories will certainly provoke our response”, Putin told a meeting of a Moscow-led security alliance.

Deputy Foreign Minister Sergei Ryabkov had earlier called it a “grave mistake with far-reaching consequences”. Russia has already suspended electricity supplies to Finland, citing payment issues.

— AFP

UK Prime Minister heads to Belfast amid deepening EU row

BELFAST: UK Prime Minister Boris Johnson steps into an increasingly bitter row on Monday when he visits Northern Ireland to urge the formation of a power-sharing executive, which is currently being blocked by a Brexit dispute.

In a historic development, the role of Northern Ireland’s first minister is set to be taken by the pro-Irish party Sinn Fein, after it triumphed in elections to the Stormont assembly earlier this month.

But the pro-UK Democratic Unionist Party (DUP), angered at the “Northern Ireland Protocol” agreed as part of Britain’s Brexit deal with the European Union, blocked the election of a speaker at Stormont.

Johnson will meet all parties involved and is expected to tell them that London will “play its part to ensure political stability”, but that Northern Ireland politicians must “get back to work” to deal with “bread-and-butter issues”, according to a statement from his office on Sunday.

The DUP is refusing to help form an executive until the protocol is changed to get rid of trade checks between Northern Ireland and mainland Great Britain, which it believes are



Northern Ireland’s Deputy First Minister and Irish republican Sinn Fein party Northern Leader Michelle O’Neill (C) and her Assembly team emerge from the chamber after the Democratic Unionist Party (DUP) failed to nominate a Speaker, on the Stormont Estate in Belfast. — AFP

threatening the province’s status within the UK.

Johnson’s government also insists the protocol is threatening the delicate balance of peace in Northern Ireland between the pro-Irish nationalist community and those in favour of continued union with the UK.

It has warned it will trigger Article 16 of the Brexit deal to suspend the agreement, or legislate to eliminate its requirements from UK law, unless the EU agrees to change it.

Writing in Monday’s Belfast Telegraph, Johnson said that

those who wanted to scrap the protocol were “focusing on the wrong thing”.

“I hope the EU’s position changes,” Johnson wrote. “If it does not, there will be a necessity to act.”

“We will set out a more detailed assessment and next steps to parliament in the coming days, once I return from discussions with the local parties.”

In London, Johnson’s spokesman told journalists that Foreign Secretary Liz Truss would speak in parliament on Tuesday “to set out the rationale for our approach”. — AFP

Lebanese opposition makes unexpected gains

PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS

BEIRUT: Lebanese opposition groups made some unexpected gains in parliamentary elections in crisis-ridden Lebanon, against major political groups they blame for plunging Lebanon into its worst-ever economic crisis, according to preliminary unofficial results on Monday.

The early results from Sunday’s elections also showed that the Hizbullah movement has lost major allies in Mount Lebanon and south and north Lebanon, to members of some opposition groups, which could lead the movement to lose its majority in the 128-member parliament.

According to the preliminary results quoted by Lebanese media, the opposition managed to snatch around 10 seats.

In the 2018 elections Hizbullah and its allies, among them the Christian Free Patriotic Movement, won a majority of 71 seats in parliament. Many of the opposition candidates emerged from mass, anti-government protests that erupted in 2019. They were directed, among other things, against widespread



Lebanese electoral staff counting votes for parliamentary elections in the presence of party delegates and EU observers in Beirut. — AFP

corruption in Lebanon. Many people blame the established parties, which have been in power for decades, for the country’s severe crisis.

Gains were also reported by Hizbullah’s staunch critics, the Christian Lebanese Forces, who said that they are now the largest Christian bloc in parliament, with more than 20 seats.

Such a gain dealt a blow to Hizbullah ally the Free Patriotic Movement, who lost their title as being the largest Christian bloc in parliament. In 2018 the group,

led by the son-in-law of President Michel Aoun, had 18 seats. Now they are at 16.

For more than two years, Lebanon has been suffering from the worst economic and financial crisis in its history. According to the UN, around three-quarters of the people in Lebanon now live below the poverty line.

Interior Minister Bassam Mawlawi said in a news conference on Sunday that voter turnout in the elections was 41 per cent, down from 49 per cent in the 2018 elections. — dpa

SHORT TAKES

RIYADH

Saudi doctors separate conjoined twins in Yemen

Doctors in Saudi Arabia have successfully separated conjoined twins from Yemen after a ‘complicated’ 15-hour operation, Saudi state media reported. The baby boys, Yussef and Yassin, were ‘conjoined in several organs’, and some 24 doctors were involved in the operation to separate them, the official Saudi Press Agency (SPA) said. The centre’s doctors carried out the ‘four-phase surgery’ separating Yussef and Yassin, describing it as ‘among the most complicated’ they had



performed, the SPA said. Last July Saudi doctors separated a Yemeni baby from her parasitic twin, saying at the time it was their 50th successful operation on conjoined twins. —AFP

COLOMBO

Cash-strapped Sri Lanka out of petrol: PM

Crisis-hit Sri Lanka has run out of petrol and is unable to find dollars to finance essential imports, the new prime minister said in an address to the nation. “We have run out of petrol... At the moment, we only have petrol stocks for a single day,” Ranil Wickremesinghe said, warning his bankrupt country could face more hardships in the coming months. He said the government was also unable to raise dollars to pay for three shipments of oil, with the ships awaiting outside



the Colombo harbour for payments before discharging their cargoes. Sri Lanka is in the throes of its worst-ever economic crisis.

— AFP

BAGHDAD

Seven dead after dust storms hit Iraq, Syria

Heavy sandstorms have once again blanketed the Iraqi capital Baghdad in an orange haze and have claimed several lives in neighbouring Syria, activists said. Seven people were killed in eastern Syria, including two children, the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights said. The strong winds uprooted trees and caused power outages in the province of Deir al Zour. In Iraq, renewed sandstorms caused breathing difficulties for hundreds of people. The



Iraqi Health Ministry said that 2,000 patients had been treated in hospitals. Ambulances were deployed to help people at risk of suffocation, the state agency INA reported. — dpa



TAKAFUL OMAN INSURANCE SAOG

P.O. Box 207, P.C 134, Bareeq Al Shatti, Muscat, Sultanate of Oman, Tel: +968 22303000, Fax: 968 24699511, www.takafuloman.om

RIGHTS ISSUE

Rights Issue of 150,000,000 shares at a price of Baiza 41 per share (with a share price of Baiza 40 per share plus issue expenses of Baiza 1 per share)

RIGHTS TRADING PERIOD	RIGHTS SUBSCRIPTION PERIOD
Opening Date: 29 May 2022	Opening Date: 1 June 2022
Closing Date: 5 June 2022	Closing Date: 8 June 2022

The contents of this advertisement are extracted from the unofficial translation of the Arabic Prospectus approved by the Capital Market Authority through Administrative Decision No. KH/86/2022 Dated: 15 May 2022. Investors are advised to carefully review the Prospectus before deciding to subscribe to the shares offered.

Issuer	Takaful Oman Insurance SAOG
Commercial Registration No.	1190750 established on 3 February 2014
Principal place of business	PO Box 207, PC 134, Bareeq Al Shatti, Muscat, Oman
Company's duration	Unlimited
Authorised Share Capital	OMR 20,000,000 (Twenty Million Omani Riyals)
Issued Capital (pre-issue)	OMR 10,000,000 (Ten Million Omani Riyals) divided into 100,000,000 (One Hundred Million) shares
Issued Capital (post-issue)	OMR 16,000,000 (Sixteen Million Omani Riyals) divided into 250,000,000 (Two Hundred and Fifty Million) shares after issuance of the Offer Shares, assuming full subscription
Issue size	150,000,000 (One Hundred and Fifty Million) shares offered at Baizas 41 per Offer Share aggregating to OMR 6,150,000 (Six Million One Hundred and Fifty Thousand Omani Riyals)
Issue Price	Baizas 41 per Offer Share, consisting of issue price of Baizas 40 and Baiza 1 towards issue expenses, payable in full on submission of the Application Form.
Purpose of the issue	The purpose of the Rights Issue is to increase the capital of the Company by increasing its paid-up capital, so as to enable its business growth and compliance with the solvency margin requirement of the CMA.
Rights Entitlement	Each Eligible Shareholder is entitled to participate in the Rights Issue pro rata based on their percentage shareholding in the Company as on the Record Date, rounded down in the case of fractional entitlements (the "Rights Entitlement"). Accordingly, each Eligible Shareholder is entitled to 150 Offer Shares for every 100 Shares held by them on the Record Date or to 1 Offer Share for approximately every 0.67 Shares held by them on the Record Date, duly rounded down.
Eligibility for Subscription	Subscription for the Rights Issue is open to Shareholders whose names appear in the Company's shareholder register with the Muscat Clearing and Depository Company SAOC ("MCDC") as on the Record Date. Persons who purchase the rights on the Muscat Stock Exchange ("MSX") within the Rights Trading Period are also eligible to subscribe for the Offer Shares before the Subscription Closing Date. The 'rights' representing ownership rights of Shareholders to subscribe to the Rights Issue shall be traded on the MSX during the Rights Trading Period. A Shareholder has the option to either subscribe to the Rights Issue or sell its Rights Entitlement on the MSX. The eligibility to subscribe for Offer Shares shall lapse in case the Shareholder neither subscribes to the Rights Issue nor sells their 'rights' on the MSX during the Rights Trading Period. An Eligible Shareholder wishing to apply for Additional Shares shall complete the required details in the Application Form and submit it during the Subscription Period to the Collecting Bank together with the requisite subscription amount. A Shareholder who does not subscribe for its full Rights Entitlement during the Subscription Period or who sells their Rights Entitlement (either in part or in full) is not eligible to apply for Additional Shares. An Applicant who is not a Shareholder on the Record Date but who has acquired a Rights Entitlement is not eligible to apply for Additional Shares. The application and allotment of Additional Shares shall be subject to the terms and conditions stipulated in Chapter 14 of the Prospectus.
Record Date	22 May 2022
Start of Trading of Rights Entitlement	29 May 2022
End of Trading of Rights Entitlement	5 June 2022
Subscription Opening Date	1 June 2022
Subscription Closing Date	8 June 2022
Allotment	The Offer Shares shall be allotted against valid Application Forms, subject to the provisions of Chapter 14. The Offer Shares shall be allotted and refunds will be made (if required) within 3 days after the allotment, which is subject to CMA approval. The Applicant, after the announcement of the allotment, shall ensure that the allotted shares are appearing in its account with MCDC.
Refund of Application Money	Refund of application money, if any, shall be made to the Applicants within 3 days after the allotment.
Listing	As the shares of the Company are already listed on the MSX, the Offer Shares shall also be listed on the MSX.
Approvals for the Issue	Board approval vide its resolution at its meeting on 31 March 2022 ; and CMA approval vide its Administrative Decision KH/86/2022 dated 15 May 2022
Issue Manager	Alizz Islamic Bank SAOC Alizz Tower, CBD area, P.O. Box 753, PC 112, Ruwi, Sultanate of Oman, Tel: +968 2477 5413 Email: tariq.khan@alizzislamic.com
Legal Advisor to the Issue	Al Maamary, Al Abri & Co. (MAQ Legal) The Office Building, Suite No. 704, PO Box 1963, Al Khuwair South, PC 130, Sultanate of Oman, Tel: +968 2411 2474, Email: asad.qayyum@maqlegal.com
Statutory Auditor	KPMG LLC Shatti Al Qurum, Children's Public Library Building P.O. Box 641, P.C. 112, Sultanate Of Oman Tel: +968 7939 1797, Email: makram@KPMG.com
Collecting Bank	Alizz Islamic Bank SAOC Alizz Tower, CBD area, P.O. Box 753, PC 112, Ruwi, Sultanate of Oman, Tel: +968 2477 5560, Email: wail.alshaibani@alizzislamic.com

Use of Proceeds

The purpose of the Rights Issue is to increase the capital of the Company by increasing its paid-up capital, so as to enable its business growth and compliance with the solvency margin requirement of the CMA.

Overview

Takaful Oman Insurance S.A.O.G ("Takaful Oman", the "Issuer" or the "Company") was established as a public joint stock company in Oman and registered with the Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Investment Promotion (the "MOCIIP") on 3 February 2014 under the commercial registration number 1190750 and was registered and licensed on 5 April 2014 by the Capital Market Authority (the "CMA") to write general and family takaful in Oman. Takaful Oman operates in accordance with the Islamic Shari'a principles and it has a Shari'a Supervisory Committee to ensure Takaful Oman's adherence to Shari'a rules and principles.

The principal legislation under which the Company operates is the Oman Takaful insurance Law, (promulgated by Royal Decree no. 11/2016 as amended) (the "Takaful Law") and its executive regulations issued pursuant to CMA decision no. 103/2019 (the "Takaful Regulations").

The registered office of the Company is at P.O Box 207, P.C 134, Bareeq Al Shatti, Muscat, Oman. The Company is one of two takaful companies operating in Oman and has its head office in Muscat and operates through a network of 9 branch offices, strategically located throughout Oman.

The Company is listed on the Muscat Stock Exchange and has an authorized share capital of OMR 20 million and, as at 31 March 2022, the issued and fully paid up share capital of the Company was OMR 10 million divided into 100 million shares. As at close of trading on 31 March 2022, the Company's market capitalization was OMR 6.6 million. For the year ended 31 December 2021, the Company generated a net profit of OMR 761,043. As at 31 December 2021 Takaful Oman had total assets of OMR 34,598,428 and total shareholders' equity of OMR 23,295,865.

Approvals

The Rights Issue has been approved by:
• Takaful Oman's Board of Directors via its resolution dated 31 March 2022.
• CMA approval via its Administrative Decision no. KH/86/2022 dated 15 May 2022.

Takaful Oman's Major Shareholders as of 31 March 2022

Name	Country of incorporation	Number of shares	%
Oman International Development and Investment Company S.A.O.G	Oman	17,347,934	17.35%
Al Khonji Invest LLC	Oman	15,008,164	15.01%
T'azur Takaful Insurance Company	Kuwait	15,000,000	15.00%
Oman National Investments Development Company SAOC	Oman	10,000,000	10.00%
Oman Investment Authority / 1, 2 & 3	Oman	9,349,200	9.35%
Blue Door Investment Services LLC	Oman	7,500,000	7.50%
Jabreen International Development Company S.A.O.C	Oman	7,174,570	7.17%
Others		18,620,132	18.62%
Total		100,000,000	100.00%

Historical Financial Statements

The following information has been extracted from the audited financial statements of 2020 and 2021. For full financial statements, please visit MSX website at www.msx.om or Company's website at www.takafuloman.om.

Participants' Fund

OMR 000	FY 2019	FY 2020	FY 2021
Gross Written Contribution	25,255	25,249	26,655
Net Retained Contribution	12,168	11,627	11,107
Net Earned Contribution	14,063	12,109	10,812
Net Loss Incurred	(10,661)	(9,490)	(10,419)
Net Underwriting Result	2,185	1,496	(2,450)
Wakala fee	(5,051)	(4,545)	(4,798)
Deficit in Participants' Fund	(2,866)	(3,048)	(6,073)
Retention Ratio	48%	46%	42%
Net Loss Ratio	76%	78%	96%
Net Expense Ratio	32%	36%	34%

Shareholders' Fund

OMR 000	FY 2019	FY 2020	FY 2021
Wakala fee	5,051	4,545	4,798
Investment Income	587	557	886
General and Admin Expenses	(2,759)	(3,063)	(3,698)
Rental Cost	(75)	(69)	(64)
Wakala Financing Cost	-	(61)	(181)
Acquisition Cost	-	-	(1,174)
Profit before taxes	2,803	1,909	566
Taxation	(13)	(183)	(195)
Profit After Tax	2,791	2,092	761

Dividend Policy

The Company's dividend policy complies with CMA guidelines. The Board shall recommend the distribution of the dividends to the shareholders after due consideration of the regulatory guidelines, the future growth expectations, AGM approval and other factors. Since inception, the Company has not paid any dividend due to deficit in the Participants' Fund despite profit in the shareholders' account.

Price Justification

Company's Business Plan and outlook

Takaful Oman is one of the only two takaful companies in Oman and has created a strong market presence. It is also one of the fastest growing companies in the insurance sector with CAGR of 23% during the last six years. The new management team is focused to convert the impressive growth in top line and market share into overall profitability both for the participants (policyholders) as well as the shareholders. This involves revamping of entire portfolio with "profitability" as the key driver, realignment of processes and building partnerships to expand in the market.

The Company has taken into consideration various quantitative and qualitative factors in deciding a fair issue price of shares under this rights issue. The key factors include the Company's strategy, brand value, financial forecasts, future outlook, key risks and challenges faced by the Company and the shareholders' return consideration. (Please refer to the Summary Financials and Business Plan in the Prospectus for further details on financial forecasts).

Average Share Price

Period ending 31 March 2022	Average closing price (Bz/share)	Discount of Issue Price to Average Closing Price
1 month	67	4.0%
3 month	69	4.2%
6 month	75	4.7%
1 year	90	55%

Peer Comparison

Insurance / Takaful Companies	Market Price (OMR/share)	Market Cap (OMR mn)	P/E	P/BV	ROA FY2021	ROE FY2021	Dividend Yield FY2021
Al Ahlia Insurance	0.302	30.2	7.9	0.7	4.9%	9.6%	8.3%
Al Medina Takaful	0.093	16.3	17.0	0.7	3.8%	4.1%	8.1%
Arabia Falcon Insurance	0.115	11.9	7.1	0.6	2.3%	8.4%	10.4%
Dhofar Insurance	0.194	19.4	7.6	0.7	1.9%	9.7%	7.7%
Muscat Insurance	0.470	5.2	6.7	0.3	1.7%	4.5%	0.0%
National Life & General Ins.	0.338	89.6	12.0	1.3	4.0%	11.2%	0.0%
Oman Qatar Insurance	0.213	21.3	6.8	1.0	3.8%	16.1%	3.3%
Oman United Insurance	0.388	38.8	9.8	1.3	3.7%	12.9%	9.0%
Takaful Oman	0.066	6.6	8.7	0.3	2.5%	3.3%	0.0%
Vision Insurance	0.105	10.5	NA	0.8	-3.2%	-12.7%	0.0%

Market price is as of 31 March 2022. ROE and ROA are based on FY2021 numbers and calculated on average assets and average equity.

Based on the aforesaid factors, the Company believes that the Issue Price compares favorably with the peer average, and is expected to offer good return to the shareholders. It is also at a discount to prevailing price of Bz 66 per share as at 31 March 2022 and at a discount to the pre-issue one, three, six months and one-year average closing prices.

As of 31 March 2022, the market capitalization of the Company was OMR 6.6 million, and subject to full subscription of OMR 6 million, the post-issue weighted average price is expected to be approximately Bz 50 per share.

Board of Directors

Takaful Oman has a Board consisting of seven (7) Directors. The current Board was elected at an annual general meeting held on 11 May 2020 for a term of three (3) years, except two (2) Directors who were elected at an annual general meeting held on 27 March 2022 to fill the vacancy of two resigning Directors. Details of the current Board members are as follows:

Name	Date of Election	Position	Capacity	Nomination
Mr. Mohammed Abdullah Al Khonji	11-May-20	Chairman	Non-Independent	Representative of Al Khonji Invest LLC
Mr. Sulaiman Hamed Al Harthi	23-March-21*	Deputy Chairman	Non-independent	Representative of Oman International Development and Investment Company SAOG (OMINVEST)
Mr. Badar Awadh Al Shanfari	27-March-22**	Director	Independent	Personal
Mr. Khalil Ahmed Al Harthy	27-March-22**	Director	Independent	Personal
Mr. Mosobah Saif Al Mutairi	11-May-20	Director	Independent	Personal
Sheikh Abdulaziz Khalifa Al Saadi	31-March-22***	Director	Independent	Personal
Mr. Tareq Mohammed Al Mughairi	11-May-20	Director	Independent	Representative of Oman Investment Corporation SAOC

* Shareholder requested to replace its elected representative Director with Mr. Sulaiman Al Harthi on 23 March 2021.

**Elected on 27 March 2022 to fill the vacancy of the resigning Directors.

***Shareholder requested to replace its elected representative Director with Sheikh Abdulaziz Al Saadi on 31 March 2022.

Subscription Conditions & Procedures

Eligibility for Subscription

The Rights Issue is open to all Eligible Shareholders and to each person who purchases all or part of the Rights Entitlement of an Eligible Shareholder. Each Eligible Shareholder is entitled to approximately 150 Offer Shares for every 100 Shares held by them on the Record Date, duly rounded down, or to 1 Offer Share for approximately every 0.67 Shares held by them on the Record Date, duly rounded down. The Rights Entitlement will be listed on the MSX and can be sold or purchased during the Rights Trading Period through the MSX.

Rights Subscription Period and Issue Price

Issue opens on – 1 June 2022

Issue closes on – 8 June 2022

The Collecting Bank will reject any Application Form that reaches it after its official working hours on the Subscription Closing Date.

The Rights Entitlement and any right to participate in the Rights Issue, will lapse if a valid application is not made during the Subscription Period. A failure to validly apply for Offer Shares during the Subscription Period will constitute a waiver of rights of participation in the Rights Issue.

Issue Price – Baizas 41 per Offer Share (with an Issue Price of Baizas 40 per share plus issue expenses of Baiza 1 per share).

Trading of Rights

The Rights Entitlement is tradable on the MSX in accordance with applicable laws/regulations of the CMA and the MSX. Such rights can be traded i.e., bought and sold during the Rights Trading Period. The purchaser of a Rights Entitlement shall contact and coordinate with the Issue Manager to collect the requisite Application Form, complete and submit the Application Form to the Collecting Bank, together with application money and required documents, in each case on or before the Subscription Closing Date in accordance with the terms contained in the Prospectus. An unexercised Rights Entitlement shall lapse at the end of the Subscription Period.

Subscription for Additional Shares

- Only Eligible Shareholders are eligible to apply for Additional Shares.
- An Eligible Shareholder who does not subscribe to their full Rights Entitlement or sells their Rights Entitlement (either partially or in full) is not eligible to apply for Additional Shares.
- A non-Shareholder as on the Record Date who purchases a Rights Entitlement, is not eligible to apply for Additional Shares.

- Eligible Shareholders validly subscribing for their full entitlement of Offer Shares may apply for Additional Shares.
- Eligible Shareholders who wish to apply for Additional Shares should indicate this by writing the desired number of Additional Shares in their Application Form and making the required payment with submission of the Application Form to the Collecting Bank.
- The minimum Additional Shares that can be applied for is one Offer Share with the maximum up to a number such that the total application (including such Eligible Shareholder's Rights Entitlement, any Rights Entitlement purchased from another Eligible Shareholder and Additional Shares) does not exceed the entire Rights Issue size.
- Additional Shares will be allotted simultaneously with the Offer Shares, subject to CMA's approval.
- If the total Additional Shares applied for exceeds the under-subscription (before considering Additional Shares) in the Rights Issue, all eligible Applicants will be allotted Additional Shares on a pro-rata basis proportionate to the number of Additional Shares applied for, and the balance will be refunded.
- If the total Additional Shares applied by Applicants is less than the under-subscription in the Rights Issue, all eligible Applicants will be allotted all of the Additional Shares applied for by them.
- If the Applicants do not subscribe for all of the Additional Shares within the specified period, then the Board of Directors shall offer such shares in public or private offering pursuant to the provisions of the Capital Market Law, or reduce the amount of the increase of the share capital to the level of the total received subscription amount, i.e., reduced by an amount equal to the value of the shares that have not been subscribed for, as per Article 140 of the CCL.

The decision of the Issue Manager, in consultation with the CMA, shall be final and binding in respect of the allotment of the Offer Shares, including Additional Shares.

Note: Applicants should ensure that their post-rights issue shareholding is within the shareholding limits prescribed in the Company's Articles of Association, Laws of Oman and applicable regulatory requirements.

The following is a worked example using illustrative numbers to show the methodology for allotting Additional Shares:

Particulars	Shares
Rights Issue Offer	100,000,000
Subscription	90,000,000
Unsubscribed	10,000,000
Additional Shares applications received from Eligible Shareholders	15,000,000
Allotment of unsubscribed shares on pro-rata basis based on applications received for Additional Shares Percentage allotment of Additional Shares (10,000,000/15,000,000=66.67%)	10,000,000
Refund of amount to Shareholders applying for Additional Shares equivalent to	5,000,000

Based on this example, a person applying for 3,000 Additional Shares will be allotted 2,000 Shares.

Subscription on Behalf of Minor Children

- An individual of age less than 18 years as on the Record Date will be considered a minor.
- Only a father may subscribe on behalf of his minor children.
- If a subscription is made on behalf of a minor by any person other than the minor's father, the person submitting the subscription shall be required to attach a valid Shari'a (Legal) Power of Attorney issued by the competent authorities authorizing him to deal in the funds of the minor through sale, purchase and investment.

Minimum and Maximum Application

The minimum application can be for one Share and the maximum application cannot exceed the Rights Issue size (including original Rights Entitlement, any Rights Entitlement purchased from another Eligible Shareholder and Additional Shares).

Particulars of the Bank Account

- Each Applicant shall be required to furnish the particulars of their bank account (registered in the name of the Applicant). The Applicant shall not use the bank account number of any other person except in case of minor children only.
- If the bank account of the Applicant is registered with a bank other than the one receiving the Application Form, they shall be required to submit a document in evidence of correctness of the bank account particulars as provided for in the Application Form. This can be done by submitting any document from the Applicant's bank, which clearly shows the account number and name of the account holder (Applicant), such as an account statement issued by the bank or a letter / document issued by the Applicant's bank, containing the aforesaid information. The Applicant shall ensure that such evidence submitted is readable in a clear manner. The Applicant is not obliged to submit evidence of their bank account if they are subscribing through the bank wherein they maintain their account. In this case, the bank receiving the subscription shall verify and confirm the Applicant's account details in its specific system and procedure.
- The bank account provided in the Application Form would be used only for refunds.
- The Application Form containing the bank account number of a person other than the Applicant shall be rejected except with respect to applications made on behalf of minor children that contain the bank account particulars of their father.

Documentation Required

- A copy of Applicant's Civil ID / Passport / Commercial Registration certificate, as applicable.
- Submission of a document confirming correctness of the bank account details written in the Application Form, only if the application is made through a bank other than the one with whom the Applicant has their bank account.
- A copy of a valid Power of Attorney duly endorsed by the competent legal authorities in the event the subscription is on behalf of another person.
- In case of applications made by juristic persons (non-individuals), which are signed by a person in their capacity as an authorized signatory, a copy of adequate and valid documentation should be attached.

Mode of Subscription

- The Collecting Bank has been instructed to only accept applications for subscriptions that comply with all the requirements as provided for in the Application Form and the Prospectus. It is the responsibility of the Applicant however, to ensure that the particulars and information contained in the Application Form are true, accurate and complete.
- The Applicant shall be required, before submitting the Application Form, to peruse the Prospectus and read the conditions and procedures governing the subscription with care and importance.
- Only the original Application Form (with preprinted details) sent to Eligible Shareholders should be used. Photocopies of Application Forms will not be accepted. If any Eligible Shareholder does not receive the Application Form, such person must contact the Issue Manager sufficiently in advance of the Subscription Closing Date to obtain a duplicate Application Form duly stamped by the Issue Manager.
- Those who validly purchase a Rights Entitlement in the MSX during the Rights Trading Period should contact the Issue Manager and submit a copy of their purchase invoice issued by their broker or statement of account issued by MCDC showing their holding of the Rights Entitlement. The Issue Manager will issue the Application Form to such Applicants. Only the Application Form issued by the Issue Manager should be used by such Applicants.
- The Applicants are required to complete the Application Form for the subscription and furnish all their particulars including the shareholder number available with MCDC, civil number/passport number and date of birth in case of minor children.
- Applicants are required to sign the Application Form to confirm that the particulars and information contained therein are true, accurate and complete. In case of minor children, only the father or legal guardian may sign the Application Form, on behalf of his minor children.
- The Applicant shall submit the Application Form to the Collecting Bank and make payment at the Issue Price for all Offer Shares (including any Additional Shares) that are the subject of such application. The Applicant shall make such application in accordance with the Prospectus and shall ensure that all documents in support of the information furnished (referred to above) are enclosed.

ix. If any overseas investor or Shareholder wishes to subscribe to the Rights Issue, they must pay in the currency of the Sultanate of Oman, i.e., Omani Rial. Payment shall be made by cheque or bank transfer.

ix. In case of payment of the value of the subscription by cheque, it shall be in favor of "Takaful Oman Rights Issue".

x. In case of payment through bank transfer, the Applicant is responsible for ensuring the successful transfer of the subscription amount to the Collecting Bank within the Subscription Period and must attach a copy of the transfer acknowledgement to the Application Form. The transfers should be made to:

Takaful Oman Rights Issue a/c

A/c no.: 208032800

Bank: Alizz Islamic Bank

Swift Code: IZZBOMRUXXX

Availability of Duplicate Application Forms

Only the original Application Form (with pre-printed details) sent to Eligible Shareholders should be used. A photocopy of Application Forms will not be accepted. If any Eligible Shareholder does not receive the original Application Form, such person must contact the Issue Manager or the Collecting Bank sufficiently in advance of the Subscription Closing Date to obtain a duplicate Application Form. Applicants submitting a duplicate Application Form should not use the original Application Form, even if it is received / found subsequently. In case of violation of this requirement, both the Application Forms may be rejected.

Collecting Bank

Application Forms may only be submitted to the Collecting Bank during its official working hours. The Collecting Bank will only accept receipt of an Application Form if the Applicant has complied with the procedure and subject matter in line with the requirements as provided for in the Prospectus; hence, the Collecting Bank must instruct the Applicants to comply and fulfill all requirements stated in the Application Form and the Prospectus. An Applicant shall be responsible for the submission of their Application Form, together with full payment, to the Collecting Bank before closing of the Subscription Period. In this regard, the Collecting Bank has the right not to accept any Application Form that reaches it after its official working hours on the Subscription Closing Date.

Acceptance Of The Application

Application will be invalid in the following circumstances:

- If the Application Form does not bear the signature and stamp (if applicable) of the Applicant with the exception of fathers who subscribe and sign on behalf of their minor children.

- Failure to pay the full subscription amount (including, for the avoidance of doubt, related issue expenses) in accordance with the conditions provided for in the Prospectus.
- If the value of the Offer Shares subscribed is paid through cheque and it is dishonored for whatever reason.
- If the Application Form does not bear the Applicant's investor number available with MCDC.
- If the Applicant's account number stated in the Application Form is incorrect.
- If there is more than one Application Form with same Applicant name (in which case, all of them shall be rejected).
- If the supporting documents referred to in the Prospectuses are not enclosed along with the Application Form.
- If the Application Form does not contain all particulars of the bank account of the Applicant.
- If the bank account details of the Applicant in the Application Form are found to be incorrect.
- If the bank account details provided in the Application Form are found to not be those of the Applicant with the exception of applications submitted in the name of minor children, which may include the particulars of bank accounts held by their father.
- In the case of a failure to attach the Power of Attorney with the Application Form as provided for in the Prospectus in respect of a person who subscribes and signs on behalf of another person (with the exception of a father who subscribes on behalf of his minor children).
- If the application is incomplete and/or has not complied with the legal and other requirements as provided for in the Prospectus.
- If the Application Form is not the original form sent by Takaful Oman or a form which is not duly issued by the Issue Manager or the Collecting Bank.
- If the Application Form is not complete or any information provided in it is found to be incorrect.

If the Collecting Bank observes, after receipt of the Application Form and before expiry of the time schedule prescribed for handing over the Application Forms in final form to the Issue Manager, that the application has not complied with the legal or other requirements as provided in the Prospectus, then the Collecting Bank shall make due efforts to contact the Applicant so as to correct the detected mistake. In case of failure to have the mistake corrected within the period referred to, the Collecting Bank shall return the Application Form to such Applicant together with the subscription amount before the expiry of the period specified for submitting the Application Form to the Issue Manager.

Refusal / Rejection of Application

The Issue Manager may reject a subscription application under any of the conditions referred to above, after securing the approval of the CMA and the submission of a report furnishing the details of the applications

Let us shuffle our salt habit



Dr Nisma Haris

The writer is a content creator and wellness advisor

How many times it has happened that you find yourself standing in a grocery store’s aisle trying to pick a healthier salt but confused about which one to pick out of so many available options?

Without further ado, let’s jump straight into the most frequently asked questions when it comes to choosing and consuming salt.

What is salt, and does it differ from sodium?

Salt is a mineral compound chiefly composed of sodium and chloride. Although sodium is an element needed for carrying out various bodily functions because of such a high percentage of sodium chloride in salt, they are used interchangeably. But how much

sodium gets hidden entry into your body from other foodstuffs (specifically packaged ones) along with bottled drinking water does need a watchful eye.

What are the most common types of salt and their benefits?

Sea salt is prepared by evaporating seawater, is rich in minerals with sodium content similar to other salt types. As it is unrefined, it makes a great choice for consumption.

Table salt is prepared by refining natural salt from impurities. Further, it is bleached, added with anti-caking additives, and fortified with iodine which also removes the beneficial trace minerals.

Hence you get that smooth fine

ALL SALTS HAVE THEIR BENEFITS AND CAN BE USED IN ROTATION WHILE PREPARING DISHES. NOT ANY PARTICULAR TYPE CAN BE LABELLED AS THE BEST AND HEALTHIEST SALT

grains-like texture which makes it easier to sprinkle.

Rock salt or black salt is extracted from the salt mines located in the Himalayas which were believed to be formed from ancient water

bodies. It has been well known for its digestive and laxative properties.

Himalayan salt or pink salt is one of the types of rock salt. The natural harvesting process retains nearly all trace elements that help in improving circulation, reducing muscle cramps, and stabilising cellular pH.

Because of these numerous health benefits, pink salt is gaining popularity and weightage over other salts. However, the sodium chloride content of Himalayan salt is the same as table salt, and lacks iodine. Moreover, there is no scientific evidence to support that it is the healthiest salt.Kosher salt has a large, flaky texture and is used in professional cooking to

season various varieties of meat. It is devoid of any additives along with iodine.

Which salt is the healthiest? All salts have their benefits and can be used in rotation while preparing dishes. Not any particular type can be labelled as the best and healthiest salt. What is predominantly concerning is the quantity to be consumed. As per World Health Organization (WHO), “Salt intake of less than 5 grams per day for adults helps to reduce blood pressure and risk of cardiovascular disease, stroke and coronary heart attack.”

Henceforth, reshuffling and limiting your salt is the major takeaway.

Extreme temperatures compound illness in hottest city

EMMA CLARK & ASHRAF KHAN

By the time Pakistani schoolboy Saeed Ali arrived at hospital in one of the world’s hottest cities, his body was shutting down from heatstroke. The 12-year-old collapsed after walking home from school under the burning sun, his day spent sweltering in a classroom with no fans.

“A rickshaw driver had to carry my son here. He couldn’t even walk,” the boy’s mother Shaheela Jamali said from his bedside.

Jacobabad in Pakistan’s arid Sindh province is in the grip of the latest heatwave to hit South Asia -- peaking at 51 degrees Celsius at the weekend.

Canals in the city — a vital source of irrigation for nearby farms — have run dry, with a smattering of stagnant water barely visible around strewn rubbish. Experts say the searing weather is in line with projections for global warming. The city is on the “front line of climate change”, said its deputy commissioner Abdul Hafeez Siyal. “The overall quality of life here is suffering.”

Most of the one million people in Jacobabad and surrounding villages live in acute poverty, with water shortages and power cuts compromising their ability to beat the heat.

It leaves residents facing desperate dilemmas. Doctors said Saeed was in a critical condition, but his mother — driven by a desire to escape poverty — said he would return to school next week. “We don’t want them to grow up to be labourers,” Jamali said, her son listless and tearful at her side.

Heatstroke — when the body becomes so overheated it can no longer cool itself — can cause symptoms from lightheadedness and nausea to organ swelling, unconsciousness, and even death.

Nurse Bashir Ahmed, who treated Saeed at a new heatstroke clinic run by local NGO Community Development Foundation, said the number of patients arriving in a serious condition was rising.

“Previously, the heat would be at its peak in June and July, but now it’s arriving in May,” Ahmed said.

Labourers forced to toil in the sun are among the most vulnerable. Brick kiln workers ply their trade alongside furnaces that can reach up to 1,000 degrees Celsius.

“The severe heat makes us feel like throwing up sometimes, but if I can’t work, I can’t earn,” said Rasheed Rind, who started on the site as a child. Life in Jacobabad is dominated by attempts to cope with the heat. “It’s like fire burning all around.

What we need the most is electricity and water,” said blacksmith Shafi Mohammad. Power shortages mean only six hours of electricity a day in rural areas and 12 in the city.

Access to drinking water is unreliable and unaffordable due to scarcity across Pakistan and major infrastructure problems. — AFP



Erika Solomon

The writer is a Berlin correspondent with NYT

At a German hideaway, oligarch villas challenge a ‘silent contract’

Nestled among snow-capped mountains an hour’s drive south of Munich, the villages around the Alpine lake of Tegernsee have been a playground of the superrich for centuries — whether Bavarian kings, Russian czars, Nazi elites or pop stars.

They have been drawn not just by the pristine views, but also by the cozy air of discretion that in more recent years has made the area a favourite destination for Russian oligarchs, too.

“This valley has been a hideaway not only for the rich, but for the very opaque. It is a long tradition,” said Martin Calsow, an author of German crime novels, who lives in Tegernsee and sets many of his stories there. “We live off them, they are the source of our wealth, and as long as we don’t mention it, everybody can prosper. It’s like a silent contract.”

But Russia’s war in Ukraine — and the sanctions targeting Russian elites in response — have roiled the placid waters of Tegernsee, upsetting the calm veneer with nagging questions about whether it is right anymore to look the other way from the sources of wealth of those the area has hosted.

At least, that is the intention of Thomas Tomaschek, a Green politician who sits on the council for Rottach-Egern, a village on the Tegernsee where some prominent Russian oligarchs maintain their lakeside hideaways.

Tomaschek has done an unusual thing in these parts: challenging

RUSSIA'S WAR IN UKRAINE HAVE ROILED THE PLACID WATERS OF TEGERNSEE, UPSETTING THE CALM VENEER WITH NAGGING QUESTIONS

the local complacency by pushing the federal government to seize or freeze assets — no easy task given the financial shields that are as much a part of the superrich lifestyle as the neon-coloured Lamborghinis that speed along the mountain roads.

“We have a moral problem here with these oligarchs,” Tomaschek said. “Many tell me, ‘Don’t make noise, it’s not our business.’ Well, I think it is our business.”

He has taken aim, in particular, at Alisher Usmanov, an Uzbek-born tycoon and ally of President Vladimir Putin of Russia. Usmanov made his fortune through metal and mining operations and owns three villas on the lake. Nearby is a sprawling hillside estate tied to Ivan Shabalov, a Russian pipeline magnate. He has not had sanctions imposed against him, but some question how he made his



Diners at a luxury hotel next to Tegernsee Lake, in Rottach-egern, Germany.

billions because his company works with the Kremlin-controlled energy giant Gazprom.

The doubts in Tegernsee reflect a similar soul searching at a national level. The decision to freeze the Nord Stream 2 pipeline between Germany and Russia symbolised how politicians and business people have been forced to acknowledge that their motto of “change through trade” has not moderated Moscow’s approach but rather compromised their own reputations. But the arguments in Tegernsee show that despite the government’s change in stance, some who profited from ties to Moscow’s elite still seem intent to wait out the current furor and quietly return to business as usual.

Usmanov, who locals say visited at least three times a year, was staying at Tegernsee when he was added to the European Union’s sanctions list in February.

Nonetheless, his private jet was able to depart from Munich several hours later. Airport officials told local news media that the plane was registered to a company in the Isle of Man, not to Usmanov himself, and that none of the passengers had used Russian passports.

“That shows that the authorities were asleep,” Tomaschek said. Usmanov’s press team, in response to queries from The New York Times, said the properties in question had been transferred to a trust years ago in a “fully transparent and legal” fashion. Usmanov had nothing to do with the Ukraine crisis and was not close to Putin, the team added. “Demands for the expropriation of someone else’s legally acquired property is legal nihilism in its purest form,” the press team said, noting that Rottach-Egern had “a special place in his heart.”

Tomaschek disagrees and compares Germany’s response unfavourably with that of Italy, where authorities deployed anti-mafia laws to identify and seize oligarch yachts and villas relatively quickly.

In recent weeks, Germany has been trying to shore up its legal framework, spearheaded by a new task force. But it could still take months — potentially providing time to move or hide assets.

— *New York Times*

Fragrant drops of rosewater



Lakshmi Kothaneth
@lakshmioman

The writer is a senior journalist and a radio anchor

The season of Damask roses on Jabal al Akhdhar closes by mid May. The Green Mountain turns pink during April and May and one can imagine how wonderful it would be to inhale the fragrance rich air!Of course now we can wait for the traditionally distilled rose water to reach the markets or take the winding road up the mountain and enjoy the cool day while fetching the rose water bottles. In every culture there is a special place for rose water and its usage goes way back in time.

My first memory of rose water was while attending a wedding ceremony in India as a child when I was sprinkled with rose water and sandalwood paste at the entrance.

Love playing with water but this one smelled nice too. It makes you smile naturally. And the rose water sprinkler stayed on my mind forever.

Covering an event at Oman National Museum gave an opportunity to linger around and admire some of the exquisite collections and guess what was on display? Delicately sitting under the small spotlight that enhanced the carved designs was a silver rosewater sprinkler (mirasshah) from northern Oman from 14th c AH/20th c CE. The

MY FIRST MEMORY OF ROSE WATER WAS WHILE ATTENDING A WEDDING CEREMONY IN INDIA AS A CHILD WHEN I WAS SPRINKLED WITH ROSE WATER AND SANDALWOOD PASTE AT THE ENTRANCE

square showcase underneath contained a beautiful white colour rosewater sprinkler with small magenta flowers at the base. The description said, “Iran - (painted glass) and Sur, South Al Sharqiyah Governorate (silver decoration) 13th - 14th c AH/19th - 20th c CE. This was under the category of cross-cultural connections - Rosewater.

While talking about the rosewater, my friend said in Syria too it was an old tradition to sprinkle rosewater and was done so for good luck. Remember going through an exhibition of consumer products a few years ago in the Sultanate of Oman, my friend from Iran and I were walking and an exhibitor wanted us to sample his rosewater and was disappointed when I could not hold the water in my palm. I had dropped most of it (I had thought he was just going to sprinkle it).

He was from Iran - a land known for its rosewater- and he had special pride when it came to his collection of rosewater. He demonstrated as he said, “See, how your friend held the water.” I cupped my palm too and there was this beautifully smelling water in my palm - “Now you can splash it on your face,” he said.

Who cares for make-up when there is rosewater?

Splash it and the impact is amazing! One looks at the world differently.

Maybe today we do not keep rosewater sprinklers, but the distilled rosewater sprays for face continue to charm.

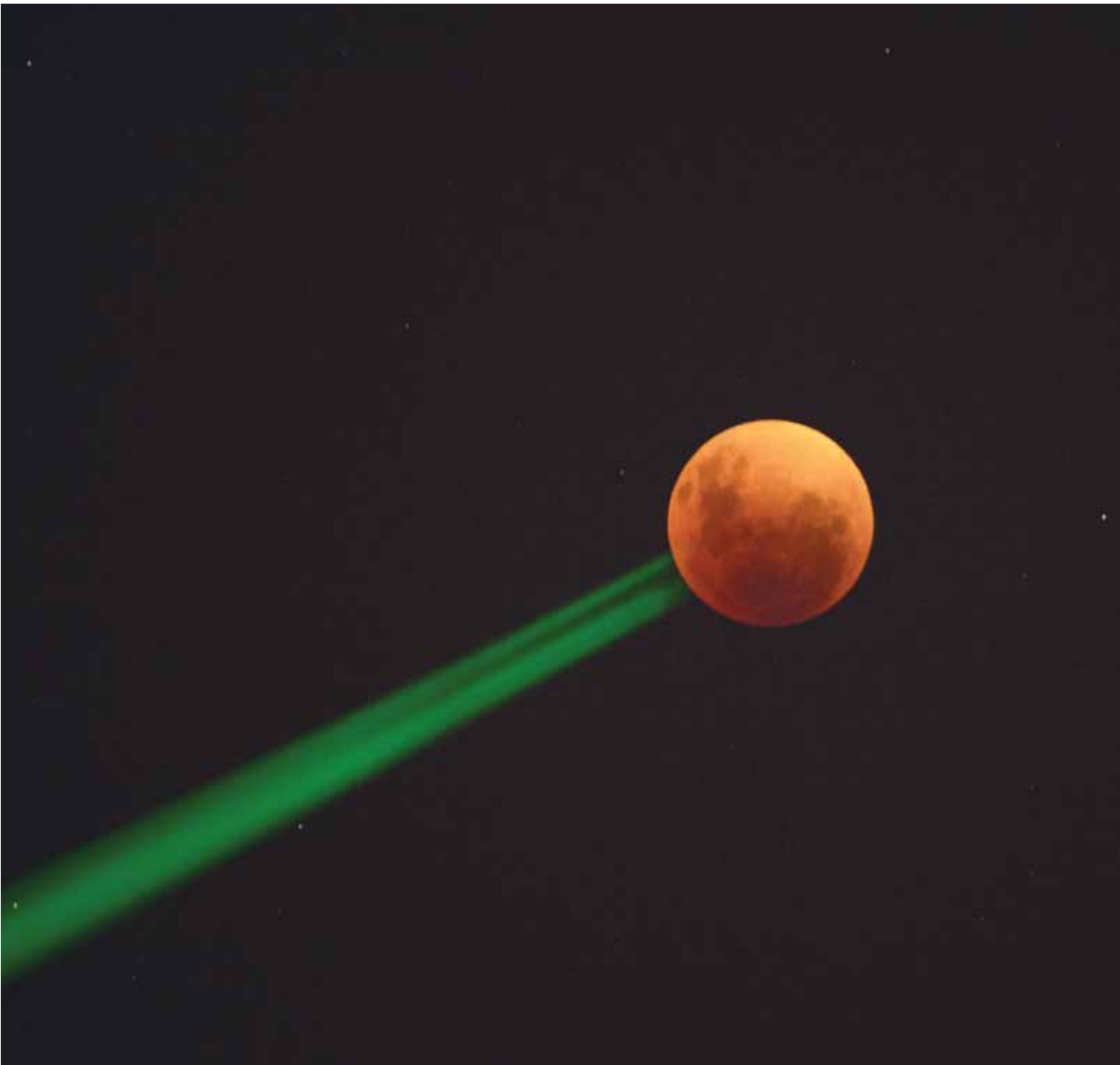
Traditions also meant washing eyes with rosewater while tackling summer heat. Yes, rosewater was also used for its medicinal properties and is known for its benefits for the skin.

But most importantly of course rosewater is an important ingredient in many cuisines especially desserts and one will definitely sense it when enjoying Baklava and not to forget gulab jamoon. Who can forget the sweet taste of rosemilk? The Middle East and Asia have celebrated the roses. The rosewater was also used in medieval Europe as well.

Growing up a little bit more I realised the rosewater sprinkler is a household item and was very much at home too and is used for special occasions. Soon it became a fun thing to do sprinkling rosewater on people, no matter how serious people were, they smiled when the drops fell on them.

Of course the fragrant water was not only cooling but refreshing.

It is about time we brought back rosewater into our lives and the rosewater sprinklers ushering in fragrant raindrops not just for sweet memories but for a bright future!



THE BLOOD MOON

The blood moon is seen during a total lunar eclipse in Santiago, Chile, on Sunday.– AFP

The power of cultural diplomacy



Sultan al Bimani
sultan.albimani@hotmail.com
@sultan5albimani

The present struggle against global terrorism is a struggle to win minds and hearts, and the current over-reliance on hard power alone is not the way to success. (Nye J, 2004) states that public diplomacy is a crucial tool in the arsenal of smart power, however smart public diplomacy involves an understanding of the roles of self-criticism, civil society, and credibility in generating “soft power”.

While the soft power of a country rests on its policies, values and culture resources.

The distribution of cultures in the world reflects the distribution of power. Trade may or may not follow the flag, but culture almost always follows power.

Throughout history the expansion of the power of a civilisation has usually occurred simultaneously with the following of its culture and has almost always involved its using that power to extend its value, practices, and institutions to other societies (Huntington, 2011).

A universal civilisation requires universal power. And as (Nye J, 2004) stated that culture and ideology are attractive, others will be more willing to follow.

And hence soft power is just as important as hard command power. These culture and ideology become attractive when they are seen as rooted in material success and influence.

They play a critical role in the diplomacy as much as in the domestic politics.

The presence of culture abroad is linking to the level of care and attention inside the country.

Thus, it is an effective tool for countries to achieve tangible and intangible benefits from abroad (Schreiber, 2017).

By providing cultural industries, ensuring their resources and gaining the appropriate image and the desired reputation.

And with the condition if there is compatibility and proportionality between Cultural Policy and Public Policy.

Art is one type of culture that can be instrumental in shaping the nature and tone of cultural diplomacy.

It can create a unique space for artists, audiences, and other stakeholders in cultural management to come together

on a neutral platform.

Despite this art influence, the use of art to raise awareness of different cultures, promote social cohesion, and strengthen intercultural relations.

Cultural diplomacy is a bridge between nations to provide a powerful tool that can be used to raise the awareness and understanding of issues (Diplomacy, 2010).

In addition, “building relationships” is one of three dimensions of public diplomacy for each government. It depends on earning high levels of trust, creating a neutral and safe environment, and can often best be done at one remove from government (Leonard, 2002).

THE PRESENCE OF CULTURE ABROAD IS LINKING TO THE LEVEL OF CARE AND ATTENTION INSIDE THE COUNTRY. THUS, IT IS AN EFFECTIVE TOOL FOR COUNTRIES TO ACHIEVE TANGIBLE AND INTANGIBLE BENEFITS FROM ABROAD

It is also one of the most effective tools for developing lasting cultural relationships.

For examples, countries create teaching and exchange programmes such as scholarships and visits and invite people from overseas in order to participate in these international programmes throughout the country. These exchange programmes have a great positive effort in human and cultural exchanges as well as an excellent deal of network building and follow-up.

(Nye J, 2004) makes this point eloquently: It is not that the student goes back converted but they go back with a much more sophisticated idea of our

strengths and weaknesses.

Through this building cultural relationships, countries attempt to ensure that the experiences which students or participants take away with them are positive and that there is a follow-up. This type of relationships is completely different from selling messages because it includes a genuine.

The best example of relationship building is the Japan Exchange and Teaching (JET) programme.

It invites young graduates from overseas universities and colleges to participate in international exchange and foreign language education throughout Japan (Leonard, 2002).

In 1936, Washington started its government-sponsored exchange of culture between United States and the Latin American nations. Then in 1938, United States used the culture as an element in its international relationship building by supervising America’s educational and cultural exchange programmes in Latin America (Pells, 1997).

Historically, France, predictably, was the first country to utilise its culture for international goals.

After its defeat in the Franco-Prussian War of 1870-71, the French government sought to repair the nation’s shattered prestige by teaching the French literature and language in the colonies and elsewhere, creating the Alliance Française for this purpose in 1883.

In the 1930s, the idea of how culture might be made a tool of foreign policy did exist overseas by some countries, while United States remained oblivious (Pells, 1997).

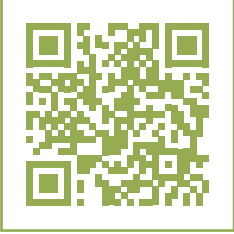
Another example is Berlin’s International Festival “Berlinale” which was started in 1951 by the US military as a propaganda and an effective tool to strive for soft power.

After World War II, Berlin was divided into sectors controlled by the allies and the front of the cold war.

The Americans were wanting to bring a touch of Hollywood glamour to their west Berlin sector, invited huge stars of the time for this festival which would be known as “showcase of the free world”. Berlinale survived after the fall of Berlin Wall and became one of the world’s most respected festivals.

sport

Follow us on
omanobserver.om/sports



Abdullah al Rawahi prepares for Jordan rally

AMMAN: Oman's Abdullah al Rawahi is in the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan preparing for this weekend's fourth round of the 2022 FIA Middle East Rally Championship (MERC).
The talented youngster has endured mixed fortunes at the start of this season's regional rally series and heads to a dozen demanding gravel special stages in the Dead Sea and Jordan Valley areas lying in third place in the Drivers' Championship, a mere five points behind Jordan's second-placed Issa Abu Jamous. Qatar's Nasser

Saleh al Attiyah is the defending champion and leads the series at the halfway point.
SECURED POINTS
Al Rawahi secured points for fourth place in the season opener in his native Oman, finished a superb second overall in Qatar and then failed to add to his points' tally in Kuwait after a heavy landing caused radiator issues and a subsequent engine failure.
Al Rawahi will team up with Jordanian co-driver Ata Al-Hmoud again in Jordan and will



drive his customary Oman Rally Team Škoda Fabia R2 evo.
The Omani said: "I am very excited for the Jordan Rally after a long wait for the fourth round of the championship. The last rally in Kuwait was really tough for us because we lost the engine. Hopefully, this time, we will have better luck with that. Jordan stages are quite familiar to me. That is where I actually started, so we are hoping to come back stronger and finish in the top three or even on the top spot!"
Friday's (May 20th) three timed

tests will be used in the morning and the afternoon and are centred around the Jordan Valley area to the north of the Dead Sea.
The first of two passes through the Bahath stage gets the action underway on Saturday (May 21st). Competitors then tackle a stage at Suwayma and the 17.00km of Ma'in 1, before returning to the service park before midday. The three specials will then be repeated in the afternoon.
Competitors will tackle 205.22 competitive kilometres in a route of 588.62km.

Oman peaked at right time, says coach Lim Chuan

**ANUROOP
ATHIPARAMBATH
MUSCAT, MAY 16**

Oman hockey team has peaked at the right time by winning the 2022 Asian Games Qualifiers tournament in Bangkok on Sunday, according to head coach Lim Chiow Chuan.
Oman thumped Bangladesh 6-2 in the final to culminate a remarkable campaign in the tournament.
"The boys were excellent in the final. We didn't leave any scope of error or complacency against Bangladesh," Lim told Oman Observer in an exclusive interview after the match.
The Malaysian coach said the Oman players came up well after

a close miss in the final of Asian Hockey Federation (AHF) Cup in Jakarta, Indonesia on March 30.
"The loss in the AHF final against Bangladesh was disappointing. But the boys have learned to convert that disappointment into a success in the Asian Games Qualifiers final. That was an important development in their psychological level and resulted in a positive approach to bag the title against the same opponents in Bangkok."
Oman lost to Bangladesh 5-3 in penalty shoot-out in the AHF Cup final after a 1-1 draw at the regulation time.
"Our players have shown the maturity to learn from some of their earlier mistakes. We were determined to take the trophy here. I am happy and satisfied



that the players implemented our strategy with success," the former Malaysian international said.
Oman have improved their rankings by two places since Lim took over as the head coach in December 2021 to World No 23 at



present.
"Oman players are naturally athletic and fast. Along with the technical skills now they have the mental attitude to deal with the big match pressure. We proved that with the final win against

Bangladesh," the head coach said.
The Oman Hockey Association (OHA) led by Dr Marwan bin Juma al Juma have been implementing a high-class training and fitness programme for the Oman players in association with the Asian

Hockey Federation.
On the plans for the Asian Games, coach Lim said Oman do not want just to be comfortable being the second tier in Asia.
"Omani players are improving and learning things fast. We don't want to be comfortable in the second tier in Asian level. We want to compete against the best in Asia."
"Our current bunch of players are really promising and we hope to make a good impact in the 2022 Asian Cup," the coach said.
Lim said the OHA and technical team need to keep producing such good young players to strengthen the national squad.
"We need to keep producing new promising young talents to bolster Oman national team and take the game into the next

Boult's 2-18 helps Royals jump to second in IPL

MUMBAI: New Zealand's Trent Boult led an inspired bowling attack to help Rajasthan Royals down Lucknow Super Giants by 24 runs and edge closer to an IPL play-off berth on Sunday.

Opener Yashasvi Jaiswal made 41 off 29 balls to guide Royals to 178 for six, a total their bowlers defended by restricting Lucknow to 154-8 in the second match of the day at Mumbai.

Boult, a left-arm quick, struck twice on successive deliveries to send back Quinton de Kock, for seven, Ayush Badoni, for nought, to dent Lucknow's chase and returned impressive figures of 2-18.

"Some days better than others. Nice to get wickets at the top," Boult said after being named man of the match. "The boys did talk about some intensity as this was a crucial game for us."

Royals, who won the inaugural Indian Premier League title in 2008 under late Australian legend Shane Warne, replaced Lucknow at second with both teams on 16 points and a win needed in their remaining match to confirm a play-off spot.

Fast bowler Prasidh Krishna sent back skipper KL Rahul for 10 before Krunal Pandya, who made 25 before falling to Ravichandran Ashwin off a relay catch between Jos Buttler and Riyan Parag, put together 65 runs with Deepak Hooda.

Hooda kept up the charge in his 39-ball 59 but fell stumped off leg-spinner Yuzvendra Chahal and took with him Lucknow's hopes of a chase.

Obed McCoy took two more including Jason Holder, for one, to expose Lucknow's tail and Prasad Krishna took down Marcus Stoinis, for 27, as Lucknow, one of the two newcomers alongside Gujarat Titans, remained short of their target.

"If we can hold our nerves and give ourselves a chance to play the new ball or a good spell. If you get through that spell you always have enough time to make up," said Rahul, whose team has lost two straight games.

"We've got power in our batting line, so it is just about playing smart when the bowlers are bowling a good spell." — AFP



MARTINEZ brace ensures Inter take title race to final week

MILAN: Lautaro Martinez ensured the Serie A title race will head into the final week of the season on Sunday with a brace in Inter Milan's 3-1 win at Cagliari to stay two points behind leaders AC Milan.

Reigning champions Inter had to win to have any hope of retaining their league crown after Milan beat Atalanta 2-0 earlier in the day. And goals in each half from Mattia Darmian's and Martinez ensured that Simone Inzaghi's side would push their local rivals down to the wire with a hard-fought victory in Sardinia.

Simone Inzaghi's Inter could have been tired after a thrilling, extra-time Italian Cup triumph over old foes Juventus on Wednesday but came through a tricky test against a side scrapping for their top flight lives.

"The emotions were on Wednesday, winning a trophy we cared about a great deal," Inzaghi

told DAZN.

"It wasn't easy after Milan's win, but the team played really well against an opponent who is problematic on their own turf. I congratulate my lads, because this was by no means to be taken for granted, especially after playing 120 minutes on Wednesday."

Cagliari meanwhile stay two points behind Salernitana, who sit just outside the relegation zone.

They had already had a Milan Skriniar goal ruled out for handball when Darmian did put the away side ahead, and once Martinez lashed home his first six minutes after the break he thought that was that.

Charalampos Lykogiannis thumped home from distance almost straight afterwards to give Cagliari hope of getting an unlikely result, but with six minutes remaining Martinez dinked home his second to calm Inter nerves.

Insigne scores on farewell

On the final day Inter host Sampdoria, who are now safe thanks to defeat for 18th-placed Cagliari, while Milan travel to Sassuolo needing just a point to secure their first Scudetto since 2011.

Stefano Pioli's side have the better of the season's two Milan derbies meaning that if the two teams finish level on points it will be Milan who take the title.

They hold the advantage over Inter thanks to strikes from Rafael Leao and Theo Hernandez which sealed their win over Atalanta in front of a packed San Siro.

Leao broke through after 56 minutes, picking up a Messias through ball before firing between the legs of Atalanta goalkeeper Juan Musso, with Hernandez adding a second 19 minutes later following a brilliant solo run through the Atalanta defence.

— AFP

Mathews falls one short of double ton as Sri Lanka make 397 against Bangladesh

CHITTAGONG: Angelo Mathews missed out on his second double hundred by just one run as Bangladesh bowled out Sri Lanka for 397 runs in the first Test in Chittagong on Monday.

Off-spinner Nayeem Hasan broke Mathews's heart, forcing him to spoon a catch to Shakib Al Hasan at square leg on 199 as he made a desperate attempt to complete his double hundred with last man Vishwa Fernando at the other end.

Nayeem finished with 6-105 on his home ground Zahur Ahmed Chowdhury Stadium while Shakib claimed 3-60 for Bangladesh.

Running out of partners, Mathews had the double hundred in his sights after sharing 47 runs with Vishwa for the ninth wicket.

But the number 10 took a blow on his helmet before tea and did not return to the field.

Last man Asitha Fernando survived 27 balls to give him support before he was bowled by Nayeem.

Vishwa then heroically returned to the crease, prompting Mathews to make his desperate attempt for the double hundred.

He struck Taijul Islam for a four to reach 196 before a single and double took him even closer, only to be denied by Nayeem.

Mathews, who resumed on 114, earlier shared 136 runs with fellow overnight batsman Dinesh Chandimal (66) before hosts Bangladesh had their first success of the day.

In the 24th over of the session, Chandimal attempted a premeditated reverse sweep but failed to make contact and was given out lbw, upheld on review.

Nayeem celebrated his third wicket of the innings and soon had a fourth when he bowled wicketkeeper-batsman Niroshan Dickwella, who made only three, four balls later.

Shakib took two wickets in two balls in the first over after the break to push Sri Lanka into a corner.

He first bowled Ramesh Mendis for one and then trapped Lasith Embuldeniya leg before for no score.

Mushfiquur Rahim dropped Fernando at mid-on on 16 to deny Shakib his fourth wicket. — AFP



Lee holds off Spieth for second straight Byron Nelson crown

LOS ANGELES: Lee Kyoung-hoon fired a career-low nine-under par 63 on Sunday to win the US PGA Tour Byron Nelson tournament for a second straight year at TPC Craig Ranch in McKinney, Texas.

South Korea's Lee, who won his first US tour title at the tournament in suburban Dallas last year, made his second victory a successful defence as he erased a four-shot overnight deficit to build a 26-under par total of 262 and beat three-time major winner Jordan Spieth by one stroke.

"Feels like a dream again, like last year," said Lee, who was greeted at the 18th green by his wife, Yu Joo-yeon and their baby daughter Celine, who was born weeks after Lee won last year. "It's an amazing feeling."

On a windy day north of Dallas, Lee got going early with a 51-foot birdie putt at the second hole.

After a seven-foot birdie at the third he blasted out of a greenside bunker to two feet for birdie at the fifth, then added birdies at six and nine before sticking his approach at the par-five 12th within five feet for an eagle that put him atop the leaderboard.

He added a 14-foot birdie at the 13th, then sealed the victory with a birdie at the par-five 18th — where his 25-foot eagle putt stopped an inch from the cup.

Lee powered past overnight leader Sebastian Munoz, who began the day at 21-under and one shot in front of Spieth.

Both got off to a slow start with bogeys



at the first. Spieth went on to post eight birdies with three bogeys in his five-under 67 while Munoz had four birdies in a 69 that left him tied for third on 264 alongside former Masters champion

Hideki Matsuyama, who charged up the leaderboard with a 10-under-par 62.

Lee preserved his one-shot lead with a gritty par save at the par-three 17th, where his tee shot left him in the left rough with an awkward stance in a bunker.

He made a 12-foot putt for the save.

Although Spieth couldn't come up with an eagle to force a playoff, it was a solid week as he heads to Tulsa, Oklahoma, next week for the PGA Championship where a victory would see him complete a career Grand Slam.

"It was a good week, good momentum into next week, last two starts being a win and a second," Spieth said.

"But this one will sting just a little bit

just looking back on the day," added the American, who perhaps regretted most a three-putt bogey at the 10th.

"But I played the holes from there exactly how they were supposed to be played," Spieth said, "grabbed three more birdies and it just wasn't quite good enough."

Tokyo Olympic champion Xander Schauffele also finished on a high note. After making the cut on the number on Friday, he had nine birdies and an eagle in his impressive 11-under 61 to share fifth on 265 alongside Justin Thomas and Ryan Palmer.

"(I'm) seeing the ball go in the hole, which is a really important thing before a major," Schauffele said. — AFP



Omani umpires set for busy schedule in June

ADIL AL BALUSHI
MUSCAT, MAY 16

Oman's football umpires will have a busy schedule in June as the Asian Football Confederation (AFC) called up many Omani umpires to officiate the final stage of qualifiers to 2023 AFC Asian Cup. Oman's international field referee Omar al Yaqoubi and his international assistant Hamed al Ghafri accompanied with other Asian umpires will officiate in Group A matches which will be held in Kuwait city during June 8 to 14.

International field referee Mahmood al Majrafi and international assistant referee Rashad al Hakamani were given the refereeing charge in the Group B qualifier matches of 2023 AFC Asian Cup which will take place in Mongolia from June 8 to 14.

The AFC decided that the refereeing team for Group C qualifier matches of the Asian Cup will feature Omani umpires including international field umpire Khalid al Shaqsi and international assistant Mohammed al Ghazali. Markaziy Stadium at Namangan city in Uzbekistan will be the venue for the matches of Group C.

Oman international field referee Qasim al Hatmi will officiate group qualifier matches of the Asian Cup in Kolkata city, India. The umpiring team will include another Oman international referee Abdullah al Shamakhi as assistant referee.

International field referee Omar al Yaqoubi and his assistants including Abdullah al Jardani and Nasser Ambo Saidi as assistant referees will team up to officiate sixth group qualifier matches of 2023 AFC Asian Cup which will take place in Kuala Lumpur city from June 8 to 14.

The last Omani umpiring team which was called up for officiating 2022 AFC U-23 Asian Cup included Oman's iconic international football referee Ahmed al Kaaf accompanied by international referees Abu Baker al Amri and Rashid al Ghaithi. The AFC U-23 Asian Cup event will be held in Tashkent city, Uzbekistan from June 1 to 19.

In the previous year, Ahmed al Kaaf has been selected to officiate as field referee accompanied by Abu Baker al Amri and Rashid al Ghaithi as assistant in Group B matches of the joint qualification of the 2022 Fifa World Cup and 2023 AFC Asian Cup Championship in Kuwait.

Ahmad Al Harthy and Oman Racing team impress at IMOLA

MILAN: Ahmad al Harthy produced a truly faultless performance during round two of the European Le Mans Series at Imola in Italy on Sunday, 15th May, to help secure a dominant GTE class win for his Oman Racing team – in doing so becoming the first Omani to take victory in the prestigious championship.

Going into the 4 Hours of Imola with confidence high after scorching to a superb pole position in qualifying, Al Harthy took the start of the race in the No.69 Aston Martin Vantage GTE and delivered an outstanding double-stint.

Building a significant lead over the course of the first two hours, in a race peppered with Safety Car interventions which impacted his advantage on several occasions, the Omani handed over the car to Sam De Haan for hour three before Aston Martin works driver Marco Sorensen completed the job in style with the run to the chequered flag – claiming victory a lap ahead of the sister Oman Racing car.

“This is amazing, unbelievable!”, said an overjoyed Al Harthy, who is supported by Oman Ministry of Culture, Sports and Youth, OQ, Omantel and MHD-ITICS, “I drove my heart out to be honest, it was a perfect, perfect, perfect race for us. It was extremely challenging throughout, Sarah [Bovy] in the Ferrari was always pushing me and it was just a matter of who could clear and pass traffic better.

“The team did a great job, we were able to really control the strategy very well – that was the reason for a great win. Both Sam and Marco, amazing teamwork, but so much teamwork behind the scenes as well. It's an amazing feeling to have given Oman its first win in the ELMS, for us to be



on the top step of the podium and to hear the national anthem.”

He added: “I want to say a huge thank you to all of the partners and everyone from back home who has been keeping in touch with what's happening this weekend. It's such a great feeling to be leading the championship too, and a double podium for Oman Racing with the sister car as well!”

Making the most of his brilliant pole position achieved on Saturday at the Autodromo Internazionale Enzo e Dino Ferrari in Imola, Al Harthy held the GTE lead off the start and was a second clear when the first of several Safety Car periods occurred roughly 10 minutes into the race.

Racing resumed around five minutes later with the Omani just 0.6 seconds ahead over the line, but he swiftly set about pumping in some very quick lap times and at the half-hour mark he held a four second advantage. Increasing his lead further, 10 minutes later a Full Course Yellow period was called due to a stranded car and so

Al Harthy took the opportunity to make a pit-stop.

Re-emerging in the lead, with his rivals electing to pit the next time around, the Oman Racing driver was 6.5 seconds to the good when racing resumed and he then pulled almost 10 seconds clear as the end of the opening hour neared.

Due to an LMP3 prototype car off the track at Tosa, though, the Safety Car reappeared and so Al Harthy's lead was negatively impacted. When the cars were unleashed again early in hour two, his advantage was down to under two seconds but he continued to circulate faultlessly.

Once again pulling away at the front, another FCY cautionary period around lap 41 then stymied his progress. Between the 90-minute mark and the midway point of the race, though, the Omani was bullet-proof and was able to pull 16 seconds clear. Eventually making his second pit-stop early in hour three, Al Harthy concluded his superb double-stint by handing over the car to De Haan.

Leading the race by 10 seconds after the second round of stops, De Haan was in the sights of the sister TF Sport-run Oman Racing car piloted by Aston Martin works driver Jonny Adam. Lap after lap the Scotsman gained and halfway through De Haan's stint Adam was able to go through – but he pitted shortly after, so De Haan reassumed the lead some eight seconds ahead of the No.57 Ferrari.

With a huge lead of more than 70 seconds with one hour and 15 minutes to go, albeit with the second placed car having already served a third pit-stop, De Haan ended his stint with just over an hour remaining when a Full Course Yellow period was in force due to another car in the barriers.

Danish star Sorensen took over the No.69 Aston Martin Vantage GTE and with 88 laps in the book he held an advantage of 45 seconds over the sister Oman Racing car. Following another FCY period with under an hour to run, Sorensen was close to 50 seconds ahead but there were two more cautionary periods during the latter stages.

Continental glory on offer as AFC Cup 2022 kicks off

KUALA LUMPUR: Regional supremacy and Continental glory will be on the line for clubs throughout Asia when the AFC Cup 2022 Group Stage commences on Wednesday.

Held in a series of centralised hubs, the South and West Zones of the competition will kick off the 2022 edition, with the Central, East and ASEAN Zones to follow suit from June 24 to 30.

Representative of the full length and breadth of the world's largest football stadium, the AFC Cup 2022 will feature a total of 38 teams spread across 10 groups, all competing to lift the coveted club crown in the eagerly-anticipated Final on October 22, 2022.

The Group Stage action begins in Kolkata, where local and Group D contenders ATK Mohun Bagan FC will face Gokulam Kerala FC at the Vivekananda Yuba Bharati Krirangan Stadium at 4:30pm (local time) before Maziya Sports & Recreation of the Maldives take on Bangladesh Premier League champions Bashundhara Kings at the same venue four hours later. In the traditionally strong West



Zone, the Muscat-based Group A will see Oman's Al Seeb Club open their campaign against Jableh of Syria at the Al Seeb Stadium at 7pm before Lebanon's Al Ansar battle Kuwait SC at 11pm.

Meanwhile, Group B, located in Kuwait City, will pit hosts Arabi SC against Bahrain's Al Riffa at the Kuwait Sports Club Stadium at 6pm before Shabab Al Khalil of Palestine face off against Dhofar Club of Oman at the same venue at 10 pm.

Group C, based in Bahrain, will see a captivating opener between Tishreen of Syria and Palestinian club Hilal Alquds

at the Al Muharraq Stadium at 6pm before hosts East Riffa, who will be hoping to follow in the footsteps of their compatriots and 2021 champions Muharraq Club, take on Nejme SC from Lebanon at 10pm.

Dushanbe and Bishkek will host Groups E and F respectively when the Central Zone kicks off on June 24, while Bali United FC, Kuala Lumpur City FC and Viettel FC will all enjoy home advantage in their respective ASEAN Zone groups, with the East Zone's Group J to be held on neutral territory in Buriram, Thailand. — AFC

Djokovic claims sixth Italian Open title

S W I A T E K M A K E S I T F I V E I N A R O W

ROME: Novak Djokovic won his sixth Italian Open title on Sunday after a straight-sets victory over Stefanos Tsitsipas, 6-0, 7-6 (7/5) in Rome, while Iga Swiatek won her fifth straight tournament by dispatching Ons Jabeur.

World number one Djokovic saw off underwhelming Monte Carlo Masters champion Tsitsipas to claim the last major tournament before Roland Garros gets underway later this month.

The 34-year-old won his first tournament of the season and confirmed his return to form after an opening few months of the season dominated by Covid-19 vaccination controversy.

“I've been building my form for the last couple of weeks and like the previous years I knew that my best shape on the clay is usually coming around Rome time,” Djokovic said on the court. “So it couldn't be a better time coming into Roland Garros with a title.”



Sunday's clash was a rematch of the pair's final at last year's French Open final but had little of the drama of that five-set thriller won by the Serb in Paris.

Djokovic made surprisingly short work of Greece's Tsitsipas, who had also reached the semi-finals of last week's tournament in Madrid and still leads the men's tour for wins this season.

An emotional Djokovic then spoke to the crowd in Italian, telling them that they were the reason he had such a good record

there and revealing his son Stefan was playing in his first ever tennis tournament. He later beamed with pride as he revealed Djokovic junior had claimed the honours at a small club competition back home in Serbia.

“My son actually won the tournament. It's a sunshine double today,” Djokovic told reporters.

TEARFUL SWIA TEK TRIUMPHS

Iga Swiatek said she was going to treat Roland Garros as “any other tournament” after beating Jabeur 6-2, 6-2 to retain the women's title. World number one Swiatek dropped to her knees in tears of joy after winning her 28th match in a row, and will be red-hot favourite in Paris.

“I'm going to treat it as any other tournament, I think it's going to be fine and I'm going to be able to keep it that way,” said Swiatek. — AFP

business

MUSCAT
STOCK
EXCHANGE
4,154.486



CRUDE
OIL PRICE
Oman Crude \$106.52
Brent Crude \$110.67
Light Crude \$107.93



Follow us on
omanobserver.om/business

Transfer your salary and enjoy attractive interest rates starting from

HOUSING LOAN

PERSONAL LOAN

CAR LOAN

4.95%

4.99%

4.95%

For more information:
<https://bit.ly/ShortTermPersonalLoanEN>

Bank Dhofar

the best bank for you

24781111 www.bankdhofar.com

Regulatory framework to safeguard against poor quality power supply in Oman

Network audit: Impact of power quality issues on residential, commercial and industrial consumers to be evaluated

CONRAD PRABHU
[@conradprabhu](https://twitter.com/conradprabhu)

The Authority for Public Services Regulation (APSR), which regulates the electricity sector, among other public utility services in the Sultanate of Oman, plans to shortly commission an audit of licensed power transmission and distribution companies to ensure that consumers are not impacted by poor quality power supply.

The audit will form the basis of a new ‘Quality of Power Supply Regulatory Framework’ to help monitor compliance by transmission and distribution licensees with the technical requirements of quality of supply across their networks.

“The electricity sector in Oman has experienced a sustained growth of customer connections which required capital investments in generation, transmission and distribution infrastructures. The



Authority for Public Services Regulation has to ensure that the customers are not receiving poor power quality which may result in damaging their appliances,” the regulator stated in an introduction to the initiative.

A number of consultants are participating in a competitive tender launched by APSR for the selection of a qualified firm to undertake the proposed audit, as well as to develop the regulatory framework around it. Interested

bidders have until June 6, 2022 to submit their proposals in this regard.

The selected bidder will be required to meet with all of the licensed transmission and distribution companies to confirm the extent to which each complies with their obligations in terms of technical parameters related to quality of power supply. Opportunities for improvements will have to be identified as well.

The list of licensees includes Oman Electricity Transmission Company (OETC), which operates the Main Interconnected System (The North Oman Grid) and Dhofar Grid; the three distribution and supply companies — Muscat Electricity, Majan Electricity and Mazoon Electricity; the Dhofar Integrated Services Company (DISC), which oversees distribution and supply in Dhofar Governorate; and the Rural Areas Electricity Company — Tanweer, which covers remote areas unserved by the national grids.

A key part of the selected bidder’s remit is to evaluate the

impact of power quality issues on residential, commercial and industrial consumers, including large customers connected at the transmission level, the captive power generators and embedded generation. Additionally, the consultant will assist the Authority in the drafting of “an appropriate Regulatory Framework of Power Quality Management to ensure proper reporting mechanism is made to the Authority and that the interests of licensees and their customers are balanced in as far as power quality and reliability of supply is concerned”, the regulator added.

Galfar adds RO 91m worth contracts to order-book

BUSINESS REPORTER
MUSCAT, MAY 16

Leading Omani construction firm Galfar Engineering & Contracting SAOG (parent company) recorded revenues of RO 34.368 million for Q1 2022, which was significantly lower than the earnings of RO 48.339 million for the corresponding quarter of 2021. Net profit slumped to RO 0.529 million this year, down from RO 1.480 million for Q1 2021.

“This reduction in profit is on account of reduced scope of works and cash flow constraints. However, the company is able to sustain a positive net margin due to various initiatives taken as part of its turnaround strategy to re-organise, improve projects performance and implement stringent cost controls,” said Majid bin Said bin Salim al Fannah al Araiimi, Chairman.

“The positive bottom-line results came despite various challenges such as drop in revenues by approximately 29 per cent compared to the same period last year, reduction in work load



and cash flow constraints due to late receipt of payments,” he added in the Directors’ Report for the quarter.

For the period ended March 2022, Galfar received new project awards worth RO 91 million, the Chairman said. “Despite the economic situation and reduction of spending in public projects, Galfar continues to maintain significant projects pipeline of RO 473 million.

Within this order book the company still waiting to receive the commencement order for projects awarded in previous years such as Dualization of Haima-Thamrait Package-4

Project (awarded July 2020), and Wadi-Alyen Water Network Project (awarded July 2019), for which commencement orders continue to be delayed,” he further stated.

“Going forward, Management expects to maintain a solid project pipeline in excess of RO 400 million with a significant number of tenders under evaluation across a diverse array of sectors and clients. We reasonably expect to be successful in a number of those which will ensure stability and sustainability of our strong market position,” the Chairman added.

Oman Fisheries CO.SAOG

DIRECTORS REPORT
For 1st Quarter (Jan-Mar) Results – Year 2022

Dear Shareholders,
On behalf of the Board of Directors, it is my pleasure to present the Company's unaudited consolidated results for the three-month period ended on 31st Mar 2022.
Our key results are annexed below:
Key Results:

Particulars	Group			Parent		
	2022 (Jan - Mar)	2021 (Jan - Mar)	Change %	2022 (Jan - Mar)	2021 (Jan - Mar)	Change %
Total Revenue/Income	6,497,095	3,832,763	69.51%	6,471,121	3,752,369	72.45%
Total Cost / Expense	(4,172,689)	(3,757,511)	11.05%	(4,150,266)	(3,660,485)	13.38%
Profit Before Tax	2,324,406	73,252	2988.83%	2,320,855	91,884	2425.85%
Income Tax	-	-	-	-	-	-
Net Profit / (Loss) After Tax	2,324,406	73,252	2988.83%	2,320,855	91,884	2425.85%

Turnover and summary of results:
The unaudited results of the first quarter represent the consolidation of Oman Fisheries Co. SAOG(Parent), and Oman Fisheries Co. Sharjah (FZE).
Your company has achieved the consolidated turnover of RO 3.849 million from operations and OMR 2.647 million from other sources of income as at 31st Mar 2022 compared to the previous year turnover of RO 3.673 Million from operations and OMR 159K from other sources of income for the same period. The group made a net Profit of RO 2,324,406/- compared to the net Profit of RO 75,252/- for the same period of the previous year.
Following are the key operational highlights for the First quarter:
1. The company has successfully completed the sale process of Al-Ameen and has made a (one time) capital gain of OMR 2.600 Mn on this transaction.
2. Gulf Japan Food Fund (GJFF), an international private equity fund focusing on the food and beverage industry, has become the largest shareholder in Oman Fisheries SAOG by acquiring 31.4% of its shares.
3. The company achieved a GP of 20% driven by the continuous efforts of the management to penetrate higher value markets, rigorous stock and inventory management and diligent revenue planning and management.
4. The company's Gross Margin has increased by 36% (from 14% in 2021 to 19% in 2022) when considered after eliminating extra ordinary items of stock provisions that have been reversed in same period.
5. Export sales represented 88% of the total sales with local sales representing 12% of the total sales.
6. On the procurement side the company managed to procure 8,348 tons of fish up to Mar 2022 from its own sources as well as partner SMEs compared to 9,721 tons during the same period in 2021.
7. The selling and distribution expenses were driven higher principally due to container & freight charges associated with the global supply chain glut. The management is driving direct exports from the factories to reduce warehousing charges and improve inventory turnover ratio. The management forecasts further fluctuations and instability for the next quarter in freight availability and pricing.
8. Debtors and cash collection cycle has been consistent in relation to the volume of sales both in the domestic and export market.

Acknowledgement
On behalf of the Board of Directors and The Management of the Company, I wish to acknowledge and express my sincere gratitude to His Majesty Sultan Haitham Bin Tariq and his Government for their continued leadership in food security and in the fisheries sector as a fundamental pillar of Vision 2040.
We also extend our thanks and gratitude to The Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries & Water Resources, Ministry of Finance, Governors and Regional Municipalities our shareholders, customers, suppliers, the artisanal fishing community and our incredible employees and look forward to the continuous positive contribution to the sector and the country.

INTERIM CONDENSED CONSOLIDATED AND SEPARATE STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION AS AT 31 MARCH 2022

	Parent Company (Unaudited) 31 March 2022 RO	Group (Unaudited) 31 March 2022 RO	Parent Company (Audited) 31 December 2021 RO	Group (Audited) 31 December 2021 RO
ASSETS				
Non-current assets				
Plant Property and equipment	2,966,505	2,966,505	3,079,095	3,079,095
Right-of-use assets	1,492,346	1,492,346	203,402	203,402
Finance lease receivables	-	-	297,958	-
Fixed deposit	-	-	1,100,000	1,100,000
Investment in subsidiaries	15,750	-	515,750	-
Deferred tax asset	719,429	719,429	719,429	719,429
	5,194,030	5,178,280	5,915,634	5,101,926
Current assets				
Inventories	1,888,118	1,888,118	1,013,196	1,013,196
Lease receivables	-	-	16,149	-
Trade and other receivables	4,771,927	4,789,587	1,392,349	1,403,081
Amounts due from related parties	7,081	-	2,405	-
Financial assets at FVTPL	113,525	113,525	113,302	113,302
Other financial assets at amortised cost	1,100,000	1,100,000	-	-
Cash and bank balances	295,737	297,449	206,409	208,121
Assets included in disposal group classified as held-for-sale	-	-	-	2,533,004
	8,176,380	8,188,671	2,743,810	5,270,704
Total assets	13,370,410	13,366,951	8,659,444	10,372,630
EQUITY AND LIABILITIES				
Equity				
Share capital	12,500,000	12,500,000	12,500,000	12,500,000
Legal reserve	3,314,319	3,315,929	3,314,319	3,480,985
Capital reserve	29,269	29,269	29,269	29,269
Accumulated losses	(9,506,130)	(9,511,591)	(11,826,985)	(10,361,715)
Total equity	6,337,458	6,333,607	4,016,603	5,648,539
Liabilities				
Non-current liabilities				
Term loans	185,657	185,657	207,138	207,138
Lease liabilities	1,275,270	1,275,270	205,448	205,448
End of service benefits	62,433	62,433	69,149	69,149
	1,523,360	1,523,360	481,735	481,735
Current liabilities				
Term loans	77,759	77,759	77,759	77,759
Lease liabilities	262,680	262,680	46,270	46,270
Short term loans	2,200,000	2,200,000	2,600,000	2,600,000
Bank overdraft	480,000	480,000	-	-
Trade and other payables	2,569,153	2,569,545	1,115,814	1,117,135
Amounts due to related parties	-	-	321,263	1,092
Liability included in disposal group classified as held-for-sale	-	-	-	400,100
	5,509,592	5,509,984	4,161,106	4,242,356
Total liabilities	7,032,952	7,033,344	4,642,841	4,724,091
Total equity and liabilities	13,370,410	13,366,951	8,659,444	10,372,630
Net assets per share	0.051	0.051	0.032	0.043

INTERIM CONDENSED CONSOLIDATED AND SEPARATE STATEMENT OF COMPREHENSIVE INCOME FOR THE PERIOD ENDED 31 MARCH 2022

	Parent Company (Unaudited) Period ended 31 March 2022 RO	Group (Unaudited) Period ended 31 March 2022 RO	Parent Company (Unaudited) Period ended 31 March 2021 RO	Group (Unaudited) Period ended 31 March 2021 RO
Revenue	3,823,677	3,849,651	3,561,324	3,673,518
Direct costs	(3,048,994)	(3,066,589)	(2,693,388)	(2,807,513)
Gross profit	774,773	783,062	867,936	866,005
Other income	47,221	47,221	212,208	180,488
Gain on disposal of subsidiary	2,600,000	2,600,000	-	-
General and administrative expenses	(493,210)	(497,948)	(547,722)	(628,946)
Selling and distribution expenses	(584,065)	(584,065)	(462,421)	(353,136)
Change in fair value of FVTPL investment	223	223	(21,163)	(21,163)
Operating profit	2,344,942	2,348,493	48,838	43,168
Finance income	15,459	15,459	13,784	9,767
Finance cost	(39,546)	(39,546)	(29,605)	(36,550)
Profit before taxation	2,320,855	2,324,406	33,017	16,385
Income tax	-	-	38,867	58,867
Total comprehensive income for the period	2,320,855	2,324,406	91,884	75,252
Basic and diluted earnings per share	0.0186	0.0186	0.0007	0.0006

Chairman

Note: The complete accounts will be sent by mail to any shareholder who request them, either in Arabic or English as requested within 7 days of receipt of the request.

OMAN FISHERIES

Ominvest builds ESG knowledge across the group

MUSCAT: In line with its strong belief in the important role business plays in society, Ominvest successfully concluded a capacity building programme covering Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) practices across its group companies. Ominvest's participating group companies included, National Life & General Insurance Co., National Finance, Oman Arab Bank, Alizz Islamic Bank, Jabreen Capital, and Ubhar Capital.

The programme was attended by Ominvest's board members as well as top and middle management executives at the Parent Company and Group companies through various focused training sessions. It also included a comprehensive online course especially designed for all staff.

The series of training sessions were concluded with a 32-hour ESG Champions Training Course for 10 ESG leads who were nominated by the CEOs of Ominvest's Group companies. This is a Certified Training



Course for ESG Champions by the Accredited Academic Institution of the European Public Law Organisation (EEPLO), and the European Law and Governance School (ELGS). The champions will lead the effort of integrating ESG across their respective companies and will act as the core unit for synchronising ESG efforts and initiatives across the Group.

The aim of the ESG capacity

building initiative by Ominvest is to raise awareness and provide the needed knowledge and skills to help create a strategic social impact, and to integrate ESG at operational and investment levels across the Group whilst aligning with global best practices.

The training sessions highlighted the important role of business in achieving the United Nation's Sustainable

Development Goals (SDGs), the role of the Financial Sector and Investors in integrating ESG in business operations and investment decision-making processes; the different forms of ESG and Impact Investing; and the difference between ESG and social impact initiatives. Global and regional trends, legal and regulatory aspects, in addition to ESG reporting and rating were

discussed in detail, introducing most common frameworks and rating agencies.

The training sessions also focused on how to build strategies for scalable and sustainable social impact that aligns with the UN's SDGs.

Commenting on the importance of the programme, Abdulaziz al Balushi, Group CEO, Ominvest said, "Ominvest is a purpose-driven organisation that has embedded social impact and good corporate citizenship at the heart of its corporate vision, mission, culture and values. Our purpose is 'transforming businesses to enrich societies'; to make sure we are creating the desired impact that aligns with our purpose, we believe integrating ESG best practices on both the operational and investment levels in our Group companies is the right way forward.

Such practices, when properly and effectively implemented, provide important and essential tools for true and verifiable assessment of

business performance in terms of environment, social and governance aspects. ESG practices will also enable us to create measurable and scalable impact, and will help benchmark our performance year on year, with an aim to enhance our resulting impact."

He added, "I am glad to have witnessed the dedication and commitment showcased by Ominvest Group's companies throughout the ESG training programme. Top management representatives were engaged in the sessions they attended and followed that up with the nomination of suitable and capable candidates to attend an intensive 32-hour training that would equip them to be the ESG champions in their respective companies.

This multiple-month initiative was merely the initial building block for the actual work to come in building our solid ESG strategy and commencing the needed integration work and implementation of key initiatives."

Bank Muscat assists merchants in offering convenient and secure QR code e-payments

MUSCAT: Bank Muscat, the leading financial services provider in Oman, has affirmed its readiness and alignment to promoting financial inclusion and digital payments across the Sultanate of Oman by providing various e-payment options to the general public at merchant partners across the Sultanate of Oman.

The bank continues to expand e-payment options available including Debit, Prepaid and Credit Cards, wearables, Mobile Wallet and the Mobile Banking app as well as the latest QR-code based payments that help retail outlets easily accept digital payments from the Mobile Banking app or Wallet of any bank in Oman.

Bank Muscat pointed out that businesses across the country including micro and small enterprises can easily implement QR-code based payments in order to meet the latest regulations on the need for businesses to provide e-payment



options to their customers.

Speaking on the occasion, Abdullah bin Hamood al Jufaili (pictured), Assistant General Manager, Digital Banking, Bank Muscat, said: "Bank Muscat is encouraged by the rapid shift to digital payments and invites today's tech-savvy customers to use different e-payments options according to their convenience.

E-payments benefit our merchant partners, customers and the general public by improving financial inclusion and offering convenient and highly secure payment options and hence, it is important that businesses offer various e-payment options that will

boost economic growth and development.

QR-code based payments are particularly helpful to small businesses in this regard. We are confident that the ongoing digital transformation will help our nation and its people achieve the ambitious goals of Oman Vision 2040."

The QR code scanning option allows merchant partners to accept e-payments from customers quickly and securely, irrespective of their bank or wallet. It has been seeing an exponential growth since its recent launch with over 440 merchants already implementing the e-payment facility.

The security of transactions is enhanced by ensuring that payments are credited into the business' account, without the need to handle physical cash and the inconvenience of maintaining small change for customers.

Payments can be easily initiated from a customer's

Mobile Banking application or Wallet application to the merchant's account by scanning a QR code. A merchant can also request money from a customer using the Mobile Payments System registered mobile number / Alias / QR code.

It must be noted that customers of local banks can easily make payments, transfer money or request funds from others using the Central Bank of Oman's Mobile Payment Clearing and Switching System (MPCSS). Funds can be transferred instantaneously using one of the following modes.

For person to person transfers, money can be sent or collected from the recipient's default account or wallet. 'Send money' can be initiated by using mobile number, Alias or by QR code scanning and 'collect money' can be initiated using recipient Alias/Mobile Number if both the sender and recipient are registered on MPCSS.

Renaissance's local sourcing rises to 79%

MUSCAT: Local sourcing of food and non-food items at Renaissance Services has risen to 79 per cent compared to 63 per cent until a year ago, further delivering on the company's commitment to Oman's economic diversification and in-country value (ICV) goals.

Renaissance shares a symbiotic relationship with its Omani suppliers, gaining from competitive pricing and timely delivery and in turn boosting ICV by giving them significant business. With this approach, Renaissance has continued to demonstrate resilience amid past and present global challenges that have materially affected fuel, freight, commodity prices and availability.

Service delivery to its 100+ operational sites throughout the country remained unaffected during the pandemic, thanks to its strong local supplier base, which includes SMEs. Furthermore, the Renaissance 2.0 direction has redefined the strategic and value-based supply chain approach.

It has set renewed OKRs



(Objectives and Key Result areas) that deliver increased ICV, including more jobs for Omanis and opportunities for SMEs.

"Challenges from the pandemic and the current geopolitical tensions notwithstanding, the company has always put Omani companies and SMEs first. The Renaissance supply chain boasts of a strong local vendor platform, reflecting our focus on Oman's economic diversification goals. It is this commitment that has stood us in good stead in the face of unforeseen global challenges and allowed us to maintain good buffer stocks to ensure efficient service delivery across our sites of operations," said Pankaj Chugh (pictured), Director, Supply Chain, Renaissance.

Toyota Corolla: Make every drive fun

MUSCAT: The most popular vehicle in the Toyota range – the Corolla, offers thoroughly exciting experiences with its engaging driving dynamics.

The Corolla is designed to be a combination of style, space and comfort. This aspect is evident throughout the Corolla. The interior design adopts a simple yet appealing style, with comfortable spaciousness and integrated functional parts combining to create a refined elegance. The ergonomically designed seats feature new cushion material, while the armrest and ample legroom offer superior comfort for the rear-seat passengers.

The Corolla's interior is

planned keeping the convenience of passengers in mind. Depending on the trim level, occupants also benefit from AC vents for the rear seat, a moonroof, 4.2 or 7-inch color multi-information display (MID), 7-inch touch-screen multimedia infotainment display, rear view camera, cruise control, six-speaker sound system, and 60:40 split-folding rear seats.

Exemplifying Toyota's continuous commitment to providing environmentally friendly vehicles is the addition of a hybrid electric model, which combines two power sources consisting of a petrol engine and electric motor with a combined power of 121 hp.



It is also mated to an Electrically Controlled Continuously Variable Transmission, which provides an outstanding fuel consumption value of 27.6 km/L (Fuel economy may vary due to driving conditions) while improving the driving experience.

The Corolla hybrid contributes to a greener future while allowing

customers to enjoy increased driving satisfaction provided by its advanced technologies which offers exceptional cabin quietness and smooth acceleration, especially when accelerating from a stand-still.

The Corolla is also available as a 2.0-litre four-cylinder Dynamic Force engine which produces 168

hp and 20.39 kg-m of torque and is mated to a new Direct Shift CVT transmission; and a 1.6-litre four-cylinder engine that produces 121 hp and 15.7 kg-m of torque, which is paired with a CVT transmission.

As with any other Toyota model, safety remains a top priority for the Corolla, which includes a comprehensive array of features to protect its occupants, such as four SRS airbags, Vehicle Stability Control (VSC), Anti-lock Braking System (ABS), Brake Assist, Electronic Brakeforce Distribution (EBD), Tyre Pressure Monitoring System (TPMS), among many others.

Specifications of vehicle imported from Toyota Motor

Corporation are as per the GSO Conformity Certificate applicable to the model/grade. Parameters such as vehicle weight, dimensions & fuel economy could vary from the GSO Conformity Certificate due to fitment of dealer installed accessories. Pictures and colours shown may differ from actual specifications.

For the latest Press Releases, Test Drive requests and more, please visit www.toyotaoman.com, www.youtube.com/toyotaoman, www.facebook.com/toyotaoman and instagram.com/toyotaomanofficial/. For any further details & to ascertain availability of stocks, please visit your nearest Toyota Showroom.



APICORP announces leadership change



MUSCAT: The Arab Petroleum Investments Corporation (APICORP), a multilateral financial institution, announced on May 16, 2022 the appointment of Khalid bin Ali al Ruwaigh as its new CEO, taking over from Dr Ahmed Ali Attiga who led the organisation over the past five years, during which APICORP successfully navigated an ever-changing business and energy landscape.

Dr Aabed al Saadoun, Chairman of the APICORP Board said, "The appointment of Khalid bin Ali al Ruwaigh marks a new chapter in APICORP's journey of transformation amidst the shifts in the energy and financial sectors. We are cognisant of the importance, complexity and responsibilities of our developmental mandate, and we will continue to adapt to reflect the changing world around us."

Khalid bin Ali al Ruwaigh said, "I am excited to join APICORP and be part of its transformational journey. As a company with a unique mandate which sits at the nexus of the energy and financial worlds, the opportunities for growth are truly vast. I look forward to working with our capable management team, our board, and our shareholders to connect industry stakeholders, develop innovative solutions, and support projects which have a positive, tangible, and lasting impact on the lives of people in our part of the world."

EU ambassadors visit Duqm SEZ



BUSINESS REPORTER
MUSCAT, MAY 16

The Special Economic Zone at Duqm (SEZAD) received a delegation of 13 ambassadors and representatives of the European Union member states, who began a two-day visit to the SEZ on Sunday.

The delegation met with Dr Ali bin Masoud al Sunaidi, Chairman of the Public Authority for Special Economic Zones and Free Zones (OPAZ), and CEOs of companies operating in the Special Economic

Zone at Duqm.

They were briefed on the investment opportunities in the Special Economic Zone at Duqm and the package of incentives, advantages and facilities offered to investors and businesspersons. The delegation was also familiarised with the already developed and under construction projects in the Zone.

Further, the visit included a tour to various infrastructure projects and other key facilities in the Special Economic Zone at Duqm (SEZAD), such as the Port

of Duqm, Duqm Refinery, multi-purpose fishing port, the Fisheries and Food Industries Zone, Duqm Hong Tong Piping Factory, dry dock and Karwa Motors.

Commenting on this visit, Veronique Aulagnon, Ambassador of France and President of the European Union Member States delegation, pointed out that the visit aims to familiarise the delegation with the various investment opportunities in Duqm and explore what and how European countries can invest in.

She expressed that by visiting

the Special Economic Zone at Duqm, they can encourage companies from their countries to invest in this Zone.

"Duqm is very promising and bringing different developments in various sectors including green energy, fisheries, oil and gas, tourism and others where companies from Europe can form further joint ventures. This could be built on the already developed projects and businesses of many European companies from Belgium and France to name a few," she added.

Mazoon Electricity energises Saih Al Nama grid substation

AL SHARQIYAH: To increase efficiency and expand serving capability, Mazoon Electricity has energised the Saih Al Nama 2X20 MVA Primary Substation located in Al Mudhaibi at North Al Sharqiyah Governorate.

The Saih Al Nama 2X20 MVA Primary substation was constructed to relieve load from Mudhaibi Primary substation and accommodate normal growth in Mudhaibi and Saih Nama areas.



All primary substations in the area exceeds their firm capacity and is expected load growth and proposes reinforcement proposals to meet the growth of the area to the north of Mudhaibi in the years to

come. Saih Al Nama 2X20 MVA Primary substation was constructed to redistribute load from Mudhaibi Primary substation and accommodate normal growth in Mudhaibi and Saih Al Nama areas.

The energised Primary substation will serve Mudhaibi, Saih Al Nama and nearby areas and will increase the efficiency of the network and reduce supply interruptions. Mazoon Electricity's substation represents a broader effort to modernise the company's

infrastructure and make it more robust and sustainable.

The opening and energising of the substations come as a part of Mazoon Electricity's constant efforts to improve the performance level of the electrical networks in the various governorates that it provides services in. These developments will add value to the services the company extends and will contribute to boosting its overall capacity.

The Green Entrepreneurship Paradox: Are green and entrepreneurship incompatible?



UBAIS PARAYIL IQBAL

A recent discussion in a research debate group raised an intriguing point concerning the contradictory nature of the terms "Sustainability" and "Entrepreneurship." The obvious answer to the question of "whether sustainable business practices reduce the carbon footprints of entrepreneurial activities in a country to zero" is a resounding "NO."

It does, however, play a critical role in reducing the environmental impact of corporate activities and safeguarding natural resources.

Sustainability, according to Prof Knut Haanaes of IMD in Lausanne, Switzerland, has evolved into a business strategy that increases a company's longevity.

According to Talal Rafi, a member of the World Economic Forum Expert Network, the shifting perceptions of their surroundings have made sustainability more crucial for businesses.

The rising demand for sustainability adoption from a variety of stakeholders has created a new arena for businesses to compete in. As a result, businesses have begun to report on their sustainability efforts using various reporting frameworks and standards.

GRI is one of the most widely used frameworks for sustainability reporting (Global Reporting Initiative Standards).

PDO, Omantel, Oman Arab Bank, OQ, and Bank Muscat



are among the companies in the Sultanate of Oman that use GRI standards for sustainability reporting.

Apparently, all sustainability policies and practices across the globe are reserved for the big players and SMEs find no place in it. The erstwhile CSR and the current ESG are the best examples of giving overemphasis to big players in the industry. In fact, SMEs are also significant if we take them collectively.

Hence, we need an inclusive approach to sustainability rather than a reserved one.

The whole scenario of viewing sustainability as a competitive tool by these big players and the possibilities of undertaking dummy acts for the sake of reporting can decay the objectivity of sustainability policies by the government.

The most sustainable strategy to ensure green behaviours in any economy is to instil a

sustainability attitude among the people, rather than making reporting mandatory.

It is the collective obligation of the entire society to assure green business in an economy in order to create a brighter future for future generations, not only managers, employees, investors, or consumers.

Finally, rather than enforcing a sustainable mindset through the legal system, it's past time to invest in cultivating one. We need to restructure the curriculum to impart sustainability values, which will serve as the foundation for developing sustainable practices.

Green entrepreneurs will emerge organically in a society with a sustainability attitude, making the portmanteau "Green-entrepreneurship" compatible.

[The writer is a lecturer in the Business Studies Department of the University of Technology and Applied Sciences, Nizwa]

COMEX to host 'Tariq Clinic' tech workshop



BUSINESS REPORTER
MUSCAT, MAY 16

COMEX, the Sultanate of Oman's official technology event, in partnership with well-known ICT expert, Tariq bin Hilal al Barwani (pictured), is all set to launch "Tariq Clinic", an exclusive and engaging technology workshop run daily at the Oman Exhibition and Convention Centre (OCEC) during May 23 - 25.

The 'clinic' is aimed at educating and supporting the participants on opportunities, prospects and growth pertaining to their personal and professional technology development.

"Technology is a powerful tool that improves, supports, and transforms our lives on a daily basis. I am honoured to work closely with the organisers at COMEX to bring technology education closer to the society," said the multi-award winning technology expert and motivational speaker.

Tariq Clinic is an exclusive COMEX initiative that will be launched this year to educate the society on what it takes to become an IT expert, learn and develop oneself in IT, as well as make use of IT in running a business.

"Tariq has created innovative projects in technology and has gained valuable experience that has impacted the society at large. It is our privilege to partner with Tariq to bring his experience and knowledge closer to the society," said Amr bin Abdullah Baabood, CEO of OITE, the organiser of COMEX 2022.

Tariq has created projects in the form of computer programs, events, training, media entertainment programmes (TV and radio), and community initiatives in partnership with private and government organisations that have impacted the lives of thousands of people and many organisations positively.

How do higher interest rates bring down inflation?

JEFF SOMMER

It's nasty out there. Inflation is high, interest rates have been rising, and bond and stock prices have plummeted. Predictions of a possible recession are proliferating.

Clearly, this is a difficult moment for anyone who has saved or invested money — or is even thinking about doing so. Many people have questions.

So we invited readers to send a brief note, asking whatever they wanted to know about what was happening in the markets and the economy, and what it might mean for their financial life.

While I've been reporting and writing about finance and investing for more than 20 years, and on other subjects even longer than that, I certainly don't have all the answers. But I do what journalists always do: find an expert who does.

The role of interest rates

Many questions dealt with inflation and interest rates, which is our topic this week.

I've received help from two experts. One is Kathy Jones, chief fixed-income strategist at the Schwab Center for Financial Research. The other is Edmund S. Phelps, a Columbia University economist who won the Nobel Prize in economic science in 2006. He won the prize for his pathbreaking work on the trade-offs among inflation, wages and unemployment, and on how people's expectations about inflation may affect inflation itself.

The central question came from Karen van Kriedt in Marin County, California, who wrote, "How does raising interest rates counteract inflation?"

In a subsequent phone conversation, she said she wanted a better understanding of what inflation really is, and of how the Federal Reserve's actions end up affecting inflation in the real world. Her question looks simple, but its implications are profound.

The inflation situation is fairly grim. On Wednesday, the government issued fresh numbers for the consumer price index. Even the good news contained disturbing elements.

For the first time in months, annual inflation moderated in April. It's possible that, as I've been suggesting since February, inflation is near a peak, with the problems caused by the pandemic beginning to ebb. Nevertheless, the index still increased at an annual rate of 8.3%, which is near its fastest pace since 1981. It's clearly much too high.

In addition, core inflation — which



Inflation is high, interest rates have been rising and bond and stock prices have plummeted. Predictions of a possible recession are proliferating.

excludes groceries and gas — picked up 0.6% in April from the previous month, faster than its 0.3% increase in March. That's not a good sign.

The Fed is tightening monetary policy to fight inflation. More precisely, it is raising the short-term interest rate it controls directly, known as the federal funds rate. It is also reducing its own bond holdings and providing what it calls "forward guidance," which amounts these days to a series of warnings that interest rates will rise further. The Fed's actions have contributed to the turmoil afflicting the markets.

Supply and demand

As van Kriedt and I discussed, inflation occurs when too much money chases too few goods. When people have a lot of cash and not that much to spend it on, they often bid up prices. "Like they are doing with houses here in Marin County?" she asked.

Exactly, I said.

Jones and Phelps explained the mechanics of how inflation works.

So how might raising interest rates help here? One way of looking at rapidly rising prices — aka, a high rate of inflation — is as an imbalance of supply and demand. By raising short-term interest rates, and by influencing rates elsewhere in the economy, the Fed is making it more expensive to borrow money.

Mortgage rates are rising, for example, making it more costly to buy

a house. That may not lower inflation in home prices immediately because the supply of materials and available workers is so tight and demand is so high, mainly because of the pandemic. The Fed can't do much about those shortages. But as they resolve, perhaps within a year or so, higher interest rates are likely to shift the relationship of supply and demand, lowering the rate of inflation.

Jones, the strategist at Schwab, put it this way: "By raising rates, the Fed is trying to make you slow down your spending.

That happens when the cost of money goes up for a car loan or mortgage or something else you want to spend money on. At some point, you're going to pull back. The higher cost of money reduces your purchasing power — what you can afford to buy — and the Fed is effectively making you buy less. And that should bring down inflation."

The need to 'communicate'

Financial markets are reacting not just to what the Fed does but also to what it says it is going to do. Nick DeClerico of Philadelphia sent in a question about that.

The Fed's pronouncements about where it expects interest rates and inflation to go are called "forward guidance." DeClerico said he was "wondering why the Federal Reserve feels it necessary to constantly 'communicate' future

actions to the financial markets." At this moment, Phelps said, the Fed may be "scaring people in financial markets into believing that they should lower their expectations of inflation."

He added, "The Fed is saying we should believe the inflation rate is going to fall as a result of the Fed's efforts."

The idea is that "the markets are already expecting that the Fed is going to succeed in lowering expectations of inflation, and that will lower inflation itself."

That's the theory, at least. There's some evidence that it works. Longer-term interest rates have risen substantially this year, not just as a mechanical response to increases in the federal funds rate but as a reflection of changing views in the markets of where the Fed wants interest rates and inflation to be a year or two from now.

This approach has a drawback, however. It's like the old game of telephone.

Start by whispering "higher interest rates and a soft landing in the economy," and before you know it, this message, transmitted from person to person, has become totally different. The Fed's messages mean different things to different people. Some people are hearing "recession."

That, in my view, is a major reason for the heightened anxiety and volatility in the markets. There is no stable consensus on where the Fed is going or whether it can get there.

The Fed is tightening monetary policy to fight inflation. More precisely, it is raising the short-term interest rate it controls directly, known as the federal funds rate. It is also reducing its own bond holdings and providing what it calls "forward guidance," which amounts these days to a series of warnings that interest rates will rise further. The Fed's actions have contributed to the turmoil afflicting the markets.

Business travel resumes, though not at its former pace

JANE L LEVERE

Business travel appears to be returning, albeit unevenly, after all but disappearing for most of the pandemic.

Despite early predictions that Zoom meetings would supplant face-to-face encounters even after the coronavirus had receded, industry trade groups and hotel companies are pointing to significant upswings in small business meetings as well as larger conventions and trade shows in the past couple of months. Airlines also say bookings by business travellers have recently jumped.

What is not returning so quickly, executives and experts say, are business trips by individuals. Some employers continue to set limits on travel. In other cases, because of Covid-19 restrictions, visitors are not allowed in the offices of the people they want to see.

And reflecting the disparate pace of the recovery, domestic business travel has returned faster than international, and travel to and from Europe has had a

"If developed countries' economies remain strong and the war in Ukraine doesn't spread, then the business travel industry will have a good fall and winter and 2023 will be a good, possibly great, year for it."

HENRY HARTEVELDT
TRAVEL INDUSTRY ANALYST

bigger rebound than Asia bookings.

Even within the United States, the strength of the return of business travel depends on the destination.

In Las Vegas, the number of trade shows and events scheduled is actually higher this year than in 2019. But attendance is projected to be only 60% to 65% of the pre-pandemic level, said Steve Hill, president and CEO of the Las Vegas Convention and Visitors Authority. In New York, the city's tourism promotion body forecasts that business travel will not exceed 2019 levels until 2025.

Henry Harteveltdt, a travel industry analyst for Atmosphere Research, pointed to data on worldwide airline ticket sales that "shows a steady increase in the number of business travel tickets being issued." That, he said, is "concrete evidence that the rebound in business travel is under way."

Yet, for all the positive signs that business travel is taking root again, Russia's war in Ukraine, China's "zero Covid" lockdowns and the unpredictable path of the pandemic all threaten to stifle a widespread return to

2019 levels from happening anytime soon.

Robert Crandall, former president and chair of American Airlines, said the war in Ukraine could have significant consequences on the global economy. "People want to feel safe," he said. "This will make them feel less safe, which will have an adverse impact on travel."

Harteveltdt was more optimistic about the prospects for business travel. "If developed countries' economies remain strong and the war in Ukraine doesn't spread, then the business travel industry will have a good fall and winter," he said, "and 2023 will be a good, possibly great, year for it."

The renewed hope contrasts sharply with the mood two years ago, after most business trips were abruptly cancelled or suspended.

The US Travel Association, a trade group, said that in 2020, domestic business travel spending was down 68% from 2019 levels. And although the spending grew in 2021, the group said, it was still about half of what it was in 2019.

WJ Towell Group Company

Quality car rentals at competitive prices.

Muscat 9014 6672, 9679 0684
Sohar 9731 6218 Salalah 9429 9325
www.orbit-oman.com

• Fleet of 2,000 vehicles
• Choose from a wide range of brands & models
• PDO, OXY and BP spec vehicles available
• Attractive rates for short-term & long-term lease

أوربيت ORBIT
Car Rental & Lease

Classifieds

Ask For Free Demo

Cloud
Computing Services

Tally FOR VAT

For Tally Sales, Services or Customization

Contact: Guruprasad +968 79248644, 98753781
Email: guru.prasad@asiasolutions.net
ASIA SOLUTIONS

https://www.asiasolutions.net

TallyPrime

OMAN DAILY Observer Classified Section

TUESDAY MAY 17, 2022 | SHAWWAL 16, 1443 AH

Mohammed al Rashdi: 99841230
m.alrahd86@yahoo.com

Ali al Maashari: 99639264
ali.almashari@omandaily.om

Saada al Rashdi
95919344

94501166
24649593
24649595

Generator & Marine Engine
Sell & Repair

9351 0868

Husqvarna
FOREST & GARDEN TOOLS

POWERFUL. RELIABLE. TRUSTED BY EXPERTS.

OMAN'S BEST SELLING LANDSCAPE AND GARDEN TOOLS
Chainsaws| Hedge trimmer| Brush cutters| Lawnmowers| Blowers| Ride on mowers| Cultivators

CALL: 99631272 | EMAIL: gdsoman@gdsoman.com

Authorized Exclusive Distributors for Oman:
الشركة العامة لخدمات التنمية ش.م.م
GDS General Development Services L.L.C.

SIT VACANT

Urgent requirement - Civil engineer.
Reputed maintenance company requires 5-10 years Oman experienced, English speaking, BTEch/diploma holder with Fit out/ maintenance experience. Suitable candidate may forward CV to: directrecruit2022@gmail.com

BIN Management supervisor

1. Can handle team of 30 employee.
2. IT knowledge.
3. Knowledge of Telemetry system.
4. with 4 years of experience.
Please send the updated CV to the following e-mail IDs: Ahmed.Aliasee@imdaadab.om, HR@imdaadab.om

FOR RENT

FLATS, 2BHK and 1 BHK in Mumtaz ☎99341138/ 90991079.

FLATS, 2BHK in Ghubra near Indian School. ☎99341138/ 90991079.

SIT. WANTED

CARE taker for old lady over 90 years. Contact: 91724525.

LOOKING job as a cook. Bangladeshi, 50 years old. Indian, Chinese, Arabic & Continental food. 8 years Le Meridien 5 stars hotel in Dubai, 8 years Hyatt Regency 5 stars hotel in KSA & 10 years Omani house cook Muscat. Contact: 92943422.

INDIAN male (MBA Finance) having 7 years experience in Oman in accounts, looking for suitable position. Currently in Oman. Contact 77220864.

INDIAN male graduate Executive Secretary/ Stenography/ Oman DL and Muscat experience available. Contact 79256679.

SERVICES

A LEGAL translation office needs **Marketeers.** Contact E-mail: oman4n@gmail.com

AUTOCAD/REVIT ARCH MEP, part/ full- time. Contact WhatsApp: 79037728.

AL SUMRI AC maintenance. We are ready to repair and install all types of Air-Conditioner within Muscat Governorate. 94301888.

SITUATION WANTED
Mechanical Engineer with Master Degree from UK having 7.5 years work experience in Oman. Looking for a suitable Project Manager job role.
Contact: 91162085

JOB SEEKING

Sales & Operations supervisor in Shipping & logistics and freight warehouse industry 8 years experience with Oman driving license
Contact: +968 71917998

RENT A CAR

Buttercup Rent A Car AMAZING OFFERS
○ Rent a car for 10 days and get an extra free day.
○ Rent for one month and get 5 days free.
All the cars are 2016 brand new special prices for public departments, companies and long-term contracts.
☎972494490.

LUXURIOUS
Toyota bus 2016, air-conditioned, 30 passengers, offered for daily/monthly/ annually, Muscat. Contact: 98080609, 96316269.

FOR RENT

◆ **1, 2 & 3 BHK FLATS** in Central Ruwi

◆ **2 BHK FLAT** in Madinat Qaboos (Next To Brazilian Embassy)
Tel No.: 99643760 & 99346546

◆ **SUBSTANTIAL VILLA** in Hay Al Shatti Near Grand Hyatt 3 Floors with 40 Rooms, 22 Bathrooms, which is suitable for Embassy/Clinic/School/Multi purpose Office/Residential Premises
Tel No.: 99643760 / 24704994

AL NAMANI CARGO
DOOR TO DOOR AIR AND SEA CARGO WORLD WIDE

WORLD WIDE DOOR TO DOOR CARGO

INDIA • BANGLADESH
NEPAL • SRILANKA • INDONESIA
PHILIPPINES • AFRICA • EUROPE
USA • ALL GCC

TOLL FREE NUMBER
80066766
www.alnamanicargo.com

95587410, 9988 1554, 99638698, 94940231, 98523631
Branches : Ruwi, Hamryya, Dhala, Seeb, Barka, Suwayh, Sohar

FREE PICK UP 24/7

DR. NORA BARAKAT MD, MS
DERMATOLOGY AND AESTHETICS
MEDICINE SPECIALIST

CONSULTATION AVAILABLE
SAT TO WED 10AM TO 6PM
THU 9AM TO 2PM

CONTACT US
☎+968 24451726 • +968 79235354
AL MAASHARI TRADING COMPANY - SULTANATE OF OMAN
AL-SALAMAH@OMANMAIL.COM

EMERGENCY NO
+968 94502100

VIGAS CARGO
WORLD WIDE DOOR TO DOOR

Transportation, Packing & Cargo Services

◆ CARGO SERVICES BY AIR & SEA WORLD WIDE
◆ DOOR TO DOOR DELIVERY IN INDIA, INDONESIA & UK
◆ PROFESSIONAL PACKERS & MOVERS
◆ MUSCAT - DUBAI - MUSCAT REGULAR TRANSPORT

H.O. Ruwi
99851366
92495068

Ghubrah : 93571703
Falaj : 93571704
Store : 93571823
Misfa : 98119561
93260956
vigas.cargo@yahoo.com

SKT سماء الخضراء للتجارة
SAMA AL KHADRA TRADING

SERVICES:

PIPING SYSTEMS VALVES
DRAINS INTERCEPTORS

Tel: 24501568, 24502479 • Fax: 24503566
Email: sales@samaalkhadra.com
Website: www.samaalkhadratradingco.com

Quality Comes First

Tower Cranes & Passenger Lifts:
• Sales and Rental Services
• Installation
• Maintenance Service
• Breakdown Service
• Spare Parts Supply
• Hoist & Lowering
• Support Fixation
• Dismantling
Steel Fabrication Works

NEW MANARA TECHNICAL SERVICES LLC
Mobile: +968 9853 1975, 9853 1970
E-mail: info@newmanara.com / newmanaratechnical@gmail.com
Website: www.newmanara.com

SITUATION VACANT
Required for Ras Al Hamra Recreation Centre (PDO Club)
SWIMMING POOL LIFEGUARDS/ATTENDANTS (Male & Female) OMANIS ONLY

Qualification & Skills: Accomplished swimmer with recognized Life Saving and First Aid qualifications and certifications.
Must be fluent in written & spoken English.

Experience: 2 years working as Life Guard & Pool Attendant.

Job Responsibilities: Supervise swimming activities, children and other weak swimmers and ensure pool and safety guidelines are followed.
Must be willing to work shift duties and on weekends.

Note: A swimming test will be conducted to test the candidates swimming and rescue skills
Please email CV to: oceanint@omantel.net.om

To advertise on our social media platforms and website

Please Contact our Team
95210257

OMAN OBSERVER
www.omanobserver.com

Driving School

Special offers for those wishing to learn driving in (Aziba - Khwair Qurum - Ruwi Al Amirat)

Contact No: 99074072

AL KHOORY EQUIPMENT EST.
P.O. Box 545, P.C. 117, Al Wadi Al Kabir Area, Sultanate of Oman

Official distributor of **Schneider Electric**

Stockist & Wholesaler of Low Voltage Switchgear Products and a One Stop Solution for all Switchgear Products and Assembly

Tel: +968 24832474, +968 79474556
E-mail: alkhoory@omantel.net.om • www.alkhooryoman.com

Urgently Required

An Excellent Grade Electrical Company based in Oman has immediate requirements:-

Protection Engineer: BE in Electrical Engineering
DCRP Level 4
Minimum 7 Years experience in GCC in 33KV Substations.
Position Required - 1 No.

Testing Engineer: BE in Electrical Engineering
DCRP Level 3
Minimum 7 Years experience in GCC in 33KV Substations.
Position Required - 1 No.

Note: Candidates holding NOC/Transfer availability preferred.
Interested candidates may forward their CV & Expectations etc by Email: hrdepartment@gmail.com

Al Eman Dental Clinic

Flat 22, Floor 2
Abu Zaki Trading Building
Opp. Al Nahda Hospital
Sultan Qaboos Street

☎ : +968 24834113
☎ : +968 97454854
☎ : +968 96438854

Our Mission: To preserve your teeth and smile for a lifetime

OMAN DAILY Observer

For Advertisements
Please Contact with our Team:

Head Office
Mohd Al Rashdi
99841230
m.alrahd86@yahoo.com

Salalah Office
Bakhit Al Shihri
92998577
bakhit.omanidaily@gmail.com

Nizwa Office
Abdullah Al Abri
99429094
nizwaofc@omandaily.net.om

Suham Office
Musalam Al Sadi
99429192
sohardaily@outlook.com

Ali Al Maashari
99639264
wadiameeh@yahoo.com

OMAN OBSERVER

Now get news on the go

To receive news updates from OMAN OBSERVER,

WhatsApp
<your name> to
96473232

www.omanobserver.com @omanobserver



Strengthening bonds of friendship

A cultural programme held recently commemorated the 50th anniversary of the diplomatic relations between Oman and Japan. The highlight was staging of 'Noh', a major form of Japanese dance-drama in Muscat and the traditional Japanese tea ceremony drawing similarities with kahwa showcasing the essence of Omani hospitality. The event aimed to create opportunities for mutual understanding paving the way for cultural exchanges between the two countries... **P20**

150-year-old platypus specimen proved some mammals lay eggs

JARS OF 150-year-old platypus and echidna specimens that prove some mammals lay eggs have been discovered at an English museum. Collected in the late 1800s by the scientist William Caldwell, the tiny samples were found in the stores of Cambridge's University Museum of Zoology. When they were collected, these specimens were key to proving that some mammals lay eggs, a fact that changed the course of scientific thinking and supported the theory of evolution. The unique collection had not been catalogued by the museum, so until

recently staff did not know it existed. It was discovered when Jack Ashby, assistant director at the museum, was doing research for a new book on Australian mammals. He said: "It's one thing to read the 19th century announcements that platypuses and echidnas actually lay eggs. "But to have the physical specimens here, tying us back to that discovery almost 150 years ago, is pretty amazing." Ashby added: "I knew from experience that there isn't a natural history collection on Earth that actually has a comprehensive catalogue of everything in it, and

I suspected that Caldwell's specimens really ought to be here." He was right. Three months after Ashby asked Collections Manager Mathew Lowe to keep an eye out, a small box of specimens was found in the museum with a note suggesting they were Caldwell's, and Ashby's investigations confirmed this was the case. Until Europeans first encountered platypuses and echidnas, spiny anteaters, in the 1790s, it had been assumed that all mammals gave birth to live young. The question of whether some mammals lay eggs then became hotly debated in scientific circles. Experts say the newly discovered collection of little jars represents the huge scientific endeavour that went into solving this mystery. Ashby said: "In the 19th century, many conservative scientists didn't want to believe that an egg-laying mammal could exist, because this would support the theory of evolution, the idea that one animal group was capable of changing into another." He added: "Lizards and frogs lay eggs, so the idea of a mammal laying eggs was dismissed by many people, I think they felt



it was degrading to be related to animals that they considered 'lower life forms'." The newly discovered collection includes echidnas, platypuses and marsupials at varying life stages from fertilised egg to adolescence.

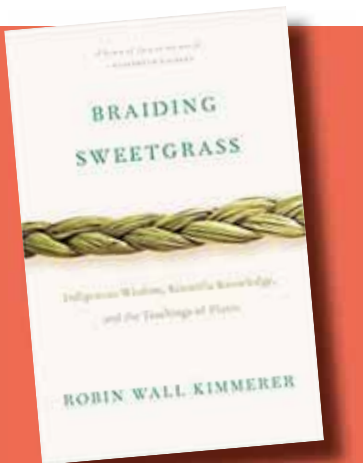
William Caldwell was sent to Australia in 1883, with substantial financial backing from the University of Cambridge, the Royal Society and the British Government, to resolve the long-standing mystery. — dpa

READ

BRAIDING SWEETGRASS

BY ROBIN WALL KIMMERER

Indigenous Wisdom, Scientific Knowledge and the Teachings of Plants, Robin Wall Kimmerer gives us a unique view on how to care for Mother Nature.



A DUSTY RIDE

A motorist drives a motorcycle-cart along a bridge in the city of Nasiriyah in Iraq's southern Dhi Qar province amidst a heavy dust storm. — AFP



FASHION

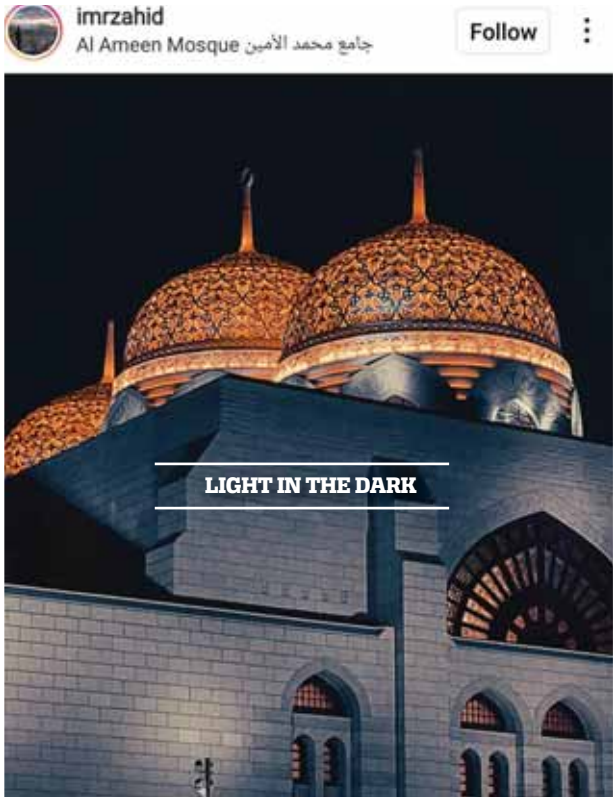
Models and designers prepare for a street fashion show, part of Ouaga Fashion Week 2022 in an hotel room used as backstage, in the popular neighbourhood of Dapoya in Ouagadougou. — AFP





find us on
TWITTER
Scan the QR Code or follow us on
www.twitter.com/omanobserver

INSTAGRAM TOP PICKS



SHARE A SLICE OF YOUR LIFE

We select three photos daily for our Instagram Top Picks of the Day. The rules are simple. Follow us on Instagram. Upload your photos. Tag us and use #OmanObserver and #BeAnObserver.



AROUND THE WORLD

MUSIC

Contemporary art to the metaverse: Takashi Murakami's poppy trip



TAKASHI MURAKAMI is known for blending pop art and Asian fine arts, but for his latest exhibition in New York, he is moving into the metaverse. At the show "An Arrow Through History" that opened this week at Manhattan's Gagosian Gallery, Murakami builds bridges from traditional fine arts to Japanese pop art to buzzy NFTs — the digital tokens that represent original artwork.

Murakami said he is concerned that younger generations are screen-obsessed and "don't understand the contemporary art history."

"They can enjoy very few things, but with the plus of augmented reality, maybe the young people open their eyes more and then step into the contemporary art scene," the 60-year-old Japanese artist said.

Of late, athletes, artists, celebrities and tech stars have been hawking NFTs, which use the same blockchain technology as cryptocurrencies.

"When I work on a creative production, I make no distinction between digital and analog," Murakami said in a statement from Gagosian.

"I'm always working in the context of contemporary art, and that context is all about whether I can be involved in events that manage to trigger a cognitive revolution."

'INTO THE METAVERSE'

In one piece, Murakami painted thick canvases and wooden structures the blue and white patterns of fish, inspired by Chinese porcelain vases dating back to the Yuan Dynasty (1279-1368).

Using Snapchat and an augmented reality filter, visitors can be immersed in the exhibition room via their phones, standing among digital images of fish that swim among the physically real works of art.

"Japanese culture originally came from the Eurasian continent, and my concept has been to go beyond from there into the metaverse, shooting through the history of art with a single arrow," Murakami said in the statement.

The metaverse is an immersive virtual reality which is accessible with augmented or virtual reality glasses, and is a concept that has experienced a boost in recent years.

Stuck at home during the coronavirus pandemic, Murakami told AFP that "I was watching the reality in my house, so that was a very monumental moment."

"For us it was getting super stressful every day, we could not go outside," he said — but his kids could enjoy VR.

"That meant I had to change the mind, to fit in with the next generation of my kids," he said. "This is my first answer — the show."

Murakami is also set to open a special exhibition at The Broad contemporary art museum in Los Angeles, titled "Takashi Murakami: Stepping on the Tail of a Rainbow," which will include immersive environments and run from May 21 until September 25. — AFP

ENTERTAINMENT

Box Office: 'Doctor Strange 2' Rules Again as 'Firestarter' Flames Out



"DOCTOR STRANGE in the Multiverse of Madness" is again the No 1 movie at the domestic box office.

In its second weekend of release, the latest installment in Disney's Marvel Cinematic Universe has collected \$61 million from 4,534 North American theaters. Ticket sales were down 67% from its opening weekend, marking a steeper drop off compared to recent Marvel movies like "Eternals" (which declined 61% in its second weekend) and "Shang-Chi and the Legend of the Ten Rings" (which declined 52% in its second weekend). However, that sizable decline is not surprising since "Doctor Strange 2" is coming off the 11th biggest opening weekend in history with \$187 million. After 10 days on the big screen, the standalone superhero adventure has grossed a strong \$291 million in North America.

At the international box office, the "Strange" sequel added \$83.5 million from 49 markets. In total, the film has grossed \$688.1 million globally.

When Disney unleashes a Marvel movie in theaters, rival studios tend to shy

away from opening new films — or risk getting crushed in its wake. Over the weekend, two movies opened nationwide to disappointing results. Universal's disturbing remake of Stephen King's "Firestarter" fizzled with \$3.8 million from 2,412 screens while landing simultaneously on Peacock; and the Roadside Attractions faith-based comedy "Family Camp" generated a paltry \$1.4 million from 854 locations. Neither of those films were particularly expensive to produce, meaning it may not be nightmarish to get those films to turn a profit, but it's certainly not the kind of coinage that studios hope to generate when putting a new film in cinemas across the country.

"Firestarter" was dinged by negative reviews and poor word-of-mouth. The film, about a girl with extraordinary pyrokinetic powers, landed a 12% on Rotten Tomatoes and a "C-" CinemaScore from moviegoers. Those weak figures suggest that the few people who saw the film over the weekend will not be rushing home to tell their friends to watch it in theaters. The most shocking aspect of

"Firestarter" is that "High School Musical" heartthrob Zac Efron is officially old enough to play a dad on the big screen. And yet that was not enough to entice audiences.

Just how bad were opening weekend ticket sales for "Firestarter"? To put them in perspective, the original 1984 film, starring Drew Barrymore, had a bigger start — not adjusted for inflation — grossing \$4.7 million from 1,356 theaters. The latest "Firestarter" may get a boost on Peacock, the streaming service owned by NBC Universal, but the company did not provide streaming metrics.

David A Gross, who runs the movie consulting firm Franchise Entertainment Research, believes ticket sales were flattened because the film is already available at home.

"Firestarter" has a lot of production pedigree; Blumhouse and Stephen King are consistent hit-makers," says Gross. But, he adds, "having the movie available on streaming at the same time it's in theaters reinforces that this is not big-screen, must-see entertainment." — Reuters



Dr Khalid Mohammed al Balushi
khalidalbalushi@hotmail.com

It Either Carries the Camel, or Else it Doesn't Wet the Load the Camel Carries"

THE FOLLOWING is my English translation of an excerpt from "A Soldier from Oman: Memory's Nectar" by (ret.) Inspector-General Said bin Rashid al Kalbani

ALMADIYYINA COUNTING

Almadiyyina is village of the Ghafri tribe. Its people were in the past renowned for mathematically determining the seasons. As far as I know, they would do that in the following manner:

Aláqoor, the raining winter season, would last for 100 days, divided in tenths:

The 1st -30th days: Starting early in winter, this period was known as bwakeer aláqrabi. The wind blew northerly, and the rainfall would focus, by and large, on the coastal areas and their bordering mountains. Aláqrabi would continue for another twenty days, and the wind would blow westerly.

The 4th ten days: Known locally as dafwat al nabbat, this period was distinguished by high temperature and the ripening of the date palm trees.

The 5th ten days: This period was known locally as the "old ten". It was named after, according to our narrative tradition, a woman who cut off her goat's hair in the first 40 days, thinking that winter had all but finished and summer started. When cold came in the following ten days her cattle died of cold, thus the period was named after her, rather than after her cattle, which perished because of her miscalculations.

The 6th ten days: This period was known as albilli, after the blossoming of citrus trees. The same name was given to the 7th ten days, also known as al jamaleel, as the men on camels would start to take rest in the afternoon. In the 8th ten days, known as Shilli, all the yields of buckthorn would be harvested. The same name was given to the 9th ten days, which were also called A'awo, as the wind hammered bundles of dried cattle fodder, making noises much like the howling of wolves. (Nowadays A'awo is heard in palm trees and mountains. We hear it coming from doors and windows, as the wind penetrates through their tightly closed pores). The last 10th days, called lamya, the Auqoor ended with a heavy downpour.

People would then start measuring the summer season. Though they thought it to be 100 days long, they would only calculate 40 days. The first ten days, called ghyoob al thariyya, witnessed heavy downpours, the arrival of magpies and the blossoming of the flowers of the samr trees, known locally as albarim. In the second ten days, the birds continued to flock in, and the possibility of downpour persisted. In the last third ten days, we would see the arrival of a bird type known locally as warrad, and the rains continued though only sporadically on the coastal and the neighbouring mountainous areas.

A distinguishing feature of the rain during these ten days was that it either poured rather heavily or didn't pour at all. No wonder our elders used to say, "It either carries the camel, or else it doesn't wet the load the camel carries". After that came the last forty days, in which the early signs of summer dates as well as of honey appeared. With the end of the days, the Madiyyina counting stopped only to start all over again with the subsequent winter.

(In many parts of Oman, there are those who are well versed in astrology. People on the coasts are conversant with the wave movements and fish migration. Each area has its own survival mechanism).

* The Arabic word for camel is "jamel" (translator)

art & life

Local Scene

f t i y l p v @omanobserver

TUESDAY | MAY 17 | 2022

Photos Courtesy of:
Yamato Ikehara
Yuki Tsuji
Plants Sculpture Studio Inc

Liju Cherian
@lijucherianoman

The Sultanate of Oman and Japan have some similarities in common with regard to the Omani kahwa and the Japanese tea, traditionally on how to communicate with the people and society.

2022 marks the 50th anniversary for diplomatic relations between Japan and Oman. To celebrate this, a group of artists visited Oman in March to further friendship between the two countries.

The International Association for the Global Agenda with its founder member Miki Oikawa and public interest incorporated association Hosho-kai Chairman Atsushi Nishikori organised a major form of Japanese dance-drama called 'Noh' for the first time in Muscat and performed 'Shakkyo' on March 8 as part of the cultural programmes.

The play 'Shakkyo,' was performed at Royal Opera House Muscat (ROHM), where the Japanese boy in the first half used costumes imagining the flag of Oman.

In the stage arts managed by the flower arrangement artist Yuki Tsuji, decorations by Japanese Ikebana used local plants, presenting a world view of each country.

Hundreds of visitors visited the performance which included high-level officials from the Government of Oman, ambassadors and diplomats from other countries, as well as students with a strong interest in Japanese culture from Sultan Qaboos University (SQU) and other universities.

The theme of the project was 'Resilience and Revitalisation' based on the situation due to the pandemic.

Various programmes included poetry reading by the award-winning poet Hassan al Matrooshi followed by the significant dance of lion performed by Kazufusa Hosho, the 20th Grand Master of Hosho School of Noh, an exhibition of traditional Japanese arts and crafts related to Noh theatre art held at the Cultural Club, a lecture by the Grand Master Hosho, and a workshop about the tea ceremony and its experience.

Jota Yamamoto, Ambassador of Japan in Oman, who co-hosted the event, says, "It was an opportunity for Omanis to deepen their understanding of Japan. I would like to develop these opportunities on an ongoing basis and further promote exchanges between the two countries."

Miki Oikawa from International Association for the Global Agenda, who hosted the event, said the initiative not only deepened mutual understanding between the two countries but also promoted understanding of the culture of Middle Eastern Arab countries and Muslims in Japan, and was consistent with the vision of promoting understanding of the diversity of Global Agenda.

"I feel the participation of various groups enabled us to deepen exchanges on each other's culture and deep spirituality. We will continue to work to increase opportunities that will lead to further development of both the countries," she added.

While Kazufusa Hosho, the 20th Grand Master of Hosho School of Noh, who also hosted the event, was of the view that although Japan and Oman seemed distant from each other, he was able to feel the commonalities such as design, humanity, and ideas about nature.

Toru Nakai, Director of Japan Art and Culture Association, says Omani people respect each other and value the nature of harmony and tradition. The visit, he says, helped cultural exchange programmes in which both countries understand each other deeply.

He also drew similarities between Nishijin and Omani textiles, and compared the final product with differences regarding the design, thread dyeing or weaving.

"However, we can feel similarities on its sensitivity which nurtures with nature and the long history of the artisan's technique passed on from generations until the present," he adds.

Tea Master, Ryo Iwamoto, says that the custom of having kahwa with dates is exactly the same as the Japanese tea. "As a Japanese person, I felt comfortable while tasting kahwa. We can emphasise it as a cultural similarity and I expect we create more opportunities for Omani people to understand Japanese culture and to have Japanese tea much like the Omani way."

"I would like to know more about the traditions of Omanis and will be glad to have them visiting us the next time in Japan," he says.

Miki Oikawa, Global Agenda, says while in Oman, she prefers to sit on the floor with Omani friends and taste kahwa.

"I would like Omani people to show how Japanese traditional life is similar and it is great to have friendship and welcome the guests. For the past 20 years, every time I visit Oman, I found something similar and lasting memories and expect my future visits to be yet another experience," she concludes.

Strengthening bonds of friendship

