

ROYAL OFFICE MINISTER RECEIVES AMBASSADORS

Gen. Sultan Mohammed Al Nu'amani, Minister of the Royal Office received on Sunday Khalid Mohammed Abdul Halim Radi, Ambassador of Egypt and Noralizan Abdula Momin, Ambassador of Brunei Darussalam to the Sultanate of Oman. **>A5**



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RNO HANDS OVER SULTAN QABOOS SAILING TROPHY

The Royal Navy of Oman (RNO) handed over the winner of the Sultan Qaboos Sailing Trophy (11th edition) to the winner in the city of Dunkirk, the Republic of France. The event, which reflects the Sultanate of Oman's interest in sailing at the regional and international levels, coincides with the 53rd glorious National Day. **>A3**



Founded 1975 · Volume 48 No. 185 | 16 Pages · Baisas 200 · Subscription OMR63 | ISO 9001:2008 Certified Company | Chairman/Editor-in-Chief: Mohamed Issa Al Zadjali | Printed & Published by Muscat Media Group

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MINISTRY PLANS TO INVEST OMR2.5BN IN TRANSPORT AND LOGISTICS SECTOR

The transport ministry workshops generated 27 investment opportunities

Times News Service

MUSCAT: The Ministry of Transport, Communications and Information Technology for Transport has planned a schedule to invest about OMR2.5 billion in the transport and logistics sector for the period between 2021 and 2025.

Eng. Khamis Mohammed Al Shammakhi, Undersecretary of the Ministry of Transport, Communications and Information Technology for Transport, confirmed the plan during workshops



aimed to attract investments in the transport and logistics sector.

He pointed out that the value of the envisaged projects stood at OMR1.4 billion. This, he said, pertains to declared or yet-to-be-floated investment opportunities.

The second set of workshops to

review investments in transport and logistics sector were reviewed on Sunday by the Ministry of Transport, Communications and Information Technology and the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA).

The workshops generated 27 investment opportunities and 6

enabling initiatives for the improvement of the logistics sector.

Organised by the Ministry and the CAA, with the support from the National Programme for Investment and Export Development "Nazdaher", the programme lasted for two weeks during which

the team of organisers held meetings with relevant authorities.

During the workshops, investors and private companies had a chance to identify related challenges, shape their ideas and study investment opportunities in co-operation with "Nazdaher".

Logistics

It is noteworthy that the workshops and clinics seek to attract investment in transport and logistics, and improve the sector's attractiveness to Omani cadres, and the Sultanate of Oman's ranking in the Logistics Performance Index.

They also aim to solve the challenges of ongoing projects, frame new investment opportunities, and work on the capabilities that support investment in the sector.

About 250 employees from 56 government and private establishments participated in the workshops, in addition to 15 investors from Oman and abroad.

-WITH ONA inputs

TOP THREE INSIDE STORIES

OMAN

Nearly a million visit Dhofar Khareef

1 The number of visitors to the 2023 Dhofar Khareef season stood at 962,000, compared to 813,000, a rise of 18.4% over the corresponding period in 2022. **>A3**

WORLD

UN bodies renew call for ceasefire in Gaza

2 The heads of several major United Nations (UN) bodies stressed the need to stop attacks on schools, children and shelters, and called for an immediate ceasefire. **>A6**

WORLD

Nicaraguan crowned as Miss Universe

3 Sheynnis Palacios from Nicaragua was crowned Miss Universe 2023 on Sunday at the Jose Adolfo Pineda Arena in San Salvador. **>A7**

COMMENTARY

The new meaning of USA: United Savage Apartheid



MOHAMED ALZADJALI

The world now has a new abbreviation for USA: It is United Savage Apartheid (USA). This is a reflection of the unholy nexus between the United States, Israel and other countries which are supporting the Zionist regime, who have launched a brutal and savage attack on the Palestinians in Gaza.

As the truth unravels of October 7 attacks in Israel, shocking details point out to the handiwork of the Israel Defence Forces (IDF) in the shooting of innocent Israeli citizens at the Nova trance music festival, around three miles from the border with the Gaza Strip.

Leading Israeli newspaper Haaretz has reported that an Israeli police investigation into the Hamas attack on the Nova music festival on October 7 revealed that an Israeli attack helicopter killed innocent Israeli attendees.

The truth is a bitter pill to swallow but now there are videos confirming that the IDF was involved in the killing of its own citizens and the blame was put on Hamas.

According to an independent investigation, the Israelis have often put the blame on Hamas and used all their propaganda machinery to sell their lies. The latest bunch of lies was witnessed when the Israeli media televised the clips of hospitals to prove that it was being used by Hamas. Be it a normal cal-



endar portrayed as a roster of shifts of Hamas or other clips, which exposed IDF fake stories rather than reveal any truth of Hamas' using hospitals to launch any attacks.

Unfortunately, the problem is the belief of the Western world and the Western media that they are watching Hamas terror rather than accepting it as the handiwork of IDF terror or IDF's fake propaganda.

The fabricated stories of the IDF are much to the liking of few Western media. The Western world is only aware of one version given by the IDF. They are unable to see the truth and it is a sad irony that when investigations from even Israeli media like Haaretz are hidden.

The big question is: Is the Western media fair and is the handling of news in the current conflict fair? The reply is No and the world is made to believe that all bad things are done by Hamas and Israel plays the victim card.

It's like the Western world wants to hear only evil things from the media. The other day I was watching the BBC, when they first reported that the IDF had entered the Al Shifa Hospital. The BBC newsreader talked about the IDF terrorising the

patients, Arab speakers, medical staff and their relatives. However, they soon realised that it was an incorrect version and the BBC then issued an apology for the wrong information provided earlier.

Worse was to show that the IDF was involved in a humane gesture by showing that they brought incubators to save the new-born babies. The truth is that many new-born babies died and were evacuated during the Israeli raid on Al Shifa Hospital.

One can imagine how the IDF and the Israel government control the media in the West. We have seen in the past how the USA has used big lies to justify their attacks on other nation's sovereignty. One remembers very well how the USA used the excuse of weapons of mass destruction (WMD) in Iraq to launch their attacks. The world came to know that the WMD story was all lies and they had other reasons to attack Iraq.

It is a similar story in Gaza now. This time the USA and Israel claim that the Hamas command headquarters are under the Al Shifa hospital to justify their horrific raid that has led to deaths of innocent children and other patients. **>A5**

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TENDER NOTICE

Oman Water & Wastewater Services Company (Nama Water Services) hereby announces the following Tenders: -

Tender No.	Description	Eligibility	Tender Fee (RO)	Last Date of Safe Tender Documents	Bid Submission Date
T/2545959/2023	Consultancy Services for Design and Supervision for Sewer, TE Networks and STP (Phase I) Project at Al-Suwaiaq	Local Companies registered with Government Tender Board and International Companies specialized in the works mentioned	R.O. 1,500/- (Plus 5% VAT) Non-refundable	5/12/2023	8/1/2024
T/2544961/2023	Consultancy Services for Design and Supervision for Sewer, TE Networks and STP (Phase I) Project at Barka	Local Companies registered with Government Tender Board and International Companies specialized in the works mentioned	R.O. 1,500/- (Plus 5% VAT) Non-refundable	5/12/2023	8/1/2024
T/2542960/2023	Consultancy Services Supervision for Construction of Remaining Works of Sohar Sewage Network (Phase -III)	Local Companies registered with Government Tender Board and International Companies specialized in the works mentioned	R.O. 500/- (Plus 5% VAT) Non-refundable	5/12/2023	25/12/2023

The tender document can be purchased from Oman Water and Wastewater Services Company (Nama Water Services) e-tendering page (Supplier Login) from the date of publication of this announcement until 5/12/2023. The applicants shall pay the tender fee through electronic payment gateway through Supplier Login. Applicants who are not registered with Oman Water and Wastewater Services Company (Nama Water Services) shall register from <https://owwsc.nama.om/Business-with-Us/Vendor-Registration> to have the login credentials of Supplier portal.

All applicants who have paid the tender fee shall have access to the Tender Documents through Nama Water Services e-tendering page (Supplier Login). All participating Companies shall submit a Bid Bond of **1%** of the bid value in a sealed envelope to Oman Water and Wastewater Services Company (Nama Water Services) Chairman of Tender Committee not later than **3:00 pm** on the bid submission date.

Bid Bond must be obtained from a Bank registered in the Sultanate of Oman and it should be addressed in favour of Oman Water and Wastewater Services Company (Nama Water Services). The bid along with all required documents shall be uploaded through Oman Water and Wastewater Services Company (Nama Water Services) e-tendering page not later than 3:00 pm on the date specified above. For more details refer to Tender Page of our [website www.owwsc.nama.om](http://www.owwsc.nama.om) or Email to: tender@owwsc.nama.om



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COMMENTARY

Midnight Chaos



SALEH AL-SHAIBANY

I blame the congested urban life for many of our problems these days. We live uncomfortably close together divided by thin concrete walls. We may tolerate the noise from the house next door during the day but we need the night to be peaceful.

Last month, as I was prepared to go to sleep just after midnight, the peace of the night was shattered by loud music coming from a house celebrating a wedding. They were having their fun as the world was starting to take a break from a busy routine. About fifty people were on the terrace making as much noise as possible making sure the whole neighbourhood was aware of their party. My first impulse was to call the police but I thought it would not do any good.

I went to bed knowing sleep would not come easy. I lay awake with the tempo of music vibrating the very floor my bed stood on. I was a guest to a wedding party that I was not invited but forced to take part until two in the morning.

Keeping silent to disrupting actions of others is common. I guess most of us are tolerant and in doing so we allow ourselves to suffer silently. A week later, two teenagers decided to have some fun in the middle of the night. They made their presence felt with the wheels



of their cars squealing as they drove fast on the narrow roads.

I parted the curtain and peered outside in the dark. The light from the half moon was shining on two cars racing side by side at a break neck speed. They disappeared around a bend and then one of them came back spinning a full circle before straightening up and narrowly missing hitting a tree.

The second car followed behind in hot pursuit and did a similar spin, straightened up and the driver drove straight towards a graveyard compound. I watched in horror as the car ploughed on the brick wall. There was a terrible noise as the headlamps picked up dust lifting up in the air mixed with grey smoke erupting from the radiator, I guessed I acted on impulse and rushed out of the house. I was not alone.

My neighbours were outside making their way to the car. Miraculously, the young driver staggered out from the metal and brick ruins looking very dazed. His racing friend did not even bother to stop and try to help. He sped away leaving his friend facing the music.

However, the young man recovered quickly and started to walk away from the scene. I learned later that he did not have a driving license nor the car was his.

I went to sleep that night knowing that, although the two men broke the peace of the night, I harboured no ill-feeling against them. Sometimes, disruptions come to an end peacefully but in that occasion it nearly concluded in a disaster. I would have felt guilty if the accident had caused a fatality but I slept easy knowing that all ended well. The following morning, I shared some thoughts with one of my neighbours. We agreed that not all the nights are as peaceful as they used to be in our street. As a matter of fact, the days are quieter and uneventful.

Before we parted company, I looked at the broken wall and the overturned white car. The scene was a strong evidence that there was no definitive plan for disruption. Everybody deserves some peace and quiet during the night. Anyone who is insensitive to that basic need does so at their own peril.

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MINISTRY OF LABOUR

More than 200 jobs for Omanis

Times News Service

MUSCAT: The Ministry of Labour has announced the availability of more than 200 job vacancies in private sector institutions that are operating in North Al Batinah Governorate for Omani job seekers who have not worked previously.

North Al Batinah
The Ministry of Labour, represented by the Directorate General of Labour in North Al Batinah Governorate, announced to job seekers (who have not previously worked), the availability of 250 opportunities in private sector institutions in the governorate.

Subsidy initiative
Those who wish to benefit from the wage subsidy initiative, can apply through the job opportunities service (wage support initiative) on the Ministry's website: www.mol.gov.om or register through the Ma3ak application.



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Nearly 1 million tourists visited Dhofar in Khareef



Spending by visitors
this year reached
OMR103 million
compared to OMR86
million in 2022

Times News Service

MUSCAT: The number of visitors to Dhofar during the Khareef season 2023 recorded an increase of 18.4 per cent to reach about 962,000 compared to 813,000 visitors last year.

Spending
Data issued by the National Center for Statistics and Information also indicated an increase in spending by visitors this year, reaching OMR103 million compared to OMR86 million in 2022,



while the number of nights of stay of visitors also increased to 7 million nights compared to 6 million nights in the Khareef season 2022. The data showed that the number of Omani visitors reached 666,307, representing 69.2 per cent of the total, while the number from the Gulf Cooperation Council countries reached 190,853, representing 19.8 per cent. 68,100 tourists came from Asian countries. The number of visitors from Arab countries reached 31,214, and 3,740 visitors were from Eu-

rope, 1,982 visitors from other countries. Spending on stay increased by 19.4 per cent during this year compared to the 2022 season, recording OMR33.6 million accounting for 32.2 per cent of total spending, followed by spending on food and drink at OMR 25,598,657, accounting for 24.9 per cent of the total spending. While spending on travel tickets accounted for 18.8 percent, amounting to OMR19,268,818 while spending on other items amounted to OMR 24,693,979.

Oman condemns targeting of Al-Fakhoura school in Gaza

MUSCAT: The Foreign Ministry has voiced the Sultanate of Oman's denunciation and rejection of the persistent, unjustifiable military assaults launched by Israeli occupation against the Palestinian people, including the heinous massacre that took place at Al-Fakhoura school, which is affiliated to the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA). The assault killed many civilians who had been displaced from the Gaza Strip. While expressing its condolences to the families of the martyrs

and its wishes of speedy recovery for the injured, Oman values the staunch struggle of the valiant Palestinian people who keep withstanding Israel's injustice, relentless aggression and continuous occupation of the Palestinian territories in flagrant violation of the international law and the resolutions of the United Nations (UN) Security Council. **Sanctions on Israel** Oman also reiterates its call on the international community to take practical measures and impose deterrent sanctions on Israel to stop

its aggression and the crimes it commits against civilians. Oman affirms that such practices are exercised in stark contempt and disregard for human souls and human dignity in blatant violation of UN charters and international norms, including the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and international humanitarian law. It expresses its rejection of Israel's continuous, inhumane siege and blockade on the Gaza Strip, depriving the population there of basic living necessities including fuel, water, food and medicine. -ONA



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RNO hands over Sultan Qaboos Sailing award



DUNKIRK: The Royal Navy of Oman (RNO) handed over the winner of the Sultan Qaboos Sailing Award (11th edition) to the winner in the city of Dunkirk, the Republic of France. The event, which reflects the Sultanate of Oman's interest in sailing at the regional and international levels, coincides with the 53rd glorious National Day. The Sultan Qaboos Sailing Award for this year (2023) was won by the Polish sailing ship Dar Młodzieży. The award ceremony took place during the closing of an annual sailing conference organized by the International Sail Training Association, under the patronage of Azza Hamoud Al Busaidi, Chargé d'Affaires of the Sultanate of Oman's Embassy in Paris. The Sultan Qaboos Sailing Trophy is supervised by the RNO

in cooperation with the International Sail Training Association. It was first launched in the Kingdom of Norway in 2011 under the Royal orders of late Sultan Qaboos bin Said. It is considered the most prestigious award in the field of sailing. This award lends great support to sail training worldwide. This is in addition to its humanitarian roles in spreading fraternity, co-operation, love and peace. The award ceremony was attended by Commodore Mohammed Hamoud Al Zadjali, Senior Staff Officer at the RNO, the Military Attaché at the Embassy of the Sultanate of Oman in Paris (non-resident for Germany, Italy, Spain and Austria), RNO officers, the President of the International Sail Training Association, among other officials and experts. -ONA



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4TH EDITION OF HIMAM TRAIL RUN RACE FROM NOVEMBER 23

Over 600 participants from 62 countries will compete in the main distances and nearly 2,000 runners in fun and kids' races

MUSCAT: The fourth edition of the Himam Trail Run Race will begin on November 23 (Thursday), with a diverse lineup of races and elite runners from across the globe over three days.

Organised by the Al Dakhiliyah Governorate and with the Ministry of Heritage and Tourism as main partner, this year's race will take place in the scenic terrains of Al Hajar Mountain Range and features over 600 participants from 62 countries competing in the main distances, and nearly 2,000 runners in the fun and kids' races.

The classic and challenging Al Hajar Ultra 110km kicks off on November 23, starting in the picturesque town of Al Hamra. In this challenging trail, runners will embark on a journey through the rugged beauty of Jabal Akhdar before descending into Birkat Al Mouz.

Along the way, they will navigate rocky paths, climb steep inclines, and take in the stunning views of the surrounding landscape, ultimately gaining a total of 5700 metres of elevation.

Another race is the technical and scenic Skyward Canyon 55km or Scenic Sprint 20km races, both starting on November 24 in Izki and Birkat Al Mouz consecutively.

Runners will expect a truly unforgettable experience as they navigate rocky paths, climb steep inclines, and take in the breathtaking views of the surrounding landscape.

The 20km distance is a completely new trail designed to give runners scenic views of authentic Omani landscapes.

A range of shorter distances are also on offer to enable more members of the community to embark on the wonders of trail runners with the Hilly Haven 10km, Village Rush 5km, Mini Marvels 4km, and the Tiny Titans races (2km

and 1km) taking place over the weekend. These trails are designed to cater to all levels of runners, from elite athletes to young enthusiasts.

The event will see a roster of elite runners includes Jason Schlarb (USA), Kristina Schou Madsen (Denmark), Mohammad Reza (Iran), Aziza El Amrany and Rachid Al Emrany (Morocco), Salama Alaqra (Jordan), and Perrine Fages (France), adding a competitive edge to the race. Their presence is a testament to the race's growing prominence in the international mountain running community.

In addition to the races, the event will feature an exhibition appealing to sports enthusiasts, with various vendors, sports-related activities, and food options.

The exhibition, set against the backdrop of the beautiful Bait Ar Rudaydah castle in Birkat Al Mouz, will run from November 22-25, coinciding with Oman's 53rd National Day holidays.

This exhibition is an opportunity to engage with the community and visitors from within and outside Oman, enhancing the event's festive atmosphere.

Mohammed Al Riyami, Vice-President of the Himam Trail Run Race, highlighted that preparations for this year's race began a year ago, aiming to offer an experience marked by high levels of organisation and professionalism.

He said, "The race is a culmination of years of experience and dedication, with the goal of making it a landmark event at both the Middle East and international levels. The unique Al Hajar Mountain Range provides a distinctive terrain that has gained international recognition, adding to the race's allure".

The Himam Trail Run Race main races are accredited by the International Trail Running Association (ITRA).

This inclusion allows competitors to earn internationally recognised points and improve their global rankings in trail running.

The race is supported by various organisations, including the Ministry of Culture, Sports and Youth, the SMEs Development Authority, ASYAD Group, Oman Airports, Be'ah, and Al Safa Foods, reflecting its significance and impact at multiple levels, from promoting tourism, healthy lifestyle and fitness to contributing economically to the region.





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MEETINGS

GAZA WAR

Royal Office Minister receives envoys of Egypt and Brunei Darussalam



MUSCAT: Gen. Sultan Mohammed Al Nu'amani, Minister of the Royal Office received in his office on Sunday Khalid Mohammed Abdul Halim Radi, Ambassador of the Arab Republic of Egypt to the Sultanate of Oman.

Al Nu'amani underlined the bilateral relations between Oman

and Egypt and the advancement of those relations in various fields of interest.

In his turn, the ambassador expressed his appreciation for the Sultanate of Oman's stances regarding several regional and international issues. He also underscored Oman's active roles



in bridging points of views and calling for resolving issues by peaceful means.

Further, the two sides exchanged views regarding a number of matters of common concern.

Meanwhile, Gen. Sultan Mohammed Al Nu'amani, Minister of the Royal Office also received in

his office today Noralizan Abdula Momin, Ambassador of Brunei Darussalam to the Sultanate of Oman.

During this meeting, the two sides reviewed areas of joint co-operation and means of enhancing them. They also discussed several issues of mutual interest. -ONA

North Al Sharqiyah gears up for winter tourism

The Governorate aims to further develop the tourism sector through organising seasonal events related to desert, mountain or water adventure tourism

Times News Service



IBRA: The Heritage and Tourism Department in North Al Sharqiyah Governorate has completed all preparations for the winter tourism season, which extends from October to April every year to attract tourists from within and outside the Sultanate of Oman.

Samiyah bint Hamad Al Bu-

saidi, Director of Heritage and Tourism Department in North Al Sharqiyah Governorate, said that the department is reviewing the preparations of the hotel establishments in the wilayats of the Governorate and followed with the commitment of these estab-

lishments with the quality standards set by the Ministry of Heritage and Tourism.

The department also reviewed the safety of means of transport within the camps and the hotel establishments and verified the validity of the related tourism li-

cences, she added.

She said that the wilayats of North Al Sharqiyah Governorate are known for their tourism potentials such as Al Sharqiyah Sands, the wadis, oasis and water springs, forts and castles, traditional souqs.

She said that the Heritage and Tourism Department in North Al Sharqiyah Governorate aimed to further develop the tourism sector through organising seasonal events related to desert, mountain or water adventure tourism which attract tourists.

The activities also include visits to the site of water lakes in the Wilayat of Wadi Bani Khalid, which attract tourists for the purpose of relaxation, she added. She said that the last tourism season in North Al Sharqiyah Governorate has seen an increase in the profits and revenues and hotel rooms occupancy which ranged between 60 and 90 percent.'

She said that the number of licensed hotel establishments amounted to 47 with 1,044 hotel rooms. The value added for tourism camps in the governorate saw a remarkable improvement. -ONA

Hamas appeals to UN for probe

< FROM A1 Hamas even appealed to the United Nations to send their team to investigate the truth as they know it is only an alibi for the Israelis to attack and kill the innocent Palestinians.

The drama staged by the IDF by showcasing planted weapons in the hospital has no takers as it is clearly evident that Israelis want to convey the false narrative that they are only defending themselves. When the first video report came from Al Shifa Hospital, only few weapons were seen but later on, when a French journalist was taken by the IDF, the same X-ray room was filled with more ammunition and weapons, clearly demonstrating that it was stage-managed by the IDF.

Arab media reports suggest that the majority of Israelis do not believe the version of their government and the assurances of their Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and the defence minister. The two are spreading only lies, supported by the USA. This is why, USA today means United Savage Apartheid.

For the USA to believe whatever the IDF feeds them as truth is a mockery of justice and it is only leading to the killings of hundreds and hundreds of innocent Palestinians. This genocide has to stop. The USA is hand-in-glove with Israel in committing massacres. And the USA shamelessly expects it to be loved.

There is a growing hatred for the USA from across the world. At least, the people in the Muslim and Arab world are seething with anger and the hate has reached the limit.

I wonder if we can find another USA that has its original meaning, the one we know as the United States of America.

The anger is evident in Oman as citizens poured their hearts out and reacted angrily to the greetings the US Embassy in Oman shared on X, formerly Twitter, on the occasion of the 53rd National Day of Oman on Saturday. It is a shame to read those scathing reactions by Omanis and a slap on the spineless US foreign policy. The USA needs to stand up to the truth and the just cause of Palestinians.

Most importantly and urgently, they should intervene to stop the genocide in Gaza and Palestine. Or else, the USA would only mean United Savage Apartheid.

'MAWHUB'

Initiative to groom disabled people



AL JABAL AL AKHDAR: An initiative codenamed 'Mawhub' or "Talented" was launched today in the Wilayat of Al Jabal Al Akhdar (the Green Mountain) to groom people with disabilities and empower them to work in the tourism sector.

The initiative was launched

cooperatively between OMRAN Group, Al Wafa'a centre for the rehabilitation of people with disability and dusitD2 Naseem Resort, Jabal Akhdar.

The launching ceremony was held under the patronage of HH Sayyida Hujajaia Jaifr Al Said.

-ONA



SMARTEN UP DRIVE SAFE

 A TIMES OF OMAN HANDS-FREE DRIVING INITIATIVE

OBITUARY

IT IS WITH PROFOUND SORROW, WE ANNOUNCE THE SAD DEMISE OF OUR MEMBER



MR. JACOB P. KURIAN (aged 56)
Membership No. J-368- ON 17th November at Kerala.

We express our heartfelt Condolences and profound sympathies to the bereaved family members.

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Funeral Service on Monday 20th November at 11:00 AM at Sharon Mar Thoma Church, Palairivattom, Cochin, Kerala.

Vicars and Members of Mar Thoma Church in Oman.



Sultanate of Oman Ministry of Health

ANNOUNCEMENT

The Ministry of Health invites specialized companies to participate in the following Bidding: -

Tender Ref	Description	Last date for Collection of Bidding Document	Bid Submission Closing Date on/ Before 10:00 am Wednesday	Eligibility	Tender Fee (Non-Refundable)
1/2023	Renting locations for vending machines for hot and cold drinks and snacks at Nizwa Hospital	03/DEC/2023	27/DEC/2023	Specialized Companies	R.O 25.000 Per set

- Bidding Documents can be purchased from the Financial Affairs Dept Between 8.00 A.M and 12.00 P.M on working days, on payment of Tender Fee mentioned above.
- Ministry is not bound to accept the lowest tender and reserves the right to accepts or reject any Bidding.
- For any Clarification, you may contact via Telephone: 25211016 , 25211121



Israel, Hamas near deal to pause fighting

The release of the hostages could begin within the next several days, the US daily reported, citing people familiar with the negotiations

GAZA: Israel, the United States and Hamas are close to a deal that could see dozens of women and children held hostage by the group in Gaza freed in exchange for a five-day pause in fighting, the *Washington Post* reported on Saturday.

The release of the hostages could begin within the next several

days, the US daily reported, citing people familiar with the negotiations. The agreement, should it materialise, could lead to the first sustained pause in the ongoing conflict in besieged Gaza, the report said.

Israel has not immediately responded to the publication's report. A White House spokesperson

said no deal has been reached yet and that the US is continuing to work to get a deal between Israel and Hamas.

Israel, the United States, Germany and the European Union designate Hamas as a terror organization. Hamas took some 240 people hostage and killed 1,200 during terror attacks in southern Israel on October 7. Israel's military campaign against the militants has killed some 12,300 people, including about 5,000 children, according to Hamas, which has controlled the Gaza Strip since 2007.

The Post reported that the agreement was sketched out during weeks of talks in Doha, Qatar, among Israel, the United States and Hamas, indirectly represented by Qatari mediators, according to Arab and other diplomats.

However, it was unclear until

now that Israel would agree to pause its offensive in Gaza temporarily, provided the conditions were right, the *Washington Post* said.

The paper said the six-page deal calls for all parties to the conflict to halt combat operations for at least five days while an initial 50 or more hostages would be released in smaller groups every 24 hours.

The Post said it was not clear how many of the hostages would be released under the agreement.

The report said that overhead surveillance would monitor movement on the ground to regulate the pause.

The freeze in fighting is also intended to allow a crucial increase in the amount of humanitarian assistance, including fuel, to enter the Palestinian enclave from Egypt, the report said. -**OW**

Times
OF OMAN

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

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

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

HUMANITARIAN ASSESSMENT

WHO team visits Al-Shifa Hospital



GENEVA: A humanitarian assessment team visited Al-Shifa Hospital in northern Gaza and saw signs of the Israeli shelling and gunfire in what was described as a "death zone," the World Health Organization (WHO) said yesterday.

The WHO-led team, which included public health experts, logistics officers and security staff from various UN departments, was able to spend only an hour inside the hospital on Saturday due to security concerns, WHO said.

The team described the hospital as a "death zone" and said the situation was "desperate," with the hospital basically not functioning as a medical facility due to scarcity of clean water, fuel, medicine and other essentials.

"Signs of shelling and gunfire were evident. The team saw a

mass grave at the entrance of the hospital and were told more than 80 people were buried there," the WHO said. The hallways and hospital grounds were filled with medical and solid waste, and patients and health staff expressed fear for their health and safety, it said. There were 25 health workers and 291 patients, including 32 babies in critical condition, remaining in Al-Shifa, WHO said.

"WHO and partners are urgently developing plans for the immediate evacuation of the remaining patients, staff and their families," it said.

"Over the next 24-72 hours, pending guarantees of safe passage by parties to the conflict, additional missions are being arranged to transport patients" to other hospitals in the south of Gaza. -**ONA**

HORRIFIC ATTACKS

UN bodies renew call for ceasefire in Gaza

NEW YORK: After the killing and wounding of dozens in Israeli attacks on two schools in Gaza, the heads of several major United Nations (UN) bodies stressed the need to stop attacks on schools, children and shelters, and called for an immediate ceasefire for humanitarian reasons.

Adele Khader, UNICEF Regional Director for the Middle East and North Africa said that the scenes of death and destruction following the attacks on the Al-Fakhoura and Tal Al-Zaatar schools in Gaza, which resulted in the deaths of many children and women, are horrific.

She stressed the need to stop these horrific attacks immediately, and said that children, schools and shelters are not targets.

For his part, Philippe Lazzarini, Commissioner-General of the UNRWA said that he received "horrifying images and footage of scores of people killed and injured in another UNRWA school in which thousands of displaced people are sheltering in the northern Gaza Strip."

On the X platform, Lazzarini stressed that "these attacks cannot become commonplace, they must stop. A humanitarian ceasefire cannot wait any longer."

Second aid for Gaza civilians
A second Indian Air Force (IAF) C17 aircraft, carrying 32 tonnes of



aid for civilians in Gaza caught up in the ongoing Israel-Hamas war, on Sunday departed for the El-Arish Airport in Egypt.

Taking to his official handle on X, External Affairs Minister S Jaishanker reaffirmed New Delhi's commitment to extend humanitarian assistance to Gazans, posting, "We continue to deliver humanitarian assistance to the people of Palestine. Second @

IAF_MCC C17 aircraft carrying 32 tonnes of aid departs for the El-Arish Airport in Egypt."

Earlier, India sent 38 tonnes of humanitarian relief for civilians caught up in the ongoing ground offensive by the Israeli forces in the Strip.

The aid package comprised fluids and painkillers. The disaster relief material, weighing approximately 32 tonnes, also included

tents, sleeping bags, tarpaulins, basic sanitary utilities, and water purification tablets, among other items.

Indian Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) Official Spokesperson Arindam Bagchi said India shipped emergency aid for Gazans earlier, "India sends humanitarian aid to the people of Palestine! An IAF C-17 flight carrying nearly 6.5 tonnes of medical aid and 32 tonnes of disaster relief material for the people of Palestine departs for El-Arish airport in Egypt. The material includes essential life-saving medicines, surgical items, tents, sleeping bags, tarpaulins, sanitary utilities, and water purification tablets, among other necessary items."

The spokesperson said India has always stressed the need to avoid civilian casualties in the ongoing military operations in Gaza.

"This is not about one specific facility," Bagchi said, adding, "India has always underlined the need for civilian casualties to be avoided, for humanitarian law to be observed, and to encourage any effort to provide humanitarian relief to those caught in the conflict."

Prime Minister Narendra Modi, in his opening address at the Voice of Global South Summit on Friday, said new challenges are emerging from the events in West Asia. -**ONA/ANI**



CANCER PATIENTS

UAE to give medicare to 1,000 Palestinians

ABU DHABI: UAE President Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan has directed the provision of medical care for 1,000 Palestinian cancer patients from the Gaza Strip.

The patients are to receive treatment and all necessary healthcare in UAE hospitals. The initiative reflects the UAE's steadfast approach to supporting the Palestinian people and is part of its ongoing endeavours to mitigate the escalating humanitarian situation in Gaza.

Recently, he also directed that 1,000 Palestinian children requiring medical care be hosted in the UAE, along with their families. The children will receive comprehensive healthcare services in UAE hospitals until their full recovery and subsequent return.

Furthermore, the UAE president has ordered the setting up of a fully equipped field hospital in the Gaza Strip under the Gallant Knight 3 operation, aiming to address the humanitarian needs of those affected by the conflict. -**ANI**

SCORCHING HEAT

US pop star Swift postpones Rio concerts over fan's death

RIO DE JANEIRO: A day after the death of a fan who fell ill in a sweltering concert, US pop star Taylor Swift postponed her show in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, on Saturday because of the scorching heat.

"The decision has been made to postpone tonight's show due to the extreme temperatures in Rio," Swift wrote on Instagram. "The safety and well-being of my fans, fellow performers, and crew has to, and always will, come first."

Rio hit a record high of 59.3 degrees Celsius (139 degrees Fahrenheit) on Friday for the heat index, which combines temperature and



humidity. On Saturday, the heat index peaked at 59.7 degrees Celsius.

About 60,000 fans had gathered on Friday for Swift's sold-out first concert at the open-air Nilton Santos stadium, located in a hotter northern neighbourhood far from Rio's breezy beaches.

The Rio Health Secretariat reported that 23-year-old Ana Benevides died Friday night after suffering a cardiorespiratory arrest during Swift's concert.

It said efforts to revive the woman failed and an investigation had been launched. "At this time, the cause of death cannot be deter-

mined," the agency said.

Several other fans also fell ill during Friday's concert. Videos show Swift interrupting her performance to ask the production team for water.

"It's with a shattered heart that I say we lost a fan earlier tonight," Swift said in a post on Instagram earlier Saturday. "I can't even tell you how devastated I am by this."

Swift was also scheduled to perform in Rio on Sunday, followed by three shows in Sao Paulo from November 24 to 26. The Brazilian T4F entertainment company said Saturday's show was postponed to Monday.

Meanwhile, National Consumer Secretary Wadih Damous posted on X, formerly Twitter, that the government had ordered T4F to guarantee access to water at all of Swift's concerts in Brazil.

Following Benevides' death, Justice Minister Flavio Dino announced that the government would issue a directive allowing bottled water to be brought to concerts.

"Companies producing shows with high heat exposure must provide free drinking water in easily accessible 'hydration islands'." -**OW**

Sheynnis from Nicaragua crowned as Miss Universe

Nicaragua, Australia, and Thailand had made it to the final three, but Sheynnis Palacios won the competition to become the Miss Universe 2023

EL SALVADOR: Sheynnis Palacios from Nicaragua is crowned Miss Universe 2023 on November 19 at the Jose Adolfo Pineda Arena in San Salvador, El Salvador. Miss Universe 2022, USA's R'Bonney Gabriel, crowned her on stage as the audience applauded.

Nicaragua, Australia, and Thailand had made it to the final three, but Sheynnis Palacios of Nicaragua won the competition to become the current Miss Universe 2023.

Shweta Sharda, an Indian contestant, qualified for the semi-finals and was ranked in the top 20,



BEAUTY PAGEANT: The 72nd Miss Universe pageant was hosted in El Salvador, with contestants from around 90 nations were part of the competition.

however, she failed to enter the top 10 after the swimsuit round.

Michelle Cohn from Guatemala and Maria Camila Avella Montanez from Colombia became the first married mothers to take part in the pageant. Miss Universe official

Twitter page shared the pictures of new Miss Universe 2023.

The 72nd Miss Universe pageant was hosted in El Salvador, with contestants from around 90 nations were part of the competition.

Shweta Sharda of India, wearing a colourful glitter swimsuit, and Erica Robin of Pakistan, wearing a burkini, failed to qualify for the swimwear round and so did not advance to the evening gown competition. -ANI

TB's first time infections rise

PARIS: An estimated 10.6 million people developed tuberculosis (TB) in 2022. A majority of those – 7.5 million people – were diagnosed with the airborne lung disease for the first time. This is significant because once you've had TB, you are more likely to get it again.



The World Health Organization said this was the highest annual record of new cases of TB since it started monitoring the disease in 1995.

In its Global Tuberculosis Report 2023, the WHO said the sharp rise may be linked to delays in treatment caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.

"Health seeking" – as it's called – was very poor for all diseases other than COVID during the pandemic, said Dr Ramya Ananthakrishnan, director of REACH, a non-profit organization in India.

Due to isolation and quarantine measures during the pandemic, many people failed to get tested for TB, said Ananthakrishnan: "A large number of people who had extra pulmonary TB (extra pulmonary TB is when it infects an area outside of the lungs - the ed.) also didn't seek healthcare during that period."

Tuberculosis is a contagious disease caused by the bacteria, Mycobacterium tuberculosis.

The bacteria is airborne and spreads when an infected person coughs openly and another person comes into contact with droplets produced by the cough.

It typically affects the lungs, but can affect other parts of the body as well. Data suggests that more men than women are affected by TB.

It's estimated that a quarter of all people in the world are infected by the bacteria, Mycobacterium tuberculosis. But it can lie dormant – or inactive – in the body for years.

Only 5% of people who are infected go on to develop the disease in the two years after their original infection with the bacteria. An infection often breaks out when a person's immune system is weakened for some other reason.

"One of the top reasons for immunity going down is malnutrition," said Ananthakrishnan. "HIV creates a big risk [and] diabetes is an important threat to immunity." -DW

AFGHAN REFUGEES RETURN

Pakistan plans to deport all illegal Afghan refugees by January next year

KABUL: Balochistan Information Minister Jan Achakzai on Friday said that Pakistan will deport all illegal Afghan refugees by January 2024, according to Khaama Press.

During a press conference in Quetta, Achakzai stated, "The caretaker government is trying to deport all illegal Afghan immigrants by January. After that, the government would announce a

time frame for repatriating the remaining Afghan immigrants."

He also reiterated that militants use Afghan territory as a base for plotting attacks in Pakistan, Khaama Press reported.

Meanwhile, following the attacks, Pakistan has been sharing information about terrorists and their terror activities.

He further stressed the impor-

action is taken to discredit the institutions of Pakistan, they will be given a befitting reply. Our brotherhood should not be considered our weakness."

Earlier in October, Pakistan issued a directive asking all individuals residing in the country without legal status to depart voluntarily or face potential enforcement actions after November 1.

Nearly 400,000 Afghan refugees have returned to Afghanistan from Pakistan in the past two months, TOLO News reported, citing the Taliban's consul in Karachi.

According to Khaama Press, the Taliban administration dismissed Pakistan's allegation regarding the use of Afghan soil to plan attacks on Pakistan.

The Taliban asserted that Af-

ghanistan should not be held responsible for any security failures in their country.

The mass return of hundreds of thousands of Afghan refugees from Pakistan is poised to exacerbate Afghanistan's already dire humanitarian crisis, according to the United Nations High Commission for Refugees, Khaama Press reported. -ANI



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إعلان مناقصة
Tender Notice

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

TENDER NUMBER	TENDER NAME	DATE OF PUBLISHING	LAST DATE TO PURCHASE TENDER DOCUMENT	SUBMISSION DATE	COMPANIES WHO SHOULD PARTICIPATE IN THIS TENDER	DOCUMENT PRICE
MTCT/ 246/2023	SPACE CONSULTATION SERVICES	19-11-2023	3-12-2023	31-12-2023	EXPERIENCED COMPANIES AND REGISTERED WITH THE SECRETARIAT GENERAL OF TENDER BOARD (FIRST CLASS)	(-/300) THREE HUNDRE OMANI RIAL (10/-) TEN OMANI RIAL FOR SME NON-REFUNDABLE
MTCT/ 247/2023	MANAGING AND OPERATING TWO DIVERSIONS ON THE (ADAM / THUMRAYT) ROAD IN (WILAYAT HAYMA)	19-11-2023	3-12-2023	31-12-2023	EXPERIENCED COMPANIES AND REGISTERED WITH THE SECRETARIAT GENERAL OF TENDER BOARD (FOURTH CLASS)	(-/25) TWENTY FIVE OMANI RIAL (10/-) TEN OMANI RIAL FOR SME NON-REFUNDABLE
MTCT/ 248/2023	SUPERVISION CONSULTANCY SERVICES FOR THE CONSTRUCTION OF ROAD TO JABAL SHAMS (WILAYAT AL HAMRA)	19-11-2023	3-12-2023	31-12-2023	EXPERIENCED COMPANIES AND REGISTERED WITH THE SECRETARIAT GENERAL OF TENDER BOARD (FIRST CLASS)	(-/125) ONE HUNDRED AND TWENTY FIVE OMANI RIAL (10/-) TEN OMANI RIAL FOR SME NON-REFUNDABLE

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Head's ton powers Cummins' side to easy win over India to lift their sixth ODI World Cup title

AHMEDABAD: Australia produced a magnificent performance to outplay India by six wickets in the final and lift the ICC Men's Cricket World Cup 2023 at the Narendra Modi Stadium on Sunday. The majority of a packed and partisan 100,000 crowd arrived at the stadium hoping to see the host nation end their decade-long wait for a major ICC trophy win. But it was Australia who delivered on the day. The Australian bowling attack combined to turn the screw after a fast-paced powerplay, bowling India out for 240. And Travis Head was the star with the bat, hitting an inspired century (137) to win Australia's men their sixth ICC Cricket World Cup crown. Victory for Australia is a crown-



PLAYER OF THE FINAL: TRAVIS HEAD



PLAYER OF THE TOURNAMENT: VIRAT KOHLI

ing moment in what has been a phenomenal year for Pat Cummins' side across formats, adding to their win over India in the World Test Championship final in June and their subsequent retention of the Ashes. Tasked with a target of 241 to win the World Cup, Australia got off to a fast but shaky start in the face of a new-ball assault from India's seam attack. David Warner (7), Mitchell Marsh (15) and Steven Smith (4) all departed cheaply as Australia slipped to 47/3 inside the opening seven overs, with Mohammed Shami and Jasprit Bumrah taking the wickets.

But a superb partnership between Head and Marnus Labuschagne (58*) won it for Australia, with Head hitting a century and Labuschagne playing the foil at the other end, with a resolute half-century of his own. Head was caught in the deep with just one run needed to win the game, departing to a standing ovation from his teammates having scored 137 from 120 runs, an innings studded with 15 boundaries and four maximums. He was later named the man of the final. And Glenn Maxwell scored the winning runs as Australia claimed victory with six wickets and seven overs to spare. Earlier, Cummins won the

toss and chose to bowl first in Ahmedabad in-front of a packed crowd. But it was India who got off to a flier, inspired once more by captain Rohit Sharma. The early loss of Shubman Gill didn't halt India's attacking momentum, as Rohit (47) and Virat Kohli (54) racked up the runs in the first ten overs, with 80 runs coming in the first powerplay, equalling the record for a World Cup final. However, the departure of the skipper for 47 from 31 balls was followed by Shreyas Iyer for 4 in the very next over, and the match took an abrupt turn from that moment on, as the runs dried up through the middle overs.

Looking to rebuild in the face of some excellent bowling on a tricky surface, Kohli and KL Rahul (66) bedded in, ensuring India reached at least a competitive total. Wickets fell frequently as Australia's bowling attack looked to press home their advantage, and the final Indian wicket came off the last ball of the innings, with the total at just 240. Cummins' 2/34 from ten overs summed up the effort from the Aussie pacers, with Mitchell Starc taking 3/55 and Josh Hazlewood 2/60. Adam Zampa provided good control through the middle, finishing with 1/44, while Glenn Maxwell's 1/35 from six overs included the crucial wicket of Rohit. The innings fell into two distinct sections. Nine fours and three sixes were struck in the first powerplay as India reached 80/2. But in the following 240 balls of the innings, there were no further sixes, only four boundaries and just seven twos - with all other runs coming in singles. The second innings got off to a frenetic start, with David Warner edging the first ball through the slip cordon and scoring 15 runs in a thrilling first over. And the drama built yet further when Shami, handed the new ball over

Siraj, removed Warner in a bizarre second over. Six wides, a bye and a leg bye came in Shami's over as the ball swung all over the place, with Warner wafting at one arcing away-swing to edge to slip. And Bumrah stood up when his team needed him, bagging his team's second, removing the dangerous Marsh for a run-a-ball 15, and then dismissing Steve Smith for 4. With three of the top four back in the hutch with the score at 47/3, India had pulled themselves right back into the contest. But Australia rebuilt as Head and Labuschagne led them to victory.

Kohli is player of the tournament India's run-scoring machine Virat Kohli was named the ICC Men's Cricket World Cup 2023 Player of the Tournament. His 765 runs in the tournament is the most ever scored by an individual batter at the event. India's No.3 scored at least a half-century in nine of his 11 innings. **Brief scores:** India 240 (Rohit Sharma 47, Virat Kohli 54, KL Rahul 66; Mitchell Starc 3/55, Josh Hazlewood 2/60) lost to Australia 241/4 in 43 overs (Travis Head 137, Marnus Labuschagne 58*; Jasprit Bumrah 2/43). - [cricketworldcup.com](#)



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MSX INDEX ENDS HIGHER

The MSX index closed at 4,622.35 points, up by 0.06 per cent from previous close. The Sharia Index ended up by 0.27 per cent at 440.73 points. Al Batinah Power, up 9.52 per cent, was the top gainer while Muscat Gases, down 2.86 per cent, was the top loser.

Crude oil prices recover on demand growth expectations

The gains came after monthly reports from both Opec and the IEA showed that demand concerns over the last few weeks were overblown that led to the price decline

Times News Service

MUSCAT: Crude oil prices showed a steep recovery this week after reaching the lowest level since July 2023 following reports that highlighted demand recovery in the near term coupled with continued supply deficits.

The gains came after monthly reports from both Opec and the IEA showed that demand concerns over the last few weeks were overblown that led to the price decline.

Calls for continued output cuts by the Opec+ group as Saudi Arabia and Russia confirmed that they would continue with the voluntary cuts of 1.3 mb/d until year end as well as Iraq's calls for additional cuts supported prices.

Doubts on US production growth as well as travel demand reaching pre-covid levels in the US and an enquiry by the US Treasury department into breaching of sanctions on Russia also pushed up prices, according to Kamco Invest. On the other hand, weak consumer sentiments in the US partially offset the gains. Meanwhile, the declines until



mid-last week that pushed prices below the \$80/b level for the first time since July-2023 was mainly led by demand concerns in the US and China, higher inventories in the US as well as a strong greenback that traded at the highest level in 11 months against a basket of currencies at the start of the month, Kamco Invest report said. Easing concerns related to the war on Gaza and its impact on supplies from the region also led to the decline.

On the demand side, the IEA upgraded its demand growth forecast for this year to 2.4 mb/d vs. 2.3 mb/d in its earlier forecast led by increasing demand in Q4-2023 on the back of surprising demand strength in China.

However, recent data showed faltering demand in China as refiners nominated less supplies for December from Saudi Arabia due to quota shortages as well as declining refining margins. Expectations of milder winter temperatures

are also expected to weigh on demand from China. However, travel demand in the US during Thanksgiving is expected to support consumption during the quarter.

This came a day after Opec also nudged up its oil demand forecast for the year while retaining its forecast for next year. In Europe, oil demand in Germany is expected to decline this year, as per the IEA, mainly led by fall in demand for industrial fuels. In terms of refined products, the demand for jet fuel is expected to see a rebound in the near term, according to Bloomberg.

On the supply side, oil production in the US remained elevated at 13.2 mb/d during October-2023, according to data from the Department of Energy. The increase in production came despite a fall in oil rig count, indicating better drilling efficiency by oil explorers in the US. In addition, oil production in Brazil reached record levels during September-2023 with record expecta-

tions for the full year output.

Oil production by the OPEC group showed marginal monthly gain during October-2023 with average monthly production reaching 27.9 mb/d. Data from OPEC secondary sources showed higher output mainly in Angola and Iran were partially offset by declines in Saudi Arabia, Libya and Kuwait.

Oil prices

Crude oil prices reached the lowest level in more than three months during mid-last week after concerns over demand disruptions from the war in Gaza faded while crude oil output growth continued in the US. Brent crude oil futures prices went below the \$80/b mark on 8 November, 2023 to reach \$79.54/b but showed consistent growth in the subsequent trading sessions, resulting in the longest running positive streak in future prices in two months. Nevertheless, prices were down for the third con-

secutive week last week and slid around 14.5% since the near-term peak at the end of September-2023.

Most recent support to prices came from the latest economic data released in China that highlighted a largely positive trend in terms of retail sales, industrial output, and fixed asset investment. A slowdown in US inflation during October-2023 also supported the view that interest rate have peaked. This was followed by a fall in USD against a basket of currencies to a two and a half month low level after the latest comments from the US Fed suggested a rate cut in the next spring also supported crude oil prices.

Prices of almost all crude grades reported declines during October-2023. Average Brent crude prices dropped by 3.0% to reach \$91.12/b. The decline in average OPEC reference basket price and Kuwait export grade price was also 3.0% to reach \$91.78/b and \$92.85/b, respectively. Meanwhile, the consensus estimate for Brent crude underwent a significant upgrade from last month's forecast. Prices are now expected to reach \$90.0/b at the end of Q4-2023 as compared to \$86.5/b expected last month for the quarter. Expectations for the next two quarters were also upgraded, as per the consensus estimates from Bloomberg.

On the other hand, the US EIA marginally lowered its forecast for oil in its latest outlook report. The agency expects Brent spot to average at \$83.99 per barrel vs. its previous forecast of \$84.09 per barrel. For 2024, the EIA expects the crude grade to average at \$93.24 per barrel as compared to its previous forecast of \$94.91 per barrel.

World oil demand

World oil demand growth forecast for 2023 was upgraded slightly in OPEC's latest month report. De-

mand is expected now to grow by 2.5 mb/d vs. 2.4 mb/d forecasted last month, to reach 102.1 mb/d. The upward revision reflected higher demand forecasted for China during Q3-2023 and Q4-2023 that more than offset downward revisions to demand estimates for the non-OECD region during Q3-2023.

There were revisions to demand data for the OECD region during the first three quarters of the year, but these revisions offset at the regional level. In terms of product categories, demand for jet fuel is expected to strengthen in the coming weeks after seeing weak trends over the last few weeks, according to Bloomberg.

The demand growth is expected to be supported by jet fuel demand in Asia that is expected to rise partially offset by a slide in demand from Eastern and Western Europe and North America. Estimates for oil demand growth in 2024 were left unchanged from the previous month at 2.2 mb/d with demand expected to average at 104.3 mb/d.

Oil demand in the US is expected to remain elevated led by private household consumption. According to Opec, manufacturing activity in the US has remained upbeat while the start of winter is expected to boost demand for heating fuels. Oil demand in Europe is expected to be affected by demand drop in Germany due to sharp decline in demand for diesel and naphtha, according to the IEA.

This decline is expected to be the biggest this year in the OECD countries. Data showed that import of diesel into Europe dropped by 10% m-o-m in October-2023 led by a fall in supplies from the Middle East suppliers.

This resulted in higher usage of stocks that pushed down gasoil inventories in the ARA region to 268,000 metric tonnes, the lowest point since 2018.

POS DEVICES

BankDhofar partners with Ministry of Housing to enhance customer experience

MUSCAT: BankDhofar announced its partnership with the Ministry of Housing and Urban Planning to enhance the customer experience through convenient payment solutions. The collaboration aims to provide state-of-the-art Point of Sale (POS) devices at the VIP Hall in Muscat, allowing guests to make secure and hassle-free payments.

The agreement, signed by Faisal Hamed Al Wahaibi, Chief Government Banking & Investment Banking Officer at BankDhofar, and Nasser Khamis Al Siyabi, Director General of Administrative and Financial Affairs at the Ministry of Housing and Urban Planning, signifies a significant step towards seamless payment experiences for esteemed guests visiting the ministry's VIP lounges.

BankDhofar's POS payment solution ensures that customers can conveniently settle fees and outstanding amounts using any debit or credit card. In addition to



providing the necessary technical support and training to relevant employees in the VIP hall. In June 2022, the bank has also introduced the first of its kind android-enabled Mobile POS solutions in the Sultanate. This low-cost, maintenance-free payment terminal allows merchants to accept pay-

ments quickly and conveniently through their NFC-enabled Android devices.

Faisal Hamed Al Wahaibi, Chief Government Banking & Investment Banking Officer at BankDhofar, commented on the partnership: "We are delighted to collaborate with the Ministry of Housing and

Urban Planning, as it reflects our commitment to providing innovative services and cutting-edge technology solutions. Through this cooperation, BankDhofar will play a crucial role in achieving Oman Vision 2040 through public-private partnerships."

BankDhofar's extensive network, consisting of more than 100 branches, including Maisarah and three corporate branches, along with over 300 ATMs, CDMs, FFMs, and MFks, ensuring that customers have easy access to banking services nationwide.

This partnership between BankDhofar and the Ministry of Housing and Urban Planning is a testament to their shared goal of delivering exceptional customer experiences and promoting digital payments. By embracing technological advancements and fostering collaborations, both organisations are driving Oman towards a more inclusive and digitally-driven future.

OECD ASSESSMENT

Climate finance provided by developed countries reached \$89.6 billion in 2021

PARIS: Climate finance provided and mobilised by developed countries for climate action in developing countries reached \$89.6 billion in 2021, according to the OECD's sixth assessment of progress towards the goal for developed countries to provide and mobilise \$100 billion of climate finance annually for climate action in developing countries under the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change.

This shows a positive trend, representing close to an 8 per cent increase over 2020, which is significantly higher than the 2.1 per cent average annual growth observed from 2018 to 2020. However, one

year after the 2020 target, developed countries remain just over \$10 billion short of the goal to mobilise \$100 billion a year. Two years ago, ahead of COP26 in Glasgow, the OECD released forward-looking scenarios of climate finance for the period 2021-2025, which indicated the goal is likely to be reached as of 2023. The \$89.6 billion total for 2021 is slightly higher than the upper end scenario that was estimated for this year. On the basis of preliminary and as yet unverified data available to the OECD to date, the goal looks likely to have already been met as of 2022.

"The overall upward trend is positive and shows that countries are continuing to increase action to scale up and mobilise climate finance. The increase needed to reach the \$100 billion goal that was set for 2020 has not yet been achieved, but preliminary data available to the OECD indicates that countries look likely to have met that objective ahead of 2023," OECD Secretary-General Mathias Cormann said. "Of course, developing countries urgently require these significant investments so climate finance providers need to continue to ramp up their efforts in line with their stated commitments."

Over 2016-2021, the share of climate finance targeting lower middle-income countries (LMICs) and upper middle-income countries (UMICs) remained stable, whereas the share targeting low-income countries (LICs) increased from 4 per cent in 2016 to 10 per cent in 2021. The share of climate finance targeting small island developing countries (SIDS) progressively increased from 2 per cent in 2016 to 4 per cent in 2021, and the share targeting least developed countries (LDCs) progressively increased from 12 per cent in 2016 to 25 per cent in 2020, dropping to 20 per cent in 2021. -WAM

CAPITAL MARKET AUTHORITY



CMA announces preparedness of information, health insurance claims exchange systems

Times News Service

MUSCAT: The Capital Market Authority (CMA) in the Sultanate of Oman has announced the preparedness of information and health insurance claims exchange systems in Dhamani platform. These systems include eligibility, authorisation, exchange claims and reconciliation.

CMA pointed out that digital portals are also available via Dhamani for insurance companies and private health institutions which are not yet prepared to link to the platform due to not having their own electronic channels. This will allow them to use the services and systems of the platform.

The CMA assured that it is working hand in hand with many private health institutions and insurance companies to complete the direct link between the platform and concerned institutions. By the end of this year, the integration will be complete and the exchange of information and claims will be done via the platform.

CMA is keen to ensure maximum preparedness of the plat-

form's systems for the electronic exchange between the parties of the insurance relationship, making it digital and easy to handle. This will make such services accessible for insured citizens and residents and all health and insurance institutions.

CMA emphasises that the process of developing the systems and applications of Dhamani was in cooperation and partnership between the CMA, representatives of insurance companies and private health institutions as well as the competent government entities.

It is worth mentioning that the platform project is in line with the legislative frameworks that provide adequate protection to all relevant parties.

The Regulation for Health Insurance Electronic Link was issued by Decision No. (83/2023) to regulate the processes of the platform and identify the obligations of all parties. This contributes to the success of one of the leading national projects in the field of digital transformation in the Sultanate of Oman which meets the priorities of Oman Vision 2040.

MARKET

MSX index ends higher



Al Batinah Power, up 9.52 per cent, was the top gainer while Muscat Gases, down 2.86 per cent, was the top loser

MUSCAT: The MSX index closed at 4,622.35 points, up by 0.06 per cent from previous close. The Sharia Index ended up by 0.27 per cent at 440.73 points. Al Batinah Power, up 9.52 per cent, was the top gainer while Muscat Gases, down 2.86 per cent, was the top loser. Shares of Bank Muscat were the most active in terms of number of shares traded while Oman Telecom were the most active in terms of turnover. A total number of 914 trades were executed during the day's trading session, generating turnover of OMR4.14 million, with more than 10.47 million shares changing hands. Out of 32 traded securities, 13 advanced, 10 declined, and 9 remained unchanged. At the session close, foreign investors were net sellers for OMR483,000 while domestic investors were net buyers for OMR312,000, followed by GCC & Arab investors for OMR171,000 worth of shares. Financial Index closed at 7,518.97 points, down 0.06 per cent. Prices of Al Madina Investments, and Muscat Finance were up by

6.25 per cent, and 6.00 per cent respectively. Prices of Global Financial Investments, Bank Nizwa, and Oman Arab Bank were down by 1.75 per cent, 1.04 per cent, and 0.76 per cent respectively. Industrial Index closed at 5,315.14 points, up 0.13 per cent. Prices of Al Maha Ceramics, Voltamp Energy, and Oman Cement were up by 4.55 per cent, 1.64 per cent and 0.66 per cent respectively. Prices of Al Anwar Ceramics, Raysut Cement, and Galfar Engineering were down by 1.18 per cent, 0.73 per cent and 0.67 per cent respectively. Services Index was up by 0.82 per cent before closing at 1,575.55 points. Prices of Al Batinah Power, Al Suwadi Power, Dhofar Generating, Barka Water & Power Company, and Shell Oman Marketing were up by 9.52 per cent, 9.52 per cent, 9.09 per cent, 7.90 per cent, and 6.02 per cent respectively. Prices of Muscat Gases, Phoenix Power, OQ Gas Networks, and Oman Telecom were down by 2.86 per cent, 1.89 per cent, 0.67 per cent, and 0.10 per cent respectively.

— United Securities

MUSCAT STOCK EXCHANGE

MUSCAT
STOCK
EXCHANGE

INDICES															
Index	High	Low	Value	Prev. Value	Diff	Diff%									
MSX 30 INDEX	4,624.414	4,581.242	4,622.350	4,619.362	2.988	0.06									
FINANCIAL INDEX	7,534.493	7,463.611	7,518.972	7,523.125	-4.153	-0.06									
Industry Index	5,321.216	5,304.727	5,315.135	5,308.262	6.873	0.13									
Services Index	1,575.554	1,554.628	1,575.554	1,562.727	12.827	0.82									
MSX Shariah Index	440.728	439.051	440.728	439.530	1.198	0.27									
MSX TR INDEX	6,095.533	6,038.627	6,092.812	6,088.873	3.939	0.06									
FINANCIAL TR IDX	8,221.516	8,144.171	8,204.580	8,209.111	-4.531	-0.06									
INDUSTRIAL TR IDX	5,684.383	5,666.769	5,677.887	5,670.544	7.343	0.13									
SERVICES TR IDX	1,752.790	1,729.510	1,752.790	1,738.520	14.270	0.82									
Trading Summary															
Volume	10,479,055	Turnover	4,144,761	Trades	914	Market Cap.	23,849,719,119	Up	13	Down	10	Equal	9	Sec. Traded	32

SHARE PRICE BULLETIN FOR SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 19

SN	SECURITY NAME	VOLUME	TURNOVER	TRADES	OPEN PRICE	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE PR	PREV. CLOSE	DIFF (RD)	DIFF %	LAST PD	LAST RD	LAST OFFER	PAI VALUE	SECURITY SYMBOL	MARKET CAP
REGULAR MARKET																	
OM0000001152	OMAN NATIONAL ENGINEERING & INVESTMENT	38,748	4,107	2	0.106	0.106	0.106	0.106	0.106	0.000	0.000	0.106	0.106	0.106	0.100	ONES	15,900,000
OM0000001533	OMINVEST	4,372	1,771	3	0.405	0.430	0.400	0.430	0.430	0.000	0.000	0.430	0.405	0.430	0.100	OMVS	287,297,133
OM0000001749	OMAN CEMENT	530	161	1	0.303	0.303	0.303	0.303	0.301	0.002	0.664	0.303	0.303	0.315	0.100	OCO1	100,254,431
OM0000002168	AL ANWAR CERAMIC	500	84	1	0.167	0.167	0.167	0.167	0.169	-0.002	-1.183	0.167	0.167	0.000	0.100	AACT	36,740,000
OM0000002796	BANK MUSCAT	4,553,396	1,238,360	70	0.272	0.273	0.271	0.272	0.272	0.000	0.000	0.272	0.272	0.272	0.100	BKMB	2,041,740,001
OM0000003026	OMAN TELECOM	2,413,200	2,530,813	147	1.021	1.049	1.021	1.049	1.050	-0.001	-0.065	1.049	1.049	1.049	0.100	OTEL	786,750,000
OM0000003125	GLOBAL FINANCIAL INVESTMENT HO	13,000	728	2	0.056	0.056	0.056	0.056	0.057	-0.001	-1.754	0.056	0.055	0.060	0.100	GFIC	11,200,000
OM0000003398	SOHAR INTERNATIONAL BANK	13,893	1,389	3	0.100	0.100	0.099	0.099	0.099	0.000	0.000	0.099	0.099	0.100	0.100	BKSB	541,320,962
OM0000004248	SMN POWER HOLDING	2,000	140	1	0.070	0.070	0.070	0.070	0.068	0.002	2.941	0.070	0.068	0.070	0.100	SMNP	13,974,492
OM0000004768	MADINA TAKAFUL	462,019	38,424	33	0.084	0.084	0.083	0.083	0.083	0.000	0.000	0.083	0.083	0.083	0.100	AMAT	14,525,000
OM0000005005	ALMAHA CERAMICS	100	23	1	0.230	0.230	0.230	0.230	0.220	0.010	4.545	0.230	0.199	0.242	0.100	AMCI	12,650,000
Total	11	7,501,758	3,815,998	264													

Parallel Market																	
OM0000001160	NATIONAL GAS	100,743	8,749	17	0.085	0.088	0.085	0.088	0.085	0.003	3.529	0.088	0.088	0.089	0.100	NGCI	7,480,000
OM0000001178	MUSCAT GASES	3,000	306	1	0.102	0.102	0.102	0.102	0.105	-0.003	-2.857	0.102	0.102	0.110	0.100	MGMC	3,060,000
OM0000001418	RAYSUT CEMENT	3,300	454	4	0.140	0.140	0.137	0.137	0.138	-0.001	-0.725	0.137	0.137	0.139	0.100	RCCI	27,400,000
OM0000001590	MUSCAT FINANCE	1,000	53	1	0.053	0.053	0.053	0.053	0.050	0.003	6.000	0.053	0.050	0.053	0.100	MFCI	16,278,755
OM0000001772	ALANWAR INVESTMENT	155,000	11,470	32	0.074	0.074	0.074	0.074	0.074	0.000	0.000	0.074	0.073	0.074	0.100	AAIC	15,244,000
OM0000001962	AL MADINA INVESTMENT HOLDING	535,572	27,670	38	0.062	0.062	0.061	0.061	0.048	0.003	6.250	0.061	0.061	0.062	0.100	AMPI	4,335,000
OM0000002275	SHELL OMAN MARKETING	100	88	1	0.880	0.880	0.880	0.880	0.830	0.050	6.024	0.880	0.830	0.880	0.100	SOMS	83,600,000
OM0000003141	BARKA WATER AND POWER	350,725	14,197	30	0.039	0.041	0.038	0.041	0.038	0.003	7.895	0.041	0.041	0.041	0.100	BWPC	6,560,000
OM0000003521	GALFAR ENGINEERING & CONTRACTING	1,250	186	2	0.149	0.149	0.149	0.149	0.150	-0.001	-0.667	0.149	0.149	0.150	0.100	GECS	30,244,980
OM0000003661	VOLTAMP ENERGY	43,102	5,268	3	0.122	0.124	0.122	0.124	0.122	0.002	1.639	0.124	0.122	0.124	0.100	VOES	10,093,941
OM0000004420	BANK NIZWA	30,353	2,894	8	0.096	0.096	0.095	0.095	0.096	-0.001	-1.042	0.095	0.095	0.095	0.100	BKNZ	212,510,538
OM0000004735	SEBICORP SALALAH	23,800	2,179	8	0.092	0.093	0.091	0.093	0.093	0.000	0.000	0.093	0.090	0.094	0.100	SSPW	88,775,191
OM0000004925	ALBATINAH POWER	16,000	368	2	0.023	0.023	0.023	0.023	0.021	0.002	9.524	0.023	0.019	0.023	0.100	BATP	15,522,411
OM0000004933	AL SUWADI POWER	7,550	160	3	0.021	0.023	0.021	0.023	0.021	0.002	9.524	0.023	0.020	0.023	0.100	SUWP	16,431,346
OM0000005260	OMAN ARAB BANK	24,078	3,130	3	0.130	0.130	0.130	0.130	0.131	-0.001	-0.763	0.130	0.130	0.142	0.100	OAB	217,023,300
OM0000005963	PHOENIX POWER	34,619	1,800	4	0.052	0.052	0.052	0.052	0.053	-0.001	-1.887	0.052	0.053	0.056	0.100	PHPC	76,055,276
OM0000007407	DHOFAR GENERATING	40,216	1,444	5	0.033	0.036	0.033	0.036	0.033	0.003	9.091	0.036	0.036	0.036	0.100	DGEN	8,000,640
OM0000008934	ABRAJ ENERGY SERVICES	64,703	19,217	13	0.297	0.297	0.297	0.297	0.297	0.000	0.000	0.297	0.297	0.304	0.100	ABRJ	228,749,400
OM0000009072	OQ GAS NETWORKS	1,526,483	228,248	473	0.150	0.150	0.149	0.149	0.150	-0.001	-0.667	0.149	0.149	0.149	0.100	OQGN	645,262,964
Total	19	2,961,594	327,581	648													

FIRST OF ITS KIND

Utico, Chinese firm to join hands to extract industrial chemicals from brine waste

RAS AL KHAIMAH: The UAE's only private utility provider, Utico, and Shandong Tianyi Chemical Corporation of China are looking at partnering for a trailblazing joint venture circular economy project to extract industrial chemicals from brine, a first of its kind in the GCC in recycling waste sea-water from desalination plants. In a statement at the 25th Water, Energy, Technology, and Environment (WETEX) and Dubai Solar Show (DSS) exhibition, a Utico statement said that the zero-breakthrough project will come up in Ras Al Khaimah over an area of 20,000 square metres at an estimated investment of AED 160 million. The joint venture project will be developed adjacent to the Utico premises. "This is a pioneering project in the region's renewable energy industry paving the way for innovation in converting brine waste from desalination plants. The pro-



ject is of particular significance in the GCC, a region which is estimated to contribute a lion's share of the world's brine affecting the land and marine ecology adversely. We are also proud to be announcing the project during a period of reinforced interest in sustainability and decarbonisation with the UAE holding the UN climate con-

ference, COP 28," said Hussain Al Lawati, Group CEO, Utico. The project also has significant social and political importance since it is part of the channel investments under the UAE-China bilateral cooperation in the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI). The joint venture company will extract bromine and deeply pro-

cessed hydrobromic acid from discarded concentrated seawater waste from Utico's desalination plants to produce final products of calcium bromide and sodium bromide, which is in high demand for industrial uses in both local and export markets. "The project will help conserve marine ecology since even after the extraction of minerals the composition of the water will not change, and there will be no harm to marine life in case of discharging it back to the ocean," said Li MaoAn, the Chairman of Shandong Tianyi Chemical Corporation. The end products from the bromine extraction from brine are in demand for industries such as oil & gas, and pharmaceuticals and are used in flame retardants, detergent, refrigeration etc. The landmark project will add and reinforce Utico's renewables portfolio and enhance the company's decarbonisation across its operations.

LARSEN & TOUBRO

L&T showcases expertise in power and water infrastructure, renewables

DUBAI: Over the last four decades, Larsen & Toubro, the Indian multinational conglomerate, has established its credentials in the Gulf region, developing vital infrastructure in various countries including the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, UAE, Oman, Kuwait, and Qatar. L&T has lent its expertise to constructing power & water infrastructure, high-rise buildings, stadiums, airports, hospitals, transportation infrastructure and executing projects in the hydro-carbon space. Apart from playing a crucial role in the NEOM project, L&T is rapidly making their presence felt in the Renewables space with the execution of key projects in the region. With their enviable track record and several key projects under execution, L&T made a significant mark at the Water, Energy, Technology, and Environment Exhibition (WETEX) and the Dubai Solar Show 2023, that was held at the Dubai Trade Center starting November 15 – 17. "Over the last few years, our focus on international business has sharpened that is reflected in the fact that over 30% of our total turnover comes from international markets, especially from across the Gulf Region," shared T. Madhava Das, Whole-Time Director and Senior Executive Vice President (Utilities), Larsen & Toubro. "We are delighted that we are playing a significant role in the huge



wave of development that is going on in across the Middle East, led by Saudi Arabia, and with our expertise and experience built over decades, we are well placed and well-equipped to continue making a difference. WETEX always has an ideal platform for us to showcase our capabilities and it was no different this year," he added. In the renewables sector, L&T has achieved significant milestones through its involvement in the world's largest green hydrogen plant project, conducted in collaboration with NEOM Green Hydrogen Company in Oxagon, Saudi Arabia. With an investment of \$8.4 billion, this project focuses on producing green hydrogen and green ammonia for global export. L&T has received approval from Air Products, the EPC Contractor and exclusive off taker, to establish Renewable Energy Generation, Storage, and Grid infrastructure, with a contract value of close to \$3 billion.

L&T Construction's Power Transmission & Distribution (PT&D) business excels as a global leader in EPC services for power transmission, distribution, renewables, and integrated solutions, encompassing transmission lines, substations, cable networks, and more. In the realm of power transmission and distribution, L&T has a proven track record with many completed projects, including 317 substations, over 4,901 kilometres of transmission lines, and more than 2,011 kilometres of cabling projects. L&T's track record in the water infrastructure space in the UAE, Oman, and Qatar is impressive too, having successfully completed more than 10 water projects cumulatively worth over \$1 billion. L&T's expertise has found expression in Oman's Al Dakhiliyah water transmission project, one of the largest undertaken in the country.

GREEN POWER

Photovoltaic power plants shine northwest China's plateau

BEIJING: Along the road in the mountains towards the Pamir Plateau in northwest China's Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region, the elevation has thinner air and warmer sunshine. On the flat ground at the foot of the Karakoram Mountains, a range of blue-black photovoltaic panels are laid in rows on the plateau, receiving power from the sun. Here is a poverty alleviation photovoltaic power plant located about 25 km southeast of Tashkurgan Tajik Autonomous County in the Kashgar region, Xinjiang. "It is very suitable here for the development of photovoltaic power generation with high altitude and the advantage of sunlight resources," said Yan Yuzhi, an engineer at the power plant. The photovoltaic power plant, covering an area of about 42 hectares, is located about 3,300 metres above sea level, said Yan, noting that there are 77,760 photovoltaic modules at the power plant. About 40 million kWh of electricity is generated annually. The power generated by the plant is delivered to the county along a 30 km-long transmission line to provide clean energy for local people. Photovoltaic power drives the county toward prosperity. -xinhua

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HEMPEL AND PERMOGLAZE

UNITE TO SHAPE THE FUTURE OF COATINGS IN OMAN

THE UNION of Hempel and Permoglaze in shaping the future of coatings in Oman marks a significant milestone for both brands. With over a century of trusted experience, Hempel has established itself as a global leader in providing sustainable coating solutions. Permoglaze, on the other hand, brings its range of colours and regional presence of over 30 years in Oman, making it a trusted brand in the region.

One of the key advantages of this collaboration is the ability to offer both Hempel and Permoglaze products simultaneously and instantly. This diversity allows the brands to cater to the specific needs of every customer in Oman, both in terms of functionality and affordability. Whether it is protecting assets against extreme weather conditions or adding a splash of colour to a building, the collaboration ensures that there is a coating solution to suit every requirement.

In line with its commitment to in-country value, Hempel has established a local manufacturing factory in Rusayl-Muscat. This strategic move allows for shorter lead times, reducing the need for inventory holding and ensuring prompt delivery to end customers. The dedication of Hempel's professional team further enhances the customer experience, as they are readily available to address any queries or concerns and provide personalized solutions tailored to each customer's needs.

In addition to their commitment to customer satisfaction, Hempel and Permoglaze are also dedicated to sustainable practices. The brands have embraced digital platforms, making it easier for customers to place orders, track deliveries, and access product information. This digital approach promotes sustainability by reducing the need for physical materials and embracing a more environmentally friendly way of information sharing.

On the significance of this collaboration Hempel's Vice President and Head of Decorative Middle East, Mark Rees Stated, "This collaboration between Hempel and Permoglaze aligns with Hempel's Double Impact strategy, which aims to double the company's size by 2025 through acquisitions and organic growth."



SPORTS

Verstappen clinches gripping race in Las Vegas Grand Prix

Red Bull driver's 18th triumph during this Formula One record-breaking season

LAS VEGAS: Red Bull driver Max Verstappen fought back from a five-second penalty and dropping to fifth to win a gripping Las Vegas Grand Prix on Saturday. He complained on Wednesday it was "99 percent show" but the show was all on track in one of the best races of the season, *BBC Sport* reported. Verstappen, his teammate Sergio Perez and Ferrari's Charles Leclerc swapped and re-swapped places throughout as they fought for the podium positions. Verstappen moved into the lead with 16 laps to go but Leclerc passed Perez back on the final lap to secure second.

Verstappen was penalised five seconds for forcing Leclerc off track at the first corner, suffered a damaged front wing in a collision with Mercedes' George Russell and made an extra pit stop than Leclerc under a mid-race safety car - the second in an action-packed race.

But the pace of the man who has utterly dominated the season inevitably prevailed and he climbed back up to pass Leclerc for the lead with 13 laps to go for his 18th win of his record-breaking season.

The drama began at the beginning when Verstappen, making a better start than Leclerc from second on the grid, got up the inside of the Ferrari into the first corner.

But the Dutchman misjudged his braking and forced Leclerc wide and off track as both cars speared into the run-off area.

It was reminiscent of some of the controversial moves pulled by Verstappen on Lewis Hamilton in their titanic battle for the title



in 2021. He protested that he was ahead at the apex, but that was untrue, and the stewards agreed with Leclerc that the move was worthy of a penalty.

Leclerc wanted Verstappen to give him back the position but Red Bull decided to leave their driver

where he was and take the penalty, which the world champion served at his first pit stop on lap 16.

But that pit stop was from second place, not the lead. Rather than waltz off into the distance after taking the lead, Verstappen found it impossible to shake off

Leclerc, and as Verstappen struggled with his tyres after lap 10 the Ferrari closed in and was able to pass the Red Bull at the end of the Strip on lap 16, triggering the Red Bull stop.

That put Leclerc in the lead and he stayed out for a further five laps, now with Perez behind him.

The Mexican had dropped to the back when he was involved in a melee at the first corner involving several cars and needed a pit stop for a new front wing.

But he moved up the field, helped by not stopping under the first safety car, triggered by a heavy crash for Lando Norris' McLaren.

Leclerc's pit stop on lap 21 put Perez into the lead, and his race was aided enormously by a safety car shortly afterwards, called to recover debris from the track following the Russell-Verstappen collision.

The debris was Verstappen's

front wing endplate but its loss seemed not to slow him down.

At the safety car, Perez pitted for a second set of hard tyres, as did Verstappen, while Leclerc, on tyres only five laps old, did not.

The stops dropped Perez and Verstappen to second and fifth, Verstappen also behind the Alpine of Pierre Gasly and Oscar Piastri's McLaren. At the restart, Leclerc managed to hold Perez off, despite the five-lap tyre offset, for three laps before the Red Bull got him on the straight.

Rather than dropping away, Leclerc hung on to Perez and re-passed him with a stunning late-braking move at the end of the Strip on lap 34.

By now, Verstappen had picked off Gasly and Piastri and homed in on the leaders and he passed Perez down the Strip two laps later.

Leclerc fought as hard as he could but the inevitable happened

on lap 37 as Verstappen steamed past into Turn 14 with the help of the DRS overtaking aid.

Perez then chased Leclerc and took back second place, and Red Bull looked to be on for a one-two.

But Leclerc had other ideas. He hung on to Perez and as the race neared its climax he was on the Red Bull's tail as they started the final lap, and down the straight he made another great late-braking move to clinch second into Turn 14 at the end of the Strip.

The top three were not the only drivers providing entertainment in Sin City as there were similarly intense battles throughout the field. Esteban Ocon's Alpine took fourth place with a single stop, the same strategy as Leclerc.

Lance Stroll was fifth for Aston Martin, while Carlos Sainz and Lewis Hamilton fought up from 12th and 11th on the grid to take sixth and seventh places.

Hamilton's teammate Russell was eighth, serving a five-second penalty for the collision with Verstappen mid-race at Turn 12, while Fernando Alonso was ninth for Aston Martin after a spin at the first corner, which gave him damage and a first-lap pit stop.

Hamilton was unlucky. A puncture after a collision with Piastri on lap 16 cost him 15 seconds because he had to do a full lap with the deflating rear tyre - only realising the problem as he passed the pit entry. That forced him off the one-stop inverted hard-medium strategy Mercedes had chosen and required a second pit stop.

Russell was the architect of his own demise, turning in on Verstappen in their collision and not only earning himself the penalty but causing a safety car that allowed Perez to jump up into the top-three fight from a position that would otherwise have been significantly lower.

Piastri took the final point. Norris was taken to hospital for further check-ups after initially being assessed at the medical centre, but was walking away from his car after his crash. Norris was later discharged when all checks came back clear. - Agencies

FOOTBALL FRIENDLY

Nagelsmann loses in first home game



BERLIN: Julian Nagelsmann's home debut as Germany coach ended in defeat in Berlin as the Euro 2024 hosts were beaten 3-2 by Turkey in a friendly on Saturday.

Nagelsmann replaced Hansi Flick in September after a poor run of results, but this was a disappointing display in front of a sold-out 70,000 crowd.

Kai Havertz gave Germany the lead but strikes from Ferdi Kadioglu and Kenan Yildiz put the visitors ahead.

Niclas Fullkrug levelled but Yusuf Sari's penalty secured Turkey's win.

Germany face Austria in another friendly on Tuesday. - Agencies

EURO 2024 QUALIFIERS

Mbappe's hat-trick in record 14-0 victory

PARIS: France scored seven goals in each half as they recorded their biggest ever win by thrashing 10-man Gibraltar 14-0 in Euro 2024 qualifying on Saturday.

The hosts are already through to the Germany tournament but did not take things easy as Kylian Mbappe hit a hat-trick that included a 40-yard strike.

Teenager Warren Zaire-Emery was one of seven different first-half scorers, *BBC Sport* reported.

At 17 years, eight months and 11 days, he became France's youngest player since 1914.

He marked his debut with a goal to make it 3-0 before going off injured.

Ethan Santos turned Jonathan Clauss' cross into his own net after just three minutes before Marcus Thuram made it 2-0 minutes later.

Then came Zaire-Emery's goal before the unfortunate Santos was shown a red card in the 18th minute.

Mbappe made it 4-0 from the penalty spot before further strikes from Clauss, Kingsley Coman and Youssef Fofana made it 7-0 at the break.



France appeared to take their foot off the pedal for a while as it took until the 63rd minute for them to add an eighth, Adrien Rabot drilling home.

But then the goals started flowing again as Coman and Ousmane Dembele scored before Mbappe grabbed two more - including a stunning 40-yard finish after the striker spotted goalkeeper Dayle Coleing off his line.

Olivier Giroud rounded off the huge win by helping himself to two goals in quick succession



shortly before the final whistle.

Netherlands qualify

The Netherlands secured a place in the Euro 2024 finals as Wout Weghorst's strike earned them a 1-0 home win over the Republic of Ireland.

The Hoffenheim striker moved clear before rifling into the roof of the net after 11 minutes.

The hosts dominated a low-tempo encounter with Republic keeper Gavin Bazunu pushing Tijjani Reijnders' shot onto the post

early in the second half.

The Republic finished the qualifiers with just six points from eight games.

The injury-hit Dutch should have increased their goal tally at the Johan Cruyff Arena, but they were wasteful in front of goal, while Bazunu made a string of excellent saves.

Wales dealt huge blow

Wales' hopes of qualifying automatically for Euro 2024 suffered a potentially devastating blow with a lacklustre 1-1 draw with Armenia in Yerevan.

Armenia, who inflicted a humiliating defeat on Wales in Cardiff in June, took the lead after just five minutes when Lucas Zelaryan - who scored twice in that 4-2 summer triumph - seized on slack defending to strike powerfully from the edge of the penalty area.

Wales were panicked and frantic but still created chances and equalised shortly before half-time as Armenia's Nair Tikhizyan headed into his own net from a Connor Roberts throw-in.

With both sides needing a win to maintain any realistic chance of automatic qualification, they each attacked desperately after the break, with Armenia's Vahan Bichakhchyan hitting the crossbar and Jordan James having a shot saved for Wales.

Wales must now beat Group D leaders Turkey in Cardiff on Tuesday and hope that Croatia, who beat Latvia 2-0 later on Saturday, drop points against Armenia on Tuesday.

Other results: Belarus 1 Andorra 0, Israel 1 Romania, Switzerland 1 Kosovo 1. - Agencies

ATP FINALS

Djokovic downs Alcaraz to set up final with Sinner

TURIN: Novak Djokovic delivered a masterclass to beat Carlos Alcaraz on Saturday in the latest instalment of their burgeoning rivalry to reach the ATP Finals showpiece. The Serb will aim for a record seventh title on Sunday after a 6-3, 6-2 win put him through to face Italian Jannik Sinner.

Sinner became the first Italian to make the season-ending final with a 6-3, 6-7 (4-7), 6-1 win over Daniil Medvedev.

In a blockbuster encounter between the two players who have dominated the tour this season,



Djokovic, 36, was at his ruthless and relentless best against his 20-year-old opponent.

Djokovic has won three of the season's Grand Slams, beating Alcaraz in the French Open semi-

finals, while Alcaraz won the other major by overcoming the Serb in the Wimbledon final.

The pair traded the world No.1 ranking through the season but Djokovic sealed the year-end top spot earlier this month for a record eighth time, and his performance on Saturday underlined why he remains the player to beat.

"This year I wasn't maybe as sharp in the second and third group matches, particularly, but I think tonight from the very beginning I felt the ball well," Djokovic said after the match.

World No.4 Sinner's victory was his third straight success against Medvedev, having lost the previous six encounters between the pair.

"It is a privilege to have this kind of pressure. The crowd has given me so much energy," the 22-year-old said.

"I felt that he was playing more aggressively, especially in the first set. Somehow I made the break and from that point I felt better," added Sinner, who has never been beyond the semi-final of a Grand Slam. - Agencies

HERO WORLD CHALLENGE

Woods to play in Bahamas

NEW YORK: Tiger Woods is set to return after seven months out when he plays in the Hero World Challenge in the Bahamas. The 15-time major winner has not played competitively since withdrawing from the Masters in April, after which he had ankle surgery.

The 47-year-old American is host of the Hero World Challenge at Albany, a 20-player invitational event that begins on November 30.

Woods will take the 20th and final playing place in the



PGA Tour event. He is joined by exemptions Justin Rose and Lucas Glover, while the likes of Scottie Scheffler, Jordan Spieth, Matt Fitzpatrick and Viktor Hovland are also taking part. - Agencies

ROUND-UP

Mall of Muscat partners with EVO to install new EV charging stations

This initiative aims to energise the expanding electric vehicle community in the country, reinforcing both organisations' commitment to a more sustainable future

MUSCAT: Taking a significant step forward in fostering sustainable mobility, Mall of Muscat, Oman's premium shopping destination, has partnered with EVO, Oman's leading provider of EV charging solutions, to install state-of-the-art 22kw chargers.

This initiative aims to energise the expanding electric vehicle community in the country, reinforcing both organisations' commitment to a more sustainable future.

As part of the collaboration, a pair of advanced 22kw chargers is now operational in a specially designated area for electric vehicle charging within the mall. Plans are being developed to expand the range of charging stations available in the mall's parking area soon.

Sustainability is an integral part of Mall of Muscat's ethos, and it recognises the critical role it can play in promoting a greener, more sustainable future for Oman. From



using energy-efficient systems to encouraging eco-friendly practices among its tenants/renters, Mall of Muscat is persistently striving to minimise its environmental footprint. Now by offering sustainable mobility options such as designated electric vehicle charging areas in its car park, Mall of Muscat aims to be a sustainability leader in the retail sector and make a significant contribution to wider environmental efforts across Oman.

A spokesperson for Mall of Muscat said, "We are happy to contribute meaningfully to the broader green initiatives taking shape across the country and enhancing our visitor experience. Partnering with EVO, a pioneer in the green transition, aligns perfectly with our mission. EVO's extensive net-

work of more than 80 charging stations nationwide is now enhanced by our own state-of-the-art charging facilities. These are all conveniently accessible through the EVO Oman mobile app, making the process of charging electric vehicles as effortless as possible. This collaboration is a testament to our ongoing commitment to promote sustainable mobility and environmental responsibility."

A spokesperson for EVO said, "Mall of Muscat stands out for its exceptional shopping and entertainment offerings, as well as its dedication to sustainability. Collaborating with them on this green initiative is a perfect fit. This partnership underscores our commitment to delivering high-quality services to visitors and aligns seamlessly with Oman's 2050 Net Zero goals."

Mall of Muscat encourages its visitors to try out the newly installed charging stations and to keep backing projects that further the cause of a sustainable Oman.

Incorporating an expanse of approximately 200,000 square meters and providing more than 3000 parking spaces, the Mall boasts a substantial area. Beyond its shopping allure, Mall of Muscat presents a host of family-centric attractions, including a cinema, an entertainment zone, and other engaging features. Remarkably, it also hosts the Oman Aquarium, the largest and only public aquarium within the Sultanate. With an impressive array of 240+ brands spanning across fashion, lifestyle, sports, and electronics, Mall of Muscat offers an unparalleled luxurious experience.



Genetco marks National Day by visiting children's hospitals across Oman

MUSCAT: In a heartwarming gesture to mark Oman National Day, Genetco (General Electric & Trading Company) exemplified its unwavering commitment to social responsibility by visiting children's hospitals across the Sultanate of Oman.

Driven by its belief in making a positive impact on society beyond its business endeavours, Genetco aimed to spread joy and happiness to young patients during this special occasion.

The management and team members of Genetco dedicated Oman National Day to engaging with young patients in various children's hospitals, with the primary goal of bringing smiles and moments of joy to those undergoing medical treatment.

Chairman, Murtadha Hassan Ali, and Dr Ambuj Khare, COO-Trade, attended the event.

Acknowledging the profound significance of giving back to the community, Genetco's initiative was purposefully centred on uplifting the spirits of children and their families during their time in the hospital.

Throughout the visits, Team Genetco orchestrated interactive sessions, distributed gifts, and actively participated in activities designed to create a motivating atmosphere within the hospital premises. The company's ethos is firmly rooted in the belief in the healing power of positivity, and

their efforts sought to contribute significantly to the well-being of the children, their families, and the dedicated hospital staff.

Dr Muthanna Al Durrah, Acting CEO, and Board Advisor of Genetco, conveyed sincere gratitude for the chance to bring moments of joy to young patients.

He emphasised, "Oman National Day is a time for patience and reflection. At Genetco, we value this opportunity to with over 52 years of extensive experience in the Oman market, General Electric & Trading Company, known as Genetco, is a leading Home Appliances, Consumer Electronics, Engineering, and Facility Management company based in the Sultanate of Oman. The company remains steadfast in its commitment to delivering exceptional products and services. Operating across multiple locations, Genetco enforces strict adherence to its strategic policy, placing a paramount focus on achieving the highest quality standards in its core activities. As a distributor of esteemed brands such as Gree, Canon, Hitachi, TCL, JBL, Best, Rowa, and more, Genetco consistently intensifies its efforts year by year to enhance the customer service experience and adhere to ISO 9001 standards. As a 100% Omani organisation, Genetco is deeply committed to serving Oman nationals and residents."

STANDOUT ACCOMPLISHMENT

Bank Muscat a reliable partner in achieving Oman Vision 2040 goals

MUSCAT: Under the watchful gaze of His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik, the Sultanate of Oman marks its 53rd National Day with notable accomplishments across various sectors, reaffirming its commitments to realising the goals outlined in Oman Vision 2040.

On this special occasion, Bank Muscat, the leading financial service provider in Oman, takes pride in being a standout accomplishment of the renaissance era, channelling all its resources and capabilities towards serving the nation and consistently aiding its advancement and growth. Over a period of 40 years, the bank – as a reliable banking partner- has contributed to the process of sustainable development through the products and banking solutions provided to various government and private institutions to implement different projects including economic projects. It has the largest asset management portfolio in the Sultanate of Oman, with assets under management (AUM) over \$2.5 billion.

Over a period of 40 years, the bank – as a reliable banking partner - has contributed to the process of sustainable development through the products and banking solutions provided to various government and private institutions to implement different projects, including economic projects. It has the largest asset management portfolio in the Sultanate of Oman, with assets under management (AUM) over \$2.5 billion.

The bank is proud of its contribution to the emergence of many small and medium-sized enterprises operating in various fields. Through its financial and management consultation services, Bank Muscat has become a house of expertise locally and regionally. It offers suitable solutions to institutions and business owners, further solidifying its pioneering stance in delivering the best innovative banking services and products. It will persist in attaining further successes in various domains based on the bank's vision "to serve you better every day," which focuses on prioritising individual and corporate customers.

Substantial services for corporates, entrepreneurs
Bank Muscat has witnessed signif-



icant development in the services provided to government institutions and corporates. The bank is keen to provide the best banking experience to customers through innovative and diverse solutions and services that suit their requirements and business. During the past period, the bank launched a number of services, including those that can be availed through e-channels, in order to align with the digital transformation adopted by different institutions.

The bank has launched an integrated digital platform for banking transactions, providing a range of digital solutions for corporate and institutional customers, encompassing payment transactions, account services, collections and receivables, liquidity and trade services for companies, SMEs, and government institutions. With this new platform, customers get better control over funds from inside and outside the Sultanate and leverage the flexibility provided by direct deposit collection services or digital account solutions that enable customers to manage funds electronically through speed transfers and other tools available on the platform.

Electronic corporate banking services are one of the solutions designed to help customers follow up on payment transactions in a safer manner. Available in English and Arabic, the platform is accessible, and it enables companies to view account details directly, upload account statements, and review transaction records.

Customers can also process various types of transactions, including local and international

transactions in Omani riyals and foreign currencies, single payments, uploading payroll files and wholesale suppliers, in addition to special payments related to credit cards and invoices.

In order to provide the best services to the business sector, Bank Muscat recently celebrated the relocation of the corporate branch in Sohar. The new branch is characterized by its spacious area and modern design, and it provides various banking services. The bank also opened a new corporate branch in Duqm, Al Wusta, to keep pace with the development and growth witnessed by the wilayat. It will continue to provide innovative services to the business sector and offer banking solutions that contribute to the development of business in various fields.

Exceptional retail services

Through its customer-centric vision, Bank Muscat has introduced new services and innovative offers that give added value to customers and enable them to benefit from features that commensurate with their different needs. It is also keen to develop a strategy that contributes to the implementation of digital transformation plans focused on Oman Vision 2040.

This sets up fundamentals to launch a variety of edge-cutting services with benefits that suit the needs of different categories. Moreover, the bank this year celebrated the opening of many new branches and relocations within its long-term strategy to enhance the branch network and provide high-quality banking services. The new branches have a con-

temporary design with ample space, encompassing Madinat Sultan Qaboos branch, Al Nahdha branch in Wilayat Al Amerat, Al Hail branch in Seeb, and Al Khoudh-6 branch, bringing the total number of branches to 178 distributed in all governorates Oman.

The bank is keen to create new products and offer exclusive deals and advantages that enhance customers' experience, in addition to providing various banking services, such as personal finance, auto finance, and housing finance.

The reflection of the interest in the bank's distinctive products is the rise in the number of MB and IB registered users, which reached 1.76 million until the end of September 2023. The total number of e-service omni-channels reached 849 devices spread across all governorates, including ATMs, CDMs, multifunctional devices, CDMs for corporates, in addition to account statement printing devices.

Unmatched financing options to support investors

To strengthen its leading position in offering top-notch banking services to both individuals and businesses, and relying on its extensive experience in the banking industry, Bank Muscat was appointed as the Issue Manager for the Initial Public Offering of OQ Gas Networks, the largest IPO listed on the Muscat Stock Exchange. The bank also acted as the Global Coordinator along with other regional and international financial organizations. The offering experienced a big success as it raised OMR288 million (\$748 million). In view of this, the bank launched

financial options to support investors and customers to get the most out of this offering. Also, the bank has strengthened its partnership with government and private institutions, providing them modern solutions and digital services tailored to suit their needs. It works closely with leading government-related companies and institutions to implement important strategic projects in the electricity and water sectors, as well as in the hospitality and real estate sectors.

With its long experience in investment management, the bank provides individual and institutional clients with the opportunity to take advantage of investment options, assessments, and analyses in various funds. Individuals wishing to achieve short-term or long-term returns can invest in the Oryx Fund and the Bank Muscat Liquidity Fund, which gives them the opportunity to invest in a diversified portfolio in the shares of many companies, thereby reducing the risk ratio.

Nonstop development of e-channels

Being one of the key strategic pillars, Bank Muscat has forged ahead executing plans aiming to achieve digital transformation and financial inclusion whether for individual customers, corporate customers or SMEs. This approach helped in achieving a notable increase by 35.7% in the acquiring transactions through e-channels and POS machines.

During this year, the bank launched a range of new electronic services, including a package of internet and mobile banking services. Customers can apply for finance products and credit cards through the IB or MB. The new addition aims to expand the list of options available through the bank's various electronic channels to enhance the customer experience in terms of facilitating the process of applying for banking services and products and reducing the waiting time when visiting branches.

Furthermore, Bank Muscat has enabled subscription and redemption options for mutual funds through the Mobile Banking and Internet Banking which resulted in the growing interest of retail investors in the bank's investment

products. Recently, the Bank introduced services for opening children's accounts through Mobile Banking and Internet Banking. It also launched the new Doorstep Banking service which provides corporate employees with the convenience of opening bulk personal accounts from their workplace.

Undivided attention to HR

Bank Muscat is honoured to be one of the leading financial institutions in the Sultanate that attaches great importance to the development of human resources and is keen to implement specialized policies and plans in this field. Its endeavour is to provide the appropriate environment for employees to help them accomplish their work and duties to the fullest. It also encourages and motivates them through various programs designed to sharpening their skills. A number of 372 new employees joined the bank this year, taking the total number of employees to 4105, with an Omanization rate of more than 93%. The bank works continuously to support employees by providing training and guidance programs and workshops in various fields so that they can achieve their dreams and aspirations, fulfil their goals, and effectively participate to achieve the goals of Oman Vision 2040.

In the same context, the bank pays great attention to supporting female employees. Women in Bank Muscat have assumed various roles and responsibilities that have enabled them to achieve many successes and achievements. It is a matter of pride that the percentage of female employees in the bank has reached more than 48% of the total number of employees in various departments and branches.

Besides, the bank is keen to partner with educational institutions to achieve the goals of sustainable human development. Therefore, the bank has provided more than 380 training opportunities for students in disciplines related to the banking sector. This annual initiative aims to develop students' practical skills in various fields and functional specialties, especially related to the banking and financial sector.

ROUND-UP

Suzuki unveils its latest trio: Fronx, Grand Vitara and Baleno



The cutting-edge technology of Suzuki vehicles is set to redefine the driving experience and elevate automotive innovation to new heights

MUSCAT: Moosa Abdul Rahman Hassan & Co, a renowned name in the automotive industry, is thrilled to announce the much-anticipated unveiling of the latest Suzuki models – the all new Suzuki Fronx, all new Grand Vitara and Baleno. The cutting-edge technology of Suzuki vehicles is set to redefine the driving experience and elevate automotive innovation to new heights. “We are excited to introduce the Suzuki Fronx, Grand Vitara, and Baleno, representing a new era of automotive excellence. These models reflect our commitment to pushing the boundaries of technology, design, and performance. The line-up will undoubtedly provide our customers with an unmatched



driving experience,” Said Darwish Al-Balushi, CEO of Moosa Abdul Rahman Hassan & Co said.

Suzuki Fronx: Vibe different The all new Suzuki Fronx is the future of SUV, with a blend of contemporary Coupe design, advanced technology, and exceptional fuel efficiency, it is a perfect choice for those seeking a sporty up-class Hatchback with sophisticated style and strength, offering an unparalleled driving experience like never before

All new FRONX comes in seven monotone shades, namely – Arctic White, Splendid Silver, Grandeur Grey, Bluish Black, Celestial Blue, and Opulent Red. It also comes in dual-tone colour combinations of Splendid Silver with Bluish Black Roof, Opulent Red with Bluish Black Roof.

Key features include: Innovative Mild hybrid powertrain for exceptional fuel efficiency, appealing aesthetics, Spacious,

sturdy & sleek interiors with advanced technological features, Head-Up Display, 360 view Camera, 9” Touchscreen Display, Qi certified Wireless Charger etc, Capable K15C Dual jet Engine (Mild Hybrid)

Suzuki Grand Vitara: Leave a grand trail The Suzuki Grand Vitara combines performance with refined elegance. Its bold styling, advanced safety features, and impressive performance ensure a comfortable and secure journey, whether you’re on city streets or conquering challenging terrains.

With powerful SUV exterior styling, flushed hood & crafted chrome grill, long shoulders emphasize the overall length while the shoulder line and the front/rear fenders, give it a muscular and assertive SUV exterior

The front face with distinctive 3-point signature lamps, chrome



grille bar which connects right and left lamps, and polygonal grille give the all-new Grand Vitara a premium look.

Sophisticated layered instrument panel expresses luxury and the thick console enhances the appearance as a confident SUV

The all-new Grand Vitara is equipped with a panoramic sunroof, head-up display, 9” Display Audio System, 360 view camera etc. Moreover, wireless charging and rear AC vents contribute to great comfort and accessibility.

Key features include: Strong Aggressive exterior design, 4WD All Grip select – Drive System with 6 speed Automatic Transmission, Cruise Control, LED Headlamps, Qi certified Wireless Charger, Sunroof

Suzuki Baleno: Raise your edge The Suzuki Baleno is a versatile hatchback that seamlessly blends

modern design with practicality featuring spacious interior, advanced infotainment systems and a capable engine. The Baleno transforms everyday driving into a delightful experience.

For the first time, the Baleno has undergone a full-model change while maintaining the much-favoured upgradation. It has evolved in all directions, including the exterior design that further accentuates the low & widest styling, high quality interior, advanced equipment such as head-up display, Infotainment system, rear seat comfort etc.

Key features include: Exterior Design: The Baleno features a dynamic exterior with a distinctive roofline design, chrome-finished front grille, and eye-catching 3-point LEDs for DRLs and tail lamps.

Interior Design: The interior offers a premium feel with a dual-tone black and navy blue theme,

soft-touch materials, and satin silver accents on the instrument panel and steering wheel.

Advanced Equipment: The Baleno is equipped with a 9-inch touchscreen display audio, a 360-degree view camera, and a colored head-up display, providing connectivity and critical information to the driver.

Enhanced Rear Seat Comfort: Rear seat cushions and shapes have been refined for firm support, and rear air-conditioning vents and fast-charging USB ports ensure a comfortable and pleasant ride for passengers.

Moosa Abdul Rahman Hassan & Co welcomes automotive enthusiasts and prospective buyers to experience the All New Suzuki Fronx, Grand Vitara, and Baleno at its dealerships nationwide. These innovative models reflect the company’s ongoing dedication to delivering exceptional vehicles that cater to a wide range of customer needs.

“With a legacy spanning over decades, Moosa Abdul Rahman Hassan & Co has been a trusted name in the automotive industry. We are proud to represent the Suzuki brand and remain committed to providing top-quality vehicles and services to our valued customers. Our passion for innovation and customer satisfaction drives us to unveil outstanding vehicles like the Suzuki Fronx, Grand Vitara, and Baleno,” CEO added.

CAREER GUIDANCE

FOR BUSINESS PARK AND JINAN ISLANDS

TCI to host ‘Study in India’ meet for students at InterCity Hotel on November 24 and 25

MUSCAT: The Crossroads International (TCI) Oman, a leading organisation guiding students in the field of higher education will organise a ‘Study in India’ meet, in partnership with TIES Global, to help aspiring students wanting to study in India. The meet will take place on November 24 and 25 at the A’Raya Ballroom of InterCity Hotel from 10am to 8pm on both the days.

The ‘Study in India’ meet will offer parents and students the opportunity to interact with representatives from several top Indian colleges and universities to discuss and understand their profiles, admission process, fee structure, eligibility, and post-study work opportunities. Leading colleges and universities such as SRM, Anna University, VIT, Nitte, Jain University will be participating in the fair.

Discussing the relevance of the meet, Annie Melinda, CEO, TCI stated, “It is important for students in Oman to have a holistic picture of the different educational options and opportunities available to them in India. One of the key factors driving students to study in India is the top quality of education that is provided at minimum costs.”

“Aspiring students and their



parents will have the opportunity to interact with several college and university representatives to understand the course most suitable for their profile at the meet. They might even get on the spot admission confirmations. For others, once a profile evaluation is done, TCI and TIES Global will help expedite the admission process.”

TCI specialises in career guidance, life-long career development, educational solutions, interactive educational technologies, international events and conferences on education and turnaround consulting for educational institutions. Helping individuals embrace learning as a way of life, the company offers top-notch solutions and services that are changing the way education is looked at in the sultanate.

With a philosophy of “Learning Redefined”, TCI also works closely with organisations to understand their training needs and provides customised training to employees,

helping them hone their skills and enhance performance. TCI offers customised programmes on capability building, integrated learning systems, campus to corporate programmes, study abroad and admissions support in addition to a host of other education-based services.

TIES Global is an international education solution providing organisation that conducts education expositions across the globe and provides a platform for Indian institutions to admit NRI and foreign students. The organisation has a team of experts who have wide knowledge of international educational systems across the globe. Armed with this expertise, TIES Global ensures the highest standards of outcomes for both students as well as colleges and universities. Over the years, the organisation has created opportunities for multiple Indian institutions to recruit foreign students from different parts of the globe through their educational events.

Al Mouj Muscat claims dual win at Arabian Property Awards

MUSCAT: Reaffirming its position as a ‘developer of distinction’, Al Mouj Muscat brought home two accolades from the Arabian Property Awards 2023-24. Competing against over 200 properties, it claimed best ‘Office Development in Oman’ and best ‘Residential Developments with 20+ Units’ for its recently launched and Jinan Island respectively.

Nasser Al Sheibani, CEO of Al Mouj Muscat, said, “Such prestigious recognition from the Arabian Property Awards stands as a testament to our vision for Jinan Island and our innovative Business Park. It takes commitment to deliver on our promise of ultimate quality and luxury and ours has never wavered from day one. Today, Al Mouj Muscat is amongst the leading in the industry, offering unparalleled life, work and leisure experiences.”

Launched in early 2023, the Business Park is situated within Al Mouj Golf and features eight mid-rise buildings divided between two distinct districts: Business Park East and Business Park West. The park provides occupiers with an oceanfront setting complemented by a picturesque view across the golf course.

The occupiers benefit from excellent connectivity, transport links, and access to world-class leisure, commercial, and tourism



amenities. Spanning 39,000 square meters and adhering to stringent grade A standards, the buildings are tied together by landscaped gardens and communal spaces, fostering a conducive environment for business networking.

Following the Business Park, early 2023 also witnessed the launch of Jinan Island at the heart of Al Mouj Muscat. It comprises of a private collection of 43 five and six-bedroom luxury villas on a serene private island. A masterpiece of luxury living and exceptional design, the exclusive island enclave of unique and elegant homes offers a blissful verdant environment for every moment of modern family life through three distinct styles of villas.

The residents-only neighbourhood is an oasis of calm, linked

to the vibrant Ghadeer District. The island is in a central location between Al Mouj Marina with its neighbouring waterside cafes and restaurants, and Al Mouj Golf, the region’s leading championship course, and the five-star St Regis and Al Mouj Kempinski hotels.

Recognised as the largest, most prestigious, and widely acknowledged awards in the region, the Arabian Property Awards have become synonymous with excellence in the real estate sector. Every year, they are judged by an independent panel of more than 90 industry experts, focusing on design, quality, service, innovation, originality and commitment to sustainability. Its 2023-24 panel was chaired by Lord Best and Lord Waverley, members of the House of Lords in the UK Parliament.





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