LET'S TALK
Times OF OMAN

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HM THE SULTAN GREETS GOVERNOR GENERAL OF BELIZE

MUSCAT: His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik has sent a cable of greetings to Froyla Tzalam, Governor General of Belize on her country's Independence Anniversary. In the cable, His Majesty the Sultan expressed his heartfelt sentiments and best wishes to Governor General Froyla and the people of her country. - **ONA**

HIS MAJESTY THE SULTAN GREETS PRESIDENT OF ARMENIA

MUSCAT: His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik has sent a cable of greetings to President Vahagn Khachaturyan of the Republic of Armenia on his country's Independence Anniversary. In the cable, His Majesty the Sultan expressed his sincere sentiments and best wishes to President Khachaturyan. His Majesty also wished the people of Armenia further progress and prosperity. - **ONA**

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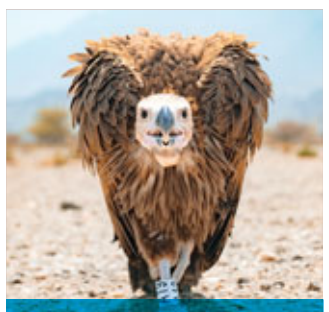
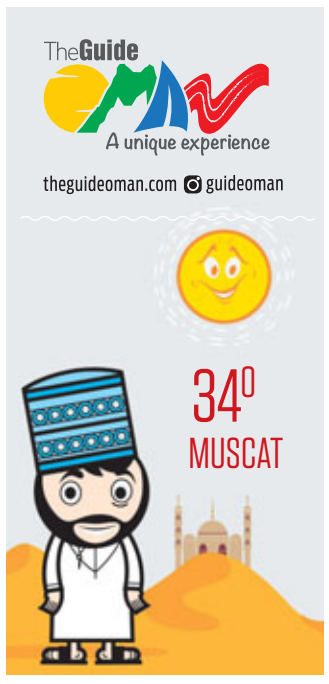


Sultanate takes key steps to save endangered vultures **A3**



BELARAB BIN HAITHAM AWARD FOR ARCHITECTURAL DESIGN

A BIRD OVER THE SEA

MUTTRAH SQUARE PROJECT TO BECOME ICONIC LANDMARK IN OMAN

Muscat Municipality has been assigned the task to carry out Maidan Muttrah (Muttrah Square) project

Times News Service

MUSCAT: In implementation of the Royal orders of His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik instructing Muscat Municipality to carry out Maidan Muttrah (Muttrah Square) project, which won first place in the Belarab bin Haitham Award for Architectural Design, a ceremony was held under the auspices of Sayyid Saud Hilal Al Busaidi, Governor of Muscat, to hand over the project.

The project's handing-over memorandum was signed at Al Wahat Club yesterday with Muscat Municipality.

The gesture seeks to utilise youth talent to portray Omani civilisation landmarks as facilities that serve all segments of society, while at the same time lending an aesthetic touch to the selected sites. The project seeks to boost the beauty of Muttrah, with an iconic bridge taking centre stage in the city square encompassing a variety of facilities.

The project envisages streamlined approach catering to the needs of all segments of society, including people with disabilities.

Its aesthetic outlook features green and aquatic spaces and a garden of sculptures.

The project features an iconic curved, angled bridge over the waterfront of the Muttrah Corniche that is inspired by the sword of Imam Al Salt bin Malik.

Designed in a way to replicate the flight of birds over the sea, the bridge also acts as a frame through which some of Muttrah's most iconic landmarks can be seen.

The Maidan Muttrah project also includes displays that show the interplay between light and water, giving an amazing visual experience for the people.

The bridge surrounds a multi-use plaza that includes a dancing fountain, retail stores and cafes and restaurants. The function was attended by Sayyid Said Sultan Al Busaidi, Undersecretary of Culture, who also heads the Prize Committee, and Ahmed Mohammed Al Humaidi, Chairman of Muscat Municipality.

TOP THREE INSIDE STORIES

OMAN

OMR5.6 million pact to set up fuel stations

1 The Ministry of Housing and Urban Planning signed 30 usufruct pacts for the establishment of integrated fuel stations with an investment of OMR5,600,000. >A2

WORLD

Myanmar helicopter attack kills many

2 Government helicopters attacked a school and a village in Myanmar, killing over a dozen people, including at least six children. >A6

MARKET

Domestic sales of refineries up 16.8%

3 The total domestic sales of refineries in Oman rose 16.8% at the end of July 2022, compared to the same period in 2021, according to new NCSI. >B1

مطارات عُمان
Oman Airports

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL

Oman Airports would like to invite qualified Local and International Companies to participate in the Request for Proposal (RFP) for the Commercial Opportunities at Muscat International Airport for the following:

RFP. Ref No	RFP TITLE	DOC's RFP OMR	DOC's Distribution	Closing Date
2022/RFP70/MCT	Car Rental service	105	21st September 2022	3rd October 2022
2022/RFP171/MCT	Ticketing counter	105	21st September 2022	3rd October 2022

Required Proposal Bond: all participating companies must provide a bank guarantee, issued by a locally registered bank, addressed to Oman Airports Management Company at the time of submitted the proposal, the bank guarantee have to be valid for 90 days from the day of submission, further details can be found in the RFP documentation.

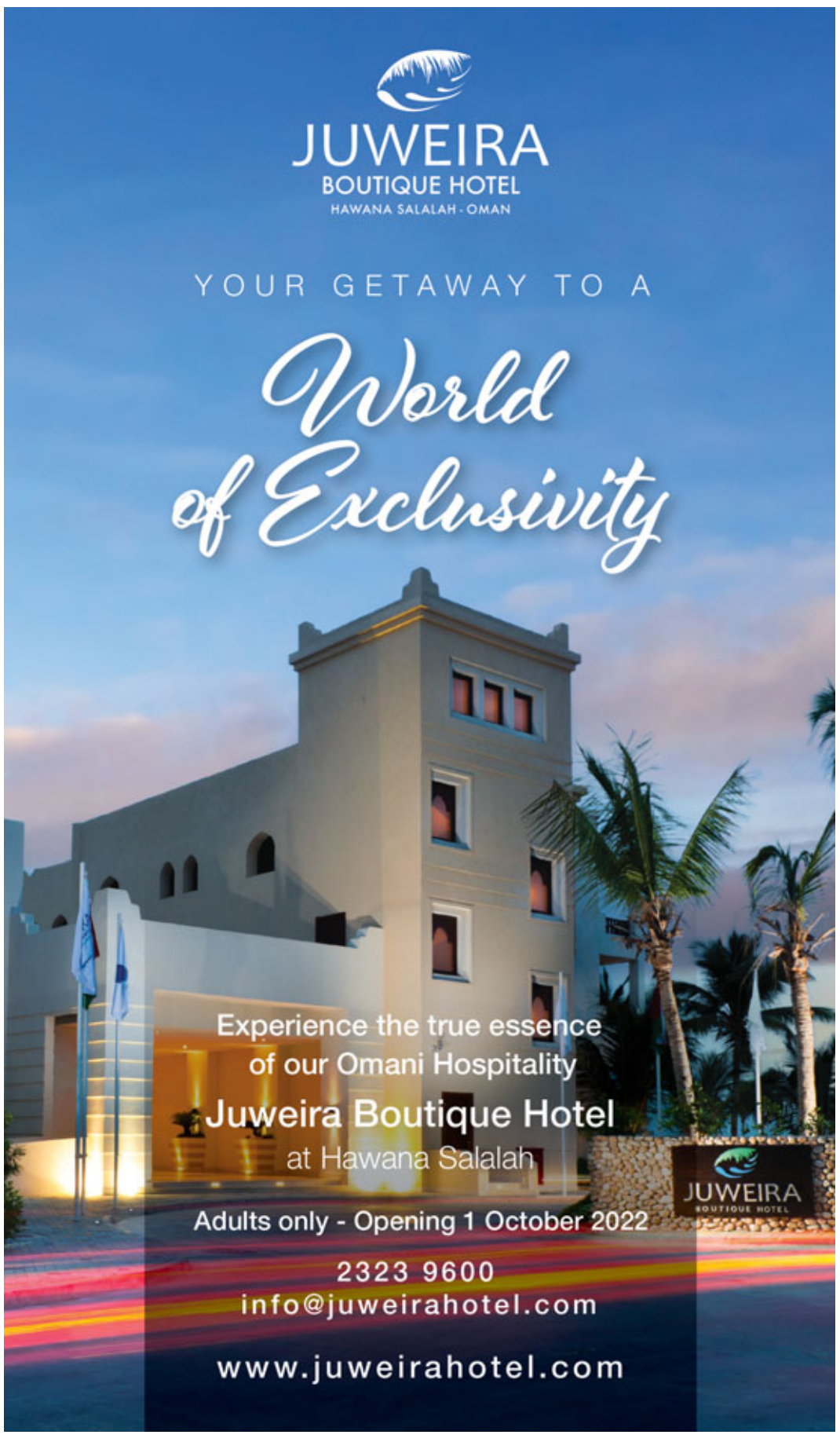
RFP Collection: Specialized companies may obtain RFP Documents from Commercial Department upon receipt of complete payment of RFP fees by deposit the payment and receive scanned copy of deposit Receipt along with a copy of Company Commercial Registration Certificate to Email: (**FinanceTenders@omanairports.com**) provided with company name, tender number & contact person as a mandatory.

OAMC Bank Account Details:
Account Name: Oman Airports Management Co. S.A.O.C.
Account No: 0423010849180012
Name of Bank: BANK MUSCAT
Branch: Corporate Branch, CBD Area, Muscat, Sultanate of Oman
SWIFT Code: BMUSOMRX

Submission: All bids shall be submitted as per mentioned instructions in the tender documents and late bids will not be entertained.

Headquarter Address:
Muscat International Airport
South Forecourt Building, First Floor
Oman Airports Management S.A.O.C
Muscat, Sultanate of Oman.

Note: All Correspondence / Clarification / Enquiries send an e-mail:
retail@omanairports.com



OMAN

Rafeeq SHOP NOW rafeeq.om

PRAYER TIMINGS

Dhuhr	12:05pm
Asr	3:31pm
Maghrib	6:10pm
Isha	7:20pm
Fajr (Tomorrow)	4:40am

CABLE

His Majesty sends greetings to Malta

MUSCAT: His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik has sent a cable of greetings to President George Vella of the Republic of Malta on his country's Independence Anniversary.

Best wishes

In the cable, His Majesty the Sultan expressed his sincere sentiments and best wishes to President Vella and the people of his country.-ONA

WEATHER

Rain in wilayats

MUSCAT: Some wilayats of the Sultanate of Oman witnessed rain of varying intensity on Tuesday, according to Oman Meteorology. The Al Hajar Mountains witnessed rainfall of varying intensity, accompanied by active winds and hail in some areas. The most prominent areas that witnessed rain are: Wilayat of Mudhaibi, Wilayat of Ibri, Wilayat of Mahda and Wilayat of Al Hamra.

MINISTRY OF HOUSING AND URBAN PLANNING

OMR5.6mn pact signed to establish fuel stations

Times News Service

MUSCAT: The Ministry of Housing and Urban Planning signed 30 usufruct agreements on Tuesday for the establishment of integrated fuel stations.

With an investment of OMR5,600,000, the area of the fuel sttaions range from 2,500 square metres to more than 5,000 square metres and the total area is 101,842 square metres.

This comes within the Ministry of Housing and Urban Planning initiatives in achieving financial sustainability, attracting investment, enhancing government revenues, stimulating commercial movement and encouraging local investment.

The agreements were signed by Eng. Hamad bin Ali Al Nazwani, Undersecretary of the Ministry of Housing, and Urban Planning for Housing and representatives of fuel stations, in the presence of Dr. Saleh bin Saeed Al Masn, Undersecretary of the Ministry of Commerce and Industry and Investment Promotion for Trade and Industry.

Furthermore, the ministry allocated sites for the establishment of seven fuel stations in South Al Sharqiyah Governorate, six fuel stations in Dhofar Governorate, six fuel stations in North Al Sharqiyah Governorate, four fuel stations in Al Dakhiliyah Governorate, three fuel stations in Muscat Governorate, two fuel stations in Al DhahirahGovernorate, in addition to the allocation of sites for the establishment of one fuel station in each of Al Buraimi and South Al Batinah Governorates.

The allocation of these sites comes within the Ministry of Housing and Urban Planning approach, which is working on a new mechanism to ensure the maximum benefit from the allocated investment sites, including the integrated fuel stations.

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ترحب بعودة
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مستشارونا الزائرون لجراحة المسالك البولية من الهند
الدكتور موهان وفريقه
مع د.هيمنت هرديكار (متواجد في مسقط بصفة دائمة)
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Incontinence
Kidney Stone
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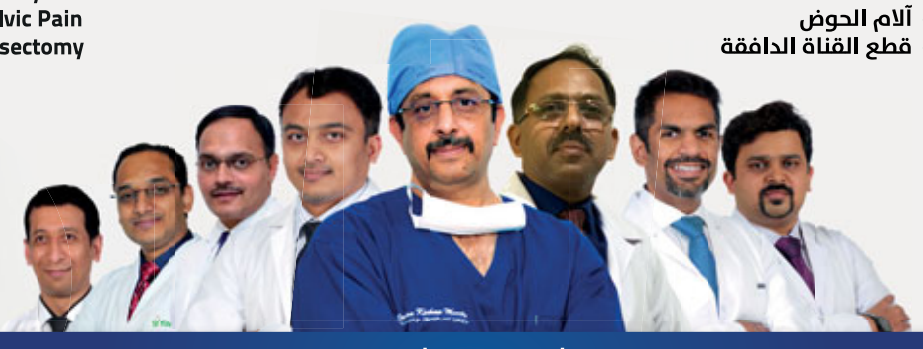
Vasectomy
التخصصات
التهابات المسالك البولية المتكررة
دم في البول
سرطان المثانة والبروستاتا والخصية والكلى
تضخم البروستاتا الحميد
سلس البول
حصى الكلى
آلام الحوض
قطع القناة الدافقة

VISITING DATES: 19th TO 27th SEPTEMBER 2022
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BILATERAL RELATIONS

Adventure tourism forum

MUSCAT: The Ministry of Heritage and Tourism, Oman Convention and Exhibition Centre, Omran Group and Visit Oman platform will organise "Oman Tourism Forum" on 27 September 2022. The two-day forum is specialised in adventure tourism.

Organising this forum comes to focus on best practices in the field of adventure tourism and the most prominent initiatives implemented to improve the efforts of the Sultanate of Oman in this field.

In this year's edition, the forum will address adventure tourism and the extent of its contribution to local tourism. It will also highlight tourist attractions in the Sultanate as the country enjoys geographical and biological diversity being mountain ranges, caves, valleys, plains, deserts, rocky hills and coastal beaches. Thus, Oman renowned to be an attractive tourist destination for tourists throughout the year.

The forum also aims to review attractions available in adventure tourism, in addition to the role of various adventure activities in highlighting the Sultanate as a unique tourist destination at the regional and global levels. The move aims to enhance the tourism movement in various governorates of Oman, particularly for adventurous tourists and those interested in this type of tourism from around the world. -ONA

Mega warehouse Sale

From 20% to 70% off
(New Stock, Showroom Display Units & Repaired units)
TVs | Home Appliances | Audio-Video | Air-conditioners | IT products
Sale Period: 21 - 25 September 2022, Location: OTE Warehouse, Ghala
Hisense life reimagined
LG Life's Good
BOSCH
Oman Gulf Enterprises LLC
For information:
Mr. Alawi: 95870063
Mr. Najmal: 97015886
79336776
Sale timings
Wednesday, Thursday, Saturday & Sunday: 9 am - 1 pm & 4 pm - 8 pm
Friday: 4pm - 8 pm
OTE Warehouse
OTE Service / ISUZU Showroom
Oman Oil Filling Station
Oman Oil
BEC
From Ruwi
Ghala
Roundabout
From Seeb

MEETINGS

Defence Ministry Secretary General meets Chief of Staff of Pakistan's Navy

MUSCAT: Dr. Mohammed Nasser Al Za'abi, Secretary General at the Ministry of Defence received Admiral Muhammad Amjad Khan Niazi, Chief of Staff of Pakistan's Navy in his office at Al Murtafa'a Garrison yesterday.

The two sides reviewed the relations between the two countries and exchanged views on some matters of mutual interest.

The meeting was attended by Rear Admiral Saif Nasser Al Rahbi, Commander of the Royal Navy of Oman (RNO) and the Military attaché of Pakistan's embassy at Muscat.

Rear Admiral Saif Nasser Al Rahbi, Commander of the Royal Navy of Oman (RNO) received Admiral Muhammad Amjad Khan Niazi, Chief of Staff of Pakistan's Navy.

The two sides exchanged views on several matters of common interest.

The meeting was attended by Commodore Tarik Issa Al Raisi, RNO Senior Staff Officer, Commodore Ali Mohammed Al Hosni, Director of Administration and Human Resources, and the Military attaché of Pakistan's embassy at Muscat.

SAF Chief of Staff

Vice Admiral Abdullah Khamis Al Raisi, Chief of Staff of the Sultan's Armed Forces (SAF) also met Admiral Muhammad Amjad Khan Niazi, Chief of Staff of Pakistan's Navy. -ONA

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MULTI-SPECIALTY HOSPITAL

Apollo Super Specialty Hospital, Al Hail introduces state-of-the-art Women and Child Centre in Oman

THE DEDICATED woman and child centre is an exclusive unit within the multi-speciality hospital. The dedicated service line with multi-speciality support can become an indispensable entity for expecting mothers and can prove to be a life-saviour for both the mother and the child's care at all stages and beyond. V.T. Saileswaran, Managing Director, stated that 'we at Apollo wanted every mother and child in the Sultanate to have exclusive access to world-class healthcare. They should feel special like how they define every family. We have also considered that the aspects of women's wellbeing and children's wellbeing are unique, and we should address it with a dedicated unit and a specially trained team.' The Apollo Women & Child unit is fully staffed by senior doctors from Obstetrics and Gynaecology, has foetal medicine, neonatal care, and paediatric care specialists and offering 24/7 services. The unit also has state-of-the-art PICU and Neo Natal care.

Distinguished Guest Tour:
The Apollo Women & Child Unit recently had the privilege of organising a welcome tour for two eminent women who have made us all proud in Oman. Her Highness Sayyida Hujaija Al Said, Chairperson of the Oman Association for Children with Disabilities, during her visit, interacted with the first mother from Apollo Women & Child Centre, at Al Hail. She complimented the Apollo Super Speciality team for this exclusive service life. The unit also had Captain Maha Al Balushi, a pioneer lady pilot of Oman, who addressed the team and reiterated the importance of such an exclusive service line for women and children. She also spoke about the ever-increasing role of women in society.

A Scenic Experience.
The Women & Child Unit has the entire gynaecology and paediatrics for both the inpatients and outpatients under one roof on the same floor. The Women and Child Centre is equipped with extremely spacious birthing suites in an ambience of care, comfort, and pleasantness. The signature suites are further enhanced by a sea view, as the expectant mothers wait for the new dawn in their lives. The comfort of home with options to customise, is what makes this unit truly special. Needless to say with utmost clinical safety.

The Lead Clinicians
The doctors' team consists of Dr. Vandana Pandit, Senior Consultant OB-GYN, with over two and a half decades of government service experience, Dr. Ali Al Jabri, Senior Consultant Paediatric Neonatologist, Dr. Mahalakshmi Baskaran, OB-GYN Specialist, Dr. Roula Osama Almahayni OB-GYN Specialist, Dr. Shakeel Moinuddin, Specialist Paediatrician and Dr. Jayapriya Sudhakar, Specialist Paediatrician. There is also oncology care, which is entrusted to Dr. Khadra Galaal Gynaecological Oncology.

The Super Speciality Bandwidth
The Women & Child Centre of Apollo Super Speciality gets the additional benefit of being part of a multi-speciality hospital, offering preventive health to tertiary level care. 'We definitely understand the changing landscape and challenges in healthcare. Our efforts are to provide the best of care across all major super speciality and sub-speciality spaces under one roof and we want to make the Sultanate of Oman a preferred medical destination in this part of the world' V. T. Saileswaran remarked.

BILATERAL RELATIONS

Oman, Uzbekistan review relations

MUSCAT: The 7th round of talks between the foreign ministries of the Sultanate of Oman and the Republic of Uzbekistan was held on Tuesday.

Enhance ties
The session reviewed bilateral relations and affirmed the keenness of both countries in enhancing those relations in various fields.

The two sides also exchanged views on various regional and international matters of common interest.

During the session, the Omani side was headed by Sheikh Khalifa Ali Al Harthy, Undersecretary of the Foreign Ministry for Diplomatic Affairs, while the Uzbek side was headed by Furkat Ahmedovich, Deputy Foreign Minister.

-ONA

REF: OFM/TD-22/-021
Manpower Supply for Cleaning Services

Oman Flour Mills (S.A.O.G). (OFM) invites specialized contractors to participate in our tender for "Manpower Supply for Cleaning Services)" as per the scope of work.

Tender Documents: Bidders wishing to participate in this tender are required to provide all details of their company, contact details and bank details no later than the date shown below via email tender3@omanflourmills.com
Oman Flour Mills SAOG. (OFM) will send all the tender documents to participants after receiving a tender fee depositing receipt copy via email.

Tender fee shall be deposited directly to the Oman Flour Mills SAOG bank account as mentioned below.

Account Name: Oman Flour Mills Company SAOG
Bank: Sohar International
Account Number: 001020032407
Swift code: BSHROMRUXXX

Tender Ref no.	OFM/TD-22/-021
Tender subject	Manpower Supply for Cleaning Services
Tender fee	RO.25/- (non-refundable)
Start date for tender collection	21.09.2022
Last date for tender collection	25.09.2022
Site visit	26.09.2022
Last date for receiving the technical queries	28.09.2022
Closing date of the tender	29.09.2022
Mode of payment of tender fee	By Bank Transfer
Email address for communication	tender3@omanflourmills.com
Mode of submission	All bidders are required to submit their proposals addressed to the Chairman of Tender Committee and deposited in the tender box located at the reception of our Ataab Investment building on the 29 September 2022.

- Vendor selection will be based on "best and final offer". OFM is not bound to select the lowest bidder
- All tender communication must be addressed to: tender3@omanflourmills.com
- Notwithstanding the specific terms in the Tender Documents. Tender fee is not refundable
- Bids submittal shall consist of 2 separate sealed envelopes (Technical) & (Commercial), with bidder name on each and tender reference number (OFM/TD-22/-21 (Manpower Supply for Cleaning Services)).

CONSERVATION

Sultanate takes key steps to save endangered vultures

Times News Service

MUSCAT: The Environment Society of Oman, in collaboration with the Environment Authority, recently hosted international vulture experts, together with key stakeholders across Oman to discuss vulture and raptor-focused conservation within the Sultanate. 16 of the 23 species of vultures found worldwide are at risk of extinction, and Oman is a stronghold for two of them, which presents the opportunity to take important steps to support their survival.

ENDANGERED: 16 of the 23 species of vultures found worldwide are at risk of extinction, and Oman is home to two of them.

74 participants, representing over 19 different organizations (Government and non-government) came together to learn about the important vulture research ESO, the Environment Authority and other stakeholders have been undertaking and to explore the role that Oman can play in the conservation of this endangered species. Throughout the workshop, rangers and staff from the Environment Authority, representing the various vulture breeding habitats, were able to learn about the importance of vultures to our ecosystem, and made aware of the level of international attention Oman receives from the global conservation community for the survival of the species.

Presentations from international vulture experts, Dr. Michael McGrady, Director of International Avian Research, André Botha,co-chair of the IUCN Vulture Specialist Group, and Dr. Umberto Gallo Orsi, Programme Officer of Convention on Migratory Species Raptors MoU, highlighted the international significance of vultures, the existing global and regional conservation frameworks and provided an overview of threats to all species in Oman, including poisoning, collision and a decline in food and habitat availability.

Dr Michael McGrady, Director, International Avian Research, said, "There is a need for cross-cutting conservation actions to address the problems our native species are facing. The first step is to increase our knowledge and understanding of the current situation".

Saleh Al Saadi, Director of Biodiversity at the Environment Authority added, "This workshop is part of the process for raising awareness and developing a long-term strategy for conservation action and working together to provide a safe environment to protect endangered species in Oman."

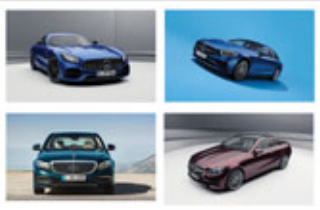
After the workshop, four Lappet-faced vultures were ringed, fitted with satellite tags and released back into the wild at Al Sareen Nature Reserve. The released vultures will be closely monitored to observe their movements and behaviour to ensure they successfully reacclimatise to the wild.

Suaad Al Harthi, Executive Director of ESO, said, "Releasing wild species into the wild is always linked to a high level of uncertainty, especially if they have been kept in captivity for a long time. If they successfully adapt back into the wild, the four vultures will contribute to the replenishment of the species."

Sultanate of Oman
Consumer Protection Authority

Zawawi Trading Company L.L.C.

Recall Campaign for Mercedes-Benz
E-Class (213 platform) , E-Class Coupé /Convertible (238 platform),
CLS (257 platform) and AMG GT 4-doors Coupé (290 platform)
with 4-wheel-drive
Model year: 2017-2023



Date of Campaign: 21.09.2022
Recall Segment: Mechanical
Recall Type: Safety

Product Description:

Number of vehicles	Chassis number	To	Chassis number	Sales Designation
4	WDD2130611A554533	TO	W1K2383611F170182	AMG E 53 4MATIC+
7	WDD2906611A006812	TO	WDD2573611A052541	AMG CLS 53 4MATIC+
2	W1K2906611A031832	&	W1K2906611A046200	AMG GT 53 4MATIC+
1	W1K2383611F170182			AMG E 53 4MATIC+

Description of defect:
Mercedes-Benz AG has determined that on certain E-Class (213 platform), E-Class Coupé/Cabriolet (238 platform), CLS (257 platform) and AMG GT 4-door (290 platform) 4-wheel-drive, the transmission wiring harness might not be routed according to specifications.In this case, the mechanical load on the single-wire seal of the transmission wiring harness could lead to a separation in the seal of the electrical connector. As a result, water from the roadway or environment could penetrate the connector. The presence of water could herby create a creeping short circuit if the vehicle is parked. As a result, the short circuit could lead to thermal overload for a longer period of time.

Procedure:
As a precautionary measure Zawawi Trading Company will check the electrical connector on the affected vehicles and rework it, if necessary. In addition, the routing of the transmission wiring harness will be optimized with an additional bracket. The expected workshop visit for the check and, if necessary, replacement of electrical connector and the installation of an additional bracket will take around 3 hours and will be free of charge.

For more information:
Sultanate of Oman customers affected by the recall who have not been contacted already will be telephoned by representatives of Zawawi Trading Company LLC, so that they can arrange a convenient time from 21.09.2022 to get their car inspected

Contact details:
Toll free number: 80079777 on all working days between 08:00 to 17:30 hrs with effect from 21.09.2022.

Mercedes-Benz

FOREIGN MINISTRY

Document attestation services launched at Oman Post checkpoints

MUSCAT: Acting in cooperation with Oman Post, the Foreign Ministry on Tuesday launched document attestation services in different governorates of Oman.

Mohammed Nasser Al Wahaibi, Undersecretary for Administrative and Financial Affairs, told Oman News Agency (ONA) that the project starts at Oman Post headquarters at the Airport Heights, Governorate of Muscat, and will later be generalised in all Oman Post branches in other governorates.

The services include attesting educational certificates, medical certificates, certificates of corporate project plans, certificates on military equipment usage and death certificates, as well as attestation of agencies, contracts, commercial invoices and contracts and civil certificates, Al Wahaibi added.

The beneficiaries can complete consular procedures by ratifying documents related to other government or private agencies, in addition to services of embassies accredited in Oman, said Al Wahaibi. This will save time and efforts, he explained, noting that Oman Post offices will apply certain charges against these services, he added.

He said that the Foreign Ministry and Oman Post have an understanding about service rendered to beneficiaries wishing to avail quality, value-added transactions through the "Door-to-Door System" (without having to visit Oman Post branches) or finalize some transactions related to embassies in Oman.

Quality services

Al Wahaibi said that these additional and quality services will be offered at competitive prices upon the request of the beneficiaries. The value of the fees charged against consular services at the Foreign Ministry will remain unchanged, he affirmed.

The ministry's offices will remain available during the transitional phase for one full year from the start of the authentication services to evaluate the experience and address any issues that may arise or tackle aspects that may require a change in procedures.

Al Wahaibi spoke about another partnership with the Public Establishment for Industrial Estates (Madayn).

The Foreign Ministry will continue to provide authentication/certification services for companies and investors within the borders of industrial estates in different wilayats of Oman, with the prime aim of streamlining procedures and enhancing investment in Oman.

-ONA

A quaint village in Yanqul

AL WUQBAH village in the Wilayat of Yanqul is one of the many beautiful villages in the wilayat. It is situated about 38 kilometres away from the centre of the wilayat. It is located between majestic mountains within the Western Al Hajar Mountains range. It is a mountainous village that links the Governorate of Ad Dhahirah with several other governorates and the Sohar Industrial Port, along with some wilayats, villages and regions.

Al Wuqbah is also characterised by many heritage sites and cultural landmarks, such as old houses, which are still proud to this day about their beauty and the craftsmanship of their marvellous Omani architecture. The old neighbourhood in the highlands of Al Wuqbah is also an eyewitness to the history and culture of the town, which tells part of the history of the region through engineering, construction and design.

WE LOVE OMAN

The village is famous for growing many trees and crops, including palm trees, and seasonal crops, such as oranges, mangoes, apples, melons, cherries, strawberries, pomegranates and grapes. Farmers in the Al Wuqbah also grow citrus fruits and vegetables, such as tomatoes, cucumbers, black pepper, wheat, barley, lettuce, parsley, garlic, onions, squash, and other species. Al Wuqbah is also famous for several aflaj or traditional irrigation systems or water channels, which irrigate orchards and crops in the town.

UN

Elderly people enjoy special status in the Omani society

GENEVA: The Sultanate of Oman welcomed the report of the Human Rights Council's expert tasked with monitoring the rights of elderly people worldwide.

First Secretary Sarah Abdullah Al Balushi, member of the Omani Permanent Mission at the United Nations (UN) in Geneva, said in a speech before the Human Rights Council that the elderly enjoy special status in Omani society, since they constitute the core component of families, as well as the community's innate social, cultural and religious repertory.

She pointed out that the family care model in Oman stems from deep-rooted values enshrined in Arab and Islamic culture embraced by generations of citizens.

Omani government exerted extensive efforts to provide necessary support for elderly people who lack relatives.

It provided social, health, psychological care and entertainment through programme offered by the Social Care Home, said Sarah Al Balushi.

She said that these services are provided within the context of the National Geriatric Care Programme conducted in cooperation with the Ministry of Health and Omani Association for Elderly Friends. The Omani official touched on aspects of cooperation with the Human Rights Council, which, she said, provides training for caretakers attending the elderly. -ONA

ADDRESS IN UN: First Secretary Sarah Abdullah Al Balushi, member of the Omani Permanent Mission at the United Nations (UN) in Geneva. -ONA

SUMMIT

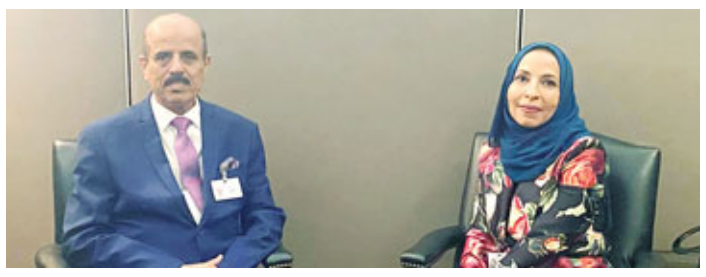
Dr. Madiha meets Bahraini counterpart

NEW YORK: Dr. Madiha Ahmed Al Shaibani, Minister of Education, Head of the Omani National Commission for Education, Culture and Science, met here today with Dr. Majid Ali Al Nuaimi, Minister of Education in Bahrain.

The meeting was held on the sidelines of the Transforming Education Summit in New York.

The meeting explored topics discussed at the summit and reviewed areas of cooperation between Oman and Bahrain in the education field.

The two sides also highlighted the efforts exerted for the sustainability of education during the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. -ONA



OCCI

Oman-Norway Business Forum eyes trade, investment relations

MUSCAT: Oman Chamber of Commerce and Industry (OCCI) organised the Oman-Norway Business Forum on Tuesday. Present at the forum were Omani and Norwegian businessmen.

The forum aimed at exploring trade and investment relations between the two countries. It also discussed establishing trade partnerships among businessmen in both countries.

Volume of trade

The forum also focused on augmenting the volume of trade exchange in general, as well as laying emphasis on oil and gas sectors, and energy solutions in particular.

Visual presentations were given during the forum covering diverse opportunities and potentials of both countries.

Economic relations

Oman Chamber of Commerce and Industry reviewed economic relations between the two sides. It also underscored the importance of promoting rates of trade exchange. The volume of trade exchange surpassed OMR5.6 million during 2021 compared to OMR3 million in 2020.

The Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Investment Promotion also reviewed "Invest in Oman" service. The Public Authority for Special Economic Zones and Free Zones also gave a presentation highlighting opportunities available at the economic zones and free zones in Oman.

Meanwhile, the Norwegian side also presented opportunities and incentives offered by Norway in areas of investment.

B2B meetings

On the sidelines of the forum, B2B meetings were held between Omani and Norwegian businessmen with the aim of exchanging expertise and familiarizing with investment opportunities in both countries. -ONA

REVIEWED ECONOMIC TIES: The forum also focused on augmenting the volume of trade exchange in general, as well as laying emphasis on oil and gas sectors, and energy solutions in particular. -ONA

SULTANATE OF OMAN

Ministry of Interior

TENDER NOTICE

The Internal Tender Committee at the Ministry of Interior announces the following tenders:

Tender No.	Tender Description	Grade	Last date for obtainment of tender documents	Last date of bid submission	Tender Document's fee
25/2022	Cleaning works for Al Khuwair Hospitality Building and Al Wattayah Building for the year 2023	First Grade	27/09/2022	16/10/2022	RO 25/-
26/2022	Cleaning works for the Ministry's General Office building in Al Khuwair and the Ministry's warehouses in Ghala for the year 2023	Excellent Grade	28/09/2022	16/10/2022	RO 25/-
27/2022	Maintenance and repair of the central air conditioning system and the split unit in the Ministry's General Office in Al Khuwair for the year 2023	Excellent, First, Second, Third and Forth Grades	28/09/2022	16/10/2022	RO 25/-
28/2022	Cleaning works for the Ministry building No. (2) and some buildings affiliated with the Ministry for the year 2023	Excellent Grade	27/09/2022	16/10/2022	RO 25/-
29/2022	Maintenance and repair of the central air conditioning system, split unit and window unit in Building No. (2) in Al Khuwair for the year 2023	Excellent, First, Second, Third and Forth Grades	28/09/2022	16/10/2022	RO 25/-
30/2022	Maintenance, cleaning, arranging and irrigation of the gardens in the Ministry's General Office building in Al Khuwair and the attached buildings for the year 2023	Excellent, First, Second, Third and Forth Grades	03/10/2022	16/10/2022	RO 25/-

Interested companies specialized in the above-mentioned works and having valid registration certificates from the Tender Board may obtain the tender documents of terms and specifications from the following website:

https://etendering.tenderboard.gov.om

OMAN/WORLD

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Myanmar helicopter attack kills many, including 6 children

The military said it opened fire because rebels were using the building to attack its forces

NAYPYITAW: Government helicopters attacked a school and a village in Myanmar, killing more than a dozen people, including at least six children, said witnesses on Monday.

At least 17 other people were injured when army helicopters shot at a school in north-central Myanmar.

The military said it opened fire because rebels were using the building to attack its forces.

The incident occurred last Friday in the village of Let Yet Kone in the central Sagaing region, the details of which emerged on Monday via a school administrator and an aid worker.

Deadly 'surprise inspection'

The school administrator told news agency AP that she had been trying to get children to safety when government Mi-35 gunships opened fire on the school.

"Since the students had done nothing wrong, I never thought that they would be brutally shot with machine guns," she said. "They kept shooting into the compound from the air for an hour. They didn't even stop for one minute. All we could do at that time was chant Buddhist mantras."

State media outlets reported on the attack the following day, claiming government forces had gone to the village to perform a "surprise inspection" after receiving reports that members of the People's Defense Force (PDF) —which the ruling Myanmar junta labels "terrorists" — and allies from the Kachin Independence Army (KIA) were hiding in the school and adjacent monastery when they opened fire on government security forces.

Though the government acknowledged injuries, claiming the PDF and KIA used villagers as human shields, it made no mention of the children.

Violence a recurring theme

Violence has been commonplace across Myanmar since the military seized power from an elected government in February 2021. Opposition movements, some of them armed, have since emerged across the country, which the military has tried to counter with lethal aggression.

Civilian casualties often occur in onslaughts initiated by the military government, targeting pro-democracy insurgents.

However, the number of youngsters killed in the air attack in the Sagaing region appeared to be the highest since the army seized power when they ousted the elected government of Aung San Suu Kyi last year. DW

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ARTICLE IV

IMF to discuss macroeconomic developments

MUSCAT: The International Monetary Fund (IMF) mission began a series of meetings here on Tuesday within the framework of 2022 Article IV talks.

The meetings, which run until 4 October, are hosted by Oman, represented by the Central Bank of Oman (CBO) and the Ministry of Finance.

IMF delegates will meet with officials of the CBO, the Ministry of Finance, the National Centre for Statistics and Information (NCSI), the Ministry of Social Development, the Ministry of Labour and representatives of other governmental and non-governmental agencies and civil society institutions.

The IMF will conduct a comprehensive assessment of the economic and financial situation in Oman.

IMF experts will also discuss the latest macroeconomic developments and related expectations, as well as fiscal and monetary policies, the Medium-Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) and the management of sovereign assets.

The experts will submit a detailed report to the IMF Executive Council about the economic situation in Oman. -ONA

DIRECT TALKS

Armenia, Azerbaijan diplomats hold talks after deadly clashes

NEW YORK: US Secretary of State Antony Blinken hosted the foreign ministers of Armenia and Azerbaijan in New York on Monday in the first direct talks between the two sides since deadly border clashes earlier this month.

Blinken's trilateral meeting with Armenian Foreign Minister Ararat Mirzoyan and Azerbaijani Foreign Minister Jeyhun Bayramov came on the sidelines of the United Nations General Assembly.

What was discussed at the meeting?

"Blinken conveyed condolences for the lives lost and emphasized the need to prevent further hostilities, underscoring the importance of returning to the peace process," State Department spokesperson Ned Price said in a statement.

"They discussed next steps, and the secretary encouraged the sides to meet again before the end of the month," Price added.

In Monday's meeting, Armenian Foreign Minister Mirzoyan called for Azerbaijani armed forces to withdraw from Armenian territory and for "international mechanisms" to be introduced "to prevent further escalations," a statement from the Armenian Foreign Ministry said.

Meanwhile, Azerbaijan's Bayramov said before the meeting that his country is "satisfied with the level of relations" with the US and added that his direct dialogue with Mirzoyan was not unusual.

"We are always open for meetings," he said.

What is the conflict about?

For decades, Armenia and Azerbaijan have been locked in tension over the disputed territory of Nagorno-Karabakh. In 2020, a six-week war left thousands dead and saw Azerbaijan make significant territorial gains.

Intense artillery shelling broke out earlier this month, killing more than 170 among troops on both sides and rekindling tensions. Each country blamed the other for the initial provocation. Last week, Armenia and Azerbaijan agreed on a ceasefire.

Fighting between the two former Soviet states also threatens to pull Turkey, a key supporter of Azerbaijan, and Russia — Armenia's security guarantor — into a broader conflict at a time when geopolitical tensions are already high.

Ahead of the talks, Blinken had said that Washington was "encouraged by the fact that the fighting has ceased and there have not been any additional military actions over the last few days."

On Sunday, US Speaker of the House Nancy Pelosi visited Armenia and decried "illegal and deadly attacks by Azerbaijan on Armenian territory." DW

FAILED CRYPTOCURRENCY

South Korea asks Interpol to issue red notice for 'Terra' crypto founder

SEOUL: South Korean prosecutors have asked Interpol to issue a red notice for Do Kwon, the co-creator of failed cryptocurrency TerraUSD, saying he refused to cooperate with their investigation into its $40 billion (€40 billion) collapse.A red notice is a request to law enforcement worldwide to locate and provisionally arrest a person pending extradition, surrender, or similar legal action, according to the Interpol website.

Kwon had flown to Singapore before Terra crashed, but over the weekend, Singapore police said he is not in the city-state, raising questions about his whereabouts.

Meanwhile, South Korean authorities have moved to prevent Kwon from traveling.

"We have begun the procedure to place him on the Interpol red notice list and revoke his passport," and official from the Seoul Southern District Prosecutors' Office told the AFP news agency on Tuesday.

"We see him as being 'on the run' from the moment when he left for Singapore," the official said, adding: "We are aware that he has no will to cooperate with all investigations since then."

Kwon denies being on the run

A South Korean court recently issued arrest warrants for Kwon and five other people connected to Terraform Labs, the company behind the TerraUSD cryptocurrency. Authorities claimed Kwon said through his lawyers that he would not cooperate with their investigation.

However, Kwon, who remains active on Twitter, denied he was "on the run" on Sunday.

"For any agency that has shown interest to communicate, we are in full cooperation and we don't have anything to hide," he said in a tweet. Hundreds of thousands of South Korean investors affected

The May collapse of Terraform Labs' cryptocurrencies, TerraUSD and Luna, affected an estimated investors in 280,000 South Korea.

TerraUSD was touted as a stablecoin, which are typically pegged to a real-world commodity or currency. However, TerraUSD was algorithmic and used code to maintain its price at around one US dollar.

Kwon's Terra/Luna system disintegrated in May, with the price of both cryptocurrency tokens plummeting to near-zero. Amid the $40 billion collapse, many investors lost their life savings.

The crash is also believed to have caused more than $500 billion in losses across wider crypto market globally, according to industry analysts. DW

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Hurricane Fiona slams Dominican Republic after battering Puerto Rico

Puerto Rico Governor Pedro Pierluisi said the storm had caused 'catastrophic' damage

SANTO DOMINGO: Hurricane Fiona dropped torrential rain and powerful winds on the Dominican Republic on Monday after causing widespread power outages and damage in neighbouring Puerto Rico.

Multiple roads were flooded or damaged by falling trees and electric poles around the famous resort of Punta Cana, which had suffered from a power outage.

After hitting Puerto Rico hard, Fiona landed on the Dominican Republic near Boca Yuma at 3:30 am local time.

The last hurricane to hit the island was Hurricane Jeanne in 2018.

Early on Tuesday morning, the US National Hurricane Center (NHC) said Fiona had become the Atlantic season's first Category 3 hurricane, with sustained winds of 115 miles per hour.

What damage was done?

Severe flooding, leaving several villages isolated, and some 800 evacuees and more than 11,000 people without power in the eastern region of the country were reported after Fiona ravaged the eastern parts of the Dominican Republic.

According to emergency services, nearly 800 people were sheltering in what were presumably safe areas, as 16 of the island's 32 provinces remained on red alert.

"The damage is considerable," said Dominican Republic President Luis Abinader. He plans to declare a state of disaster in three provinces.

Several towns were left isolated after the overflow of the Yuma River in the east of the country.

In Puerto Rico, which was still experiencing heavy rainfall, Governor Pedro Pierluisi said the storm had caused "catastrophic" damage since Sunday.

Where is Fiona heading?

Hurricane Fiona had been classified as a Category 1 hurricane but gathered strength as it continued moving from warm Caribbean waters toward the Turks and Caicos islands.

The NHC warned that the center of Fiona could pass near the east of the archipelago on Tuesday.

In the Bahamas, tropical storm conditions were also expected.

Fiona could come close to tiny Bermuda, but is expected to track out into the ocean by early Tuesday. DW

CLEAN-UP

Japan cleans up after Typhoon Nanmadol leaves four people dead

TOKYO: Japanese authorities confirmed the deaths of two people on Tuesday, with two others said to have been found "without vital signs" after Typhoon Nanmadol battered Japan over the weekend.

The storm that made landfall on the country's main southern island of Kyushu on Sunday night, was downgraded to an extratropical cyclone on Tuesday as it made its way off Japan's northeastern coast and headed into the Pacific Ocean.

At least 114 people were injured — 14 of them severely — according to government spokesman Hirozaku Matsuno.

He added that the authorities were also searching for one person reported to be missing.

Where was the worst damage?

In Japan's southern Miyazaki prefecture — where the two deaths were confirmed— the storm system dumped a month's worth of rain in 24 hours while uprooting trees and shattering windows.

A wall was damaged at a Japan Aerospace and Exploration Agency's space centre on the island of Tanegashima, located south of Kyushu island, Japan's Economy and Industry Ministry said on Tuesday.

The building is used for rocket

assembly and the extent of damage was being determined.

Homes without power

Some 140,000 homes — mostly in Kyushu — were still without power on Tuesday morning.

Most transportation, including bullet trains and ground commute, was resumed as people returned to work following a three-day weekend.

However, dozens of flights were grounded in Japan's northeast.

Climate change

Japan is currently in its typhoon season with Nanmadol being its 14th storm system.

The country witnesses around 20 such storms a year but scientists have warned that climate change is augmenting the severity of storms, resulting in extreme weather conditions such as flash floods, heat waves and droughts, becoming more frequent and intense. DW

STRONG EARTHQUAKE

Powerful earthquake of magnitude 6.8 hits Mexico's Pacific coast

MEXICO CITY: Mexico was hit by a powerful earthquake on Monday, as the country was marking the anniversaries of two major quakes that had struck the country on the same date in 1985 and 2017.

President Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador said in a video address that one person had been killed in the Pacific port of Manzanillo when a wall collapsed in a store.

Witnesses in Mexico City, a considerable distance inland to the east, described buildings shaking while authorities reported damage to two hospitals in the western state of Michoacan near the epicenter.

An evacuation order was issued for larger buildings in the capital, according to local reports. Power was briefly knocked out in some parts of the capital and some road signals like traffic lights stopped functioning.

37 years to the day since Mexico's deadliest quake

The Mexican National Seismological Service initially said the earthquake was magnitude 6.8, with the epicenter several hundred kilometers west of Mexico City, near the border of the states of Colima and Michoacan.

Mexican seismologists revised the quake's magnitude to 7.4, while the United States Geological Survey put the figure at 7.6 and said a tsunami was possible.

The quake comes on the anniversary of Mexico's deadliest on record, when there were more than 5,000 fatalities reported after the capital was struck by a magnitude 8.1 tremor on September 19, 1985.

Another quake on the same date in 2017, with its epicenter inland and far closer to Mexico City than Monday's tremor, caused more than 200 fatalities and some 1,300 injuries.

Authorities had sounded the earthquake alarms in memory of these past events roughly an hour earlier on Monday, before having to use them for real at around 1 p.m. local time.

Mexico is on the so-called Pacific Ring of Fire, the busiest area of volcanic and tectonic activity on the planet. It spans several continents, incorporating most of the west coast of the Americas and most of the eastern tip of Asia and some Pacific islands. DW

BILATERAL PARTNERSHIP

India's Jaishankar holds talks with UAE counterpart; reviews bilateral partnership

NEW YORK: To review the gamut of bilateral strategic partnership between the two nations, External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar held discussions with the UAE Foreign Minister Abdullah bin Zayed Al Nahyan and appreciated his insights on the global situation.

In a tweet, Jaishankar wrote, "Always a pleasure to meet FM Foreign Minister Abdullah bin Zayed Al Nahyan of UAE. Reviewed the continuing progress of our partnership.

Appreciated his assessments and insights on the global situation." Kicking off a jam-packed diplomatic week in New York, ahead of the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) meeting, Jaishankar held a set of bilateral talks with his counterparts in the Balkans, Europe and the Caribbean, Middle East and Asia.

As part of his diplomatic meetings in the US, External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar participated in a trilateral Ministerial meeting of India-UAE-France with his counterparts and exchanged ideas between the strategic partners.

EAM Jaishankar arrived here on Sunday for the high-level meeting of the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) and is likely to meet United Nations Secretary-General Antonio Guterres and several heads of state later this week.

Over the course of the week, Jaishankar is scheduled to have

more than 50 official engagements including bilateral, plurilateral and multilateral meetings.

The Indian minister is scheduled to deliver on Saturday India's address at UNGA, which is meeting on the theme, "A Watershed Moment: Transformative Solutions to Interlocking Challenges".

Security Council reforms will be the top item on Jaishankar's agenda as he meets dozens of world leaders during the week packed with the Assembly session and several events on the sidelines. Council reform is expected to get a boost during the session as US President Joe Biden is to present ideas for its reform and consult with other leaders, according to US Permanent Representative Linda Thomas-Greenburgh.

He is also scheduled to host a meeting of the Foreign Ministers of G4, the group made up of India, Brazil, Germany and Japan that advocate for expanding the Council and mutually support each other's claim for a permanent seat.

During his visit to the US beginning, Jaishankar will also participate in meetings of Quad made up of India, Australia, Japan and the US, BRICS and several other key groupings.

Commemorating the nation's 75th anniversary of Independence, the highlight of Jaishankar's visit will be an event on Saturday, "India@75: Showcasing India UN Partnership in Action", on New Delhi's cooperation with the UN and its march towards the Sustainable Development Goals set by the UN.

The Assembly's high-level meeting returns to a complete in-person format after two years of the Covid pandemic with 153 heads of state or government, three Deputy Prime Ministers and 34 foreign ministers expected to participate.

Jaishankar will be in New York from September 18 to 24, while he will visit Washington DC from September 25 to 28, according to the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA).

After concluding his visit to New York on Saturday, he is scheduled to visit Washington for three days starting Sunday for what the External Affairs Ministry said for "a high-level review of the multifaceted bilateral agenda and strengthen cooperation on regional and global issues to further consolidate the India-US strategic partnership".

In Washington, Jaishsnkar is expected to meet Secretary of State Antony Blinken and other senior officials of the Biden Administration. A round table focused on science and technology is also on the agenda for Washington. ANI

BALTIMORE CITY

Adnan Syed to be released after judge tosses murder conviction

WASHINGTON: Adnan Syed's conviction was overturned by a judge in the US state of Maryland on Monday. It was said that there had been two other possible suspects that hadn't been disclosed to the defense at trial.

Syed had gained national attention after the podcast "Serial" featured his case, raising doubts about him being guilty.

Adnan Syed was alleged to have killed his ex-girlfriend Hae Min Lee in 1999 in a Baltimore park. She was 18 when she was strangled and buried at the scene. Syed served over 20 years in prison for the crime, being convicted in 2000.

The 42-year-old has maintained he is innocent and has handed in multiple appeals which were denied, including an appeal to the US Supreme Court in 2019.

Baltimore City Circuit Court Judge Melissa Phinn ordered Syed immediately released on his own recognizance "in the interests of justice and fairness."

New information revealed

State's Attorney for Baltimore Marilyn Mosby asked a judge to vacate Syed's conviction last week while a further investigation is carried out. The move is said to have come as a surprise.

The decision was justified by the discovery of new information regarding two other possible suspects that were not disclosed to the defense at the trial. Cell phone data used to convict Syed was also deemed to be unreliable during the current investigation, assistant state's attorney Becky Feldman argued to the judge.

"The state has lost confidence in the integrity of his conviction," Feldman said. "We need to make sure we hold the correct person accountable.

"We will be continuing our investigation," she said, while promising to "do everything we can to bring justice to the Lee family."

The prosecutors now face a window of 30 days to bring new charges or dismiss the case.

Syed's conviction featured in "Serial"

"Serial," a weekly podcast casting doubt on Syed's guilt, led to the case gaining worldwide attention. The mixture of investigative journalism, first-person narrative and dramatic storytelling sees a US journalist revisit Syed's conviction in 12 episodes.

Syed and Lee were high school honor students. Both of them had a migratory background, with Syed being Pakistani and Lee South Korean. DW

SPORTS

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Change in playing conditions: ICC prohibits use of saliva to polish ball

This prohibition has been in place for over two years in international cricket as a COVID-19-related temporary measure

DUBAI: Using saliva to polish the ball is now prohibited permanently by the International Cricket Council (ICC), announced the organisation while introducing new changes to its playing conditions on Tuesday.

"The International Cricket Council (ICC) has announced several changes to its Playing Conditions after the Chief Executives' Committee (CEC) ratified recommendations from the Sourav Ganguly-led Men's Cricket Committee, which discussed MCC's updated 3rd Edition of the 2017 Code of the Laws of Cricket and shared its conclusions with Women's Cricket Committee, who endorsed the recommendations to CEC," said a statement from the council. The main changes to the Playing Conditions that come into effect on 1 October 2022 are:

Batters returning when caught: When a batter is out Caught, the new batter will come in at the end the striker was, regardless of whether the batters crossed prior to the catch being taken.

Use of saliva to polish the ball: This prohibition has been in place for over two years in international cricket as a COVID-19-related temporary measure and it is considered appropriate for the ban to be made permanent.

Incoming batter ready to face the ball: An incoming batter will now be required to be ready to take strike within two minutes in Tests and ODIs, while the current threshold of ninety seconds in T20Is remains unchanged.

Striker's right to play the ball: This is restricted so as to require some part of their bat or person to remain within the pitch. Should they venture beyond that, the umpire will call and signal a Dead ball. Any ball which would force the batter to leave the pitch will also be called No ball.

Unfair movement by the fielding side: Any unfair and deliberate movement while the bowler is running in to bowl could now result in the umpire awarding five penalty runs to the batting side, in addition to a call of Dead ball.

Running out of the non-striker: The Playing Conditions follow the Laws in moving this method of effecting a Run out from the 'Unfair Play' section to the 'Run out' section.

Bowler throwing towards striker's end before delivery: Previously, a bowler who saw the batter advancing down the wicket before entering their delivery stride, could throw the ball to attempt to run out the striker.

This practice will now be called a Dead ball.

Also, the in-match penalty introduced in T20Is in January 2022, (whereby the failure of a fielding team to bowl their overs by the scheduled cessation time leads to an additional fielder having to be brought inside the fielding circle for the remaining overs of the innings), will now also be adopted in ODI matches after the completion of the ICC Men's Cricket World Cup Super League in 2023.

It was also decided that the playing conditions for all Men's and Women's ODI and T20I matches will be amended to allow hybrid pitches to be used, if agreed by both teams. Currently, hybrid pitches can only be used in Women's T20I matches.

All Playing Conditions will be updated to reflect these changes.

Sourav Ganguly said: "It was an honour chairing my first meeting of the ICC Cricket Committee. I was pleased with the productive contribution of the Committee members which resulted in key recommendations being made. I thank all members for their valuable input and suggestions."

The ICC Cricket Committee: Sourav Ganguly (Chair); Ramiz Raja (Observer); Mahela Jayawardena and Roger Harper (Past Players); Daniel Vettori and VVS Laxman (Representatives of Current Players); Gary Stead (Member Team Coach Representative); Jay Shah (Full Members' Representative); Joel Wilson (Umpires' Representative); Ranjan Madugalle (ICC Chief Referee); Jamie Cox (MCC Representative); Kyle Coetzer (Associate Representative); Shaun Pollock (Media Representative); Greg Barclay and Geoff Allardice (Ex Officio - ICC Chair and Chief Executive); Clive Hitchcock (Committee Secretary); David Kendix (Statistician). ANI

FOOTBALL

Digne ruled out as another injury hits France team

PARIS: A host of injuries have struck France in the leadup to a pair of Nations League matches later this week.

The French football federation today added Aston Villa defender Lucas Digne to a long list of injured players ahead of matches against Austria and Denmark.

France coach Didier Deschamps has called up Rennes left-back Adrien Truffert as a replacement for Digne, who has a problem with his right ankle, the federation said.

Digne had been a late addition to the training camp, having joined his teammates after AC Milan defender Théo Hernandez was withdrawn from the squad because of a torn adductor muscle. France captain Hugo Lloris has also been ruled out of the games, because of a right thigh injury, and replaced by Nantes goalkeeper Alban Lafont.

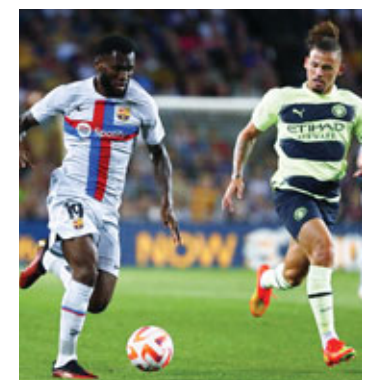
France plays Austria this Thursday and travels to Copenhagen three days later to take on Denmark.

Les Bleus face relegation to the second tier of the Nations League. The defending champions are in last place in Group 1 with two points from four games. Denmark leads with nine.

On Saturday, Marseille midfielder Jordan Veretout was called up as a replacement for the injured Boubacar Kamara, the day after Kamara had replaced Adrien Rabiot. Deschamps also needs to deal with the absence of several other players including Paul Pogba, Karim Benzema and N'Golo Kanté. ONA

SHOULDER INJURY

Phillips out of England squad ahead of World Cup

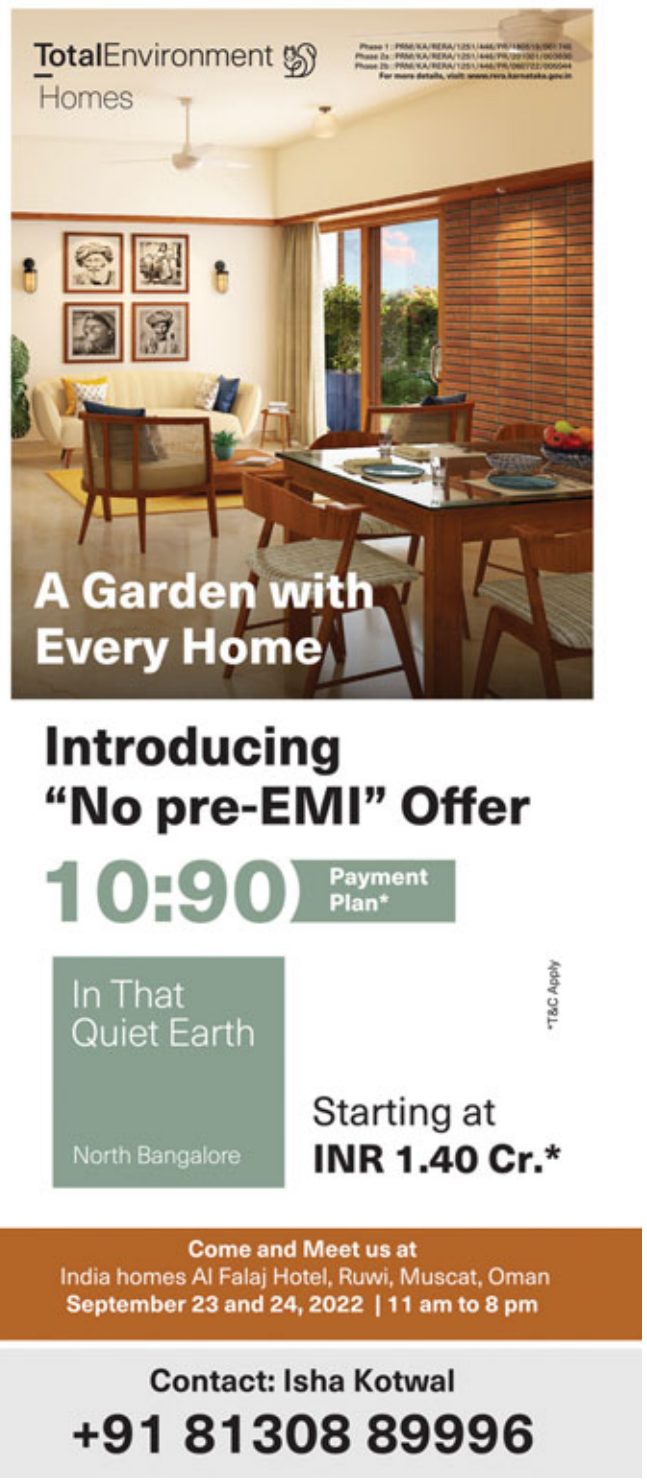


LONDON: England midfielder Kalvin Phillips withdrew from the national team squad because of a shoulder injury in a concern for coach Gareth Southgate ahead of the World Cup 2022.

Phillips was replaced by central midfielder Jordan Henderson, with England playing Nations League games against Italy and Germany over the next week.

Phillips, who was a regular in England's team in its run to the European Championship final last year, sustained a dislocated shoulder in training last week and might need an operation, potentially putting at risk his place in England's World Cup squad.

The 26-year-old holding midfielder has endured a frustrating time since leaving Leeds to join Manchester City during the offseason, with injuries, particularly problems with his shoulder, restricting him to just only substitute appearances totaling 14 minutes. The most recent appearance was a cameo against Borussia Dortmund in the Champions League last week. ONA



WORLD CUP

New Zealand name squad for ICC T20 World Cup, Guptill set to return

WELLINGTON: New Zealand announced their squad for the upcoming ICC T20 World Cup 2022 to be held in Australia from October-November this year and the opener Martin Guptill is set to make a record seventh appearance at the event.

BLACKCAPS batsman Martin Guptill has been honoured by his old school, Avondale College in Auckland, on being selected for a record seventh ICC T20 World Cup. Nathan McCullum and Ross Taylor are the only other New Zealanders to have appeared at six T20 World Cups. The 35-year-old's inclusion was part of a largely predictable 15-player squad, announced at Guptill's former high school, for the T20 showpiece in Australia next month.

Wellington Firebirds duo Finn Allen and Michael Bracewell have been named for their first senior World Cups and are the only new faces from the side that made the final of last year's event in the UAE.

Paceman Adam Milne has retained his place in the squad, after the 30-year-old was called in to replace Lockie Ferguson (calf injury) early in the tournament last October.

Devon Conway has been named as the front-line wicket-keeper after wearing the gloves in the UAE and the recent series against West Indies.

Of those who featured in last year's World Cup squad, Kyle Jamieson was not considered as he continues his rehabilitation from a back injury, while Todd Astle and Tim Seifert have missed selection.

The BLACKCAPS T20 World Cup squad will first contest the T20 Tri-Series with Pakistan and Bangladesh starting in Christchurch on October 7. With seven matches across eight days at Hagley Oval, the Tri-Series will provide fans with their last chance to see the team before they depart for Australia on October 15.

BLACKCAPS coach Gary Stead said the side was excited about the opportunity that lay ahead.

"It is always a special time announcing a World Cup squad and I would like to congratulate the 15 players selected today. It is especially exciting for Finn and Michael who are set for their first ICC events, while Martin Guptill is preparing for his 7th T20 World Cup - which in itself is an incredible achievement," said Stead in a statement by the board.

"It is great to have this tournament so soon after last year's event in which we played some really good cricket, but could not quite get over the line at the end. With the nucleus of that squad retained along with the exciting additions of Finn and Michael, we should go into the tournament with plenty of optimism," he added.

Stead said the Tri Series beforehand should provide high-quality preparation for the World Cup.

"Along with the all-important game time, those matches will be a great chance to refine our combinations and game-plans ahead of our departure to Australia," he concluded.

The BLACKCAPS open their T20 World Cup campaign against Australia at the SCG on Saturday, October 22, before facing Afghanistan (MCG), England (Gabba) and two qualifiers at the SCG and Adelaide Oval respectively.

Stead said there was a high level of excitement amongst the team about the prospect of big crowds returning for the event following a COVID-affected 2021 edition.

"We are hoping plenty of Kiwis will make the trip across the ditch to support us, along with our fans already living in Australia. Playing at the great grounds such as the SCG, MCG, the Gabba and the Adelaide Oval will be occasions to savour and something I know our boys are really looking forward to."

Guptill's selection for his seventh T20 World Cup sees him join an exclusive list of players in Dwayne Bravo, Chris Gayle, Mohammad Mahmudullah and Mushfiqur Rahim - while Shakib Al-Hasan and Rohit Sharma are set for their eighth events.

The BLACKCAPS assemble in Christchurch for the Tri-Series on October 5. On Saturday, October 15, they will depart for Australia from Christchurch.

BLACKCAPS Squad for ICC T20 World Cup and Tri Series: Kane Williamson (c), Finn Allen, Trent Boult, Michael Bracewell, Mark Chapman, Devon Conway (wk), Lockie Ferguson, Martin Guptill, Adam Milne, Daryl Mitchell, Jimmy Neesham, Glenn Phillips, Mitchell Santner, Ish Sodhi, Tim Southee. ANI

OMAN CRUDE PRICE RISES

The price of Oman oil has increased, with prices for delivery by November 2022 reaching $92.60, said Dubai Mercantile Exchange (DME). The DME statement said that the price of Oman oil rose by $2.23 from the price of Monday, which was $90.37. - ONA

MSX INDEX ENDS HIGHER

The MSX index closed at 4,476.35 points, up by 0.14 per cent from the previous close. The Sharia Index ended down by 0.16 per cent at 478.22 points. Construction Materials, up 6.94 per cent, was the top gainer while Oman REIT Fund, down 8.7 per cent, was the top loser.

Total domestic sales of refineries in Oman rise by 16.8%: NCSI data

Preliminary statistics indicate that production of M95 automotive fuel rose by 11.8 per cent to 9.26mn barrels at the end of July 2022, compared to the same period in 2021

NCSI DATA: The production of standard grade petrol (M-91) by Oman refineries increased by 1.7 per cent, reaching 7.56 million barrels at the end of July 2022, compared to the end of July 2021. - File picture

MUSCAT: The total domestic sales of refineries in the Sultanate of Oman increased by 16.8 per cent at the end of July 2022, compared to the same period in 2021, according to statistics issued by the National Centre for Statistics and Information (NCSI).

Preliminary statistics indicated that the production of M95 automotive fuel increased by 11.8 per cent to reach 9.26 million barrels at the end of July 2022, compared to the same period in 2021.

Sales of M95 increased slightly by 0.7 per cent to reach 7.24 million barrels. Its exports amounted to 2.74 million barrels, registering an increase of 93.1 per cent at the end of July 2022 compared to the same period of July 2021.

The production of standard grade petrol (M-91) by Oman refineries increased by 1.7 per cent, reaching 7.56 million barrels at the end of July 2022, compared to the end of July 2021. Sales of M91 amounted to 7.23 million barrels, an increase of 54.9 per cent while its exports decreased by 69.8 per cent, Oman News Agency said quoting NCSI data.

Gas oil (diesel) output during July 2022 witnessed a decrease of 14.1 per cent compared to the same period at the end of July 2021 to reach 18.22 million barrels. Sales of diesel increased by 9 per cent to reach 8.36 million.

As for petrochemicals, polypropylene exports and production witnessed a remarkable increase of 46.5 per cent and 19.7 per cent, respectively, while its sales decreased by 39.3 per cent at the end of July 2022 compared to the same period of the previous year.

On the other hand, gasoline production and exports decreased by 79.1 per cent and 78.4 per cent, respectively, and paraxylene production and exports by 94.8 per cent and 93.3 per cent, respectively, at the end of July 2022, compared to the same period in 2021.

BOD MEETING

Opaz approves registration fees mechanism for usufruct contracts of real estate properties

Times News Service

THIRD MEETING: The meeting was chaired by Dr Ali bin Masoud Al Sunaidy, Chairman of the board, at Opaz headquarters in Muscat. - Supplied picture

MUSCAT: The Board of Directors of the Public Authority for Special Economic Zones and Free Zones (Opaz) held yesterday its third meeting for the year 2022.

The meeting was chaired by Dr Ali bin Masoud Al Sunaidy, Chairman of the board, at Opaz headquarters in Muscat.

The board approved the registration fees mechanism for the usufruct contracts of real estate properties in the Special Economic Zone at Duqm (Sezad). Accordingly, Sezad will later announce the relevant details.

Further, the board approved a number of other usufruct applications related to the electricity sector, as well as approving the vision and mission of Opaz.

During the meeting, the Opaz Board of Directors was briefed on the proposed investment promotion strategy to attract more projects to the zones during the next phase. The board was also updated on the different efforts made to transfer the affiliation of the Public Establishment for Industrial Estates (Madayn) to Opaz as per Royal Decree No. (53/2022) and the actions that have been taken towards integration between the industrial cities, the free zones and the special economic zones supervised by Opaz. Moreover, the meeting touched on the reports related to the challenges facing applications for establishing cement projects in the zones.

It is noteworthy that Opaz was established by Royal Decree No. (105/2020) on August 18, 2020, to supervise the Special Economic Zone at Duqm, the free zones in Sohar, Salalah, Al Mazunah and any other special economic zone or free zone in the Sultanate of Oman. Furthermore, Opaz supervises Madayn as per Royal Decree No. (53/2022).

CENTRAL BANK OF OMAN

CBO issues treasury bills worth OMR9 million

MUSCAT: The Central Bank of Oman (CBO) raised OMR9 million by way of allotting treasury bills on Tuesday. The treasury bills are for a maturity period of 28 days, from September 21 until October 19, 2022.

The average accepted price reached 99.832 for every OMR100, and the minimum accepted price arrived at 99.830 per OMR100. The average discount rate and the average yield reached 2.18710 per cent and 2.19078 per cent, respectively.

Treasury bills are short-term highly secured financial instruments issued by the Ministry of Finance, and they provide licensed commercial banks the opportunity to invest their surplus funds. The Central Bank of Oman acts as the Issue Manager and provides the added advantage of ready liquidity through discounting and repurchase facilities (Repo).

It may be noted that the interest rate on the Repo operations with CBO is 3.00 per cent while the discount rate on the Treasury Bills Discounting Facility with CBO is 3.50 per cent.

Furthermore, treasury bills promote the local money market by creating a benchmark yield curve for short-term interest rates. Additionally, the government may also resort to this instrument whenever felt necessary for financing its recurrent expenditures. -ONA

ELECTRONIC PAYMENT SERVICES

CBO approves OM Pay licencing application

Times News Service

MUSCAT: The Board of Governors of the Central Bank of Oman (CBO) approved the licencing application of OM Pay to provide electronic payment services in the country.

After the successful completion of CBO Sandbox testing recently, OM Pay is all set to be launched with a new design and an upgraded state-of-art digital wallet and many other payment services.

Global Financial Technology, one of the leading FinTech companies in the country and a subsidiary of Omantel, is the main shareholder of the OM Pay application. Its CEO, Abdulaziz Al-Rawahi said, "We are grateful to CBO for approving our application and supporting us in our innovation. OM Pay is our dream come true and is aligned with the company's efforts to support Oman's digitalization plans. OM Pay application will provide a digital wallet as well as a payment gateway for the benefit of individuals and businesses alike. The encouragement that we have got from the CBO for OM Pay has been overwhelming and we are truly thankful to them".

OM Pay will offer mobile payment services to consumers and enable merchants to receive payments through its NFC, QR code, point of sale, bank transfer and online payment gateway offerings.

Some of its other key services will be:

Fund transfer:
You can transfer or request funds through OM Pay through the wallet or phone number. You can even save your bank account with OM Pay and make online payments and fund transfers through your saved accounts. It will be transferred directly into the recipient's bank account.

Mobile recharge and bill payments:
Through the OM Pay app, customers will be able to avail mobile recharge facility and pay different types of bills such as electricity bills, etc.

Merchant payment:
Users of the application can purchase items from any shop and pay the bill digitally through OM Pay. Without using cash, buyers can pay through different ways such as OM Pay wallet, a bank account linked with OM Pay using QR Code or NFC. There will be a separate application for the merchants specific to their B2B transactions.

Kids wallet:
Kids will also have a separate application with a wallet facility with a nominal amount. This will make the younger tech-savvy generation financially wiser as well as help them to develop and explore their choices in financial matters.

Payment gateway:
OM Pay will facilitate a one-stop payment service for online-based businesses in different ways such as a payment link embedded into their website or a payment link shared via SMS or chat to finalize the payment in a few seconds.

Going forward, international remittances will be another important service that OM Pay will provide. The app is easy and quick to register, just by scanning the national id and filling in other details. It is PCI DSS Compliant and available on Android and Apple Store. The OM Pay app is using emerging technologies like Artificial Intelligence and Analytics to provide ease in payment solutions. Those who have multiple bank accounts can transact from one app with money in any of their bank accounts. Those who are not banked can leverage OM Pay's network to come into a digital finance world. Merchants and business owners can use the OM Pay application for digital transactions, thus reducing dependency on cash and increasing their customer base with critical features for their businesses such as debit and credit card acceptance on their POS machines.

MARKET

MSX index ends higher

Construction Materials, up 6.94 per cent, was the top gainer while Oman REIT Fund, down 8.7 per cent, was the top loser

MUSCAT: The MSX index closed at 4,476.35 points, up by 0.14 per cent from the previous close. The Sharia Index ended down by 0.16 per cent at 478.22 points. Construction Materials, up 6.94 per cent, was the top gainer while Oman REIT Fund, down 8.7 per cent, was the top loser. Shares of Oman National Engineering were the most active in terms of the number of shares traded while Bank Muscat were the most active in terms of turnover.

A total number of 258 trades were executed during the day's trading session, generating a turnover of OMR0.68 million, with more than 2.9 million shares changing hands. Out of 39 traded securities, 9 advanced, 11 declined, and 19 remained unchanged. At the session close, domestic investors were net buyers for OMR71,000 while foreign investors were net sellers for OMR51,000, followed by GCC & Arab investors for OMR20,000 worth of shares.

Financial Index closed at 7,139.75 points, up 0.14 per cent. Prices of Bank Dhofar, Oman Qatar Insurance, National Bank Oman and Ominvest were up by 2.22 per cent, 1.65 per cent, 0.83 per cent and 0.6 per cent respectively. Prices of Oman Arab Bank, Oman & Emirates Investment, Bank Nizwa and Sohar International Bank were down by 4.72 per cent, 3.49 per cent, 1.03 per cent and 0.96 per cent respectively.

Industrial Index closed at 6,290.37 points, up 0.16 per cent. Prices of Construction Materials, Jazeera Steel Products and Galfar Engineering were up by 6.94 per cent, 1.52 per cent and 0.62 per cent respectively. Prices of Voltamp Energy and Raysut Cement were down by 1.82 per cent and 0.48 per cent respectively.

Services Index was down by 0.13 per cent before closing at 1,613.86 points. Prices of Oman Telecom and Renaissance Services were up by 0.45 per cent and 0.41 per cent respectively. Prices of SMN Power Holding, Oman National Engineering, National Gas and Ooredoo were down by 8.57 per cent, 2.73 per cent, 1.48 per cent and 0.5 per cent respectively. — **United Securities**

OMAN STOCKS

MUSCAT STOCK EXCHANGE

INDICES

Index	High	Low	Value	Prev. Value	Diff	Diff %
MSX 30 INDEX	4,476.35	4,424.27	4,476.35	4,470.06	6.29	0.14
FINANCIAL INDEX	7,139.75	7,054.57	7,139.75	7,129.51	10.24	0.14
Industry Index	6,305.03	6,274.91	6,290.36	6,280.60	9.76	0.16
Services Index	1,617.25	1,604.90	1,613.86	1,615.97	-2.11	-0.13
MSX Shariah Index	480.28	478.07	478.22	478.98	-0.76	-0.16
MSX TR INDEX	5,645.72	5,580.03	5,645.72	5,637.79	7.93	0.14
FINANCIAL TR IDX	7,470.95	7,381.81	7,470.95	7,460.23	10.71	0.14
SERVICES TR IDX	1,679.36	1,666.54	1,675.84	1,678.03	-2.19	-0.13
INDUSTRIAL TR IDX	6,543.56	6,512.30	6,528.34	6,518.21	10.13	0.16

Trading Summary

Volume	Turnover	Trades	Market Cap	Up	Down	Equal	Sec. Traded
2,909,914	683,509	258	23,185,419,145	9	11	19	39

SHARE PRICE BULLETIN FOR TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 20

REGULAR MARKET

ISIN	SECURITY NAME	VOLUME	TURNOVER	TRADES	OPEN PRICE	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE PR.	PREV. CLOSE	DIFF (RO)	DIFF %	LAST PR	LAST BID	LAST OFFER	PAR VALUE	MARKET CAP
OM0000002176	JAZEERA STEEL PROD	18,855	5,027	6	0.268	0.268	0.264	0.268	0.264	0.004	1.515	0.268	0.268	0.268	0.100	33,472,653
OM0000001483	NATIONAL BANK OMAN	19,100	4,527	7	0.238	0.242	0.234	0.242	0.240	0.002	0.833	0.242	0.224	0.242	0.100	393,479,018
OM0000001533	OMINVEST	74,800	24,903	7	0.328	0.334	0.328	0.334	0.332	0.002	0.602	0.334	0.328	0.334	0.100	223,234,052
OM0000003026	OMAN TELECOM	15,836	14,159	11	0.896	0.900	0.892	0.900	0.896	0.004	0.446	0.900	0.892	0.900	0.100	675,000,000
OM0000003224	RENAISSANCE SER.	7,500	3,655	5	0.470	0.496	0.470	0.496	0.494	0.002	0.405	0.496	0.470	0.496	0.100	117,259,360
OM0000001525	OMAN INVST& FIN.	72,000	9,000	1	0.125	0.125	0.125	0.125	0.125	0.000	0.000	0.125	0.124	0.130	0.100	29,625,000
OM0000002168	AL ANWAR CERAMIC	1,765	691	2	0.400	0.400	0.390	0.390	0.390	0.000	0.000	0.390	0.386	0.400	0.100	85,800,000
OM0000002226	ALJAZEERA SERVICES	4,500	1,215	2	0.270	0.270	0.270	0.270	0.270	0.000	0.000	0.270	0.270	0.270	0.100	16,525,154
OM0000002796	BANK MUSCAT	492,935	282,142	39	0.574	0.574	0.570	0.574	0.574	0.000	0.000	0.574	0.574	0.574	0.100	2,154,335,957
OM0000003125	GLOBAL INV. H	81,845	4,911	7	0.060	0.060	0.060	0.060	0.060	0.000	0.000	0.060	0.059	0.060	0.100	12,000,000
OM0000003281	TAAGEER FINANCE	16,000	1,472	3	0.092	0.092	0.092	0.092	0.092	0.000	0.000	0.092	0.092	0.092	0.100	23,796,886
OM0000005005	ALMAHA CERAMICS	178,130	79,177	9	0.448	0.448	0.440	0.440	0.440	0.000	0.000	0.440	0.432	0.448	0.100	24,200,000
OM0000003968	OOREDOO	94,585	37,418	12	0.398	0.398	0.390	0.396	0.398	-0.002	-0.503	0.396	0.394	0.398	0.100	257,773,915
OM0000003398	SOHAR INT. BANK	355,000	36,545	5	0.103	0.103	0.102	0.103	0.104	-0.001	-0.962	0.103	0.103	0.103	0.100	472,776,416
OM0000001152	OMAN NAT. ENG.	502,941	55,025	47	0.110	0.111	0.106	0.107	0.110	-0.003	-2.727	0.107	0.106	0.110	0.100	14,980,000
Total	15	1,935,792	559,868	163												

Parallel Market

ISIN	SECURITY NAME	VOLUME	TURNOVER	TRADES	OPEN PRICE	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE PR.	PREV. CLOSE	DIFF (RO)	DIFF %	LAST PR	LAST BID	LAST OFFER	PAR VALUE	MARKET CAP
OM0000001368	CONSTRUCTION M.	100	8	1	0.077	0.077	0.077	0.077	0.072	0.005	6.944	0.077	0.070	0.077	0.100	4,812,500
OM0000002549	BANK DHOFAR	44,100	5,895	5	0.135	0.138	0.128	0.138	0.135	0.003	2.222	0.138	0.128	0.138	0.100	413,496,498
OM0000006979	OMAN QATAR INSUR.	50,692	9,406	8	0.189	0.189	0.182	0.185	0.182	0.003	1.648	0.189	0.189	0.187	0.100	18,500,000
OM0000003521	GALFAR ENGINEER.	745	121	2	0.161	0.163	0.161	0.163	0.162	0.001	0.617	0.163	0.161	0.163	0.100	33,086,791
OM0000001517	HSBC BANK OMAN	329,000	50,656	4	0.154	0.154	0.153	0.154	0.154	0.000	0.000	0.154	0.154	0.154	0.100	308,048,170
OM0000001566	OMAN FISHERIES	98,957	10,489	7	0.106	0.106	0.106	0.106	0.106	0.000	0.000	0.106	0.104	0.111	0.100	19,300,310
OM0000001590	MUSCAT FINANCE	10,024	642	4	0.064	0.065	0.064	0.065	0.065	0.000	0.000	0.065	0.061	0.065	0.100	19,964,511
OM0000001772	ALANWAR INVESTMENT	147,100	11,914	8	0.080	0.081	0.080	0.081	0.081	0.000	0.000	0.081	0.080	0.082	0.100	16,200,000
OM0000002374	UNITED FINANCE	20,000	1,715	3	0.084	0.088	0.083	0.088	0.088	0.000	0.000	0.088	0.083	0.088	0.100	30,724,708
OM0000002804	ASAFFA FOODS	160	44	1	0.272	0.272	0.272	0.272	0.272	0.000	0.000	0.272	0.272	0.289	0.100	32,640,000
OM0000004768	MADINA TAKAFUL	750	68	1	0.091	0.091	0.091	0.091	0.091	0.000	0.000	0.091	0.087	0.091	0.100	15,925,000
OM0000004925	ALBATINAH POWER	820	32	1	0.039	0.039	0.039	0.039	0.039	0.000	0.000	0.039	0.038	0.039	0.100	26,320,610
OM0000004933	AL SUWADI POWER	922	37	1	0.040	0.040	0.040	0.040	0.040	0.000	0.000	0.040	0.038	0.043	0.100	28,576,254
OM0000005963	PHOENIX POWER	35,439	1,559	5	0.044	0.044	0.044	0.044	0.044	0.000	0.000	0.044	0.044	0.000	0.100	64,354,464
OM0000001418	RAYSUT CEMENT	2,500	523	1	0.209	0.209	0.209	0.209	0.210	-0.001	-0.476	0.209	0.200	0.209	0.100	41,800,000
OM0000004420	BANK NIZWA	13,476	1,294	3	0.096	0.096	0.096	0.096	0.097	-0.001	-1.031	0.096	0.096	0.097	0.100	214,747,491
OM0000001160	NATIONAL GAS	70,515	9,357	10	0.133	0.133	0.132	0.133	0.135	-0.002	-1.481	0.133	0.133	0.142	0.100	11,305,000
OM0000003661	VOLTAMP ENERGY	20,073	2,153	4	0.108	0.108	0.107	0.108	0.110	-0.002	-1.818	0.108	0.106	0.107	0.100	8,791,497
OM0000001681	OMAN EMIRATES HO.	25,400	2,108	7	0.083	0.083	0.083	0.083	0.086	-0.003	-3.488	0.083	0.081	0.083	0.100	10,115,625
OM0000005260	OMAN ARAB BANK	16,050	1,942	1	0.121	0.121	0.121	0.121	0.127	-0.006	-4.724	0.121	0.122	0.126	0.100	201,998,610
OM0000004248	SMN POWER HOLDING	66,610	2,132	15	0.032	0.033	0.032	0.032	0.035	-0.003	-8.571	0.032	0.032	0.033	0.100	6,388,339
OM0000008447	OMAN REIT FUND	9,489	598	1	0.063	0.063	0.063	0.063	0.069	-0.006	-8.696	0.063	0.063	0.069	0.100	29,684,742
Total	22	962,922	112,691	93												

REPORT

Indian economy resilient; time to accumulate stocks on correction

NEW DELHI: The Indian economy is resilient and has shown strength despite weakness across the globe whereas any correction in its equity markets should be utilised as an opportunity to invest for the long-term, said financial services firm Emkay Wealth Management.

The strength in the country's economy can be seen in its equity and currency markets as the correction in the Indian benchmark indices and rupee has been quite low compared to the other emerging market economies, it said in a note.

"On a closer look at the selling by overseas investors closely, it can be seen that much of it is in the large-cap space and not in the mid-cap or small-cap space," it added.

Currently, western economies have been going through sharp volatility with high energy prices posing challenges to growth.

Bucking the global trend, India's latest GDP data, it said, reflect a resilient and robust economy compared to any of the comparable economies in the emerging markets space.

"While the selling by overseas investors has been there in all the emerging markets, the extent to which the currency depreciated is also comparatively less in the case of the domestic economy."

Significant challenge

However, a significant challenge for the markets in the immediate, it said, is the rising interest rates.

"This (monetary) policy is to contain the inflationary pressures, which may steal the economy of its efficiency and impede growth by adversely affecting consumption demand. Rising rates result in higher cost of funds and may be a drag on companies which have a huge outlay on capital expenditure," the financial services company said.

Further, it said the country moving into the festival season would help promote demand and consumption. Discretionary consumption is an area that may be able to perform better and consumption in the fashion and apparel sector may look good with better earnings prospects.

Manufacturing sector

"The manufacturing sector is expected to perform well in the light of the spends by the companies and the various initiatives by the government like PLI, and also due to the opportunities presented by China plus one, and the key beneficiaries are likely to be autos, auto ancillaries, engineering companies, and speciality chemicals," it added.

Lastly, the note said this is a time to focus on businesses that have strong balance sheets, leadership positions in the respective businesses and demonstrated persistent growth as such companies will have greater stability even in the face of adverse conditions. -ANI

OIL

Oil prices steady on expectations of Fed rate hike to curb fuel demand

SINGAPORE: Oil prices steadied on Tuesday after rising in the previous session on concerns that further US interest rate hikes this week to tame inflation will curb economic growth and fuel demand in the world's biggest oil consumer.

Brent crude futures for November settlement rose 3 cents to $92.03 a barrel by 04:49 GMT. US West Texas Intermediate crude for October delivery was at $85.76 a barrel, up 3 cents. The October contract will expire on Tuesday and the more active November contract was at $85.29, down 7 cents, or 0.1 per cent.

The dollar remained firm below a two-decade high versus major peers on Tuesday, ahead of a slew of central bank meetings around the world this week led by the US Federal Reserve. -BNA

AGREEMENT

Bank Muscat to provide advanced training to Omani entrepreneurs

Times News Service

MUSCAT: Bank Muscat, the leading financial services provider in the Sultanate, in line with its vision 'To serve you better, everyday', and commitment to supporting the Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SME) sector in Oman, has signed an agreement with Radiant Sail, a leading management consultant and business advisory services provider based in the Sultanate of Oman.

The agreement was signed by Ibrahim Khamis Al Balushi, Senior Assistant General Manager - SME, Bank Muscat, and Nathan Heckman, President, Radiant Sail, and will help the bank provide an advanced entrepreneurial programme to 30 top graduates of the bank's Al Wathbah SME Academy as part of its CSR programmes.

The central theme of the advanced Al Wathbah Academy Programme is to support SMEs to present their business in a structured format to potential investors, partners and employees. Every module of the Advanced Al Wathbah Academy Programme is designed around this central theme and provides participants with an opportunity to master a variety of skills and practice lifelong learning.

The programme, which will be conducted in two batches of 15 participants each in Muscat and

Al Batinah North, will be managed by Radiant Sail and certified through KnowledgeWorkx. Study materials were developed based on a curriculum from the Harvard Business School, local case studies and in-person testimonials from Omani entrepreneurs, who have pitched their businesses successfully across the world. Participants will receive training through a combination of workshops and one-to-one coaching throughout the programme. The workshops will be interactive and are facilitated by leading professionals, who are entrepreneurs themselves and able to explain the relevant lessons with excellent real-world examples.

Speaking on the occasion, Ibrahim Khamis Al Balushi, Senior Assistant General Manager - SME, Bank Muscat, said, "We are pleased to sign this agreement with our knowledge-partner Radiant Sail to further support and develop SMEs in the Sultanate. In line with the national objective of stimulating an entrepreneurial mindset, the bank is always focused on strategic initiatives that add tremendous value to Oman's growth and development. Bank Muscat is always committed to working in close partnership with the government and the private sector to support the national economy in alignment with the landmark Oman Vision 2040."

Nathan Heckman, President, Radiant Sail, said: "Bank Muscat's various initiatives to provide support to SMEs are pioneering and highly sustainable initiatives, which immensely support small businesses and Omani entrepreneurs in their journey to becoming major players in the national economy in line with the goals of Oman Vision 2040. As a long-term knowledge partner of the leading financial services provider in the Sultanate of Oman, Radiant Sail is pleased to be a part of this initiative to further upskill Omani entrepreneurial skills and contribute to the progress and growth of the nation."

Bank Muscat's Al Wathbah Academy for SMEs is a distinctive program that combines global excellence with local relevance and was launched in 2014 as part of its Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) initiative to equip Omani entrepreneurs with suitable skills. It is conducted through 8 modules spread over 4-8 months and leads to internationally-recognised certification from the Project Management Institute (PMI).

Over 170 entrepreneurs from different governorates across the Sultanate of Oman are successfully contributing to the Omani economy after enrolling in entrepreneurial training.

LIFESTYLE

Respiratory pathogens that cause COVID-19 and H1N1 influenza spread through small droplets and aerosols released by infected people when they talk, cough, and sneeze.

SCIENTISTS DISCOVER FACEMASK WHICH CAN DETECT VIRAL EXPOSURE WITHIN 10 MINUTES

Scientists have developed a face mask that can detect common respiratory viruses, such as influenza and Covid-19, in the air as droplets or aerosols. If specific viruses are present in the ambient air, the extremely sensitive mask may inform wearers via their mobile devices within 10 minutes.

"Previous research has shown face mask wearing can reduce the risk of spreading and contracting the disease. So, we wanted to create a mask that can detect the presence of virus in the air and alert the wearer," says Yin Fang, the study's corresponding author and a material scientist at Shanghai Tongji University.

Respiratory pathogens that cause COVID-19 and H1N1 influenza spread through small droplets and aerosols released by infected people when they talk, cough, and sneeze. These virus-containing molecules, especially tiny aerosols, can remain suspended in the air for a long time.

Fang and his colleagues tested the mask in an enclosed chamber by spraying the viral surface protein containing trace-level liquid and aerosols on the mask. The sensor responded to as little as 0.3 microliters of liquid containing viral proteins, about 70 to 560 times less than the volume of liquid produced in one sneeze and much less than the volume produced by coughing or talking, Fang says.

The team designed a small sensor with aptamers, which are a type of synthetic molecule that can identify unique proteins of pathogens like antibodies. In their proof-of-concept design, the team modified the multi-channel sensor with three types of aptamers, which can simultaneously recognize surface proteins on SARS-CoV-2, H5N1, and H1N1.

Once the aptamers bind to the target proteins in the air, the ion-gated transistor connected will amplify the signal and alert the wearers via their phones. An ion-gated transistor is a novel type of device that is highly sensitive, and thus the mask can detect even trace levels of pathogens in the air within 10 minutes.

"Our mask would work really well in spaces with poor ventilation, such as elevators or enclosed rooms, where the risk of getting infected is high," Fang says. In the future, if a new respiratory virus emerges, they can easily update the sensor's design for detecting the novel pathogens, he adds.

Next, the team hopes to shorten the detection time and further increase the sensitivity of the sensor by optimizing the design of the polymers and transistors.

They are also working on wearable devices for a variety of health conditions including cancers and cardiovascular diseases. "Currently, doctors have been relying heavily on their experiences in diagnosing and treating diseases. But with richer data collected by wearable devices, disease diagnosis and treatment can become more precise," Fang says. -ANI

IN PICTURES

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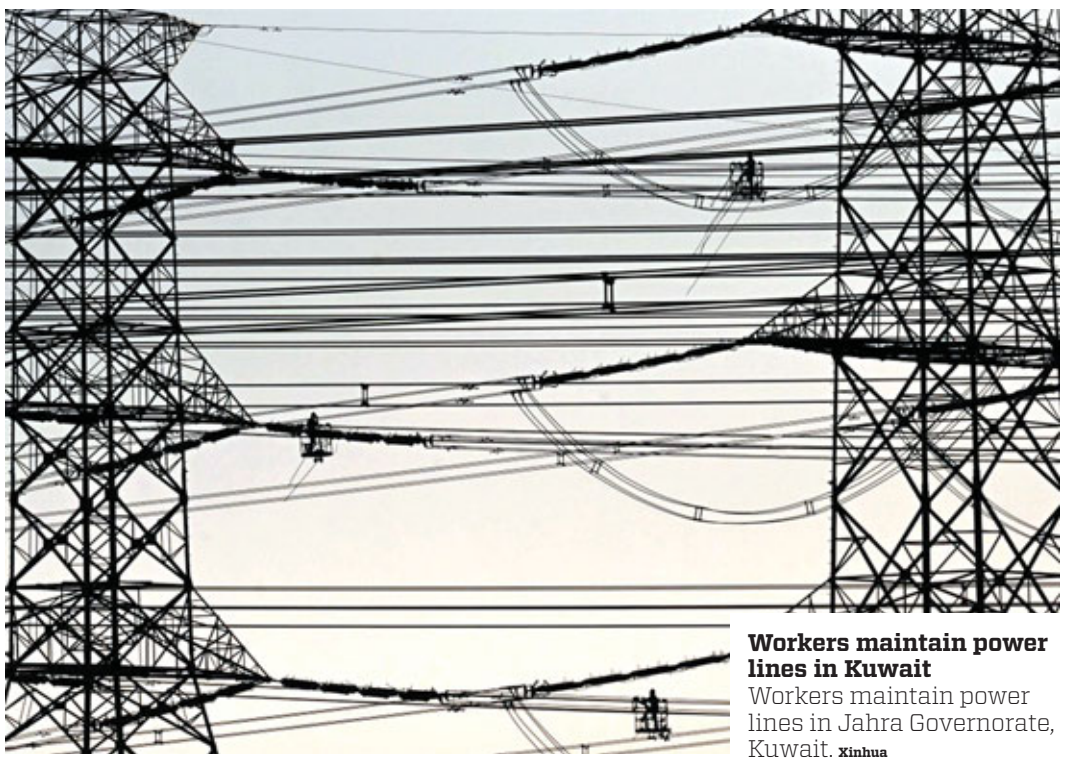

Workers maintain power lines in Kuwait
Workers maintain power lines in Jahra Governorate, Kuwait. Xinhua

Chinese writer Yu Hua's works introduced at Hungarian literary event
Hungarian sinologist and literary translator Klara Zombory (centre), Eva Kalmar (right) and Miklos M. Nagy, author and director of the Helikon publisher, attend an event organized by the Contemporary Chinese Literature Book Club of Hungary held in Budapest, Hungary. Xinhua

Chile holds military parade to celebrate Day of the Glories of the Army
Soldiers take part in an annual military parade to celebrate the Day of the Glories of the Army at the O'Higgins park, in Santiago, Chile. Xinhua

Lebanese pound sinks to new low at 39,000 against US$
Lebanese coins are sold by weight to a scrap dealer in the city of Hasbaya, south Lebanon. Xinhua

Weekend event PETZOO held in Ankara, Türkiye
A dog trainer holds a dog at PETZOO, a weekend event hosted in Ankara, Türkiye, as the country's biggest pet fair. Xinhua

22nd Pingyao Int'l Photography Festival kicks off
People take photos during the Pingyao International Photography Festival in Pingyao County of Jinzhong, north China's Shanxi Province. The Festival kicked off here on Monday, displaying works of over 1,200 photographers from home and abroad. This event will last until September 25. Xinhua

Skating breaks societal prejudice, empowers young people in Namibia
Skating brMichael Kagola (sitting), a skate aid volunteer and coach, poses with children at the skate park in Windhoek. Skating is empowering children living with disabilities to realize their full potential as well as improve inclusion while helping to reduce stigma and increase self-confidence in adolescents living in Namibia's capital Windhoek. Xinhua

AMAZING PLANET

Elephants can hear with their feet and understand different languages

Elephants are skilled communicators with memories that could give humans a run for their money. But culling and habitat loss is making it harder for them to pass on this expertise.

ELEPHANTS are skilled communicators with memories that could give humans a run for their money. But culling and habitat loss is making it harder for them to pass on this expertise.

From their feet to their big brains, elephants are perfectly attuned to their habitat

They're known as gentle giants. Elephants, found across Africa and Asia, are the largest mammals on land. And their massive bodies — from their sensitive feet to their complicated brains — are perfectly attuned to these regions' savannas and forests.

Though elephants walk on their toes, they are still able to cover long distances. That is because they have wedge-like fat pads that give them flat feet. Hidden in those fat pads are also large false toes called predigits, which further give them support by spreading the load from the sole up the limbs.

Their feet have another surprising function: communication. Elephants can pick up on low-frequency rumblings or stomping from up to 20 miles (about 32 kilometres) away. These sounds create seismic vibrations on the Earth's surface that the animals can sense with their feet. Researchers believe those vibrations travel all the way up their ears via their skeletons. This skill allows elephants to detect danger from far away.

What language is this?

But the colossal mammals aren't only well-versed in their own communication. A 2014 study found they can also distinguish between human languages — and whether the voice comes from a man, woman or child. This is especially useful when they gauge how much of a threat humans pose to them.

Researchers played different voice recordings to wild elephants in Amboseli National Park in Kenya to watch how defensive they got. Between recordings of Masai men and Kamba men, the animals reacted more strongly to the sound of the Masai, who had killed elephants on occasion. The herd also retreated less when it heard the sounds of Masai women or young boys who generally don't threaten elephants.

An elephant never forgets

Their ability to distinguish languages is a testament to elephants' renowned memories. Not only do they have the largest brains of any land mammal, but they even have more pyramidal neurons than humans. These neurons are thought to be important for cognitive functions, meaning elephants might have more advanced memory skills than us. It's no surprise that they can remember the shortest distance to watering holes, even if they are 31 miles (50 kilometres) away.

They also need these cognitive abilities to live in their complex societies. But traumatic experiences, like losing relatives to poachers or being separated from the herd, can hinder neurological development, making elephants aggressive and fearful. These types of disruptions also mean younger elephants miss out on vital social information that adults would have passed down to them.

Elephants are especially endangered in Asia, where their population has declined by at least 50 per cent in the last three generations, or around 75 years. That is mostly because humans continue to infringe on their habitat. But they are also under threat of poaching in parts of Africa. -DW

ROUND-UP

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Youth Sada in partnership with bp Oman launches 3rd cycle of 'Habbah'

The 'Habbah' programme is a well-integrated educational and training programme which includes open-to-public activities and specialised training courses as well as consultation sessions, follow-up sessions and site visits from various experts in entrepreneurship

MUSCAT: In partnership with bp Oman, Youth Sada launched its third cycle of the 'Habbah' programme, which aims to develop and enhance the small and medium enterprises (SMEs) in the Al Dhahirah Governorate, targeting 15 SMEs this year.

The 'Habbah' programme is a well-integrated educational and training programme which includes open-to-public activities and specialised training courses as well as consultation sessions, follow-up sessions and site visits from various experts in entrepreneurship. The participating SMEs' performance will also be evaluated and analysed in many aspects that are focused on in this programme. This social investment programme is managed by bp and is continuously benefiting communities with the contribution of our Block 61 partners. Block 61 is operated by bp in partnership with OQ, PTTEP, and Petronas.

Shamsa Al-Rawahi, bp Oman Social investment manager, commented, "The programme aims to enhance and evolve local SMEs by providing them training around marketing and financial challenges so that they can contribute towards the local market through their initiatives.

"The programme also gives these young flourishing SMEs the platform to learn from experts in the entrepreneurship field on how they generate the greatest impact in the local market. We look forward to watching the growth of these SMEs through the support of this programme and in partnership with Youth Sada."

Qais Al Maqrashi, Chief Executive Officer at Youth Sada, added: "The programme offers valuable knowledge for young entrepreneurs and young Omanis interested in entrepreneurship.

"We are proud that through the previous cycles of this programme, a total of 30 businesses from various sectors such as commercial, service and industrial sectors within Al Dhahirah Governorate participated over the years and over 1,200 participants from all regions of Oman benefited from the workshops part of the programme as well. We look forward to continuing this impact with the launch of the third cycle of this programme."

TOP PERFORMING STAFF

Alizz Islamic Bank CEO honours its top employees

MUSCAT: Alizz Islamic Bank's CEO, Sulaiman Al Harthi, honoured the top performing staff during the first half of the current year in a ceremony held at the bank's head office in Ruwi, in the presence of members of the executive management team.

The CEO thanked the employees for their outstanding achievements, urging them to keep up the good work during the few remaining months of the current year, and assured them that achievements will always be rewarded. He noted that the most important thing is how to sustain such good performance and build on it to help the Bank become the first and optimal choice for all customers. This is feasible only by offering the highest quality Sharia-compliant products & services and products. Al Harthi commended the employees who demonstrate a high sense of responsibility, confirming that the bank's senior management has always focused on the importance of recognising achievers and exemplary talents, and will always offer them support to grow and thrive.

The CEO further commended the achievements made by the various departments and sections, encouraging the employees to push further towards the bank's strategic objectives and to stay informed of the latest updates in the Islamic banking industry now more than ever.

The bank has received several awards in appreciation of its outstanding banking services and products, which reflects the Bank's good understanding of the market requirements and needs. Since its inception back in 2013, the bank has made investments in the community it operates in as one of its key priorities along with investments in education, youth development and increased awareness of Islamic finance as a proven way towards social welfare. Additionally, the bank strives to help customers across Oman by giving them access to convenient and Sharia-compliant banking services.

Moreover, organisational development has been one of the key strategic focuses for Alizz Islamic Bank over the past two years with a strong belief that human capital is a key driver of the organisation's overall growth. Several inter-departmental meetings were held to understand employee needs and aspirations. Accordingly, many programs were introduced to enhance the employees' capacity to make a positive change and increase efficiency. These programs involved improving strategies, structures and processes to increase the chances of impact and contribution to the bank's objectives, and boost productivity and financial awareness.

LIMITED TIME

OTE's Mega Warehouse Sale is back with a bang

MUSCAT: For a limited time only, OTE Group's immensely popular warehouse sale is back again, this time around with fabulous discounts of up to 70% on a wide array of consumer electronics and home appliance brands from the world's leading manufacturers.

The five-day-long blowout sale – the biggest of its kind in the consumer retail space here in the Sultanate of Oman – begins on September 21 and concludes on September 25. The venue is the LG Warehouse at Ghala (next to the OTE Service Centre Complex), where a multitude of items is up for grabs at attractive discounts ranging from 20 – 70 per cent.

On display amid the expansive settings of the LG Warehouse is a vast inventory of merchandise, ranging from television sets, air conditions, IT products, audio-visual devices, and assorted other home appliances. They represent some of the choicest offerings from world-class brands LG and Bosch, distributed exclusively by Oman Gulf Enterprises, an affiliate of OTE Group.

Taking centre-stage at the mega sale are products from LG, a prominent player in the global consumer electronics industry, well-known for its innovations in the TV, home appliance and air conditioner product segments.

Also sharing the spotlight with LG are products from Bosch, a luxury – yet affordable – a segment of the consumer electronics market. Bosch is also well-established as a manufacturer of energy-efficient household appliances ranging from washing machines and dryers to refrigerators, freezers, stoves and ovens and dishwashers, to small appliances such as coffee makers and food processors.

Complementing the collection are television sets and air-conditioners for residential and commercial purposes from well-known consumer electronics brand Hisense.

As with previous editions of this keenly-awaited retail extravaganza, bargain prices await customers on a wide collection of new stock items, showroom display units and repaired sets across all three leading brands during the mega sale.

Visiting hours are from 9 am – 1 pm and 4 – 8pm on Wednesday, Thursday, Saturday and Sunday. (4 – 8 pm on Friday).

PERFECT CHOICE

Renault Symbol meets customer expectations

MUSCAT: Distinguished for its innovative technologies, attractive features, and modern design Renault Symbol meets customer expectations when it comes to fuel-efficiency and excellent quality provided at a very competitive price. Its comfort and roominess makes' Renault Symbol the perfect sedan for prospective customers looking for value for money.

Reasonable pricing was one of the most crucial considerations for Salim Mohamed from Nizwa to opt for Renault Symbol.

He also says, "The best part of the car is that suspension and running gear have been engineered for comfort and efficiency. While it is affordable, Renault Symbol is also powered by a range of latest-generation engines, all of which combine performance, low fuel consumption and respect for the environment."

Anwar Shaban from Muscat says he has been using Renault Symbol for many years and has never thought of changing it. "Its economical fuel consumption and low servicing and running costs are great plus points. Renault Symbol is truly economical to run which is very important for people like me," says Anwar.

Younis Baluchi from Rusayl who has four school going kids, too says Renault Symbol is his preferred car.

"They go to four different schools, and I drop theme very day. The car provides great fuel consumption, performance, and auditory comfort. Prolonged servicing and oil-change intervals also contribute to low running costs. Renault Symbol offers high standards when it comes to travelling with comfort," says Younis.

Jamal Al Hinai from Ibri says Renault Symbol is legitimately inexpensive to run. "It comes out with top colours when it comes to affordability, fuel efficiency and multiple features especially when it comes to safety attributes."

A spokesperson for Renault Oman, from the house of Suhail Bahwan Automobiles said, "The Renault Symbol has huge fan following because of manifold factors. It is also a perfect sedan for everyone looking for luxury, status and style."

ISC MALAYALAM WING

Onam celebration to be held on Sept 23 and 24

Chief Guest: **H.E. Amit Amit Narang,** Ambassador of India to the Sultanate of Oman

Guest of Honour: **Padma Bhushan,** Smt. K.S. Chithra

MUSCAT: Onam celebrations in Oman for the year 2022, organised by Indian Social Club (ISC) Malayalam Wing are to be held on September 23 and 24, at Al Falaj Grand Hall, Ruwi. Celebrations are set to begin on the 23rd at 6pm.

At the function, Amit Naranag, Indian Ambassador to Oman, will be the chief guest, and Babu Rajendran, honourable general secretary of the Indian Social club will be the special guest.

P. Sreekumar, Convener of Indian Social Club Malayalam Wing will present the cultural award to the legendary singer Padmabhushan K.S. Chithra, an inspiration to every Malayali. Concert by famous flautist Rajesh Cherthala and the team promise to enliven the festivities with a musical fusion.

'Chenda Melam' by Melam Muscat, dance performances by ISC Malayalam wing members, and so on will also be part of the celebration.

ISC Malayalam Wing Convener P. Sreekumar, Co-Convenor Lekha Vinod and Treasurer Ajith Kumar Menon in a joint news report extended invitations to everyone and announced that being two years since the last Onam celebration ISC Malayalam Wing is poised for a grand and jubilant gala.

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Location: **OTE Warehouse, Ghala**

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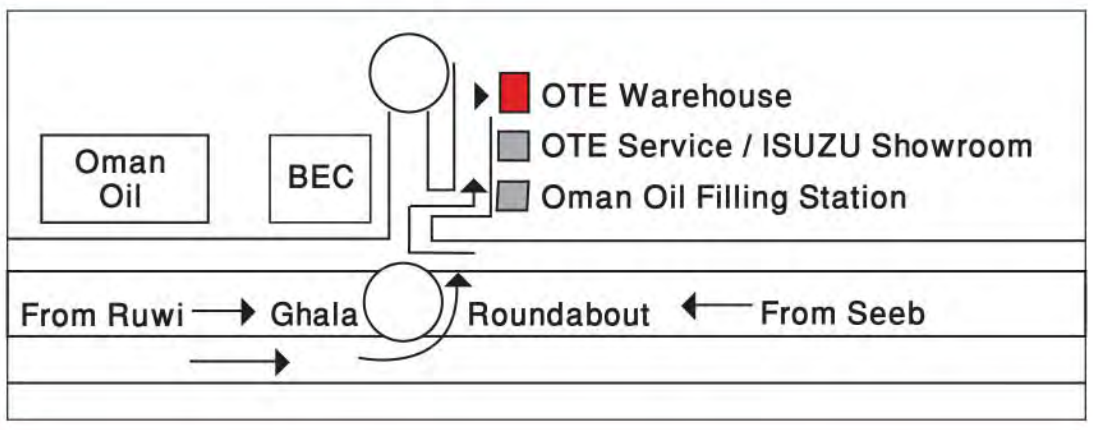

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79336776

Sale timings

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9 am - 1 pm & 4 pm - 8 pm

Friday: 4pm - 8 pm

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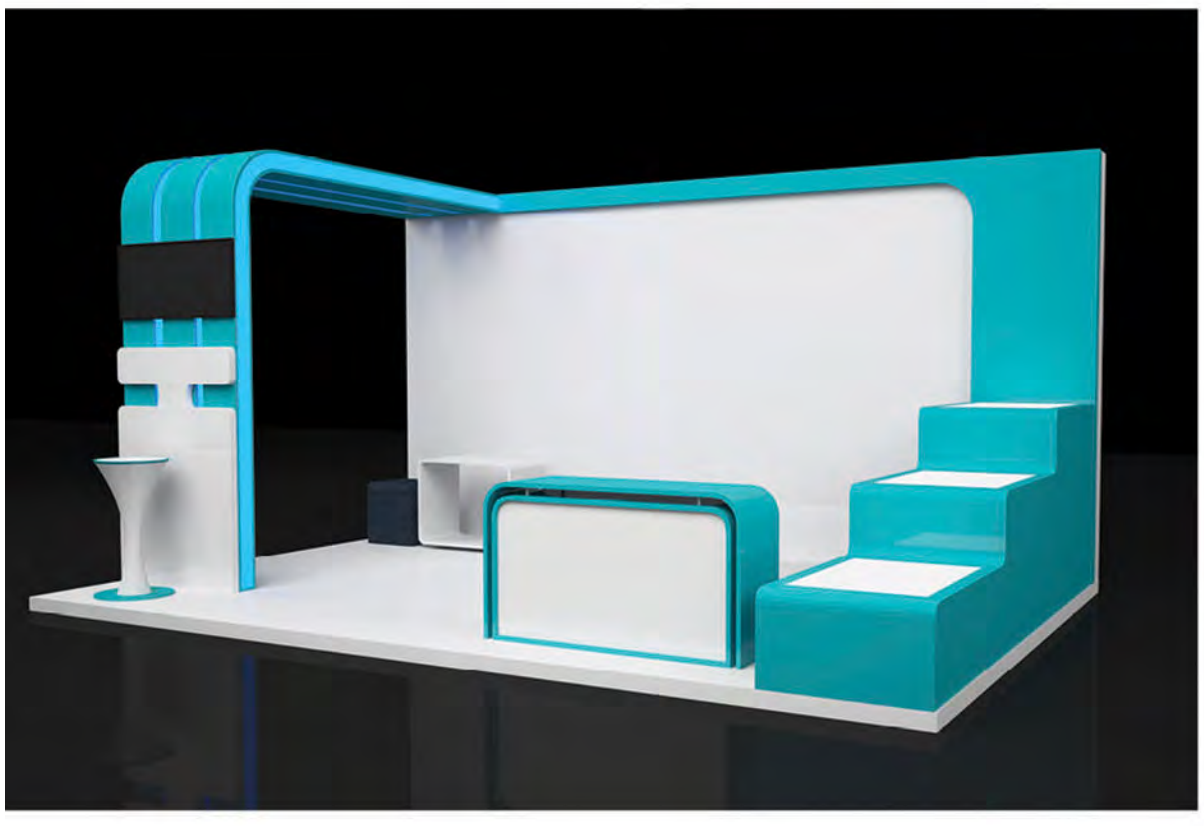

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