



HM SENDS CONDOLENCES

MUSCAT: His Majesty Sultan Haitham Bin Tarik has sent a cable of condolences to President Joko Widodo of Indonesia on the victims of the earthquake, which hit the Indonesian island of Sulawesi. In his cable, His Majesty the Sultan expressed his sincere condolences and sympathy to the president, his country's people and the deceased families, wishing the injured persons speedy recovery. -ONA



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RESEARCH PROJECT HOPES TO PRODUCE COVID MEDICINE FROM FRANKINCENSE

The effort is being jointly undertaken by the University of Nizwa and the University of Oxford

Times News Service

MUSCAT: Research to make medicines capable of fighting COVID-19, from frankincense trees in Oman, is being jointly undertaken by the University of Nizwa and the University of Oxford.

The project is looking to isolate certain key compounds from frankincense – known for its healing properties – and to use them to make antibiotics.

The resin contains large numbers of naturally-occurring chemicals that could be used to inhibit the ability of the COVID-19 virus to infect people.

Anti-inflammatory

“We realised that the properties of these compounds being anti-inflammatory can be very beneficial, because we could use these to inhibit the m-protease protein in the COVID virus,” explained Dr Ahmed Sulaiman Al Harrasi, the Vice Chancellor for Research and



The project is led by Dr Ahmed Al Harrasi (top right), who also serves as the Chair of the Natural and Medical Sciences Research Centre

Graduate Studies at the University of Nizwa. “This protein is present in the spike protein of the virus, which is used to enter the host cells, such as the lungs, in the case of humans.

“We ran models of the m-protease, in which we treated this with our active drugs,” he added. “We could see a very strong bind-

ing between the two, which means the inhibition of the virus by these compounds could be very strong.”

The project is led by Dr Al Harrasi, who also serves as the Chair of the Natural and Medical Sciences Research Centre, which he helped found, and is conducting this research, and Dr Christopher Schofield, the Head of Organic

Chemistry at Oxford.

“It starts with the isolation of active ingredients from the frankincense resin,” explained Al Harrasi.

“It then has to go through several procedures conducted here. Some of these are self-developed methodologies and protocols that helped us isolate these bio-active

components, purify them, and then characterize them.

“We came to know their structure through different spectroscopic techniques such as nuclear resonance, X-rays and mass spectrometry,” he added.

“Various techniques are used to identify and elucidate the structure of those components



used to make drugs isolated from frankincense.”

The resin was chosen for this research as it contains a high number of boswellic acids, which are known to be excellent anti-inflammatory components, which have been used to treat ailments such as diabetes, cancer, joint pain and Crohn's disease. **>A5**



Royal Opera House Muscat to reopen

A2

BLENDED LEARNING

Partial return of students to schools

Times News Service

MUSCAT: Some students of classes one, four, five, nine and 11 will return to classes from today and adopt a blended model of learning, with schools taking a number of precautions to prevent them from being infected by COVID-19.

This development comes after a decision taken by the Ministry of Education, as part of a gradual process of bringing school-going students back to classrooms. This will be expanded to other grades, after considering the epidemiological situation in the country, as per discussions with the Supreme Committee to deal with the COVID-19.

“We would like to assure eve-

ryone that not all students will go back to schools this coming Sunday,” said Dr Abdullah Ambusaidi, the Undersecretary of the Ministry of Education. “There will be a gradual return during the next week and over time, so that this can happen in a safe and easy manner.”

Adding that the vaccine will also be provided to people working in schools, he explained, “There are other possible considerations to look at, upon which the decision will be made to either fully return to schools for the second semester, or continue with blended education. Should the pandemic continue to exist, the conceived scenario is to stick to blended learning,” Ambusaidi

went on to say. “Face to face instructions will be held differently during the second semester of the academic year, in keeping with the epidemiological situation.”

Transportation

To prepare for students returning to schools, the buses that take them there have also been fitted with the precautionary measures required to prevent the spread of COVID-19.

“School buses are available, and the Ministry of Education has readied itself for this step for a long time,” said Dr Ali Al Jahwari, Director General of the General Directorate of Education in the Governorate of Muscat. “Bus contracts were signed last Novem-

ber, with operations planned for schools also taking into account the sizes of buses.

“The ministry has requested that the seating capacity of each bus should not exceed 50 per cent of its seats. Temperature measuring devices and sterilisers shall be provided for each bus,” he added. “It is important that the school administrators meet with bus drivers to remind them of the healthcare and preventive measures.”

So that students can continue learning as part of the blended learning system, the ministry has provided tablets and laptops to those who require them, while centralising the curricula through a platform that is easy to use and access. **>A2**

TOP THREE INSIDE STORIES

OMAN Oman among first to get vaccine: Saidi

1 Oman was among the first countries to obtain the COVID-19 vaccine, said the Minister of Health. **>A2**

WORLD UK to close all travel corridors: Johnson

2 The PM of Britain has announced the closure of all travel corridors to the country from Monday. **>A6**

MARKET Bank Muscat net profit at OMR163.36mn

3 Bank Muscat, the leading financial services institution in the Sultanate, announced its preliminary unaudited results for the year ended December 31, 2020. **>B1**

MINISTRY OF HEALTH

Second round of COVID vaccine to be distributed from today

Times News Service

MUSCAT: People in Oman who have been vaccinated with the first dose of the Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine will begin receiving their follow-up shot from today, the Ministry of Health has said.

This is a continuation of the first phase of the country's national immunisation campaign. In keeping with the previous rounds of vaccination, these follow-up shots will be given to frontline healthcare workers, the elderly, and those suffering chronic diseases.

As of Friday, 24,204 people were vaccinated with the first dose of the jab. The first phase of the national campaign witnessed a remarkable turnout by people from the target groups, thus achieving the desired coverage rate as planned.

This is due to the great efforts made by the relevant authorities at the central level and across the various governorates to overcome challenges at the level of field planning and implementation. This was also possible due to the high levels

of community awareness over the importance of the vaccine. The rollout of the vaccination proves it is possible to educate individuals and groups of people over their responsibility towards receiving the COVID-19 vaccine, which will help counter the coronavirus pandemic.

The Ministry of Health will continue with the first phase of vaccinations, even after the second dose is administered to those who have already been vaccinated, until all the members of the selected target groups have been inoculated. Regular updates over subsequent target groups will be broadcast through media outlets and online channels.

“Vaccines have been distributed to all governorates, along with a clear mechanism for their distribution,” said Dr Ahmed bin Mohammed Al Saidi, the Minister of Health, at a recent press conference of the Supreme Committee to deal with COVID-19. “Although the Pfizer vaccine poses logistical challenges in terms of storage, Oman does have the capability to handle them and distribute them

to the various governorates.”

He added that “The Ministry of Health booked 370,000 doses of the Pfizer vaccine, which will arrive in batches. We will also rely on the supply of the vaccine made by Oxford-AstraZeneca, and take care of its safe arrival and efficient distribution.”

Tracking bracelets

Al Saidi was disappointed to see people returning to the country throwing away their tracking bracelets, and said that strict penalties will be issued to those who don't return them.

In the context of allowing university students to return to campuses, he added, “We have not received any requests from the Ministry of Higher Education, Research and Innovation for the return of university and college students.”

Large-scale gatherings are still not allowed until people in the country can display consistent commitment towards adopting the precautions to minimise the spread of COVID-19. **>A2**





OMAN

PRAYER
TIMINGS



Dhuhr.....12.22pm
Asr.....3:27pm
Maghrib.....5:48pm
Isha.....7:02pm
Fajr (Tomorrow).....5.32am

Oman among first few countries to get COVID-19 vaccine, says Al Saidi

Sultanate’s access to the vaccine came as a result of the support of His Majesty Sultan Haitham Bin Tarik to the national anti-COVID-19 immunisation campaign

MUSCAT: Dr. Ahmed Mohammed Al Saidi, Minister of Health, member of the Supreme Committee tasked with tackling developments resulting from coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, has re-affirmed that the Sultanate was among the first countries to obtain the COVID-19 vaccine in a set of 42 countries around the world (that applied for the drug).

Dr. Ahmed pointed out that the Sultanate’s access to the vaccine came as a result of the support of His Majesty Sultan Haitham Bin Tarik to the national anti-COVID-19 immunisation campaign and his determination that the Sultanate be among the leading countries in receiving the vaccine.

The minister made the statement during the 21st press conference of the Supreme Committee, held at the Ministry of Education on Thursday.

Dr. Ahmed reiterated the that Sultanate will not accept any vaccine except after checking its validity for safe use. He described reservation among some people to take the drug as “legiti-



PRESS MEET: Dr. Ahmed Mohammed Al Saidi, Minister of Health, addressed the 21st press conference of the Supreme Committee, at the Ministry of Education on Thursday. - ONA

mate hesitation”, noting that this stance “is scientifically justifiable, but associated with rumours or misinformation”.

As many as 22,749 people received the vaccine during the first phase of the national immunization campaign against COVID-19, said the minister, noting that immunisation has now covered 82 percent of the target segments. He added that side-effects are expected, simple and normal and that no serious side-effects have been registered so far from anti-COVID-19 vaccine recipients.

The minister explained that the vaccination gives extra protection from the disease, but no scientifically evidence supports the idea that the recipient cannot not transfer the virus.

Within the first quarter of this year, the Sultanate will receive about 8 to 10 vaccines, said the minister, stressing that no vaccine will be used in the Sultanate before getting full information about it and provided that the drug is registered in the country of origin and safe to use.

“Until yesterday, a total of 27,300 doses of vaccine arrived in the Sultanate, of them 22,749 have been used so far,” said the minister, noting that a clear-cut mechanism is being implemented to distribute the vaccine in all governorates of the Sultanate and that Oman booked 370,000 does of Pfizer-BioNtech, which will arrive in batches.

Speaking about the opening of mosques, Dr. Ahmed said that

there is ongoing coordination with the Ministry of Awqaf and Religious Affairs and that congregation without distancing is banned as a precautionary measure, as of now.

Meanwhile, Dr. Abdullah Khamis Ambusaidi, Education Under-Secretary at the Ministry of Education, said that the decision to gradually resume applying the blended learning system will be assessed in accordance with the epidemiological situation.

Ambusaidi pointed out that the gradual resumption of school operation came in response to a number of justifications, the most important of which is the positive outcome of implementation of the Schools Health Protocol and the need to further empower First



Cycle pupils in basic skills, such as reading, writing, arithmetic and new syllabi.

In his turn, Dr. Ali Humaid Al-Jahwari, Director-General of Education in Muscat Governorate, said that students who will apply online and blended-learning next week will be taught subjects of ‘individual development’ through electronic platforms. He urged all to use educational portals to access home works and interactive activities.

Educational platforms

Echoing a similar opinion, Faisal Ali Al-Busaidi, Assistant Director-General of Information Technology at the Ministry of Education, said that educational platforms are synchronised to blended learning within the parameters of the current app. Students will be required to log in to these platforms to get

access to homework and interactive activities.

Dr. Amal Al-Ma’ani, Health Ministry’s Director of the Infection Control Department, said that COVID-19 is a lingering, resurgent disease and that research is ongoing to detect any of its mutations.

The new strains have not changed its intensity, but the worrying aspect is rate of reproduction of new variants, which are higher by 0.4 to 0.8 over the old species and that the rate of immunity in the Sultanate ranges between 20 percent to 25 percent, according to the recent serological survey.

Dr. Amal reaffirmed that the Sultanate is committed to giving two doses of the vaccine to each person to augment its validity. She pointed out that, though statistics in the Sultanate are reassuring, the virus is still actively spreading in society. -ONA



Sultanate of Oman
Consumer Protection Authority



Honda
The Power of Dreams

Announcement

Honda Recall Campaign

Date of the campaign : 17 January 2021
Campaign type : Safety
Campaign section : Automobile

Product Description :

Vehicle Type	Model	VIN No		No
		From	To	
Odyssey	2018 YM	5KBRL6889JB700003	5KBRL688XJB700527	38
Odyssey	2019 YM	5KBRL6869KB700048	5KBRL6828KB701107	57
Pilot	2019 YM	5FNYP6858KB700860	5FNYP6856KB701036	25

Details:

Many in-cabin system interfaces are linked to a central network, including the instrument panel, display audio, and rearview camera display. Due to inappropriate software programming, several errors in the central network may occur that either delay or prevent the rearview camera image from displaying. And it can reduce the driver's view of what is behind the vehicle, increasing the risk of a crash.

Action:

A software update has to be carried out.

For more Information:

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For Contact:

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Landline No : 24665741 Timing : From 8 Am to 6 PM

Contact details:

For more information please visit any Honda Oman service centers.



STRICT GUIDELINES

ROHM to reopen for public from today



SAFETY TOP PRIORITY: The ROHM has prioritised the health and well-being of visitors and staff, with a strategic approach to safeguarding these in every part of the building following guidance from the COVID-19 Supreme Committee. - ONA

MUSCAT: The Royal Opera House Muscat (ROHM) will reopen its doors to the public starting from today, 17 January.

Visitors can once again enjoy the magnificent opera house building and experience the inspiration of this splendid institution through special guided tours.

The Royal Opera House Muscat has prioritised the health and well-being of visitors and staff, with a strategic approach to safeguarding these in every part of the building following

guidance from the COVID-19 Supreme Committee.

Under the enhanced health and safety protocols for everyone entering the building, their temperatures will be checked at the entrance. They will have to fill a form for communication, and the guided tours should not exceed over 10 people while maintaining social distancing during the tours. All the visitors will have to follow a one-way system and maintain a safe distance, with the help of floor stickers. -ONA

SCHOOLS

< FROM A1 Education

“Indicators show significant use of this platform by students and teachers alike,” said Faisal bin Ali Al Busaidi, the assistant general manager of IT at the Ministry of Education.

“We made adjustments to the platform based on our field observations. There were three periodic surveys carried out by the ministry, to monitor the use of this platform by teachers and students.”

At the start of 2020, there were more than 600,000 students attending 1,163 public schools in the country, according to the Statistical Yearbook released by the National Centre for Statistics and Information. These schools contained upward of 22,500 classrooms, and nearly 57,000 teachers.

SUPREME COMMITTEE

< FROM A1 Vaccines

In this context, Al Saidi said, “There is close coordination between the Ministry of Endowments and Religious Affairs and the Supreme Committee.”

“There is reluctance among some people over receiving the vaccine, but this is based on misinformation and rumours,” explained the minister, while thanking everyone who’d so far received the vaccine, for their cooperation. “I have received the first dose of the vaccine and have not experienced any side effects. These side effects are simple – no serious effects have been recorded.”



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OMAN

CLASS X AND XII BOARDS

Indian school students stuck back home can take board exams

Times News Service

MUSCAT: Students attending Indian schools in Oman who have been forced to go back home because of the COVID-19 pandemic can still give their class X and XII board exams in India.

“Let us say, there is a student whose father and mother have been terminated from the job here, and have been forced to go back to Gujarat, for example,” said an official from the Indian school system in Oman.

“They can go to the nearest CBSE school and inform them of the circumstances as to why they had to leave Oman, and put in a request for them to write their board exam at that school.

“The school will then write to the CBSE headquarters and seek permission for this candidate, and during these exceptional circumstances, they will definitely provide them the means to write the exam,” he added. “Otherwise, the student would have to take admission in class X or XII all over again,



and it would be very difficult to provide that at a time like this.

“CBSE should provide permission, but in case they don’t, the parent can always reach out to us and we will approach those concerned on their behalf,” he went on to say. “The exam, however, must be given in person. There is no online provision available for the X or XII board examinations.”

Written board exams for Indian

schools in Oman are scheduled to be conducted in May and June, and a long list of protocols students are required to follow has been issued to them.

Students need to “wear a mask when they come to school and maintain social distancing,” said Indian School Muscat, the largest of the Indian community schools, in a circular sent to students and parents. “They can carry their

own stationery and bottle of drinking water. Sharing of stationery materials and drinking water are not allowed.”

Only one entrance will be kept open for students to arrive at and leave the school, with parents not allowed onto the premises owing to the pandemic.

Parents have been requested to not make their students wait for too long after their exam for the

day has ended, and must not send their children to school if they feel unwell. Their class teachers must be informed under such circumstances.

“Students should read the seating plan sent to them,” said the circular. They must “then go straight to the exam room and sit at their allotted place. They should not go anywhere else on the school campus.”

Hand sanitisers will be made

available for students, but they are also encouraged to bring their own. Those who use the toilet must follow hygiene protocols and maintain social distancing. Assembling in groups before and after the exam is discouraged, as is using the banisters in school while climbing up and down flights of stairs.

“No mobile phone should be brought to school on these days,” said ISM in the circular. “School phones can be used during an emergency. If students feel unwell, they should report immediately to the teacher in the class or the school nurse.”

Students appearing for the class X and XII board exams must submit an undertaking signed by their parents, confirming they will follow the safety guidelines issued, and not risk the health of others by staying at home, should they fall ill or display the symptoms of the coronavirus.

Children who are under quarantine, however, do not need to come to school, and can let the school authorities know accordingly.

Trending

ON SOCIAL MEDIA

📖

MOST READ ON FACEBOOK

74,761 REACH

Large numbers of migratory birds choose Duqm as one of their halts.



Story on Duqm as a destination for migratory birds

📺

MOST WATCHED VIDEO ON FACEBOOK

4,200 VIEWS



ABBAS AL LAWATI

The Strawberry Ice Cream Day video got 4,200 views and reached 11,100 people on Facebook.

📺

MOST VIEWED VIDEO ON INSTAGRAM

1,492 VIEWS



Supreme Committee's press conference video

The Supreme Committee's press conference video had 1,492 views and got 84 likes on Instagram.





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Sultanate of Oman
Consumer Protection Authority



The Power of Dreams

Honda Recall Campaign



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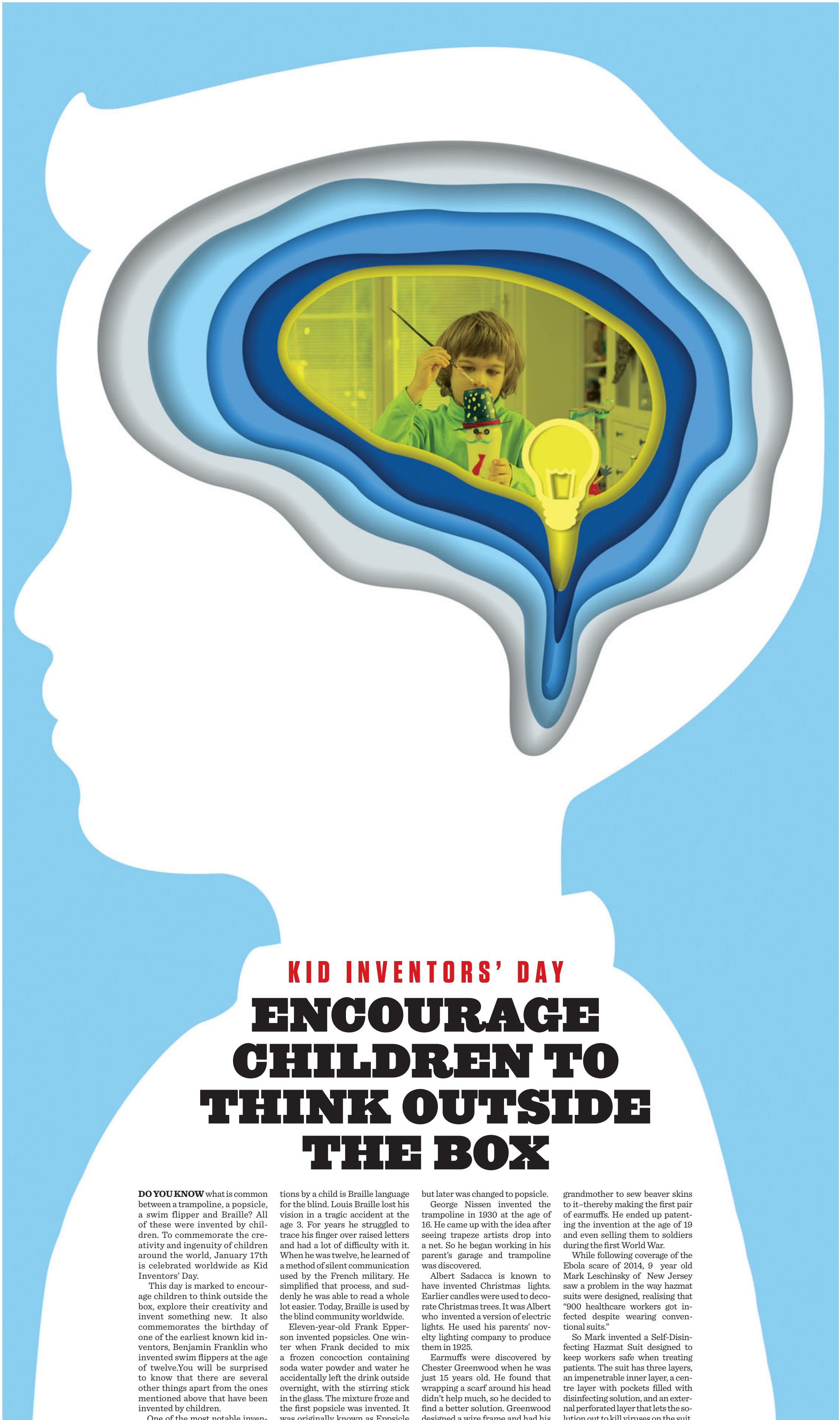
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KID INVENTORS' DAY ENCOURAGE CHILDREN TO THINK OUTSIDE THE BOX

DO YOU KNOW what is common between a trampoline, a popsicle, a swim flipper and Braille? All of these were invented by children. To commemorate the creativity and ingenuity of children around the world, January 17th is celebrated worldwide as Kid Inventors' Day.

This day is marked to encourage children to think outside the box, explore their creativity and invent something new. It also commemorates the birthday of one of the earliest known kid inventors, Benjamin Franklin who invented swim flippers at the age of twelve. You will be surprised to know that there are several other things apart from the ones mentioned above that have been invented by children.

One of the most notable inven-

tions by a child is Braille language for the blind. Louis Braille lost his vision in a tragic accident at the age 3. For years he struggled to trace his finger over raised letters and had a lot of difficulty with it. When he was twelve, he learned of a method of silent communication used by the French military. He simplified that process, and suddenly he was able to read a whole lot easier. Today, Braille is used by the blind community worldwide.

Eleven-year-old Frank Epperson invented popsicles. One winter when Frank decided to mix a frozen concoction containing soda water powder and water he accidentally left the drink outside overnight, with the stirring stick in the glass. The mixture froze and the first popsicle was invented. It was originally known as Eppsicle

but later was changed to popsicle.

George Nissen invented the trampoline in 1930 at the age of 16. He came up with the idea after seeing trapeze artists drop into a net. So he began working in his parent's garage and trampoline was discovered.

Albert Sadacca is known to have invented Christmas lights. Earlier candles were used to decorate Christmas trees. It was Albert who invented a version of electric lights. He used his parents' novelty lighting company to produce them in 1925.

Earmuffs were discovered by Chester Greenwood when he was just 15 years old. He found that wrapping a scarf around his head didn't help much, so he decided to find a better solution. Greenwood designed a wire frame and had his

grandmother to sew beaver skins to it—thereby making the first pair of earmuffs. He ended up patenting the invention at the age of 19 and even selling them to soldiers during the first World War.

While following coverage of the Ebola scare of 2014, 9-year-old Mark Leschinsky of New Jersey saw a problem in the way hazmat suits were designed, realising that "900 healthcare workers got infected despite wearing conventional suits."

So Mark invented a Self-Disinfecting Hazmat Suit designed to keep workers safe when treating patients. The suit has three layers, an impenetrable inner layer, a centre layer with pockets filled with disinfecting solution, and an external perforated layer that lets the solution out to kill viruses on the suit.



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COMBATING COVID-19

India prepared to supply AstraZeneca vaccine to Oman

Times News Service

NEW DELHI: Oman, represented by the Foreign Ministry and Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of India held the 11th strategic consultations session in New Delhi.

On being asked, the Indian side expressed its readiness to facilitate the Sultanate's demand of AstraZeneca vaccine manufactured in India.

The two sides reviewed enhancement of bilateral cooperation in the fields of energy, commerce, investment, science and technology and consular spheres.

The two sides stressed activation and renewal of the MoU signed between the two sides in these fields.

The session was chaired from the Omani side by Sheikh Khalifa bin Ali Al Harthi, Undersecretary of the Foreign Ministry for Diplomatic Affairs and from the Indian



side by Sanjay Bhattacharyya, Undersecretary of the Ministry of External Affairs. The session was attended by Sheikh Hamad

bin Saif Al Rawahi, the Sultanate's ambassador to India and a number of officials from both sides.

— ONA

RESEARCH PROJECT

< FROM A1 70 medicinal plants studied

"Some of these are about to reach pharmacy shelves as real drugs," added Al Harrasi, who added that the next step of this research will involve testing the quality and strength of the compounds isolated from frankincense. "Oxford's labs, in this regard, are one of the best established facilities in the world."

"There are other plants that contain various alkaloids – some of these are very similar to chloroquine, one of the drugs used to treat COVID-19," he explained. "At some stage, this drug was withdrawn and then brought back. The advantages of the alkaloids we have isolated is that they are naturally occurring, their structures are fascinating, and they are very promising."

"We are testing them with our

colleagues at Oxford," he went on to say. "One of these potential plants is haplophyllum tuberculatum, a very well-known plant for traditional medicine in Oman. We have a bank of more than 1,000 compounds – some of them are isolated from different plants of Oman, while others are synthetically modified by us."

"We have studied more than 70 medicinal plants of Oman," Al Harrasi said. "The NMSRC is also working on various other activities – marine species, micro-organisms, bacteria, fungi, biomedical research, anti-venoms, anti-diabetes and anti-cancer research. We have finished phase one here, and now we are in phase two. Phase three remains."

"If things go well, maybe in a year's time, we will execute the

project with regard to the 20 active components regarding COVID-19 and the m-protease enzyme," he revealed. "We have 12 research labs, and we have managed to establish a large network of active collaborators, and have large numbers of specialised equipment. Collaboration for research projects such as this one has been established with different stakeholders including the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Water Resources, Ministry of Health, Oman Botanic Garden, the Office for the Conversation of Environment, Sultan Qaboos University, Ministry of Higher Education, Research and Innovation, and several others." Internationally, the university is collaborating with more than 50 institutes around the world.

OFFICIAL STATEMENT

Bangladesh Social Club board helps COVID-hit countrymen

Times News Service

MUSCAT: The names of the 12 executive board members of the Bangladesh Social Club have been approved by the ministry, according to a statement by the Club's official. These members who are also known as the club's committee, have been overseeing the club's operations for the year 2020/21. "I would like to thank everyone for their kind support and cooperation," said Sirajul Hique, chairman, Bangladesh Social Club Oman.

"The club is now running with two branches in Muscat and Salalah. Opening of a few more branches are under process, including those in Sohar and Sur."

Recent efforts by members of the Bangladesh Social Club to help their countrymen who've been strongly affected by the COVID-19, particularly during the lockdown. The social club



also, in collaboration with the Oman Blood Bank, organised blood donation drives to help critical patients.

Established in 1995, the club has been working for the better-

ment of the Bangladeshi community across different aspects of their lives, and has organised many socio cultural activities with the approval of the concerned government authorities.

Invitation to Tender

Dhofar Power Company S.A.O.C (DPC) invites reputable contractor for carrying out following works in Dhofar Region

Tender Reference	DPC/Tender/2021/004
Subject	Installation of Feeder Protection Relays and Relay Setting works Associated with Shifting of 33kV Feeders of Existing Mirbat & Juffa/Sadah PSS from Ashoor GSS to Mirbat GSS
Tender Fee	RO. 100,000 Note: Tenderer who wish to participate in the above tender should collect the tender document from DPC's office or send an e-mail to below mentioned mail id's for tender document.
Pre-Qualification of Tenderer & Experience	Contractors participating in the tendering process shall be registered electrical contractor with Distribution Code Review Panel (DCRP) Grade –A Apart from the above, the Contractors participating in the tendering process shall have Competent Electrical Person (CEP) certified by DPC and copy of the valid CEP certificate shall be submitted along with bid without which the bids will not be considered for evaluation. Further, Tenderers will be evaluated as per the HSE qualification criterion specified in the Tender documents. The Tenderer should have performed similar works in the last 3 years.
Last date for issue of tender documents	03:00 PM on 31 st January 2021
Site Visit	10:00 AM on 1 st February 2021
Last date for seeking pre-bid clarifications	03:00 PM on 4 th February 2021
Last date for providing pre-bid clarifications	03:00 PM on 9 th February 2021
Last date for submission of bids	02:00 PM on 16 th February 2021
Any Queries Please Contact	Phone 23232554, lawrances@dpcoman.nama.om; praveena@dpcoman.nama.om

Tenderers are requested to note that the bids accompanied with Tender Bond (2% of the quoted bid price and having 150 days validity) shall only be considered for evaluation.



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UK to close all travel corridors to keep out new COVID variants

The new measure means that travellers entering the country must have proof of a negative COVID-19 test in previous 72 hours

LONDON: British Prime Minister Boris Johnson announced on Friday that Britain will close all travel corridors to the country from 0400 GMT on Monday in a bid to keep out new coronavirus variants.

Britain "will temporarily close all travel corridors from 0400 on Monday," to "protect against the risk of as yet unidentified new strains", the prime minister said at a virtual press conference at Downing Street.

The new measure means that travellers entering the country must have proof of a negative COVID-19 test in previous 72 hours. Anyone arriving in Britain must quarantine for 10 days or they have the choice of doing an extra test on day five to shorten the isolation, Johnson said.

"What we don't want to see is all that hard work undone by the arrival of a new variant that is vaccine busting," he said.

The prime minister made the remarks after Britain on Thursday banned arrivals from South America, Portugal and some other countries over fears about a strain of the virus detected in Brazil.

The new rules will be in place



NEW QUARANTINE RULES: Anyone arriving in Britain must quarantine for 10 days or they have the choice of doing an extra test on day five to shorten the isolation.

until at least Feb. 15, he said.

Meanwhile, Johnson said 3.2 million people across Britain have received vaccines. He said that his government was stepping up the enforcement of travel quarantine rules at the border and in the country.

"It's precisely because we have the hope of that vaccine and the risk of new strains coming from overseas that we must take additional steps now to stop those strains from entering the country," he said. The pressures on the National Health Service (NHS) are "extraordinary" and it would be "fatal" to show complacency now, he said.

"This is not the time for the slightest relaxation of our national resolve," Johnson said, urging the

public to stay at home.

Joining Johnson for the press conference, Chief Medical Officer for England Chris Whitty said the coronavirus infections may have already peaked in some regions of the country.

"We are seeing some levelling off" thanks to "enormous efforts" by Britons, he said. However, he said the peak of deaths is likely to be in the future due to the delay in hospitalization.

The British government's Chief Scientific Adviser Patrick Vallance also said the restriction measures in place must remain in place to suppress the figures.

England is currently under the third national lockdown since the outbreak of the pandemic in the

country. Similar restriction measures are also in place in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.

Britain's coronavirus reproduction number, also known as the R number, is estimated at between 1.2 and 1.3, compared with last week's one and 1.4, the British government's Scientific Advisory Group for Emergencies (SAGE) said Friday. If the R number is above one, it means the number of cases will increase exponentially.

According to SAGE, the R number varies in the country. It has gone down slightly in London, the South East and South West, as well as the North East and Yorkshire, but it has risen slightly in the East of England, Midlands and North West. **Xinhua**

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GRIM MILESTONE

World COVID-19 deaths surpass two million

BALTIMORE: A grim milestone has been reached globally as the COVID-19 deaths have breached the 2 million deaths mark while the cases are nearing 94 million.

As of Saturday, 7:52 am IST, the COVID-19 Dashboard by the Center for Systems Science and Engineering (CSSE) at Johns Hopkins University (JHU) reported that the global coronavirus caseload stands at 93,787,372 while the fatalities across the world stand at 2,006,987. The United States continues to be the worst-affected country by the pandemic reporting over 23,520,563 cases and 391,922 deaths -- the most anywhere in the world.

India and Brazil continue to be the second and third most affected country respectively reporting over 10.5 million cases and 8.393 million cases respectively. Brazil has the second-highest death toll in the world from COVID-19 reporting as many as 208,246.

Meanwhile, Russia may vaccinate 60 per cent of the population against the coronavirus in the first year, this is a very serious achievement, the head of Russian consumer rights watchdog Rospotrebnadzor said as reported by Sputnik.

US President-elect Joe Biden



said that the coronavirus vaccine rollout in the US till now has been a "dismal failure".

Sputnik further reported that UK Prime Minister Boris Johnson said that current COVID-19 restrictions should be in force for some time more, as official figures showed that the UK has recorded 55,761 new coronavirus cases and 1,280 further deaths in the last 24 hours.

Japan's Ministry of Health, Labor and Welfare on Friday held a meeting to discuss introducing harsher punishments for violators of coronavirus rules as the country sees a surge in COVID-19 cases and deaths, media reported.

India begins today a nationwide vaccination drive against the novel coronavirus to be launched by Prime Minister Narendra Modi at 10:30 am via video conferencing. **ANI**

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WORLD

India launches world’s largest coronavirus vaccination drive

The drive aims to inoculate millions of its healthcare and frontline workers with the aim to reach 30 million people in the first phase

NEW DELHI: Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Saturday launched India’s vaccination drive against the novel coronavirus via video conferencing.

Billed as the world’s largest vaccination programme, covering the entire length and breadth of the country, the drive aims to first inoculate millions of its healthcare and frontline workers and reach an estimated 30 million people by the end of its first phase.

A total of 3,006 session sites across all states and union territories were virtually connected during the launch.

Around 100 beneficiaries will be vaccinated at each session site on the inaugural day, the union health ministry has said.

In the first phase government and private sector health care workers, including Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) workers, will receive the vaccine.

The drive will be held daily from 9 am to 5 pm, except on the days



VACCINATION DRIVE: The drive will be held daily from 9 am to 5 pm, except on the days earmarked for routine immunisation programmes.

earmarked for routine immunisation programmes.

Union Health Minister Dr Harsh Vardhan on Friday termed the country’s vaccination drive as the “beginning of the end of Covid-19.” He also urged people to trust the indigenously manufactured vaccine, saying the government has given emergency use approval after proper scientific scrutiny.

In the next phases of the vaccination drive, people aged over 50, and those who are below 50 years but have serious health conditions or co-morbidities will be vac-

inated, according to the health ministry.

Dry-runs at vaccination centres across the country have been held with lakhs of healthcare staff across districts being trained.

The drugs regulatory body of India has currently approved two vaccines. Pune-based Serum Institute of India has developed the Covishield vaccine developed by AstraZeneca and Oxford University while the Covaxin has been developed by Hyderabad’s Bharat Biotech in collaboration with the Indian Medical Council of re-

search (ICMR) and National Institute of Virology.

The vaccination programme in the country will use Co-WIN (Covid Vaccine Intelligence Work), an online digital platform developed by the Union Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, which will facilitate real-time information of vaccine stocks, storage temperature and individualised tracking of beneficiaries for COVID-19 vaccine. This digital platform will assist programme managers across all levels while conducting vaccination sessions.

A dedicated 24x7 call centre - 1075 - has also been established for addressing the queries related to Covid-19 pandemic, vaccine rollout and the Co-WIN software.

The full initial procurement amount of 1.65 crore doses of Covishield and Covaxin vaccines against Covid-19 have been allocated to all States/UTs in the proportion of Health Care Workers database, Union Health Ministry stated.

India reported 15,158 new COVID-19 cases, 16,977 discharges and 175 deaths in the last 24 hours, as per the Union Health Ministry’s data on Saturday. The cumulative caseload in the country reached 1,05,42,841 including 2,11,033 active infections and 1,01,79,715 recoveries. The death toll has climbed to 1,52,093.

Most of the states have received the first batch of coronavirus vaccine doses including Delhi which has received 2,74,000 vaccine doses, followed by Maharashtra receiving over 9 lakh doses and Andhra Pradesh around with 4.7 lakh doses.

Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal during a press conference on Thursday said, “So far, we have received 2,74,000 doses of vaccine from the Centre. Each person will be administered two doses and the Centre provides 10 per cent extra vaccine, taking damage into account. So the 2,74,000 doses will be sufficient for around 1,20,000 health workers.”

States and union territories have geared up for the vaccination drive. In the national capital Delhi, the drive will be launched from the state-run LNJP Hospital by Chief Minister Kejriwal and Delhi Health Minister Satyendar Jain.

Healthcare workers will get the jab in a total of 81 centres. The Union health minister will visit the new OPD Wing of All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS) in Delhi to witness the launch of the inoculation drive. He will join doctors and around 100 potential vaccine beneficiaries at the centre.

In Maharashtra, Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray will launch the vaccination drive from a centre at Bandra Kurla Complex in Mumbai on Saturday. As many as 4,000 health workers will be administered Covid-19 vaccine every day at nine vaccination centres in the city the Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC) said.

In Gujarat, 161 centres will deliver the vaccine, Chief Minister Vijay Rupani said. As many as 700 healthcare workers will be administered the COVID-19 vaccine in Goa, Chief Minister Pramod Sawant said.

According to a state government release, 332 locations have been identified for the launch of the drive in Andhra Pradesh.

Telangana Health Minister Eatala Rajender will take the first jab of the vaccine. He said: “A total of 140 centres have been short-listed for the distribution of the vaccine. Chief Minister of Telangana K Chandrababtu Naidu has appealed to the MLAs, MPs, and Ministers to part in the inauguration of vaccine distribution program at centres in their constituencies”

A total number of 243 centres have been prepared for the first phase of vaccination drive across the state on January 16, including 10 centres in Bengaluru, Karnataka Health and Medical Education Minister Dr K Sudhakar said. **ANI**

PRIVACY POLICY

WhatsApp delays privacy changes following backlash

WASHINGTON: The WhatsApp messaging service announced on Friday that it would delay changes to new business features after people around the world criticised the new policy.

Under updated terms, the app would be allowed to share users’ data, including location and phone number, with its parent company Facebook and its units such as Instagram and Messenger.

The Facebook-owned company said it is “going to do a lot more to clear up misinformation around how privacy and security works on WhatsApp.”

Privacy rights activists heavily criticized the WhatsApp changes, saying it was the latest step showing Facebook’s poor handling of user data.



Users looking for other messaging options

Following WhatsApp’s initial announcement many users have signed up for other messaging services, including privacy-minded Signal and Telegram. Signal said that a massive influx of users had led to technical difficulties in delivering some messages on Friday.

WhatsApp also canceled its February 8 deadline for accepting the tweak to its terms of service, involving sharing data with Facebook servers.

“We’re now moving back the date on which people will be asked to review and accept the terms,” the company said in a blog post.

The delay could pose a hurdle to WhatsApp’s plan to generate rev-

enue by making it easier to engage in commercial exchanges on the messaging app. Facebook bought WhatsApp for \$19 billion in 2014 but the messaging service has been slow to make money.

Countries challenge data-sharing terms

The change to data terms has continued to spark backlash around the world.

WhatsApp’s updated privacy policy verges on user surveillance and threatens India’s security, a petition filed in an Indian court said on Thursday.

India is the app’s biggest market where it has 400 million users. Many users have begun installing rival apps like Signal and Tel-

egram. WhatsApp has launched a costly advertising campaign to calm customers.

Italy’s data protection authority issued a statement: “The authority believes it was not possible for users to understand what kind of changes were being introduced, nor how data would be treated after February 8.”

The Italian data authority said it would look carefully into WhatsApp’s policy disclaimer to assess its compliance with privacy data rules. It said it was ready to urgently intervene.

The change has also met with a challenge in Turkey. The country’s Competition Board this week began investigating the messaging service and its parent. **rw**

MASSIVE QUAKE



42 killed after 6.2-magnitude earthquake hits Indonesia

JAKARTA: The number of casualties in Indonesia’s 6.2-magnitude quake that jolted West Sulawesi province on Friday rose to 42 with hundreds of people wounded, an official and two top rescuers said.

More than 10,000 people were forced to evacuate as the quake destroyed houses, office buildings, hotels, hospitals and shopping malls in Mamuju city and Majene district, the National Search and Rescue Agency’s Head Bagus Puruhito said.

The National Disaster Management Agency’s Spokesman Raditya Jati said that 34 people were killed in Mamuju city and eight in Majene district.

The official told Xinhua in a text message that the jolts also damaged the sea port and a bridge in the province, citing that 300

houses were destroyed in Majene district. President Joko Widodo ordered the head of the disaster agency, police chief and military commander to immediately take emergency steps to search for victims and treat those who were injured in the quake.

Emergency relief aids have also been sent to the quake-affected area, Jati said.

Operation Head of the Search and Rescue Office in South Sulawesi province Muhammad Rizal, whose four teams of rescuers are being involved in the evacuation process, said that more than 400 people suffered injuries in the natural disaster.

“A total of 189 people suffered serious wounds and 214 others got minor injuries in Majene district, still the figures about the wounded persons in Mamuju city

have not been reached yet,” Rizal told Xinhua.

More units of heavy machinery equipment are badly needed to remove the rubbles, according to him.

Meanwhile, the Meteorology, Climatology and Geophysics Agency’s Head Dwikorita Karnawati on Friday warned of the possibility of another strong quake and a tsunami.

“The structures of the materials and rocks under the earth are unstable or weak after 28 times of tremors, and these may cause an underwater landslide and trigger a tsunami,” Karnawati said.

She recommended that people immediately stay away from the coast when another strong quake takes place as a tsunami may hit within two to three minutes after the quake. **Xinhua**

SURGE IN CASES

China builds hospital in 5 days after COVID-19 cases surge



BEIJING: China has built a 1,500-room hospital for COVID-19 patients in just five days after a spike of infections was reported in a city south of Beijing.

The hospital is the first of six with a total of 6,500 rooms being built in Nangong in Hebei province, the Xinhua News Agency said Saturday. The temporary facilities are due to be completed within the next week.

Why is China building new hospitals?

Chinese health authorities have

placed more than 28 million people in the northeast into lockdown as they battle a new wave of the coronavirus in Nangong and the Hebei provincial capital of Shijiazhuang.

In the past week, China has seen the number of daily cases jump to a 10-month high. On Saturday, the country reported 130 new cases. Of those cases, 115 were local infections, 90 of which were in Hebei province.

Another 23 cases were found in northeastern Heilongjiang province while two cases were

reported in Beijing.

Total case numbers remain far below the height of the initial outbreak in early 2020, but concerns are growing due to the Lunar New Year holiday a month away.

The 15-day celebration sees hundreds of millions of people leave cities for their ancestral homes, which could help to spread the virus.

What caused the new spike?

The National Health Commission (NHC) said on Saturday that

the recent outbreaks have come from travelers entering the country or contaminated frozen food imports.

“Since December 2020, epidemic clusters have occurred in Beijing, Sichuan, Liaoning, Hebei and Heilongjiang,” a statement posted on the NHC’s website said, citing NHC Minister Ma Xiaowei.

“They mainly have the following characteristics. Firstly, they are all imported from abroad, caused by travelers from overseas, or contaminated cold-chain imported items.” **rw**

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FOOTBALL

United-Liverpool Derby is ‘game of the season’: Alex Ferguson

MANCHESTER: Former Manchester United manager Sir Alex Ferguson has said that it is a nice thing that he has retired so he will not have to go up against Jurgen Klopp’s Liverpool.

Ferguson had taken United to 3 Premier League titles during his 27-year tenure at Old Trafford.

United are yet to win the title since Ferguson retired in 2013.

Manchester United are currently at the top of the Premier League standings and they have a three-point lead over second-placed Liverpool.

“I’ve always considered the Manchester United and Liverpool derby the game of the season. Quite simply, they are the two most successful teams in Britain when you add up all the trophies



TOPPING CHARTS: Ferguson had taken United to 3 Premier League titles during his 27-year tenure at Old Trafford.

they’ve won together. It’s obvious that you have to beat Liverpool to win anything.

It’s similar to when I was at Aberdeen - you had to beat Rangers and Celtic to win anything and you can add a mental attitude to that,” Goal.com quoted Alex Ferguson as saying.

“In reality, it is the game. Liverpool’s success over the 70s and 80s was phenomenal. To do that, I had to take a road that was always going to be difficult, it meant I had to wait in terms of building the club. Eventually, it turned out fantastically for us.”

“Now I’ve retired, and thank goodness I’ve retired actually when I see Liverpool’s performance over the last two seasons - they’ve been phenomenal. I’ve

got great respect for Liverpool, I always have,” he added.

Liverpool had won the Premier League title in 2019-20 season and Klopp’s side are once again in contention of winning the title.

Klopp will make a late call on the fitness of defender Joel Matip ahead of the match against United. The Cameroon international has not played for the Reds since limping off in the draw against West Brom on December 27.

Naby Keita will be missing the clash for Liverpool and as a result, he has joined Diogo Jota, Kostas Tsimikas, Joe Gomez and Virgil van Dijk on the sidelines.

United and Liverpool will take on each other on Sunday in the Premier League. **ANI**

Rain washes out final session as Rohit’s wicket gives Aussies slight edge



At stumps, India’s score read 62/2 and the visitors still trail by 307 runs with eight wickets in the bag



LOST IN RAIN: The eagerness of the hosts to get back on the field was visible with skipper Tim Paine constantly speaking to the match officials.

BRISBANE: The third session on the second day of the final Test between Australia and India was lost to rain at The Gabba on Saturday.

The eagerness of the hosts to get back on the field was visible with skipper Tim Paine constantly speaking to the match officials, but it wasn’t to be as a wet outfield saw the umpires call for an early end to the day’s proceedings.

At stumps, India’s score read 62/2 and the visitors still trail by 307 runs with eight wickets in the bag. Cheteshwar Pujara (8) and Ajinkya Rahane (2) will need to start afresh on Sunday and with Nathan Lyon sending the dangerous-looking Rohit Sharma (44) back to the hut before the tea break, the hosts definitely hold a slight edge.

The second session saw India score 62 runs, but they lost both the openers with Shubman Gill (7) being sent back first by Pat Cummins. The ball hit that corridor of uncertainty outside the off-

stump and Gill had no answers as he edged it to Steve Smith at second slip.

While Rohit looked like he had the game covered, he was dismissed against the run of play by Lyon as the off-spinner lured him to dance down the track and the opener did just that. Unfortunately, he didn’t reach the pitch of the ball and his attempted hit found Mitchell Starc at long on.

Earlier, the Indian bowlers toiled hard to dismiss Australia for 369 in their first innings. Shardul Thakur, T Natarajan and Washington Sundar picked nine of the ten wickets while Mohammed Siraj finished with one wicket. Unfortunately, the Aussie tail once again troubled the Indians as they added 56 runs for the last three wickets. While Starc was unbeaten on

20, Lyon used the long handle to good effect to hit a 22-ball 24. Josh Hazlewood too tried his luck to manage 11 with two boundaries. Marnus Labuschagne top-scored for Australia as he his fifth Test ton on the opening day.

Brief Scores: Australia 369 (Labuschagne 108; Natarajan 3/78); India 62/2 (Rohit 44; Lyon 1/10). **ANI**

LONGEST FORMAT

Root scores 8,000 runs

GALLE: Skipper Joe Root on Saturday became the second-fastest England batsman to register 8,000 runs in the longest format of the game.

The right-handed batsman reached the milestone-mark in the ongoing first Test against Sri Lanka at Galle International Stadium. Root surpassed former opener, Alastair Cook, to achieve the feat in 178 innings. Former cricketer Kevin Pietersen (176) is still the fastest English batsman to reach

8,000 Test runs. Root, who became the seventh England batsman to achieve the feat, is also the first batsman from his country to hit a double century in Sri Lanka.

Prior to this knock, Pietersen had hit 151 in Sri Lanka in 2012 and that knock was the highest score by an England batsman in Sri Lanka until the skipper scored a double ton to rewrite the record books. On Friday, Root smashed his 18th century to give the visitors the upper hand in the match. **ANI**

CRICKET LEAGUE 2019-2020

Oman Cricket Club-Salalah distributes trophies

Times News Service

MUSCAT: Oman Cricket Club-Salalah under the aegis of Oman Cricket, distributed trophies to the winners and runners-up for the cricket league 2019-2020 which was delayed due to coronavirus pandemic.

Four winners and four runners-up received their trophies and individual medals from A.R.Srinivasan Level 2 educator for umpires. Mayur Toprani, Treasurer of Oman Cricket Club Salalah, Hiten Dave and Waseem members and ground committee heads and Anil Kumar, Secretary Oman Cricket Club were present during the ceremony.

Winner of A Division was Fonderie Bellie and runner-up was Mohammed Riaz & Partner.

In B Division, Civil Technology was declared winner while runner-up was Abu Saeed Restaurant.

In C Division, team Al Wasta United and Development was the winner while Saham Al Janoob was the runner-up.

In D Division, Al S’afwa Dairy & Beverages was the winner while

ONEIC was the runner-up.

Along with the winners and runners-up trophies, individual trophies were also given to the winners of each division.

A Division-Man of the Series- Abhishek Choudankar of Fonderie Bellie, Batsman of the Series- Mohammed Ilyas of Muhammed Riaz & Partner, Bowler of the Series- Mohammed Irfan of Danube.

B Division- Man of the Series- Vijesh V.G from Divine Trading, Batsman of the Series- Kumar from Divine Trading, Bowler of the Series- Shahbaz from Civil Technology & Development

C Division- Man of the Series- Mohsin Abdul Rajjak Wadekar from Saham Al Janoob, Batsman of the Series- Sanil Kumar Kunhnil Paramnath from Saham Al Janoob, Bowler of the Series- Noel Ananda from Gharbia Enterprises.

D Division- Man of the Series- Hafiz Qumar Shahzad from Mohammed Parvez Trading.

Batsman of the Series- Shirish Jawalkar of A’Safwah Dairy & Beverages, Bowler of the Series- Qasim Khan from A’Safwah Dairy & Beverages.

CRICKET ROUND-UP AUSTRALIAN OPEN

Suraj, Mehran power Al Turki to big win

Times News Service

MUSCAT: Suraj Kumar’s vital 89 and Mehran Khan’s fantastic 4 for 13 powered Al Turki NMC to a comfortable 146-run victory over AER in a Premier Division 50-over League game at OC Turf 1 in Amerat on Friday.

Invited to bat first, Al Turki found the going tough, collapsing to 51 for 6 in 21 overs before Suraj put together 55 for the seventh wicket with Mehran (28 off 44). He found another dependable partner in Jitenkumar Ramanandi (65 off 51) and the duo added 86 for the eighth wicket before Suraj got out for 89 off 110. Al Turki was finally able to reach 227 for 9, a total it was able to defend rather comfortably thanks to a potent bowling attack.

Mehran was the pick of Al Turki bowlers, taking four wickets while Mohit Patel and Jay Odedara bagged two wickets each. Young opener Muzahir Raza top-scored with a patient 23 off 90.

Brief Scores (Premier Division): Al Turki NMC 227 for 9 in 50 overs (Suraj Kumar Singh 89 – 8x4, 1x6, Jitenkumar Ramanandi 65 – 5x4, 2x6, Rubella Abdus 3-48, Shoaib Muhammad 2-20) beat AER 81 all out in 38.3 overs (Muzahir Raza 23 – 4x4, Mehran Khan 4-13, Mohit Patel 2-21, Jay



Suraj Kumar and Mehran Khan of Al Turki NMC

Odedara 2-15) by 146 runs.

Usman leads Basta to victory

Usman Haider struck a solid 79 to help Basta CT to an exciting 21-run win over Ernst & Young in a keenly contested A Division 50-over League match at OC Turf 2 on Friday. Basta posted a healthy 252 for 7 on the board thanks to major contributions from Us-

man and Shahid Mehmood (41 off 50). Shrey Wilson claimed 3 for 31. E&Y got off to a good start reaching 149 for 2 in 35 overs that included a superb 72 off 73 by opener Issa Al Balushi before losing the plot and falling short by 21 runs due to too many dot balls. Shrey Wilson (44 off 98), Sultan Ahmed (42 off 60) and Omer Sarfraz (35 off 32) were the other main scorers. Shamsudheen Sha- reef bowled well, taking 3 for 30.

Brief Scores (A Division): Basta CT 252 for 7 in 50 overs (Usman Haider 79 – 5x4, 1x6, Shahid Mehmood 41 – 3x4, 2x6, Shrey Wilson 3-31) beat Ernst&Young 231 for 9 in 50 overs (Issa Al Balushi 72 – 6x4, 3x6, Shrey Wilson 44 – 1x4, Sultan Ahmed 42 – 2x4, Shamsudheen Shareef 3-30, Mohammed Abbas Naqvi 2-36) by 21 runs.

Mustansar Hussain’s brilliant all-round performance powered Zubair CT to a nail-biting win over LC Tech in a B Division 30-over League game at Muscat Municipality ground 2 on Friday.

Mustansar’s solid knock was the highlight of Zubair’s 197 all out in 29.1 overs as Abdul rauf claimed 3 for 42 while Jaleel Mahamood and Shahil Mohammed took two wickets each.

LC Tech fought well reaching 146 for 4 in 24 overs before losing a couple of quick wickets and letting the run rate climb higher. In the end, it could manage only 188, falling short by 9 runs. Mifas Mohammed scored a fluent 55 off 42 while Rahul Rajeev contributed 32 off 36. Mustansar bowled well, taking 2 for 35 while Mubashar Iqbal bagged 2 for 53.

Brief Scores (B Division): Zubair 197 all out in 29.1 overs (Mustansar Hussain 70 – x4, Abdul Rauf 3-42, Jaleel Mahamood

2-26, Shahil Mohammed 2-26, Rajesh Shetty 2-49) beat LC Tech 188 for 8 in 30 overs (Mifas Mohamed 55 – 8x4, Rahul Rajeev 32 – 4x4, Mustansar Hussain 2-35, Mubashar Iqbal 2-53) by 9 runs.

OCT Ruwi win

In another B Division game, top Omani all-rounder Mohammed Ali Akbar and Shuaib Ismail steered OCT Ruwi to an easy 7-wicket victory against PDO RC at Muscat Municipality ground 1.

PDO was dismissed for a dismal 152 as Mohammed picked up three wickets while Imran Al Balushi, Zubair Ali Akbar and Shuaib Ismail bagged two wickets each. Nadeem Ahmed and Taha Naqi scored 34 and 33 respectively.

OCT Ruwi raced to the target in the 23 rd over, scoring 154 for 3 thanks to brilliant batting by Mohammed Ali Akbar (50 off 56), Shuaib Ismail (46 not out off 33) and Zubair Ali Akbar (36 off 35).

Brief Scores (B Division): PDO RC 152 all out in 26 overs (Nadeem Ahmed 34 – 7x4, Taha Naqi 33 not out – 1x4, Mohammad Ali Akbar 3-22, Imran Al Balushi 2- 30, Zubair Ali Akbar 2-30, Shuaib Ismail 2-38) lost to Oct Ruwi 154 for 3 in 22.4 overs (Mohammad Ali Akbar 50 – 7x4, Shuaib Ismail 46 – 6x4, Zubair Ali Akabr 36 – 3x4) by 7 wickets.

Two test positive for COVID-19 on flight carrying players

MELBOURNE: Two positive COVID-19 cases were reported on a charter flight on Saturday carrying tennis players and officials to Melbourne ahead of the Australian Open.

As a result, all the players and passengers onboard will now have to stay in two weeks of strict hotel quarantine. “Two positive COVID-19 tests were returned from one of the charter flights into Melbourne in the past 24 hours. There were 79 people on the flight, including 67 passengers, of which 24 are players,” the Australia Open said in a statement.

“The two positive tests have been returned by a member of the flight crew and a passenger who is not a player, who returned a negative test within 72 hours prior to boarding the flight.”

“All passengers from the flight are already in quarantine hotels and the two positive cases transferred to a health hotel. The 24 players on the flight will not be able to leave their hotels rooms for 14 days and until they are medically cleared. They will not be eligible to practise,” it added. **ANI**

ASIAN FINANCIAL FORUM

The 14th Asian Financial Forum will be held as an online event on 18 and 19 January. Under the theme 'Reshaping the World Economic Landscape', the forum will run round the clock across different time zones.

MARKET BUSINESS & FINANCE



\$1.9 TRILLION PACKAGE

US President-elect Joe Biden announced a \$1.9 trillion (€1.56 trillion) stimulus package on Thursday to revitalise a flagging economy and speed up the nation's response to the coronavirus pandemic.

WORLD GOLD COUNCIL



REPORT: Investors will likely see the low-interest rate environment as an opportunity to add risk assets in the hope that economic recovery is on the immediate horizon.

Economic recovery in emerging markets to benefit consumer gold demand: WGC

LONDON: Gold investment will remain well supported in 2021 while gold consumption should benefit from the nascent economic recovery, especially in emerging markets, the World Gold Council (WGC) said.

The COVID-19 pandemic raised uncertainty by compounding existing risks and creating new ones. But by the end of last year, investors were optimistic that the worst was over.

"Looking ahead, we believe that investors will likely see the low-interest rate environment as an opportunity to add risk assets in the hope that economic recovery is on the immediate horizon," said WGC in its outlook report.

Investors will likely also be navigating potential portfolio risks, including ballooning budget deficits, inflationary pressures and market corrections amid already high equity valuations.

WGC quoted market surveys indicating that most economists expect growth to recover in 2021 from its dismal performance during 2020. "And although global economic growth is likely to remain anaemic relative to its full potential for some time, gold's more stable price performance since mid-August may foster buying opportunities for consumers."

The economic recovery may

particularly realise in countries like China, which suffered heavy losses in early 2020 before the spread of the pandemic was controlled more effectively than in many western countries.

"Given the positive link between economic growth and Chinese demand, we believe that gold consumption in the region may continue to improve," said WGC.

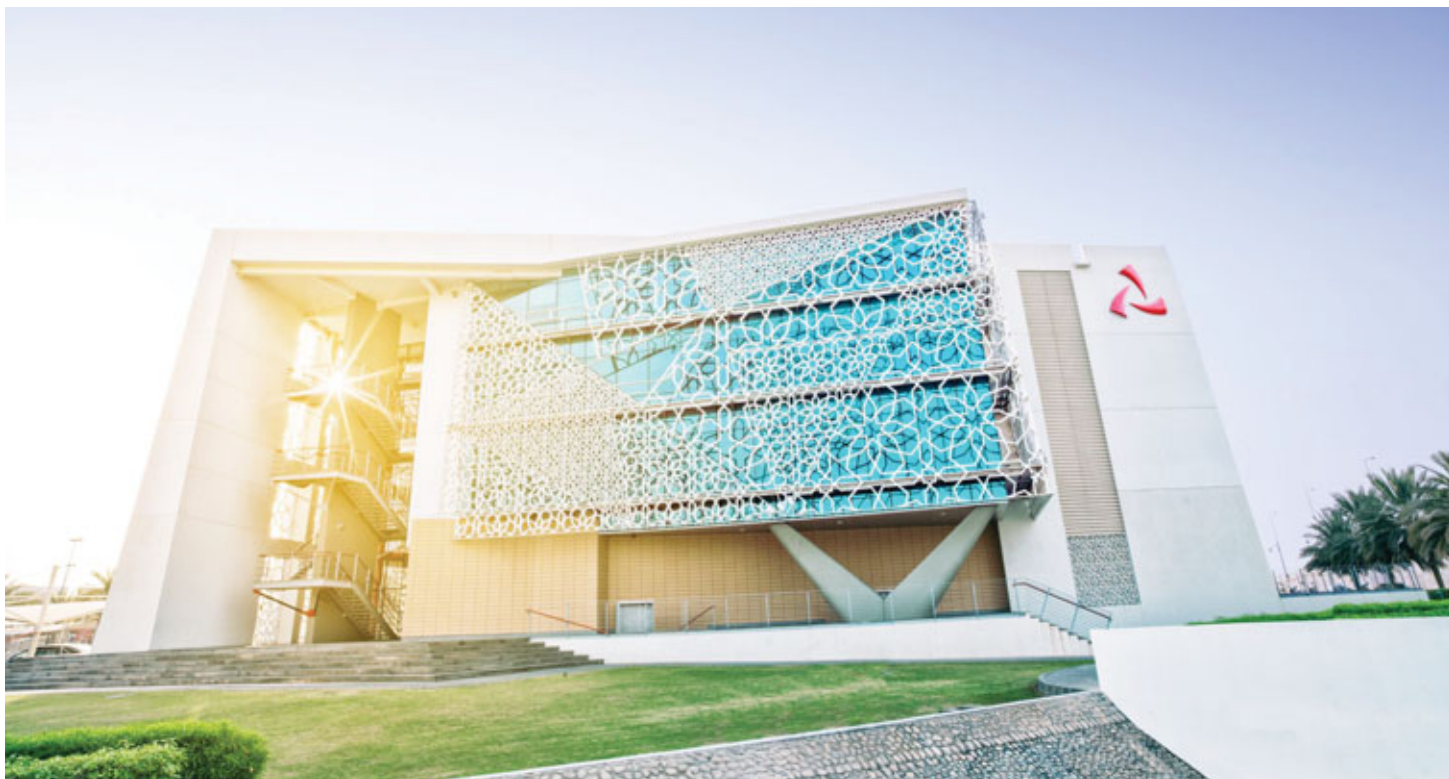
Similarly, the Indian gold market appears to be on a stronger footing. Initial data from the Dhanteras festival in November suggest that while jewellery demand was still below average, it had substantially recovered from the lows seen in Q2 of last year.

However, with the global economy operating well below potential and with gold prices at historically high levels, consumer demand may remain subdued in other regions.

"We anticipate that the economic recovery in some emerging markets like China and India may limit some of the headwinds the gold market experienced in 2020 caused by extremely weak gold consumption," said WGC.

The WGC is a market development organisation for the industry. Its purpose is to stimulate and sustain demand, provide industry leadership and be the global authority on the gold market. **ANI**

Bank Muscat posts net profit of OMR163.36mn



PRELIMINARY UNAUDITED RESULTS: Net interest income from conventional banking and net income from Islamic Financing stood at OMR322.13 million for the year ended December 31, 2020, compared to OMR316.97 million for the same period in 2019, an increase of 1.6 per cent. - Supplied picture

Customer deposits including Islamic customer deposits increased by 4.2 per cent to OMR8,377 million as against OMR8,043 million as of December 31, 2019

Times News Service

MUSCAT: Bank Muscat, the leading financial services institution in the Sultanate, announced its preliminary unaudited results for the year ended December 31, 2020.

The financial results are subject to the approval of External Auditors, Board of Directors, Central Bank of Oman and the shareholders of the bank.

The bank posted a net profit of

OMR163.36 million for the year compared to OMR185.55 million reported during the same period in 2019, a decrease of 12.0 per cent.

The key highlights of the results for the year are as follows:

Net interest income from conventional banking and net income from Islamic Financing stood at OMR322.13 million for the year ended December 31, 2020, compared to OMR316.97 million for the same period in 2019, an increase of 1.6 per cent.

crease of 1.6 per cent.

Non-interest income was OMR134.41 million for the year ended December 31, 2020, as compared to OMR155.20 million for the same period in 2019, a decrease of 13.4 per cent mainly due to subdued business conditions due to COVID-19 related lockdowns in Q2, Q3 and Q4 2020 and waiver of certain fees due to regulatory measures.

Operating expenses for the year ended December 31, 2020, was OMR179.85 million as compared to OMR195.93 million for the same period in 2019, a decrease of 8.2 per cent due to cost management measures taken by the bank.

Net Impairment for credit and other losses for the year 2020 was OMR81.04 million as against OMR56.13 million for the same period in 2019. The increase was mainly on account of precautionary and collective provisions

made in the first half of 2020, on a forward-looking basis given the emerging stress in the economic and business conditions as a result of the impact of COVID-19 and the continued pressure on oil prices.

Net loans and advances including Islamic financing receivables increased marginally by 0.5 per cent to OMR8,918 million as against OMR8,878 million as of December 31, 2019.

Customer deposits including Islamic Customer deposits increased by 4.2 per cent to OMR8,377 million as against OMR8,043 million as of December 31, 2019.

The full results for the year ended December 31, 2020, along with the complete set of unaudited financial statements will be released following the approval of the Board of Directors of the Bank at its meeting scheduled later during January 2021.

INVESTMENT FUNDS

OMR65.48mn Oman REIT Fund launched

Times News Service

MUSCAT: Bringing excitement to Oman's real estate market, Jasser Al Aulaqi, the CEO of Shumookh Fund Management, has announced the launching of OMR65.48 million 'Oman REIT Fund', one of the largest real estate investment funds in the Sultanate.

The fund's OMR39.28 million IPO (initial public offering), representing 60 per cent of the total fund, will be available for subscription from January 17 to January 31. Shumookh Fund Management is the sponsor and investment manager of the fund while the United Securities is the issue manager, handling the public offer.

"Oman REIT Fund offers an investment opportunity to the investors to participate in Oman's high potential real estate market by allowing them access to a diversified portfolio of real estate assets located at strategic locations across the Sultanate," Aulaqi said.

"Oman REIT Fund could be a game-changer in Oman's real estate sector. The fund presents investors with multiple benefits including stable and high income, hedge against inflation and high liquidity along with professional management of their wealth by a team of investment experts," he pointed out, adding, "The fund's aims to pay an annual dividend of 7.5 per cent p.a. in the first year, which can grow up to 8.2 per cent p.a. during the 5th year."

The close-ended Oman REIT Fund will be listed on the Muscat Securities Market (MSM) for secondary market trading upon closure of the IPO. The Capital Market Authority (CMA), Sultanate's regulator has already given the necessary approval for the fund to open to the public, Aulaqi informed.

Oman REIT Fund has its as-



INITIAL PUBLIC OFFERING: The fund's OMR39.28 million IPO (initial public offering), representing 60 per cent of the total fund, will be available for subscription from January 17 to 31. - Supplied picture

sets distributed across sectors in such a way as to ensure higher and steady returns, Aulaqi noted, saying, residential cum commercial properties represent half of the fund's allocation, followed by office and retail assets at 29 per cent and 13 per cent respectively. Logistics and industry properties make up the rest.

Expressing hope in Oman's real estate sector growth, Aulaqi said, "Supported by Oman government's continued focus on economic diversification, the Sultanate's real estate sector is poised for vibrant growth, and this makes Oman REIT Fund an unmatched investment tool. The fund has in place an active asset management strategy and the availability of asset pipeline at an attractive valuation significantly enhances its appeal."

"Oman REIT Fund is arguably the largest REIT in the Sultanate with the total appraised value of properties pegged at OMR64.48 million. It has a diverse portfolio of as many as 20 high-worth in-

dividual property assets spread across the capital area including Ruwi, Madinat Qaboos, Qurum, Al Khuwair, Ghala, Rusayl and Misfah, with a strategic mix of residential and commercial, retail, office and industrial as well as logistics properties. The ranking of the Fund is expected to be on top among its peers upon listing on the MSM, in terms of market cap," he continued.

According to Tariq A Razeq, Deputy General Manager of United Securities, the current offer is for 392,855,364 units including Green Shoe option, and each unit is priced at OMR0.102 (unit price OMR0.100 and 2 baiza towards issue expenses).

Oman REIT Fund promises strong growth potential supported by a diversified, high-value asset portfolio, he said, adding, the Fund offers a simple and affordable means to invest in Oman's high-value real estate sector without buying the property directly and to enjoy long-term capital appreciation and reliable income

that grows at an estimated rate of 7.5 per cent to 8.2 per cent over 5 years. Investors can subscribe to the IPO for as low as OMR102 and going up to a maximum of OMR16.37 million in a single application which is for 163,689,735 units (25 per cent of the fund size).

Highlighting the relevance and attraction of Oman REIT Fund, Razeq said infrastructure development is a key element of Oman's Vision 2040 and the expected high growth in its tourism, hospitality, industrial and health-care sectors would certainly have a positive impact on its real estate sector, making Oman REIT Fund one of the most attractive financial instruments in the country. This is possibly the best time to invest in Oman-based REIT in view of the prevailing low real estate prices in Oman due to COVID-19 crisis, and the expectation is that the prices will shoot up in the near future, he added.

Elaborating on the types of investments the fund offers, Razeq said investors can choose the category I or category II depending on the investment size and status. Category I has a minimum and maximum application sizes of 1000 and 10,000,000 units respectively while the minimum and maximum application sizes for category II investors stand at 10,000,100 and 163,689,735 units respectively.

The fund is open for subscription to both Omani and non-Omani individuals and juristic persons, and its designated collection agents are Oman Arab Bank, Bank Muscat, Bank Dhofar, National Bank of Oman, Ubhar Capital, Global Financial and United Securities.

The subscribers can contact the collecting banks and agents for submitting the application.

VATing it out



Ashish Athavale, Tax Partner

With the impending VAT in April 2021, BDO will be addressing your concerns through a series of weekly articles.

Is VAT applicable on reimbursements or out of pocket expenses charged at actuals?

VAT is applicable on both of the above which are charged in addition to the value of actual supply. However, 'disbursements' are outside the scope of VAT.

Is VAT applicable on 'discount' or 'Buy-One-Get-One' (BOGO) offers by super-markets?

VAT is not applicable on 'discount' if shown on the face of invoice. Similarly, in case of BOGO (effectively 50% discount), as the price of the free items is included in the charged item, VAT is not applicable on the value of the item which is free with the purchase of the charged item.

Is Oman VAT applicable on items shipped from UAE for purchases done on websites?

While UAE VAT may not apply, Oman VAT shall apply at the border when goods get cleared from customs.

Are Free-of-Cost (FOC) supplies provided by customers used in providing services liable to VAT? Yes, if the input credit is recovered by service provider and No, if such input credit is not recovered.

Will VAT apply on Withholding Tax (WHT) commercially borne on behalf of payee outside Oman?

VAT shall apply on any taxes that are due as a result of supply. Hence, if WHT is commercially borne by service recipient/payer in Oman, then VAT under reverse charge has to be accounted on value of invoice plus WHT borne on the same.

How does VAT impact transaction between related parties?

Similar with the concepts relevant to Corporate Income Tax (CIT), in VAT, transactions with related parties should be at arm's length and relationship between parties should not influence the related party price. However, VAT law could be flexible, by disputing the related party price when input VAT credit is restricted to the receiver of supply.

This is a 4-part series on VAT. Opinions expressed are personal and should not be considered as an opinion or interpretation of law. Further clarity shall be available as VAT Regulations / Guides are issued.

Contact us on info@bdo.com.om OR ashish.athavale@bdo.com.om for any queries on your VAT registrations/obligation



MARKET

TRAINING HUMAN CADRES



EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION SKILLS: The programme, which focuses on three different levels, aims at equipping the participants with effective communication skills in the English language to contribute to attracting and localising more foreign investments in the various industrial cities. - Supplied picture

Madayn Industrial Academy unveils three-month programme

Times News Service

MUSCAT: The Public Establishment for Industrial Estates – Madayn, represented by Madayn Industrial Academy, has launched an intensive three-month programme on English language skills in a business environment.

The programme, which focuses on three different levels, aims at equipping the participants with effective communication skills in the English language to contribute to attracting and localising more foreign investments in the various

industrial cities.

This programme comes in line with the academy's plan to train the human cadres in Madayn's various industrial cities.

Training opportunity

It is worthwhile to mention that Madayn Industrial Academy was established in 2019 to offer training opportunities for the national cadres to enhance administrative, financial and technical skills, raise their productivity, provide value-adding services to the investors in the industrial cities, and provide

new job opportunities for the national cadres.

Madayn Industrial Academy organises a series of training programmes and events that address trending topics and challenges locally and globally. The academy also organises training-for-employment in cooperation with the bodies concerned in this field.

Madayn aims through the academy to develop the skills of the national cadres by providing training opportunities for the cadres to meet the requirements of the industrial sector.

Biden unveils \$1.9 trillion stimulus plan

US President-elect Joe Biden has announced a massive coronavirus relief package to kickoff his term



STIMULUS PACKAGE: The proposal, the first of his "two-step plan", will build on the previous stimulus legislation passed by the US Congress in 2020. - DW

WASHINGTON: US President-elect Joe Biden announced a \$1.9 trillion (€1.56 trillion) stimulus package to revitalise a flagging economy and speed up the nation's response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Biden laid out the first of his "two-step plan of rescue and recovery" in a prime-time address.

"Tonight, I lay out my first step, the American Rescue Plan that will tackle the pandemic and get direct financial assistance and relief to Americans who need it the most," he said.

"Next month, in my first appearance before a joint session of Congress I will lay out my 'build back better' recovery plan," Biden said on Thursday. "It will make historic investments in infrastructure, manufacturing, innovation, and research and development in clean energy."

"Our 'rescue and recovery' plan is a path forward with both serious of purpose and a clear plan, with transparency and accountability, with a call for unity that is equally necessary," he said.

"It's not hard to see that we're in the middle of a once-in-several-generations economic crisis with a once-in-several-genera-

tions public health crisis. A crisis of deep human suffering is in plain sight and there's no time to waste," Biden said. "We have to act, and we have to act now."

The president-elect also justified the huge price tag of his proposal during his speech.

"The return on these investments in jobs, racial equity will prevent long-term economic damage, and the benefits will far surpass the cost," Biden said. "In this moment of crisis... we cannot afford inaction."

The spending proposal will build on the two massive relief packages approved by Congress in 2020. It lists a host of measures including providing financial aid to individuals, state and local government, and businesses struggling with the prolonged economic fallout.

What does the plan include?

Stimulus payment checks for \$1,400 – topping up the \$600

checks issued under the most recent COVID-19 bill.

Raises the minimum wage to \$15 an hour.

\$350 billion in funding to state and local governments – a proposal that Republican lawmakers had blocked all last year.

\$160 billion for a national COVID-19 vaccination campaign.

About \$440 billion for small businesses and communities particularly hard hit by the pandemic.

\$170 billion for schools, with the goal of getting most institutions serving kindergarten through eighth grade open in the first 100 days of his administration.

Increases supplemental unemployment insurance to \$400 a week from the current \$300 a week now; also extending it through September.

Extends moratoriums on foreclosures and evictions until September and funding rental.

Provides \$30 billion in rental and utility assistance for families. - DW

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ONLINE EVENT

Asian Financial Forum to focus on current economic landscape

HONG KONG: The 14th Asian Financial Forum (AFF) will be held as an online event on January 18 and 19. Under the theme 'Reshaping the World Economic Landscape', the forum will run round the clock across different time zones, examining the current economic landscape and exploring global business opportunities with more than 160 influential policymakers, financial experts, investors, business leaders and economists.

Distinguished guests at various sessions will share insights on a wide range of topics including the global economic outlook, socially responsible and impact investment, the asset and wealth management industry in the post-COVID era, climate change risks and opportunities for the insurance industry.

According to a press statement by the Hong Kong Trade Development Council in Dubai, heavyweight speakers at the AFF's keynote sessions include Paul Romer, 2018 Nobel Laureate for Economic Sciences and policy entrepreneur, Alexis Ohanian, co-founder of Reddit and Seven Seven Six, and Luc Julia, Co-creator of Siri, Apple's virtual assistant. - WAM

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New Polyclinic required GP Doctors, Nurses, Lab Technician. Email hiringoman1234@gmail.com

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Urgently required a Tally Sales Executive with a minimum of 3 to 5yrs experience. Contact +968-92770324. Email: tallysales456@gmail.com Whatsapp +91-9743546518

Smart, dynamic Sales Executive, 2-3 years of outdoor sales for a reputed Tile & Cladding stone company. Building material experience, Arabic knowledge, Oman Driving License preferred. Attractive package. Apply with photographs to salesjobs@gmail.com or 00968-96986963.

PURCHASE/PROCUREMENT

Urgently wanted experienced Purchase manager/supervisor for a super market in Qurum. Contact 91444677

JOB VACANCIES

DOMESTIC HELP

Urgently required a fulltime Filipino Housemaid for an Omani family with good salary & benefits. Interested person can call: 98256531, 99107632

Looking for experienced Sri Lankan housekeeper for a English family. Contact 99888143

MECHANIC/TECHNIC

Urgent Requirement for Indian AC Technicians with minimum experience of 5-10 years in maintenance of cassette, Ductable, package, AHU units. Email najeebairtech@gmail.com. Contact : 99899028

MANAGER

Property Leasing Manager, send CV-vepsupervisor@gmail.com

MISCELLANEOUS

Manager Valuation , Civil Engineer, Foreman, Accountant Email hiringoman1234@gmail.com

We are looking for an experienced Stationary Salesman & Driver with Omani valid driving license. Send Cv bluestarnational@gmail.com. Contact 99468194, 24488120

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Kerala based Nair boy 45/175 Star Aswathi, BDS, MDS, MFDS Dental doctor, divorce working in UK, suitable proposals invited. Contact 00968-99344106, 00417-95423663, 0091-9207384572

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ACCOUNTS/FINANCE

Accounting Manager/Chief Accountant, 12 years' experience in Oman-MIS-Budget- Planning-Finalization-Tax Returns etc., Have NOC looking for suitable position - Contact 95570425 (Call/WhatsApp)

Accountant, office administration. Indian Male B.com + Diploma Oman Experience. Tally , Peachtree, QB , Tradeasy knowledge and have DL.Contact : 79841591Email : murshidmuchi4513@gmail.com

Accountant, administration, NOC available ,immediate joining.Contact: 93403636. Email: munafshaikh22@gmail.com

Finance, ERP, audit & taxation, project & market study business modelling, business process with professional & corporate experience full time or part time. # 93671585

Accounting manager / Chief accountant, 15+ years of experience in Oman & UAE, have NOC on visit. Contact: 79007124 / 78039524 Email: shkkader@gmail.com

Female looking for a part time job in accounts. Contact 97125362

Senior accountant, 18 yrs experience in accounts & finance along with 14 yrs experience in Oman seeking suitable replacement.Oman DL. Independently can handle accounts upto finalization, tax returns etc. Contact 93653482

Indian male, 18 yrs experience upto finalization, tally, SAP, excel accounting. NOC & DL available seeks suitable position. # 97887472, 71206125

Indian Male Bcom MBA. 19 years experience in Finance, MIS,Audit, Budget, banking, Tax, Payroll, ERP (Orion, Tally, Sage, Epicor). NOC available. GSM 91190552.

Accountant (CA Inter) - Indian (male) with 10 years' experience Accounting. Oman DL. # 94450401

BCom Graduate with DL & Experience looking for suitable placement. Contact 92695069. Email: zameelpv@gmail.com

MBA Finance 16+ Exp of Oman in Accounts up to finalization,looking for suitable senior position Contact: 92383882

Indian Male, Senior Accountant over 16 years Oman experience in Accounts looking for a Job & have NOC. Contact: 95851920, 78258270

Indian male B.Com, tally experience,accounts upto finalization with DL. Contact 94532610. vargheseekuttikattil@gmail.com

Male accountant M.S finance, 7yrs gulf experience with DL.Contact 95318382. Email salmanriaz1988.thumrait.int@gmail.com

Indian male 18+ yrs experience in finance,debt collection & credit,audit operation available for immediate joining. # 95500941, 78159940. Email tatabrezaziz@gmail.com

Looking for Senior Accountant Position.Having 10 Years Experience, and DL also. Mob - 79202007

Accountant Indian Male, 34 years old, 9 years of experience in finance, Looking for suitable job. # 9874 8634

Looking for Senior Accountant Position.Having 10 Years Experience, and DL also . Mob - 79202007

Sudanese 32 yrs,6 yrs experience in Oman in Accounting & Administrative assistant. Contact 94050251. email danygalaxy184@gmail.com

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CONNECT

JOB WANTED

SENIOR CIVIL ENGINEER
11+ Yrs of experience (10 Yrs Oman experience)
• On Engineer Visa (Expiry - Feb 2022), Can get release also.
• Experience in Building and Factory projects with Ministry & Private Clients.
Looking for fulltime/part time job. Having Omani DL.
GSM: 94125368 ; premjithpremanathan@gmail.com

Accountant Indian Male
MBA Finance 2 years
experience in india with
good knowledge in tally
seeks placement.
9539 1786

B.E Civil Engineer
Indian Male 29yrs with 7 Plus years of Experience in handling High End Building Construction Projects, Infrastructure, MEP, Interior finish and Landscaping works looking for any suitable job in immediate. Having Knowledge of MS Project & Primavera P6. NOC & Oman D/L Available.
Please contact me on 95051103, Email: loyannavildsouza@gmail.com

Omani Mechanical Engineer
Omani, looking for a job, Bachelor in Mechanical Engg from the United States of America, +2 yrs of experience in Oil & Gas. + NEBOSH certification Holder.
Contact: 95070748 Email: siyabi430@gmail.com

Facility Manager / Operation (Project-Civil) Manager
B.E. (Civil) with 24 years expertise in Facilities Management, Civil Construction Management, Project Management, Maintenance Management, Construction Site Inspection & Audit, Process & Documentation, Security & Surveillance, Contracts & vendor management, Budgeting & cash flow. Available to join immediately. Omani DL & NOC is available.
Contact: +968-96180303 shiv00769@gmail.com

Senior MEP Manager

Indian Male: Btech, having 23 years GCC experience with valid Oman driving licence seeks suitable placement.

Contact GSM: 79880377 Email: jaksona8081@gmail.com

Structural/Civil Engineer
with 14 years of experience (8 years in USA and 4 years in Oman) in PEB, RCC, Pipeline, Offshore, and Marine structures and have Master degree from USA. Seeking for placement as Project Engineer or Manager.
Please contact me on +968-93368626 irfan.sanjari.syed@gmail.com

SR. Manager/GM/VP (Plant)
Indian Male, with more than 23 years exp. in repair/maint/deployment/logistic/procurement of Vehicles/Heavy construction equipment in a large reputed construction industry seeks suitable placement in senior management level. NOC available.
Contact: 79198709

FINANCE MANAGER
Group-Finance Manager, 19 years' experience in Strategic planning, Finance, Accounting, Income tax, VAT etc. Qualified CPA, CMA, CIA. Looking for Senior management position in finance/internal audit. Available to join shortly.
Contact 92148608 / soji_ansu@yahoo.com

PROJECT ADMINISTRATION/CEO OFFICE/OPS/HR /CORPORATE COMMUNICATION/ADMIN/MKTG
Smart Indian, Masters, excellent English, Arabic speaker, 17years Oman exp including Multi-Billion Airports Project, Hospital, Media, EPC handling Project Administration, CEO Office Management, Corporate Communication, Admin, HR, Operations, Customer Relations. # **99283938**

MBA, seeking job, 27 yrs experience in capable managerial candidature with rich experience in Business operations, Vendor development, Procurement and HR generalist. Can join immediately.
Whatsapp: 7730012111 Mobile: 94268870 Email: mvssmgbr@gmail.com

Execution Architect/ Finishing Manager
36, Male in design/ execution at consultancy & contracting with 13 Work experience in Hotel/Office/ Airport/ retail in Construction/Interior fit-out Space seeking Suitable placement. Knowledge on CAD/ MS office/ Planning/ Tendering/ Estimation. D/L and NOC available immediately.
Contact: 78371040; architdesign2020@gmail.com

Moroccan Sales Engineer with
over 6 years of industrial
experience in Oman looking for
suitable opportunity.
GSM: 93823132 Email: mehdikassen@yahoo.com

SENIOR CORPORATE AND RETAIL BANKER
With over 30 years experience in Credit Management, Relationship Management, Credit Administration, Operations Management and Recoveries/ IFRS9 Provisioning Methodologies seeks suitable placement.
Email: DolphinOcean367@gmail.com

QUALITY MANAGER
Indian, Quality Manager, 18 years exp. 4.3 years at Abu Dhabi, looking for top/senior management position in quality. Coordinating RFQ to Mass production, Time, Resource & Quality planning, Process design, Project execution, etc. Available to join shortly.
Contact: 91-9952022345, venkatavaradu@rediffmail.com

ELECTRICAL MANAGER
Graduate Electrical Engineer & MBA (Project Management) with 28 years' experience in Industrial Projects & Maintenance looking for senior role. NOC Available and can join immediately.
Contact: 968-94029112 Email: sakthiveljothi@gmail.com

Project Engineer
32 yrs old - Having 10 years of experience (6 yrs in Oman) in oil & gas field - Intense work experience in fabrication of Pressure Vessels, Structural Steel fabrication & erection, Manufacturing of Skid Packages, Piping Spools & supports, Storage Tanks, Stack & Ducts, Pig Traps. EPC & Turnaround projects.
Having DL & Current Visa expires in Feb/2021.
Contact # boopathiraja88@gmail.com / 97412105

Finance/Accounts Manager
Indian male (MBA Fin) with 20 yrs working exp as Accounts & Finance Manager (Strategic planning, Procurement, Finance, Accounting, HR Admin, Audit, Tax, VAT) seeking suitable post. Valid Oman DL. NOC available.
Contact No.99705790 email: thoms_mat@yahoo.com

CIVIL ENGINEER
16+ Years Experience In Site Supervision, Structural Engineering, ETABS, STAAD, ROADS, BRIDGES, Project manager, INDUSTRIAL. WORKED WITH SOHAR ALUMINIUM AND OCC. WITH ALL SAFETY Training & KNOWLEDGE. Available Noc & Valid Driving License.
Call or Wts app 98333185

PURCHASE + STORES + ADMINISTRATION
Indian Male 10+ yrs experience in Oman (Currently available in Oman). Experience in Engineering / Construction, Manufacturing, Trading Concern & Structural Steel Projects. Materials Management with administrative skills. Looking for suitable placement and ready to join immediately with D/L & NOC.
Contact: 78235621/bsda@gmail.com

OMANI HR/PRO
Omani, 15 yrs experience, PRO, Relation development, Labour & Crime law, HR & Time Management. Fluent in English, Arabic & Hindi seeks Part Time job.
Contact 97264447

Indian male, bachelor's degree, Graduate (B.Com, B. Ed) looking for secretary, exec assistant, office administration jobs, 18 years experience, 7 years in Oman.
Call 97015841 Email khalid.bin.umar@gmail.com

Junior Architect with 3-years Oman experience in designing, proficiency in AutoCAD, Sketchup, Lumion Vray & Photoshop. Has worked in quantity estimations. Looking for suitable placement in Muscat.
Contact 95972625

SENIOR ACCOUNTANT (SRI LANKAN)
MBA, B.Sc and CA (Intermediate) with 18 years of experience (12th year in Oman) in Retail, FMCG, Leasing and Property management sectors. Immediate joining. DL. NOC is available.
M: 9641 6394 / Mail: scms.ac133@gmail.com

General Manager/ Sr. Manager Role, Indian Professional (BE, MBA, PMP, FIDIC) with 25 years experience into Civil and Infrastructure Constructions and Project Management. NOC available.
Contact 94634053

Graduate Civil Engineer
From India with over 11 years Project Management Experience with Consultant and Client in Oman with local release & driving license seeks suitable opportunities.
Email: contactsyedshams@gmail.com; GSM: +968 98500235

FINANCE
Indian, Group-Finance Manager, 19 years' world class experience in Strategic planning, Finance, Accounting etc. Multiple Professional qualifications in Accounting and audit. Looking for Top/Senior management position in finance/internal audit. Available to join shortly.
Contact 99455353

Bsc In Civil Engineering, MBA in Project Management, PMP certified, having 14 yrs experience (12yrs in Oman) with experience of construction of 4 star hotel, Airports, commercial & residential buildings, factories, Oil stations, is looking for a suitable placement. Having Oman Driving licence with NOC.
Contract: 99721926, tanvircivil@gmail.com

Senior Software Test Engineer
Indian Female 25yrs, BCA, M.tech, 5+ years experience in Wipro technologies. Key Skills – Web Application testing, Anti money laundering, Agile methodology, Manual Testing, Automation testing, selenium, Java, SQL, Appium and API testing.
Contact: 71792368 / 99295161 / nibesh.cmn@gmail.com

ADMINISTRATION
Indian, Male, having bachelor's degree looking for position in Office Administration/ Document Control, total 22 years of experience, 19 years in Oman with Oman driving licence. NOC available.
Contact No. 99757759

Omani DL holder Indian from Kerala looking for a job in F M C G sector.
12 year experience in Oman.
Speak Arabic, English, Hindi and Malayalam.
Work experience in all over Oman.
Interested please Contact 94022634

MicroMasters in Supply Chain Management, B-Tech in Mechanical Engineering 3 years industry experience as a Sales Engineer, Valid Oman DL.
Contact: 99137115 Email: adimurali7@gmail.com

GM / NSM / Head Of Sales
Male 49 - Proven Business Manager with exceptional sales management skills. Chartered Institute of Marketing - UK, MBA in Marketing, 15+ years of FMCG sales & business management experience in GCC & OMAN. NOC/DL available.
Email: sljobseeker72@gmail.com Contact: 96223114



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JOB WANTED

ADMIN/HR

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Indian Female 7 years experience Exe. Secretary, Admin Asst, Project Asst, Collection Followup. Contact 92243552

Filipino male w/ release. , with 2 years exp. in Philippines Admin, Data encoder and 4 years exp here in Oman Salesman, Merchandising Contact 97157688, email: markaslarona@yahoo.com

Looking for job Document Controller/Admin/Camp boss, 11 years experience. Contact 79245674

Smart Indian, Excellent English, Arabic speaker, 17years Oman experience in Airport Projects, Hospital, Media, EPC. Contact 99283938

DRIVER

Experienced driver with car, looking job in office/company for contract. Contact 79250786

10 yrs experience driver looking job. Contact 91335595

Looking for driving job. Contact 96312087

IT

CRM, ERP & MIS analyst, experience 5 yrs. Contact 71561266

Sudanese, Male, BSc with honors in Computer Science. 5 yrs Experience in IT support, Android apps Development, ERB Systems, and systems management & Administration. Contact 96606209. Email Blackmode21@gmail.com

IT graduate, Pakistani, looking for IT job. Contact 97444530. Email mdmesam@gmail.com

ENGINEER

Irani Civil engg +18 yrs experience in GCC, looking for job. Contact 79135430

Electrical Engineer having 7 years of experience in construction sector in Oman in MEP, Data cabling, BMS works, ELV systems looking for opportunities. Contact: +968-96335725

Indian male having diploma in mech engg & valid Oman DL have 6 yrs experience in Oman Contact 95645241

Civil Engineer, Indian female with 3 yrs experience in Oman, 28 yrs old, looking for a suitable job in a construction Company. Oman DL, valid visa. Contact 99772710, 99256371

Mechanical Engineer, 10 yrs exp with Oman DL, looking for sponsor/ position in MEP solar, Oil & Gas. Contact 79550976, +919446253959. Email afsalhyder@gmail.com

Senior Civil engineer with 12 yrs exp in government & private construction projects, looking for a suitable position. Contact 95962450. email solanki.ahmed@gmail.com

B.E Civil Engineer having over all 14 yrs Experience in building & Roads with consultant and contractor. NOC available immediate joining. Contact 94011294. Email: adnanluky@gmail.com

Planning Engineer, Indian 20 yrs experience in using Primavera P6 for oil & gas, water pipeline & building, MEP works scheduling seek suitable senior position with release & Oman DL. # 92651105, 90643701 reji_mathai@hotmail.com

B.Tech ECE, experience of 5 yrs (3 yrs in gulf & 2 yrs in India) seeks job. Can join immediately. Contact 96878051185. Whats APP +919809975212. Email shinejcia@gmail.com

Electrical engineer, experience 12 year in Oman seeks job. #98148034

B.E Civil Engineer having 10 yrs experience in Oman building Oil & Gas having DL. Can join immediately. Contact 96455880

Indian 22/male, Computer Science graduate from SRM University is looking for an immediate placement in any available field, Contact 95495877, nikhileshlalam@gmail.com

Arabic/English speaking Civil engineer, 5 yrs experience in Projects coordination, preparing submittals & engineering software, resident & have valid DL. Contact 95432250

Safety officer (engineer), two years experience in Oil field in Oman, ne-bosh IGC, valid D.L. # 79318246

Planning Engineer: Pakistani National with BE Civil, 13 years of experience including 8 years in Oman in Project Planning, Scheduling and Delay Analysis looking for a suitable position. Local transfer - NOC, Contact: 97018909.

HVAC Technican cum Supervisor, chiller plant coldroom all refrigeration system, VRF system, 30 yrs experience DL holder # 79816271. Email mohandaskd@gmail.com

Mechanical Engineer (B.E) with 7+ yrs exp in MEP projects, Dil&Gas piping projects. NOC & Oman DL available. Contact 91293770. email jehilk212@gmail.com

Senior civil engineer with over 10 yrs experience on high end projects(RE) Contact 78270396

Electrical Engineer B.Tech, 15 years exp in Oman seeks job. NOC and Release available. # 92254336 Email ameen1667@gmail.com

MISCELLANOUS

Plumbing, painting maintenance works. Contact 96191837, 98937266

Electrician, plumber & A/C Service, L.Driver (D/L) Contact 95308363

MEDICAL

Indian Male 43.y.o seeking a suitable opportunity in medical centers for Admin/Mktg/Ops.Noc & D/L available. Contact 98274545

Lady G P. With M O H licence. Full or part-time, for Capital area only. Contact 99470508

Indian 30yrs, MSW [Medical & psychiatry] MSC Psychology, 6 yrs experience seeks job. Contact 79308281, 91 9207258008

MANAGER

Electrical Project Manager with 10 Years Experience in (Primary & Distribution) Substations and Over head lines, Oman DL. Contact 99022692

Indian, Finance Manager 20Yrs Experience, Trade finance - MIS - Budget - Planning - Auditing - Finalisation - Banking: 90473368, devan801@gmail.com

Indian with 13 yrs of Banking exp, worked as SME Relationship manager in GCC with good knowledge in Trade finance, forex, compliance, looking for a suitable position, valid DL available. contact 72524421. email dreamzct2020@gmail.com

PURCHASE/PROCUREMENT

Sri Lanka male in Oman seeking a job as, procurement, store manager, operation & Administration, Degree, fluent in Supply Chain Management- Oracle ERP. Contact 98878815

Indian male 12 years experience in purchase store management and Inventory looking for suitable job with NOC, Oman DL Gsm 97099785. Email rajakmani66@gmail.com

Keralite, 31 yrs purchase assistant, 10 yrs working experience in Oman, valid Oman DL. Looking for suitable jobs. Contact 98615731 Email sanalk73@gmail.com

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Indian with 16years experience in sales and marketing with valid Oman DL, looking for opportunities Contact 79685337

MBA Marketing/HR, 5 years working experience in India. Experience in Sales, Marketing and operations. Contact +96896652549

Experienced outdoor sales rep having own visa & vehicle seeks a suitable placement in outdoor sales in Capital area til Seeb on salary or commission basis. Contact 71928724. email arscreens04@gmail.com

15 yrs exp in perfumes & cosmetics in GCC. DL holder. Contact 78399076, 95868684

6 years experienced Sales officer looking for the suitable job. Valid, Omani driving license available. Contact 98424254

20 yrs experience in Sales & Marketing of Central Air Conditioning & Structural steel etc. Contact 968-95950370

Looking for SalesManager position having 13 yrs experience in FMCG/IT/Media/oilfield. DL. Contact 90174597

Sales/office driver, 15 yrs experience with DL & NOC. Muscat Area. Contact 79758863

Indian/female (28)/MBA, 6+ years' experience in digital marketing and business development with valid Oman D/L. available for immediate joining. Contact: 97210952

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ROUND-UP



Mercedes-Benz's Certified Pre-Owned cars offer something for every driver

With a line-up of the most sought-after cars at competitive prices, customers are sure to find a model that suits them

MUSCAT: Owning a Mercedes-Benz is one New Year's resolution drivers can make happen with Mercedes-Benz Oman's Certified Pre-Owned cars.

With a line-up of the most sought-after cars at competitive prices, customers are sure to find a model that suits them. Included in this New Year's selection of cars is an A200 (the model year 2019) from OMR11,995, a C200 (the model year 2020) from OMR16,495, and an E200 (the model year 2019) from OMR17,495. For those looking for more power, a Mercedes-AMG GLC 43 (the model year 2019) is available from OMR23,995 as well as a GLS 500 4MATIC (the model year 2017) from OMR26,995. Combining affordability with the highest quality standards of care, all Certified Pre-Owned car prices are valid until March 31, 2021.

"A car is an important investment. Our Certified Pre-Owned cars offer the latest in advanced



technology, premium materials and features, not to mention the highest performance," said Shaun Michael, Chief Executive Officer at Mercedes-Benz Oman. "We are starting the year on a high note with some of our most wanted models and are confident that our customers will find what they are looking for, from great-value vehicles to excellent customer care and above all, a reliable service."

All Certified Pre-Owned cars have been maintained to the highest standards of care and service. The athletic and attention-grabbing A200 is available in Polar White with ARTICO man-made leather in Black (the model year 2019, 18,615km) from OMR 11,995, while the elegant and compact C 200 in Polar White with ARTICO man-made leather in Saddle Brown (the model year

2020, 4,399km) is available from OMR16.495.

The spacious and intelligent E200i is also included in the line-up, coming in Selenite Grey with leather in Nut Brown (the model year 2019, 18,558km) from OMR17,495. For those looking for an SUV experience, the sleek and innovative Mercedes-AMG GLC 43 is up for grabs in Designo Hyacinth Red with leather in Saddle Brown (the

model year 2019, 2,132km) from OMR23,995, while an iconic GLS 500 4MATIC in Obsidian Black with leather in Silk Ginger Beige (the model year 2017, 26,995) from OMR17,945 is also available.

With the assurance of an exhaustive certification process and 24-hour Roadside Assistance (selected vehicles only), every Certified Pre-Owned Mercedes-Benz now comes with a minimum one-year warran-

ty and a full-service history. Service packages and finance options are also available upon request.

Ensuring vehicles enjoy the highest standard of mechanical, electrical, comfort, and safety conditions, all vehicles undergo a multi-point inspection by specialist Mercedes-Benz technicians following which only certified cars are displayed at the Mercedes-Benz Oman authorised dealership.

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MHD opens new MG showroom in Sur

The line-up that will be displayed at the Sur showroom, include all of MG Motor's best-selling cars including the enormously successful ZST, that have already proven extremely popular following its launch in October last year

MUSCAT: Mohsin Haider Darwish (MHD), the official distributor of MG Motor in the Sultanate recently celebrated the opening of its new showroom in Sur. The state-of-the-art showroom, blends convenience, ease of use and best-in-class facilities.

The showroom's VIP launch event took place on January 11 under the auspices of Dr Yahya bin Badr bin Malik Al-Ma'awali, Governor of South Al Sharqiyah and was presided over by Areej Mohsin Haider Darwish, Chairperson MHD ACERE, Mohsin Hani Al Bahrani, CEO of MHD ACERE Division. Also, in attendance, were many highnesses and excellencies, as well as senior management and executives from MHD.

Commenting on the opening of the new showroom in Sur, Mohsin Al Bahrani, CEO MHD ACERE, "We are delighted to officially be opening our first showroom here



in Sur – reflecting the continuing growth and expansion of our MG Motor business here in the Sultanate. In recent months MG Motor has become an increasingly popular brand in Oman, as more and more members of the motoring public recognise its world-class engineering, build quality, power and style that are offered across diverse models at affordable prices. We have in fact seen people from different walks of life getting attracted to the MG brand; not just in the capital area of Muscat, but also in other regions of the Sultanate."

"Looking ahead to 2021, our strategic focus will be centred on customer experience and providing a first-class aftersales experience. We also plan to introduce new MG

models, maintaining our reputation for being at the forefront of the automotive industry when it comes to the latest models with technologically advanced features."

The line-up that will be displayed at the Sur showroom, include all of MG Motor's best-selling cars including the enormously successful ZST, that have already proven extremely popular following its launch in October last year.

MG is a British-born automotive brand established in 1924, known for its historic models, awards and achievements throughout the past 96 years. MG was founded by William Morris and Cecil Kimbers and has the oldest car club in the automotive industry. Best known for its two-seat open sports cars,

MG also produced saloons and coupes. Since it acquired MG, SAIC MOTOR, as a Global Top 500 company, has opened a new chapter for this British icon. MG will explore new avenues in the future.

Bringing to Oman reputed auto brands from around the world, Mohsin Haider Darwish's (MHD)-LLC, Automotive Division has been a well-established name in its sector. Complementing its extensive line-up of few of the most popular automotive brands, MHD has been respected for its excellent after-sales service and its keen focus on customer care. MG Motor is a popular name in the MHD LLC folio, has been accepted in the market as one of the best value-for-money.

'MOVEMENT THAT INSPIRES'



Kia presents its new brand purpose and future strategy

DUBAI: Kia has announced new details of its new brand purpose and ambitions for the future during a digital showcase event. Supported by a new brand slogan, 'Movement that inspires', Kia revealed new details of a strategy which will see the company go beyond vehicle manufacturing to create sustainable mobility solutions for customers.

Signalling the brand breaking away from its traditional manufacturing-driven business model, Kia has announced a new corporate name. Removing the 'Motors' from its name (previously 'Kia Motors Corporation'), Kia will expand into new and emerging business areas by creating innovative mobility products and services to improve customers' daily lives.

Ho Sung Song, President and CEO of Kia Corporation, commented, "At Kia, we believe that transportation, mobility, and movement represent a human right. Our vision is to create sustainable mobility solutions for consumers, communities, and societies globally. Today we start putting this vision into action with the launch of our new brand purpose and strategy for the future."

Kia's new brand slogan, 'Movement that inspires', is introduced today at the heart of a brand manifesto which reflects Kia's new purpose of inspiring consumers through products and services, and

their experiences with the brand.

Kia's new brand purpose emphasises that movement is at the genesis of human development. Movement enables people to see new places, to meet new people, and to have new experiences. This connection is the essence of Kia's new brand – to enable human progress by providing innovative in-car spaces, exciting new products, and meaningful, convenient services that inspire customers and free up time for the activities that they enjoy the most.

Artur Martins, Senior Vice President, Head of Global Brand & Customer Experience at Kia, said, "Movement has always been at the heart of our brand, and moving people at the core of our business. Movement helps humankind to constantly progress, improve, and evolve. That is why at Kia we believe that movement inspires ideas."

Kia has been in the 'movement' industry for more than 75 years, and the company went on to create Korea's first domestic bicycles and to manufacture motorcycles and delivery trucks. Today, Kia is one of the biggest automakers globally, providing high-value passenger vehicles to millions of people around the world.

Under its new brand purpose, Kia will meet changing customer expectations about how they move, and how their movement impacts the world around them.

AL RIADAH PRIORITY BANKING

BankDhofar conducts year-end grand prize draw of savings account scheme

MUSCAT: Demonstrating its keenness to stay connected with customers, BankDhofar recently organised Al Riadah Priority Banking Services gathering.

BankDhofar applied the preventive measures to avoid the widespread of COVID-19. As part of the event, BankDhofar conducted the year-end grand prize draw of the savings account scheme 2020. The draw saw two Al Riadah Priority Banking winners of valuable cash prize worth OMR 250,000 each.

The event was attended by Al Riadah customers, whereas representing the bank and welcoming prestige customers were BankDhofar Al Riadah team and executive team members.

On the gathering, Dr Tariq Taha, Chief Retail Banking Officer at BankDhofar said, "This gathering is an opportunity for us to interact with our customers directly and hear from them. At BankDhofar, we have always been committed to designing tailor-made products, services and financial solutions for our customers. We are always open for their feedback and suggestions, which help us elevate the level of our services and products."

Congratulating the winners, Dr Tariq added, "I would like to congratulate the two lucky winners of the grand prize draw, and all the winners throughout the year. The scheme saw large popularity this



year, as we introduced new draw categories, in which we provided the chance to win for all family members be it children, youth or ladies. Our main aim of the Savings Account Scheme is to encourage our customer to save, and we reward them for that."

Al Riadah Priority Banking provides a unique range of banking products and services that are tailored to suit the unique lifestyle of priority customers, ranging from personalized cheque book, exclusive Al Riadah card, including: Visa Infinite Debit Card, Visa

Signature Debit Card, Visa Infinite Credit Card, and MasterCard Platinum Credit Card. Customers can enjoy exceptional times at restaurants, shops, as well as procurement protection, extended warranty, access to airport lounges around the world, travel insurance for cardholders and their families, in addition to other exclusive services. BankDhofar has tailor-made financing solutions to meet the needs of its priority banking customers with low insurance fees and simple and fast procedures. The bank also provides deposit

accounts at competitive interest rates and low insurance fees. Al Riadah customers may benefit from the distinct monthly interest rate of the Savings Account, and get the chance to win in the special draws for Al Riadah segment.

BankDhofar has dedicated Al Riadah counters in most BankDhofar branches and established specialised Al Riadah centres that provide a private and unique experience in Muscat (Muscat Grand Mall, Mall of Muscat, and Royal Opera House), Batinah - North (Sohar), and Dhofar (Salalah).

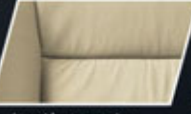


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