

HM SENDS CONDOLENCES

MUSCAT: His Majesty Sultan Haitham Bin Tarik has sent a cable of condolences to Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani, Emir of Qatar on the death of Sheikh Mohammed bin Khalid bin Hamad bin Abdullah Al Thani. In his cable, His Majesty the Sultan expressed his sincere sympathy and condolences, praying to the Almighty Allah to rest the deceased's soul in peace and grant his family patience to bear the loss. **-ONA**



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HM THE SULTAN PARDONS PRISONERS

MUSCAT: His Majesty Sultan Haitham Bin Tarik, the Supreme Commander, has issued a Royal pardon to a number of prisoners convicted of different cases. They included 229 prisoners, 70 of them are foreign prisoners, according to an official source at the Royal Oman Police (ROP). The Royal pardon of His Majesty the Sultan coincides with the anniversary of 11 January, the day when His Majesty assumed reins of power. It also comes in consideration of the families of the prisoners. **-ONA**



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HM MEETS SHEIKHS OF NORTH AL SHARQIYAH GOVERNORATE



HM affirms the government pressing ahead with measures to upgrade citizens' living standards

MANAH: His Majesty Sultan Haitham Bin Tarik on Monday held a meeting at Hisn A'Shumook castle in the Wilayat of Manah with Sheikhs of North Al Sharqiyah Governorate.

The Diwan of Royal Court issued a statement to this effect reading as follows:

"In continuation of Royal meetings held by His Majesty Sultan Haitham Bin Tarik with Sheikhs of Governorates in the Sultanate of Oman to serve interests of the country and citizens of this dear homeland and, in pursuance of His Majesty's attention to interact directly with citizens, His Majesty the Sultan held a meeting today, Monday, 10 January 2022, with Sheikhs of the North Al Sharqiyah Governorate at Hisn A'Shumookh castle in Manah.

At the outset of the meeting, His Majesty the Sultan gave thanks



January 11, anniversary of HM the Sultan's accession to power **>A4**

and praise to the Almighty Allah for the great bounties of safety and security He has bestowed on Oman, praying to Allah that the march of building in Oman be a success.

After that, His Majesty the Sultan touched on a variety of issues of developmental, economic and social significance to citizens' aspirations. He affirmed that the government is pressing ahead with measures to upgrade citizens' living standards and achieve economic stability and prosperity. **>A4**



On the Anniversary of His Majesty's
Accession to the Throne,
Landmark Group extends its sincerest
congratulations to
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SULTAN HAITHAM BIN TARIK**
May Almighty Allah
Bless Him and the People of Oman.

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Sultan Haitham bin Tarik
- may God protect him -

On the occasion of His Majesty's accession to the throne in the country.



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and the people of Oman
on the occasion of the 2nd Anniversary of
His Majesty's Accession.



#Jan11th_Renewed_Renaissance





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We extend our warmest congratulations and blessings to His Majesty Sultan Haitham Bin Tarik, may God protect him, on the occasion of the Accession Anniversary of His Majesty. We pray to the Almighty Allah to enable him to take this great nation to greater prosperity.

MEETING



< FROM
A1 ‘Elevating Oman to its deserved status a national duty’

He pointed out that elevating Oman to its deserved status is a national duty that requires the contribution of each citizen.

Then, His Majesty the Sultan engaged in an open dialogue with the sheikhs, who presented demands and requests for development projects and services needed in their wilayats. This reflected the depth of the relationship between the leader and the people.

His Majesty the Sultan stressed that the government would spare no effort in shouldering its responsibilities and that the renewed renaissance is cutting its way through, in firm resolve, and will eventually attain its objectives.

The meeting was attended by HH Sayyid Belarab bin Haitham Al Said, Sayyid Khalid bin Hilal Al Busaidi, Minister of the Diwan of Royal Court, Sayyid Hamoud bin Faisal Al Busaidi, Minister of Interior, Sultan bin Salim Al Habsi, Minister of Finance, Dr. Hamad bin Said Al Aufi, Head of the Private Office, Sheikh Ali bin Ahmed Al Shamsi, Governor of North A'Sharqiyah and walis of the governorate.

May the Almighty Allah protect His Majesty the Sultan and grant him good health and well-being. May He protect Oman, citizens and residents against all harms." -ONA

HISTORIC DATE

January 11, the anniversary of HM’s accession to power

MUSCAT: Today, the 11th of January, coincides with the anniversary of His Majesty Sultan Haitham Bin Tarik's assuming the reins of power in the Sultanate of Oman, succeeding the late Sultan Qaboos bin Said bin Taimour.

The anniversary, which constitutes a historic date in Oman, epitomizes that unanimous stance of Omanis who, on this day in 2020, welcomed their monarch, pledging loyalty and allegiance to him.

Since he assumed the reins of power in Oman, His Majesty the Sultan called upon all citizens to continue to safeguard the achievements of the renaissance and work for the elevation of the status of this country, so that its people would have a better life – with Oman Vision 2040 serving as a roadmap for all aspirations.

His Majesty the Sultan upholds the Omani traditions of citizens' solidarity with their leaderships. He continues to meet citizens from all governorates of the Sultanate of Oman, acting from his deep conviction in the significance



of directly interacting with the public and listening to opinions and proposals that serve the interests of the country and its citizens.

The State's modern institutions keep pace with Shura (consultation) and democratic action, namely the Council of Oman, with its bicameral chambers of State Council and Shura Council, and municipal councils in different governorates of the Sultanate of Oman.

His Majesty the Sultan introduced a comprehensive vision enshrined in legislations like the Basic Law of the State, the Governorates and Municipalities Affairs System (law), as well as action programmes, including Oman Vision 2040, which targets a set of national priorities such as health, education, research, innovation, economic diversification, fiscal sustainability and governance of the State's Administrative Apparatus.

The citizens take pride in the positive results emanating from the tangible measures under-

taken to address the challenges of the Renewed Renaissance led by His Majesty Sultan Haitham Bin Tarik, whose prudence played a great role in tackling all difficulties.

On the economic side, the Medium Term Fiscal Balance Plan (2020-2023) continued to deliver a positive outcome in its second year, including the reduction of 2021 deficit, control of public spending, cutting down public debt and augmenting the Central Bank of Oman reserves in foreign currency. One of the outcomes was that global credit rating agencies amended Oman's status to "stable" and "positive".

This is in addition to the creation of a social security system designed to maintain a suitable standard of decent life and the alleviation of the impacts of the current stage.

The need to address the repercussions of the Covid-19 called for the formation of a Supreme Committee tasked with tackling the impacts of the pandemic and handling its economic fallout. As a result, internationally approved antiviral vaccines were endorsed and applied to protect citizens and residents in the benign land of Oman.

His Majesty the Sultan's emphasis on cooperation with all countries is a clear indicator of the constant state of Omani foreign policy based on advocating the cause of international peace and security, non-interference in the internal affairs of other countries and encouraging dialogue and peaceful settlement for regional and international issues.

Over a span of 49 years, the late Sultan Qaboos laid solid foundations for the renaissance in Oman. He established a basic infrastructure that earned accolades from the international community. To name a few of his achievements, Sultan Qaboos initiated a social and economic system based on justice. The best way to eternalize the good deeds of the late Sultan is to preserve his achievements and build on them. -ONA



Best wishes to His Majesty
Sultan Haitham Bin Tarik
- May Allah protect him -

**on the 2nd anniversary
of his accession
to the throne**

Wishing His Majesty continuous
success and prosperity



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Oman LNG is honoured to congratulate

**His Majesty
Sultan Haitham Bin Tarik**

and the people of Oman on the anniversary
of His Majesty's Accession to the throne

May the Almighty Allah protect His Majesty,
guide him to the renewed Renaissance and
bring Oman further progress and prosperity



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Greetings

The management and staff of Muscat Media Group would like to convey our warmest greetings and felicitations to **His Majesty Sultan Haitham Bin Tarik** and the people of Oman on the anniversary of the Accession Day





Congratulations and best wishes to
His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik,
on the 2nd anniversary of his
accession to the throne.



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UNVEILED

Council of Ministers approves new sports, culture clubs: Sayyid Theyazin



His Highness Sayyid Theyazin bin Haitham Al Said, Minister of Culture, Sports and Youth.

MUSCAT: Within the context of the Royal attention accorded by His Majesty Sultan Haitham Bin Tarik to sports and culture clubs—given their role in honing the skills and talents of youth and serving as podiums for cultural, sports and youth activities—and, in keeping with Oman Vision 2040, His Highness Sayyid Theyazin bin Haitham Al Said, Minister of Culture, Sports and Youth, has unveiled the Council of Ministers’ approval to announce sports and culture clubs in some wilayats, as listed below:

- 1: The Wilayat of Al Amerat in Muscat Governorate
- 2: The Wilayat of Nakhal in South Al Batinah Governorate
- 3: The Wilayat of Taqa in Dhofar Governorate
- 4: The Wilayat of Izki in Al Dhakhiliyah
- 5: The Wilayat of Dima Wa Al Taeen in North A’Sharqiyah Governorate
- 6: The Wilayat of Dhank in Al Dhahirah Governorate

His Highness Sayyid Theyazin wished that the clubs will cater to the needs of different segments of society, notably by hosting social events and activities to meet the objectives that gave rise to their establishment. **-OMA**



Sayyid Fahd receives Iranian Foreign Minister

The two sides stressed the importance of activating the joint Omani-Iranian committee

MUSCAT: His Highness Sayyid Fahd Mahmoud Al Said, Deputy Prime Minister for the Council of Ministers received here on Monday Dr. Hossein Amir Abdollahian, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Islamic Republic of Iran. The Iranian official conveyed greetings and best wishes of President Dr. Ebrahim Raisi of Iran to His Majesty Sultan Haitham Bin Tarik and the Sultanate of Oman. The meeting reviewed the bilateral relations and means of enhancing them in various fields. It also touched on matters of common interest. The two sides exchanged views on regional and international developments and the efforts exerted for the consolidation of peace and stability to serve the peoples of the region and enhance international cooperation. The two sides stressed the importance of activating the joint Omani-Iranian committee, as well as increasing consultations between the two countries on several issues of regional concern. The meeting was attended by Sayyid Badr Hamad Al Busaidi, Foreign Minister and Ali Najafi Khoshroudi, Ambassador of Iran to Oman. **-OMA**

Tender Announcement

MUSCAT ELECTRICITY DISTRIBUTION COMPANY S.A.O.C INVITES INTERESTED COMPANIES TO PARTICIPATE IN THE FOLLOWING TENDER

Tender No.	Description	Last Date of Buying	Date of Submission	Grade	Site Visit	Attendee	Tender Price (R.O)
MEDC 05/2022	Installation of 33KV, 20MVAR Capacitor Banks at OETC Grid Stations	27/01/2022	22/02/2022	A	1- 31/01/2022 Site visit for Zone 3 2- 01/02/2022 Site visit for Zone 1 & Zone 2 @9:00 AM at MEDC Head Office	One Electrical , One Civil Engineer & One Protection Engineer with Full PPE.	105
MEDC 04/2022	Replacement of Hamriyah 2x20MVA Primary Substation (P035)	27/01/2022	22/02/2022	A	02/02/2022 @9:00 AM at MEDC Head Office	One Electrical, One Civil Engineer & One Protection Engineer with Full PPE.	1575
MEDC 03/2022	Construction of 2X20MVA Ruwi Valley (P174) Primary Substation	27/01/2022	22/02/2022	A	02/02/2022 @9:00 AM at MEDC Head Office	One Electrical, One Civil Engineer & One Protection Engineer with Full PPE.	1575
MEDC 02/2022	33 KV Load Shifting to Mabelah Industrial Grid	27/01/2022	22/02/2022	A	03/02/2022 @9:00 AM at MEDC Head Office	One Electrical, One Civil Engineer & One Protection Engineer with Full PPE.	1575

The table below shows the instructions for participation: -

Participation	- Companies registered with Tender Board may obtain Tender documents. - The amount specified above is including 5 % VAT. - The amount specified above is Non-Refundable payment (Terms and Condition apply) - For payment procedure and to obtain the tender document, please contact us via e-mail Contract@medcoman.com 24588600 – Ext: 8577 - 8726
Purchase timing	Tender documents can be purchased at the official working time between 08:00 – 13:00 hours
Enquiries	- Any inquiry can be sent using clarification available in the tender documents, one week before bid submission date - Any request for clarification received after the above-mentioned period will not be considered.
Tender Submission	- Tenders should be submitted in a sealed and stamped envelope which contain two separate envelopes (Technical proposal and Commercial proposal) addressed to the CHAIRMAN OF MINOR TENDER COMMITTEE, MUSCAT ELECTRICITY DISTRIBUTION CO. marked only with tender number and the subject. - Please follow SUBMISSION OF TENDER mentioned in clause 20.0 in Prime Document.
Guarantee	- The Tender should enclose a bank guarantee or a certified cheque issued by any bank in the Sultanate of Oman Unconditional and irrevocable and shall be disbursement as soon as it is submitted for the value of (1%) of the tender value valid for a period of at least ninety (90) days from the last date of tender submission and addressed to the CHAIRMAN OF MINOR TENDER COMMITTEE, MUSCAT ELECTRICITY DISTRIBUTION COMPANY S.A.O.C. - The bid bond should be included in the commercial proposal envelope only. - Any tender not accompanied by a Tender Bond shall be rejected.
Terms and Conditions	- The name of the bidder, other marks or any reference must not be specified on the envelope - Tenders received after the deadline stated in the Invitation to Tender, including any extension thereof, for any reason whatsoever will not be considered - The Tender shall be valid for a period of at least ninety (90) days from the last date of tender submission including any extension thereof. - If the submission date extended, the bank guarantee or a certified cheque shall be extended in accordance with the bid extension date. - MEDC is not bound to accept the lowest (or highest) Tenderer. - Preference of awarding the tender will be given to those bidders who achieved a high percentage of purchasing from Local Products and have a High-level percentage of Omanization - Muscat Electricity Distribution Company gives priority to award the projects to SMEs companies. - For projects whose value is less than OMR 10K, the priority to award will be given to registered companies that hold a valid certificate Of Reyadah. - Failure to comply with the instructions in tender document may lead to disqualification.
Bid Placement	The Completed Tender should be deposited in the Tender Box No. 1 in the ground floor of MEDC Head Office building at Airport Heights, before 10 a.m. on the assigned date of tender submission



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COOPERATION

Oman, Iran hold political talks

MUSCAT: Sayyid Badr Hamad Al Busaidi, Foreign Minister held yesterday a session of political talks with Dr. Hossein Amir Abdollahian, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Islamic Republic of Iran. The session reviewed relations of cooperation between the two countries in various spheres and the means of enhancing them. The two sides reviewed some regional and international issues of common interest. They also touched on Vienna talks regarding the nuclear agreement “Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA)”, emphasising the importance of the Plan to achieve security and stability. The session was attended by Sheikh Khalifa Ali Al Harthy, the Foreign Ministry’s Undersecretary for Diplomatic Affairs, Khalid Hashel Al Musalhi, Head of the Minister’s Office Department, Ali Najafi Khoshroudi, Ambassador of Iran to Oman and members of the delegation accompanying the guest. **-OMA**

Trending ON SOCIAL MEDIA

MOST READ ON FACEBOOK

54,949 REACH



Story on Indian couple's attempt to travel 12,000 km with their cat

A story on a couple's attempt to travel 12,000 km with their cat reached 54,949 people and had 5,225 engagements on Facebook.

MOST WATCHED VIDEO ON FACEBOOK

4,400 VIEWS



The 8PM show

The 8PM show episode had 4,400 views and reached 4,600 people on Facebook.

MOST VIEWED VIDEO ON INSTAGRAM

706 VIEWS



The Morning Minute video on Russia talks

The Morning Minute video on Russia talks with US on Ukraine had 706 views and 34 likes on Instagram



The Morning Minute video on Russia talks



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19 killed in New York City apartment fire

The city's fire officials said the blaze, which was started by an electric heater, is one of the worst blazes in recent memory

NEW YORK: A fire at an apartment building in the New York City borough of the Bronx has left at least 19 people dead, Mayor Eric Adams said on Sunday.

The city's fire officials said the blaze, which was started by an electric heater, is one of the worst blazes in recent memory.

What we know so far

At least 19 people have died, Mayor Adams confirmed.

The fire started from a space heater in an apartment that spanned both the second and third floors, and only made it as far as the hallway, officials said.

But smoke still spread to every floor, probably because the door to the apartment where the blaze began was open, the city's fire department commissioner, Daniel Nigro, told reporters at a news conference.

"This is going to be one of the worst fires in our history," Adams said in an interview with CNN.

Stefan Ringel, a senior adviser to Adams, confirmed that nine children, aged 16 or younger, were among the fatalities. Emergency crews said around 60 people were injured in total, while more than a dozen are in hospital and in a



MASSIVE FIRE: The fire started from a space heater in an apartment that spanned both the second and third floors.



critical condition.

The fire broke out at a 19-story building in the Bronx around 11 a.m. (1600 GMT), with the blaze quickly spreading throughout.

Around 200 firefighters responded to the scene at East 181st Street, the city's fire department said, where they discovered victims on every floor of the building.

"Members found victims on every floor in stairwells and were taking them out in cardiac and respiratory arrest," fire department commissioner Nigro said at a press conference earlier on Sunday.

Many of the victims were suffering from smoke inhalation.

How did the fire start?

Fire commissioner Nigro said that the blaze was caused by a malfunctioning electric space heater. The fire quickly spread through the duplex unit that the heater was in — climbing up the second and third floors.

The door to the apartment where the fire began was left open — causing a thick cloud of smoke to spread throughout the apart-

ment building.

He added that there were smoke alarms located throughout the building.

Some of the residents who were trapped in their apartments broke open their windows in an effort to get air. Other stuffed wet towels under their doors to block the smoke. Nigro said earlier that the smoke was so dense that it was "unprecedented."

'Tragedy beyond measure'

New York City Mayor Adams, who has officially been in the job for a little over a week, paid tribute to the victims.

"We've lost 19 of our neighbors today. It's a tragedy beyond measure," Adams said in a message posted on Twitter.

"Join me in praying for those we lost, especially the 9 innocent young lives that were cut short," he added. -**aw**

AMERICA'S DAD

US comedian Bob Saget found dead

WASHINGTON: US comedian Bob Saget was found dead in a Florida hotel room, local police announced on Sunday. He was 65.

Police said there were no signs that foul play or drugs were involved in his death.

"Earlier today, deputies were called to the Ritz-Carlton Orlando, Grande Lakes for a call about an unresponsive man in a hotel room," the Orange County Sheriff's office said in a tweet.

"The man was identified as Robert Saget & pronounced deceased on scene. Detectives found no signs of foul play or drug use in this case," the statement added.

The cause of death is currently under investigation.

Saget is survived by his wife Kelly Rizzo and three children.

He performed at a show in Jacksonville, Florida on Saturday night. Just hours before his death on Sunday, he tweeted his appreciation for the audience, along with a photo of himself at the venue.

The comedian had only just begun his 2022 tour "doing an all new show of standup and music," and his next gig was scheduled



for later this month in West Palm Beach, Florida.

Saget was best known for his lead role in the popular "Full House" sitcom where he played Danny Tanner, a widowed father raising three girls with the help of his brother-in-law Jesse and friend Joey.

The show ran for eight seasons, from 1987-1995, on ABC, and followed by a Netflix sequel focusing on one of Danny's daughters, DJ Tanner, which ran from 2016-2020. Saget was also the long-time host of "America's Funniest Home Videos" from 1989 to 1997. -**aw**

COVID SURGE

Winter Olympics opening ceremony downsized amid surge in COVID-19 cases

BELJING: China has downsized the opening ceremony of the Beijing Winter Olympics because of the coronavirus pandemic.

Chinese Film Director Zhang Yimou has announced that the opening ceremony will be much smaller than that of the 2008 Summer Games held in the capital, reported NHK World. Zhang has been appointed chief director of the Games' opening and closing ceremonies, reprising his role in the 2008 Olympics.

He said the opening ceremony

on February 4 at the National Stadium, known as the Bird's Nest, will feature about 3,000 performers and last less than 100 minutes, reported NHK World.

The number of performers is one-fifth that of the 2008 ceremony and the length is less than half.

With less than one month to go before the Olympics, community infections of the Omicron coronavirus variant have been confirmed in the city of Tianjin, adjacent to Beijing, and the inland province of Henan, reported NHK World. -**ANI**



We are delighted to extend our sincerest congratulations and best wishes to

His Majesty Sultan Haitham Bin Tarik

– May the Almighty protect and preserve him –

On the occasion of the anniversary of his accession to the throne

May the Almighty protect him for Oman and its people. We pledge loyalty under his wise leadership as we look towards a more prosperous future for the country and its people.

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Myanmar jails Aung San Su Kyi for four more years

The Nobel Peace Prize laureate has faced an onslaught of legal charges since being detained on February 1 last year



NAYPYITAW: A Myanmar court on Monday sentenced ousted leader Aung San Suu Kyi to four more years in prison.

The Nobel Peace Prize laureate has faced an onslaught of legal charges since being detained on February 1 last year after her government was overthrown in an early morning coup by the army.

What are the latest charges against Suu Kyi?

The 76-year-old was given a two-year sentence for breaching the export-import law by importing and owning walkie-talkies, and one year for having a set of signal jammers. Both

sentences will run concurrently. These charges stem from when her house was raided on the day of the coup.

The court also handed down a further two-year sentence for breaching the natural disaster management law related to coronavirus rules while campaigning. Suu Kyi was convicted last month on two other charges — incitement and breaching COVID-19 restrictions — for which she was given four years in jail.

The head of the country's military junta Min Aung Hlaing later halved that sentence and said she could serve her term under house arrest in the capital Naypyidaw.

All the charges against her together carry a maximum sentence of more than 100 years.

What are the reactions to Suu Kyi's sentence?

Suu Kyi's supporters say the charges against her are baseless and contrived to end her political career while legitimizing the military takeover.

"The Myanmar junta's courtroom circus of secret proceedings on bogus charges is all about steadily piling up more convictions against Aung San Suu Kyi so that she will remain in prison indefinitely," said Phil Robertson, deputy Asia director of Human Rights Watch. The Nobel committee said the convictions were "politically motivated."

Tin Tin Nyo, head of news organization Burma News International, told DW the charges were designed to keep Aung San Suu Kyi from power. [bw](#)

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INVITATION TO TENDER (RE-TENDER)

Dhofar Integrated Services Company S.A.O.C (DISC) invites reputable service provider for carrying out following works in Dhofar Region.

Tender Reference No	Title of the Tender
DISC/E/Tender/2022/005	Outsourcing Functions Support for Regulatory & Compliance, Risk Management
Tender Fee	RO. 105.000 Inclusive VAT (5%) each Note: Tenderer who wish to participate in the above tender should collect the tender document from DISC's office or send an e-mail to below mention mail id for tender document.
Experience	The Service Provider should have experience of Similar Service in Sultanate of Oman.
Pre-qualification	The Tenderer should be a registered business owner with proper commercial registration with ministry of commerce. The Tenderer must show previous experience in similar services in the past
Last date for issue of tender documents	03:00 PM on 25 th January 2022
Site Visit	-
Last date for seeking pre bid clarification	-
Last date for response pre bid clarification	-
Last date for submission of bids	02:00 PM on 1 st February 2022
Any Queries Please Contact	Phone 23232554, purchase@disc.nama.om

Tenderers are requested to note that the bids accompanied with Tender Bond (1% of the quoted bid price and having 90 days validity) shall only be considered for evaluation.



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Heartiest Felicitations to His Majesty **SULTAN HAITHAM BIN TARIK** on the Occasion of the Anniversary of his Accession to the Throne



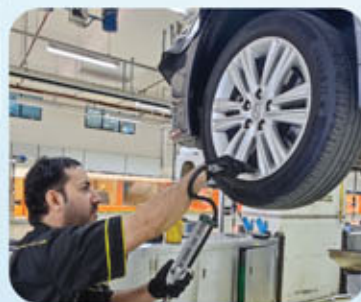
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And the people of Oman
On the Second Anniversary of the Accession Day



Rising Above on the Wings of Progress



Under the wise and visionary leadership of **His Majesty Sultan Haitham Bin Tarik**, Oman is confidently moving towards new frontiers. Driven by inspiring far-sighted initiatives, the nation continues to steer ahead, encouraging innovation and promoting prosperity. Saud Bahwan Group is wholly committed to **His Majesty's** vision. Playing a responsible role towards fulfilling national objectives. Including development and empowerment of talented Omanis through various goal-oriented initiatives. Providing them several opportunities to explore and realise their full potential. On this occasion, Saud Bahwan Group salutes the vision of **His Majesty** and congratulates the people of Oman.



SAUD BAHWAN Group

OMAN CRUDE PRICE FALLS

The price of Oman oil has decreased, with prices for delivery by March 2022 reaching \$80.38, said Dubai Mercantile Exchange (DME). The DME statement said that the price of Oman oil fell by 33 cents from the price of Friday, which was \$80.71. - OMA

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BUSINESS & FINANCE



MSX INDEX ENDS HIGHER

The MSX index closed at 4,221.58 points, up 0.11 per cent from the previous close. The Sharia Index ended up by 0.29 per cent at 527.69 points. National Finance, up 8.91 per cent was the top gainer while, Ominvest down 1.90 per cent, was the top loser.

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MARKET

MSX index ends higher

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MUSCAT: The MSX index closed at 4,221.58 points, up 0.11 per cent from the previous close. The Sharia Index ended up by 0.29 per cent at 527.69 points. National Finance, up 8.91 per cent was the top gainer while, Ominvest down 1.90 per cent, was the top loser. Shares of Ominvest Perpetual Sukuk were the most active in terms of the number of shares traded as well as in terms of turnover.

A total number of 555 trades were executed during the day's trading session, generating a turnover of OMR8.24 million, with more than 18.2 million shares changing hands. Out of 42 traded securities, 17 advanced, 7 declined and 18 remained unchanged. At the session close, Domestic investors were net buyers for OMR353,000 while foreign investors were net sellers for OMR188,000 followed by GCC & Arab investors for OMR165,000 worth of shares.

Financial Index closed at 6,714.85 points, up 0.12 per cent. National Finance, Global Investment Holding, Muscat Finance, Oman & Emirates Holding and Takaful Oman were up 8.91 per cent, 4.76 per cent, 3.51 per cent, 3.17 per cent and 2.86 per cent respectively. Ominvest, Sohar International Bank and National Bank Oman were down 1.90 per cent, 0.85 per cent and 0.51 per cent respectively.

Industrial Index closed at 6,069.33 points, up 0.36 per cent. Jazeera Steel Product and Al Maha Ceramics were up 2.63 per cent and 1.35 per cent respectively. Voltamp Energy was the only loser by 0.89 per cent.

Services Index was up by 0.15 per cent before closing at 1,646.31 points. SMN Power Holding, Al Suwadi Power, Sembcorp Salalah, OIFC and Al Jazeera Services were up 6.98 per cent, 2.08 per cent, 1.35 per cent, 0.66 per cent and 0.57 per cent respectively. -United Securities

OMAN CEMENT COMPANY



SELF-SUFFICIENCY: OCC will add 11,000 tonnes per day to its current production levels as part of its plans to raise the production of cement in Oman to meet the demand in local markets and to achieve self-sufficiency of high-quality cement. -ONA

OCC floats tender for construction of its fourth cement production line

MUSCAT: Oman Cement Company (OCC) floated a tender for the construction of its fourth cement production line in Oman and to upgrade its third line.

The fourth line will have a capacity of 10,000 tonnes per day of clinker, whereas the daily capacity of the third line will be upgraded from 4,000 to 5,000 tonnes per day.

OCC will add 11,000 tonnes per day to its current production levels as part of its plans to develop the production of cement in

Oman to meet the demand in local markets and to achieve self-sufficiency of high-quality cement.

Eng. Salem Abdullah Al Hajri, CEO of OCC said, "This tender has been floated for local companies operating in the Sultanate of Oman as part of OCC's interest in enhancing the added value of its projects and enriching the local markets. This targeted expansion will be the biggest of its kind in Oman's cement industry to achieve self-sufficiency by 2023."

The new production line will provide cement products at lower prices compared to the imported cement. The line will create business opportunities for small and medium enterprises (SMEs) operating in Oman to supply OCC with local raw materials, such as gypsum and iron ores.

The line will also bolster the construction sector and infrastructure projects by providing cement products at competitive prices. -ONA

INDUSTRY SURVEY

UK manufacturers positive about 2022 despite Brexit and inflation

LONDON: British manufacturers are optimistic that business conditions and productivity will improve this year despite most saying they have been hurt by Brexit and rising costs, according to an industry survey published on Monday.

Trade body Make UK and accountants PwC said 73 per cent of manufacturers believed conditions for the sector would improve and 78 per cent foresaw at least a moderate increase in productivity in 2022.

But two thirds of companies said Brexit had hampered their business in the nearly two years since Britain left the EU, while retaining staff and rising input costs linked to inflation also presented a challenge.

"It's testament to the strength of manufacturers that they have emerged from the turbulence of the last couple of years in such a relatively strong position," said Stephen Phipson, chief executive of Make UK, according to Reuters. "To build on this we now need to see a government fully committed to supporting the sector," he said, adding that the government needed a longer-term vision for the economy. -BNA

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OMICRON VARIANT

Emerging economies must prepare for US Fed policy tightening: IMF

NEW DELHI: High inflation and COVID-19 new variant Omicron have made the outlook for emerging markets like India more uncertain. Another big challenge for the emerging economies would come from the policy rate hike from the United States Federal Reserve.

Faster rate increases by the

Federal Reserve could "rattle financial markets and tighten financial conditions globally" and the emerging economies must prepare for it, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) said.

"Broad-based US wage inflation or sustained supply bottlenecks could boost prices more than an-

anticipated and fuel expectations for more rapid inflation. Faster Fed rate increases in response could rattle financial markets and tighten financial conditions globally. These developments could come with a slowing of US demand and trade and may lead to capital outflows," IMF said. -ANI

STOCK MARKETS

Asian stocks mixed after Wall Street falls on rate hike worries

BEIJING: Asian stock markets were mixed Monday after Wall Street fell on worries the Federal Reserve will raise interest rates as soon as March.

Shanghai and Hong Kong advanced. Seoul and Sydney declined. Japanese markets were closed for a holiday.

Investors were rattled last week after notes from the latest Fed meeting showed officials thought the US job market is healthy enough that it might no longer need ultra-low interest rates and other stimulus. That was reinforced by US employment numbers Friday that showed stronger-than-expected wages, though with only about half as much hiring as forecast.

The prospect of earlier rate hikes "suggests that markets could continue to be roiled by volatility," Tan Boon Heng of Mizuho Bank said in a report, according to The Association Press (AP).

Investors were cautious after Fed officials said in December that plans to roll back ultra-low rates and other economic stimulus that has boosted share prices might be accelerated to cool US inflation now at a four-decade high. -BNA

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Female 9 yrs exp as Cabin Crew Head/Supervisor 1 yr exp secretary (Oman) currently Marketing Specialist, seeking job - Secretary /Manager etc can join ASAP. Contact 98190105.
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Indian male experience in Counter Sales & Office for 12 years in Oman with D/L looking for suitable placement. Contact 94365722

Indian Male, B.com graduate. 4 years of experience in Sales & Marketing, having Oman D/L. Looking for suitable placement. Contact 79812393

Indian with 11+ years experience in Building materials Sales & Marketing in reputed firms seeks placement. Currently in Oman. Contact 94013236
Email: sreejithkuruvettil@gmail.com

CIVIL ENGINEER

Diploma with 6 years experience in Oman in Construction, Renovation & Interior, BOQs, Quotations, MOD and other ministries project. Seeks new opportunity.

Contact 97587901
Email: mosakhal44@gmail.com

Quantity Surveyor

Srilankan Male Quantity Surveyor (BSc QS (Hons) reading) with 4 years of Civil & ID experience in Oman. Looking for a job.

Contact: 92187572
Email: sifathhasan1995@gmail.com

ENGINEER

Mechanical Engineer, & Graduate Marine Engineer Indian male, 36 year old, having an experience of 12 years. Presently in Oman, having Oman D/L seeks suitable placement in Oman.

Contact: 95476011
Email: noblesimon1985@gmail.com

OMANI HSE

Bachelor's degree in BA & IOSH.

10 years experience in HSE and O&M.

Contact +968 95555865

Senior Accountant

Indian male M. Com with PG in computers, working as Senior Accountant in Oman with over 12 years with advanced knowledge in MS Dynamics, ODDO, Tally Erp/Prime (Tally customising with developer), looking for suitable position.

Contact on +96871551938

ACCOUNTS

Indian Male, 38yrs (age), 13 years of experience in accounts in Oman, Having D/L, NOC is available, Can join Immediately.

Contact No: 95920740,
Email ID: alhameed1527@gmail.com

FINANCE

B.Com ICWAI (Intermediate), 18+ years Finance/Accounts/Reporting/Credit Control/ Finalisation, Expd in MFG/Retail/Service Ind, Expd in ERP-Orion/Focus/JD Edwards/D/L, NOC available, can join immediately.

Mobile: 97634372

SENIOR MANAGER SUPPLY CHAIN

Indian Male with +25 years of Experience in Supply Chain, Purchase, Sales & Distribution, MIS, Inventory & Credit Control seeks placement.

CONTACT 94619442

FINANCE

MBA, Mcom, ICWA (inter) 21 years experience in Oman working as Manager in Business / Accounts / Finance / Operations. Looking for Senior positions in Business / Finance and Operations.

CONTACT: 96211885

JOB WANTED

Indian male Senior Sales Executive with 9 years experience in Readymix company in Oman, having Oman DL. Seeking suitable placement. Contact 93415429
Email: aliibvrm@gmail.com

Indian, 7 years of experience as a FMCG Sales executive in Oman with Oman D/L, looking for suitable placement. Contact 91883131

33 yrs Male, MBA & 11+ yrs experience in Sales, Service, lead & Supervision (Automobiles & FMCG). With D/L (UAE) Contact 7862 2687

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Omantel launches path-breaking Innovation Labs in the Sultanate

Along with the Labs, the Company also inaugurated its 5G experience centre, the Omantel Innovation Oasis, and E-Dukkan, Middle East's first unmanned convenience store

MUSCAT: Omantel, the leading and first telecommunications company in Oman and a key role-player in Mena, officially launched its path-breaking Innovation Labs on January 10.

Along with the Labs, the Company also inaugurated its 5G experience centre, the Omantel Innovation Oasis, and E-Dukkan, Middle East's first unmanned convenience store.

The launch event was presided over by guest of honour His Highness Sayyid Dr Fahad bin Al Julanda Al Said, Vice-Chancellor of Sultan Qaboos University and witnessed the presence of representatives from various ministries and local start-ups support entities and partners.

The Omantel Innovation Labs have been launched to leverage

Omantel's expertise, partnerships, reach and access to technology to contribute to Oman's Vision 2040 and promote innovation and entrepreneurship in new and emerging technologies namely 5G, Internet of Things, Cybersecurity, Customer Experience technology and Big Data.

Omantel Innovation Labs initiative is based on three broad goals – Ecosystem, Innovation and Investment. It aims to create an ecosystem of partners that can catalyse the rapid growth of technology start-ups in Oman; develop a platform that can identify and support relevant innovations in Oman to maintain Omantel's prominent position as the leader in technology and identify and invest in a portfolio of start-ups that are strategically aligned with Omantel's strategic growth plan.

Participating start-ups benefit

from a 1,100 sqm space that inspires and promotes knowledge-sharing and co-working within themselves and with Omantel teams. The space has nine well-equipped meeting rooms, a community square, a hardware lab, a co-working space and individual offices. The space will not just host the tech start-ups but also be the venue for multiple ecosystem activities that engage and link them with corporate partners, academia, investors and government entities.

The Omantel Innovation Oasis is a showcase of the uses of 5G technology and other frontier technologies. It complements the Omantel Innovation Labs as a place where incubated tech start-ups can potentially showcase their innovations in the future.

The Innovation Labs will organize, participate in, and host multiple activities to support Omantel's internal innovation agenda

by providing systematic spaces, approaches, events and activities that can accelerate product conceptualization, prototyping, testing and deployment of solutions to Oman and Omantel-centric challenges. Both the Innovation Labs and the Omantel Innovation Oasis will enable and empower Omani tech entrepreneurs and pave the way for Omani companies to lead the digital transformation in the Sultanate.

E-Dukaan at the Omantel headquarters is powered by artificial intelligence and IoT. It brings a queue-free, cashless, grab-and-go shopping experience and is an example of how important sectors of the economy can function seamlessly and efficiently using IoT. Shoppers can walk out with their items, without having to get their purchases scanned for prices at the counter or having to deal with physical money or bank cards. AI sensors automatically detect items in the shopping basket and bill the customer directly from his virtual wallet through an App. The store has no billing counters or cashiers.

His Highness Sayyid Dr Fahad bin Al Julanda Al Said commented, "I congratulate Omantel on these path-breaking launches. They are yet another step towards realising Oman's digital future and economic diversification objectives and aligning with Oman Vision 2040 objectives. Seeing these start-ups harness frontier technologies under Omantel Innovation Labs and contribute towards national growth while being examples of entrepreneurial spirit gives us immense pride. I have complete

faith and confidence in the sharp young Omani minds. They have the talent, and Omantel is playing the enabler by guiding and shaping their ideas into successful, profitable ventures."

His Highness Sayyid Dr Fahad bin Al Julanda Al Said further said, "The parallel launch of Omantel Innovation Oasis and E-Dukaan underscore their symbiosis and synergy with Omantel Innovation Labs. While the Labs incubate, the Oasis showcases the potential of frontier digital technologies while the smart store is a real-world application of innovation. I once again congratulate Omantel as well as the start-ups."

Talal bin Said Al Mamari, CEO, Omantel said, "We are excited and proud of these launches. The Omantel Innovation Labs are a platform that will channelize the Company's resources in a way that they are invested in the growth of Oman's tech entrepreneurial domain. We are aligned with the goals of Oman Vision 2040. The Labs are a vital component in our journey towards a digital future. They will put expertise in the right and deserving start-ups that are looking to push the boundaries of economic growth through self-reliance, riding on technology. We wish the start-ups the best and I am sure that it will be a symbiotic relationship where we learn and gain from each other. We look forward to more local innovation through Omantel Innovation Labs."

He added, "We want the world to know that 5G has more applications than perceived. E-Dukaan is an initiative Omantel is very proud of as it is the first smart store in

the entire Middle East. Omantel provided the necessary smart technologies while OOMCO introduced a mix of products compatible with the technologies used in the store. We are certain that shoppers will enjoy the experience."

Five Omani start-ups are already honing their market preparedness under Omantel Innovation Labs' Accelerator Program designed in collaboration with local and international partners. The program is tailored to the needs of each participating start-up to ensure that they commercialize, grow rapidly, and scale effectively while ensuring the technical feasibility, market desirability, and financial viability of their products and operations.

The companies are Autoplant an AI and IoT solutions for the farming industry to improve agricultural decision making, Lamma, Oman's first super app, a unified communication platform with payment integration, Mamun, an embedded credit, payments & insurance platform, Pixel Tech, a subscription-based tool that allows sellers in the GCC to easily set up digital stores and sell their products online and Remedy.om, a platform that connects patients with clinics and therapists. In addition, 3 new start-up winners of the last edition of the Upgrade programme will be incubated within Omantel Innovation Labs.

These companies are eligible for perks worth over USD 250,000 in cloud computing, legal services, accounting and other areas as well as hands-on support from local and international mentors.

NATIONAL LEADERSHIP PROGRAMME

Ominvest uplifts its leadership skills and empowers Omani talents

Shireen Aziz

Abdullah Al Jabri

Reema Al Tooobi

Mohammed Al Rahbi

Humaid Al Tooqi

Nibras Al Amri

Salim Al Dhuhli

Asiya Al Balushi

MUSCAT: Building on the company's progressive achievements in empowering human capital, Oman International Development and Investment Company (Ominvest), one of the leading investment firms in the region, announced that eight of its employees have been selected to partake and represent the company in the National Leadership Programme to upskill and empower the potential Omanis (etimad).

Ominvest's participation in the programme reaffirms the company's commitment to upskill its Omani team members and make them future-ready for competitive roles within the group. A team gathering was held at Ominvest's offices to congratulate the enrolled employ-

ees, encourage commitment and boost motivation to achieve the envisioned plan for their capacity and career development.

The meeting was attended by the Group CEO, members of the executive management team and etimad participants. Commenting on the occasion, Abdul Aziz Al Balushi, Group CEO, Ominvest said, "We congratulate our colleagues who have enrolled in the reputable etimad programme. Excellence has always been a core value at Ominvest and this initiative reflects our commitment to demonstrate this value in the way we empower our employees. I encourage the members joining the programme to exhibit full commitment in grasping knowledge and translating learning

into effective utilisation at work, hence elevating overall performance and productivity."

He added, "As part of Ominvest's strategic plan for 2021-2025 to Act Smart and Grow Bigger, we will focus on developing our internal talents and support their growth in several ways towards achieving our objectives."

Over the years, Ominvest has become an employer of choice to many ambitious Omanis wishing to join a progressive organisation that offers top-notch expertise and professionalism. Today 82% of the Ominvest Group's total workforce are Omanis and 70% of its leadership roles are held by Omanis.

etimad is an initiative that initially stemmed from the Labour

Market and Employment Lab at what was previously the National Program for Enhancing Economic Diversification (Tanfeedh).

The programme is now adopted by the Ministry of Labour and aims to train and qualify thousands of Omanis in the private sector in different batches. It includes specialised curriculums, which were designed in partnership with global and international leadership development institutions, i.e. MIT, Tuck, Harvard, and Columbia Business School.

The revised programme consists of 5 main modules, e-learning, workshops, one-on-one coaching, and an action learning project, which will be executed within 10 months for the current batch.

INVESTMENT RESIDENCY PROGRAMME

MD of Al Karama Group conferred with 10-year investor visa in Oman

MUSCAT: As part of the Investment Residency Programme announced by the Government of Oman, Abdul Nasser Kuninkarath, Managing Director of Al Karama Group of Companies, Oman receiving 10-year investor visa from Qais bin Mohammed Al Yousef- Minister of Commerce, Industry and Investment Promotions (MOCIIP), in the presence of Asila bint Salim Al Samsami, Undersecretary of the Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Investment Promotion (MOCIIP) and top officials from ROP, in an event held at Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Investment Promotion on 9 January in Oman. Investment Residency Program offers long-term five- and ten-year renewable residence permits to investors in Oman.

"At the outset, I would like to thank His Majesty Sultan Haitham Bin Tarik and the Government of Oman for honouring me with this coveted visa. Indeed I

am very grateful and delighted, the love and support I have received from the people of Oman, has always been overwhelming. I look forward to new opportunities and ventures in Oman," commented Abdul Nasser Kuninkarath, Managing Director of Al Karama Group of Companies, Oman on the achievement.

Abdul Nasser a native of Kerala had established Al Karama Group of companies in 2001, which is a leading retailer group, having a chain of Hypermarkets in Oman with more than 12 branches across Muscat, Al Batinah and Al Dakhiliyah Governorate and expanding it further to newer areas.

Abdul Nasser said, "We are committed to our loyal customers who have supported us and have built a trust within us which helped us grow. We are very thankful to all the helping hands and will continue to maintain and improve our relationship with our customers."

ROUND-UP

PROMOTION



Test drive GAC Motor’s GN8 and win exciting prizes

MUSCAT: GAC Motor is offering interested customers a winning opportunity to test-drive the GN8 and get a chance to win – 1 iPhone 13 Pro 128 GB and 4 REDMI Note 10 S 128 GB phones. Besides this, customers owning any of the GAC Motor vehicles can benefit with 5 Years/ 150,000 km Manufacturer’s Warranty, Comprehensive 1 Year insurance (Oman Coverage), Assured Service 10 years/100,000 KMs on GA8 & GN8 models, 4 years /40,000 KMs on GS3, GS4 & GA4 models and 3 years /30,000 KMs on GS8 model and ‘3M’ Window Tint (For 21 & 22 YM Models). The campaign is valid until 3rd February 2022 (Conditions apply). The offer is presently valid only in all locations except Salalah. For more details, please visit any GAC Motor showroom).

Created to perform multi-purpose activities with ease, the GN8 delivers a smooth and enjoyable drive on any terrain and under any weather conditions. Its exterior makes a grand mark with its passionately designed and well-

sculpted body. Its available range of colours enhances the overall look, making it an instantly recognisable model. Awarding the GN8 with praiseworthy glares is the 17-inch Aluminium Alloy Wheels, LED Headlights with Height Adjustment, LED Daytime Running Lights, Side Mirrors with Turn Signal Indicators and more.

For the interior, the GN8 bears a very emotional design that is thoughtfully created keeping the comfort of its occupants in mind. A 3-zone Automatic Air Conditioner with Separate Second Row Control Panel ensures the environment is cool and comfortable for everyone. Adding to this feeling is the 6-Way Power-Adjustable Driver’s Seat, a 4-Way Adjustable Front Passenger’s Seat and Second Row Captain’s Chairs. Giving occupants a beautiful view of the skies above during the day or the Moon and stars at night is the Power Sunroof with Jam Protection. To allow ease of alighting the GN8 or getting off, there is a thoughtful addition of Sliding Doors on both sides.

A 10.1-Inch Colour LCD Screen adds to the overall style quotient in the interior. Also available are 7-Inch Colour LCD Meter Cluster with Trip Computer, Audio System with 6 Speakers and Speed Based Volume Adjustment.

Powering the GN8 is a 198 HP 2.0L Turbocharged Engine that produces 320 Nm of Torque at 4000 RPM.

As in the case of any GAC vehicle, safety is a top priority and an area that receives unparalleled attention. The GN8 is equipped with a range of advanced active and passive safety features.

They include dual front airbags, front side airbags, electronic stability program, anti-lock braking system, electric brake force distribution, traction control system, hydraulic brake assist, hill-start hold control, hill descent control, tyre pressure monitoring system, anti-rollover system, impact sensing door unlock and more.

In Oman, GAC Motor vehicles are distributed by New World Autos and backed by Saud Bahwan Group.



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NATIONAL LIFE & GENERAL INSURANCE

Top insurer NLG appoints Dr Dhafir Al Shanfari as Chief Operating Officer

MUSCAT: As part of the company’s business excellence and growth strategy, National Life & General Insurance Co. (NLG) has appointed Dr Dhafir Awadh Al Shanfari as the Chief Operating Officer.

He has held leadership positions in various government organisations and was the CEO of the Public Authority for Privatisation and Partnership before joining NLG. Dr Al Shanfari has an MBA Degree from Duquesne University, Pittsburgh, USA and PhD from Deakin University, Melbourne, Australia and was also associated with SQU as Head of Management Department (College of Economics and Political Science).

“I am delighted to welcome Dr Dhafir Awadh Al-Shanfari to the NLG family and I am sure we are going to benefit immensely from his vast experience. With his academic excellence, his experience in various sectors, handling leadership roles across multiple functions, I eagerly look forward to him as a core contributor to the growth of the organisation,” said S. Venkatachalam, CEO, NLG.



NLG is the market leader in Oman with branches in Dubai, Abu Dhabi and Kuwait. NLG also has a strong digital presence with Online Digital Insurance and Mobile App to buy/renew insurance, manage claims or for any other support.

The company has been the Best Performing Company in the Large Cap segment in Oman bagging the AIWA awards 4 times in a row from 2018 to 2021.

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ROUND-UP

be'ah launches reverse vending machines for PET bottles collection

The initiative comes in a bid by the company to integrate the recycling culture, promote the circular economy, recover the value of materials, and reduce the produced quantities of waste

MUSCAT: As part of the efforts made to ensure safe disposal of PET bottles, Oman Environmental Services Holding Company (be'ah), the nation's sole waste management entity, launched Reverse Vending Machines (RVMs) for the collection of used PET bottles.



The initiative comes in a bid by the company to integrate the recycling culture, promote the circular economy, recover the value of materials, and reduce the produced quantities of waste. The RVM machines employ Artificial Intelligence (AI) through embedded sensors to accept only PET bottles and reject non-PET

bottles and other items. be'ah has so far installed 17 reverse vending machines at key locations across Muscat Governorate this year – with plans in place for a broader deployment at the other governorates in the coming stage. As part of this project, be'ah has signed agreements with several lo-

cal companies to support the project as part of their respective corporate social responsibility (CSR) initiatives. These agreements are divided into two types. As for the first type related to the locations of these machines, agreements were signed to allocate sites for these machines with petroleum products marketing companies such as Oman Oil Marketing Company, Shell Oman Marketing Company in addition to a number of key shopping malls such as Carrefour Al Seeb, Qurum & Muscat Grand Mall. be'ah has also signed an agreement with Omantel (as a strategic partner) to offer simple rewards and incentives to users of these machines in support of this project. Moreover, be'ah signed other agreements with other companies as well to provide different rewards and incentives. Commenting on this initiative, Kumail bin Ahmed Al Lawati, Head of Business Development Department at be'ah, said: "The aim of this project is to educate the community about the need to play a greater role regarding the large consumption of plastic bottles in the Sultanate. The PET bottles

constitute a great burden on the waste management entities. The RVM will contribute to instilling and promoting the culture of recycling and sustainable behaviours among community members." "The aim of RVMs is to collect PET bottles of various sizes by encouraging community members to dispose of them in these machines instead of throwing them in regular garbage bins. Those who dispose of plastic bottles through these machines will receive various rewards, presented by our partners such as Omantel and a number of other companies. The collected PET bottles will be sent to various recycling facilities in the Sultanate in order to recover their value and ensure the use of locally recycled materials", he added. Saba Said Al Busaidi, Senior Manager of Corporate Affairs at Omantel, said, "We are pleased to be a strategic partner in this vital project, which is in line with Omantel's strategy and CSR initiatives related to the environment. Omantel, the leading national company in providing integrated telecommunications services in the Sultanate, is very keen on re-

ducing the negative effects of our operations on the environment and using environment-friendly technologies. This project is part of many steps taken by Omantel to preserve the environment. Omantel will provide technical expertise such as artificial intelligence to ensure the smooth operation of the RVMs. We will also use our experience to raise awareness about the project by encouraging our subscribers to use the RVMs." It is worth mentioning that Oman's Vision 2040 focuses on the adoption of a circular economy as part of the Sultanate's plans to shift from the linear economy (extraction, manufacturing, and disposal) to the circular economy to preserve the value of resources. The circular economy creates new job opportunities, alleviates health and environmental problems, and reduces pollution. Moreover, improving the waste collection, transportation, and disposal system contributes to reducing greenhouse gas emissions as emissions from waste collection vehicles and engineering landfills become less due to the decomposition of organic waste in them.

PRESTIGIOUS CERTIFICATIONS

Al Maha receives ISO 9001:2015, ISO 14001:2015, ISO 45001:2018 certifications

MUSCAT: Al Maha Petroleum Products Marketing Company has announced that it has received a trio of certifications from the International Organisation for Standardisation (ISO). These include the ISO 9001:2015 certification for Quality Management System, ISO 14001:2015 for Environmental Management System, and ISO 45001:2018 for Occupational Health and Safety Management System. The company received these prestigious certifications because

of its commitment to adhering to the highest international standards of quality, environment, health, and safety in an endeavour to ensure its consistent and sustainable growth. Sharing his thoughts on Al Maha receiving the ISO certifications, Eng. Hamed Al Mahgdri, CEO of Al Maha commented, "We are very proud to have received each of these certifications. Every one of them is a result of the great effort we have put into developing and updating our internal processes

to meet international quality and management standards. These include all aspects of quality management and customer satisfaction, as well as detailed and rigorously enforced health, safety, and environmental protocols across the organisation." **Specific requirements** The certifications each serve as specific requirements that organisations can use to improve their quality, health, safety, and environmental performance. As part of an

effort to meet these requirements as well as to boost performance, Al Maha recently completed a comprehensive internal assessment across the organisation. A team carefully assessed the company's various facilities and outlets, observed the work of departments across the company, assessed the performance of human resource teams, and most importantly, carefully analysed all health, safety, and environmental protocols, filling in any gaps and bringing them up to global standards.

"Receiving these certifications marks an extremely significant milestone in our success journey and demonstrates our commitment to providing high-quality and professional services to our clients. Therefore, I would like to thank every member of our staff for their outstanding contributions to the company's success as well as their role in helping us achieve these highly sought-after certifications. I would also like to encourage them to keep up the good work as we continue making

significant strides into the future," added Eng. Hamed Al Mahgdri. Named in honour of the majestic Arabian Oryx (al Maha), the Al Maha Petroleum Products Marketing Company was established in 1993. The company has since established itself as an integral strategic partner in the development and support of the Sultanate's infrastructure. It continues to maintain a network of service stations throughout Oman, including in some of the most inaccessible parts of the country.

Steering the nation to a bright future

Congratulations and warmest wishes to **His Majesty Sultan Haitham Bin Tarik** on the second anniversary of accession.

May Allah grant him good health and the wisdom to guide this vibrant nation to a bright future.

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PRAISES POUR IN FROM OMANIS FOR HIS MAJESTY’S LEADERSHIP AND WISDOM

Times News Service

NATIONALS in the Sultanate of Oman have hailed His Majesty Sultan Haitham Bin Tariq’s role in shaping the country’s long-term future, as well as his able leadership and wise governance. On the anniversary of his accession, they have also pointed to his ability to weather Oman through the storm of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Rashid bin Abdullah Al Nasri, the CEO of Omani company Mirsal, alluded to the effective governance measures taken to deal with the fallout of the COVID-19 pandemic.

“This day has inspired me to say thanks to His Majesty, and today is a very good time for all of us to take stock of the many aspects of our country he is trying to improve,” he said. “The government has taken many excellent and effective measures to counterbalance the low oil prices, which were a result of the pandemic.

“He has also worked to address other economic aspects: we can see that he has ordered our cabinet to work efficiently, which has enabled us to reduce our budget deficit significantly,” he added. “His Majesty was able to deal with the difficult situations we faced alongside the entire world. Despite all this, he

On the anniversary of HM’s accession, people have pointed to his ability to weather Oman through the storm of the COVID-19 pandemic

has continued to pay close attention to Vision 2040, so that our economy continues to grow and we all have jobs.”

Al Nasri was particularly impressed by the indicators listed under Vision 2040 that address comprehensive development across many areas, including government, society, the environment and the economy.

People in the field of education were also quick to offer their congratulations to His Majesty the Sultan.

Laila Al Balushi, an Omani from the Wilayat of Shinas, said in this context: “During his reign so far, he has witnessed many events, and it is never easy to earn the trust of an entire population. Despite the challenges, he has faced, however, he has prov-

en his worth, thanks to his style of leadership and the essence of his speeches, which provide hope for a better tomorrow and promises of joy to our future, promising generations.”

Another Omani national, Maha Al Raisi, added: “It is our pleasure to witness the richness and wisdom of the achievements of His Majesty Sultan Haitham Bin Tariq. We are the children of this benevolent country filled with the bounties of nature, and a spirit of solidarity during both times of crisis and prosperity. We ask God Almighty to protect Oman’s people and ruler.”

A student at the University of Technology and Applied Sciences in Ibri, Eman Al Badi exuded wisdom beyond her young years while speaking of His Majesty.

“He has had to lead Oman through the difficult circumstances of the pandemic, and contend with a fall in oil prices because of the same,” she said.

“Through his intelligence and wisdom, Oman emerged with only a little damage, and our deficit has also decreased over time. This shows us that His Majesty’s way of governance is the right one.”

“His Majesty takes great interest in the country’s youth: in many of his speeches and decisions taken, we can see that

government and private institutions have been asked to take care of young people, and make optimal use of their energy and intelligence.”

Ali Salim Kafetan, who works in the government sector, was also on hand to praise His Majesty.

“His Majesty has a clear vision which helps him see the state of his country after 20 years with an honest realism, as well as the challenges the country is going through,” he said.

“He has been committed to dealing with them ever since he ascended to the throne. There is no doubt that many of the things that are being done are new for many people.

“Our leader, His Majesty Sultan Haitham Bin Tariq, understands using remedies to fix problems,” he explained.

Faisal Al Badi, an employee at a private company, ventured: “His Majesty Sultan Haitham Bin Tariq aims to take Oman on the renaissance that was begun by the late His Majesty Sultan Qaboos bin Said bin Taimour, and make ours a country like no other.

“In him are the traits of a ruler represented by the strength of his personality, his measured thinking, his wisdom, and insightful vision, all of which go towards the betterment of Oman, its economy, and its people,” he added.

Why expatriates call Oman a home away from home

Whichever of the world’s six inhabited continents people have come from to Oman, the country has always left on them an indelible mark.

The Sultanate is a melting pot of cultures that welcomes everyone: whether it is the young American moving to the Middle East for a new adventure, or the South Asian man who wants to share the peace and calm of Oman with his wife and children.

This article features amazing anecdotes from expatriates, many of whom live in the country, but also those who continue to have fond memories of Oman despite having departed its sandy shores many years ago.

Greg Johnston
I moved to Oman 2001, with my wife, Debbie, and our four-year-old daughter Sam Ava. We had, however, given up hope of a sibling for her.

While we were in the country, my wife was admitted to hospital in Shatti Al Qurum after suffering some horrendous pain, but the doctors there were amazing and did a great job treating her. All went well, and a few months later, we were blessed with some wonderful news: Sam’s little brother was to be born soon.

Ben, our lovely baby boy, arrived on the seventh of July, 2005. Sadly, we don’t live in Oman any more, but his arrival is our most special memory about the country. We live in Aberdeen now.

Renjith Pillai
I worked for four years in Oman and lived in Ruwi, Muscat. It was amazing to witness life in Oman, which is so closely linked to local cultures and traditions.

I was fortunate to take in all the country had to offer: I visited museums, galleries and palaces, saw the Sultan Qaboos Grand Mosque, and attended festivals organised for the holidays.

I celebrated with my Omani friends, eating halwa and drinking kahwa, and sharing in their generosity. I was able to experience the entirety of Oman’s hospitality, which reflects the country’s rich heritage.

Rayed Darwish
Oman is by far the most beautiful nation in the Gulf. Its tranquil serenity coupled with unparalleled

beauty makes Oman a stunning pearl for visitors, residents, and citizens. Its geography, topography, and climate imbue a spirit of adventure, peace, and harmony.

Whether it’s visiting the amazing Opera House or hiking in its splendid mountainous terrain - or stunning caves - Oman is unmatched in what it has on offer. If you’re travelling through Muscat, Jabal Akhdar, or Salalah, Oman will not disappoint. Did I mention its incredible wadis and falaj systems? In short – Oman delivers in every conceivable way!

Rowena Motas
Oman is a place I’d never heard of before coming here. Any reservations I had before leaving the Philippines, however, were banished on the day I arrived in Muscat. The Omanis are very nice and accommodating. I felt I was home.

The beauty of the Sultanate’s nature captivates my heart. I also enjoy the different celebrations here, especially Muscat Festival and National Day, when the roads and buildings are decorated with different lights in the colours of Oman’s flag. Truly, Oman is my second home.

Eshan Samir
I am an eight-year-old boy. When both my parents were hospitalised in May 2021 due to COVID-19, many Omanis and people from other nations helped me survive alone at home. I love Oman and the people around here. They are very caring and loving. By God’s grace and many people’s prayers, both my parents are doing great now.

Sourav and Madhurima Sarkar
There are lots of memories to share of Oman, but our best one also happens to be among our most recent.

On 17 September, we travelled late at night from Muscat to Ras Al Jinz, with a sudden desire to go turtle-watching. The effort of staying awake all night paid off in the form of an unforgettable experience.

We did not even expect to see so many turtles walking ashore in the early morning along with their cute little hatchlings. Coupled with the stunning morning sunrise, it really made for a wonderful sight.

Naweeda bint Mohammad Hussain
I’m an Omani national with Pakistani origins. In 2010, I lost my father due to a heart attack. Soon afterwards, my sister and I began facing a lot of challenges.

In 2017, I was diagnosed with Meckel’s diverticulum, and admitted to Sohar Hospital. Despite many tests, the doctors there could not diagnose my condition for a long time. However, once the surgeons discovered my ailment, they sent me for an operation, which was a very challenging procedure for them.

I wish to salute such amazing doctors who were not only there to help me during these difficult situations, but also gave me the courage and confidence in every step of my life.

Nicole Brewer
I’ve been an expat living in Oman for over eight years. I’ve seen the growth, hospitality, and love that has blossomed through those years for this dynamic country. I’m grateful for the opportunities that I’ve had here being an English teacher and travel blogger, visiting everywhere from Salalah to Sur during the years. Thank you very much Oman for being such a great place to live.

Mohammed Abdul Momin
The people of this country are extraordinary. When it comes to beauty, the first thing that comes to mind is the beach, the mountains, and the wonderful city of Salalah.

If anyone asks me which country is my second homeland, I can say that with my eyes closed, Oman is my second home. I am blessed to be able to come to a country such as this.

Maymoona Mehboob
The modern world must follow the steps of Oman. The world really needs to follow the golden practices of tolerance, kindness, justice and ultimately, peace that are the norm in Oman. I really feel secure in this country.

I feel that this is my home, that the people here are my brothers and sisters. In these seven years that I have lived here, I have shared all of my successes, happiness and sorrows with my dear Omani neighbours and my dear friends living in Oman.

Libin Babu Kutty
I still cherish the memories of my trip to Salalah. I was mesmerised with the weather, the light drizzles, the highlands covered with lush green plants, water flowing from the waterfalls, the people enjoying the surroundings with their loved ones, the serene beaches, the caves reminding us of the livelihood of older generations, and the cool breezes that make you fall in love with the region.

That trip truly refreshed and nourished my body and mind

Maricar Azul Miranda
I remember one morning when we were in a hurry to get to Ruwi because we had an urgent appointment. We found a taxi outside our building, but on arriving at our destination, my husband and I realised that we had forgotten our wallets at home.

It was really embarrassing, so we asked for his number so that we could pay him later. But the Omani driver waited outside until our appointment ended and then dropped us home. Omani people are the best in terms of humanity!

Saji Uthuppan
My memory is one of community spirit during cyclone Gonu. At that time, many of us who lived in Al Nahda had to face hardship and struggle when dwellings our homes were flooded, and streets had gotten washed away.

However, my friend Mr. Davis and I had no second thoughts about to collect drinking water from a nearby well, to supply to some of our neighbours who were in a worse state than we were. The owner of the well was such a generous and kind person to allow the public to take water from there at no cost.

Aysha Jemsheer
Oman is where my family and I have thrived. My kids and I took our first ever flight to join my husband in Salalah. I love everything about that city: the climate, the people, and the wonderful places.

When we moved to Muscat, I felt a bit empty to leaving Salalah, but eventually fell in love with the capital as well. Through my career, I got to meet so many amazing Omanis, who are loving, caring, and so down to earth.

Gisela Olvera Ogando
I came to Oman in 2019 to work as a marine biologist, taking care of jellyfish, reptiles, and sharks. The people I met there are still some of my best friends to this date. This includes five Omani women who opened my mind to culture here, and gave me the sweetest friendship I could imagine.

The culture shock was huge for me, working with people from Europe, Africa, Asia, and the Americas, but I had many amazing experiences. I got to know the beauty of the country, visiting Wakan and Jabal Shams, went snorkelling in the Dimaniyat Islands, dived into Bandar Al Khiran, and witnessed the Khareef in Salalah and the beauty of Nizwa.

I feel so grateful that the path of life took me to this amazing nation, and I hope I will be able to come back one day.

Sumosh Nair
I lived in the country for a little less than a decade and have stories to narrate for a lifetime. This is a country that has so much to offer: culture, natural beauty, and some of the best people, who believe in humanity.

The transformation this country has seen over the years is a blessing to all of us, and the nation will continue to march towards glory and success.

Andrea Ritler
A walk down an Omani street is a great way to enjoy architecture, design and structure. Witness castles, palaces, houses and buildings with their decorated doors, and savour the smell of frankincense essence in the air.

Take in the palm trees around you and the famous falaj water irrigation system, which are mind-blowing. Omani hospitality includes more than coffee in Arabic kahwa. You are expected to partake in dates, fruits, sweets and baked goods. So wonderful is this country that sometimes, you never feel like leaving, but instead want to be part of one big happy family here!

Regine David
I am proud to call myself a resident of Oman: coming across the country’s love and security, its amazing beauty, and

its cultural prosperity makes us thankful to call Oman our second home. From the desert to the sea, from its mountains to the wadis, and from its ancient heritage to its modern outlook, Oman is an amazing country to live in.

Khan Sameena Mannan
If there is one place that best symbolises the culture and heritage of Oman, it has to be Sultan Qaboos Grand Mosque in Muscat.

I had the opportunity to visit this place of worship on 15 October 2021, and the beautiful, colourful mosaic patterns, the lovely, plush carpeting, and the amazing chandeliers overhead mingle effortlessly with the serenity and peace the complex seems to exude.

The qualities of this mosque are so strongly embedded in the welcoming nature and kind nature of the Omanis.

Shahnaz Sadiq
Oman is a peaceful, loving land that shows kindness towards expatriates. I have been living in Rustaq since I was in grade five in school. I remember as a child, my father would take us to Ruwi in Muscat for shopping, and to the Corniche to enjoy the experience of the sea and the souq.

I want to thank my father’s sponsor, Sulaiman bin Saif Al Ghafry, whose family would always offer us fruits and vegetables, and take us on horse rides. I am thankful to this land which gave us an amazing life, and having now settled with my husband and children in Rustaq, look forward to spending many more years here.

Hareem Khawar
To define Oman as an attractive country would be an understatement. Its seashore, highlands, and deserts all hold picturesque sights and historic stories ready to unfold.

Its vintage culture and alluring sites seem to attract globetrotters from all parts of the world to experience warmth and local hospitality. Dawn is probably the best time to take a walk around town: the mosques glow in the dim light of the still dormant sunrise, which illuminates fresh-cut grass, moistened by the early morning dew.



AS ICT TAKES FOCUS, OMAN EMBRACES THE BEST OF THE DIGITAL AGE

AS OMAN seeks to build a robust, 21st century economy based on knowledge, research and innovation, the country has embraced the value of technology across an increasing number of key sectors. Positive developments have resulted from entities utilising technology as a safe haven to overcome challenges. Moreover, the COVID-19 pandemic has proved the importance of digitisation for all kinds of services, as entities providing online services were able to continue their operations, either without being affected, or being only slightly affected by the pandemic, in comparison with entities that usually adopt the conventional approach in providing their services. A number of initiatives have been launched to improve and implement ICT capabilities in Oman

- Smart water and electricity meters implementation**
- Expand the use of smart meters for water, electricity and gas
 - Reduce cost of conventional meters and monitor/reduce leakages
 - Provide timely and accurate data on water, electricity and gas consumption
- SAS 4th Industrial Revolution hub/sandbox**
- A national centre for tech entrepreneurship in Oman
 - Bring together local and international stakeholders, inventors, start-ups, SMEs, tech and industrial experts, and regulators
 - Create a flexible, unrestricted environment to develop new products and solutions

- Last mile services (LMX)**
- Link Oman's last mile of broadband, the portion of the network that reaches end-use entities
 - May include Internet of Things devices, CCTV services and more
 - Propose viable policies and solutions to integrate resources from stakeholders
- Artificial Intelligence chest classifier**
- Takween Company developed and successfully tested a methodology to read x-rays these results using AI
 - The tech uses algorithms and programmes to analyse complex data, accurately interpret results, and monitor minor data points that might go unnoticed by radiologists
 - Has potential to improve over time and produce better and more accurate results

- Digitisation of key public services**
- Accelerate digitisation of key government services, to improve quality and increase demand
 - Will target 64 government entities over five years, through a public-private partnership
 - Will create opportunities to improve efficiency, performance, and transparency
- Fintech: accelerating Oman towards a cashless society**
- Effort in response to World Bank recommendations to separate operator from payment systems
 - Central Bank of Oman is currently privatising services related to national payment systems
 - Aims to reduce tax evasion, al-



- leviate risk related to use of banknotes, enhance transparency, and reduce potential for corruption
- Promoting Oman as a disaster recovery hub**
- Plan suggested due to Oman's political stability and unique geographic location
 - Involves setup of facility used by institutions to host basic applications and data, which can be recovered and operated after becoming unavailable in their original format
 - Oman can also provide competitive disaster recovery services as it is connected to major submarine cable systems
- Establish ICT shared solutions and cybersecurity companies**
- Establish a company that provides various services in ICT fields

- Enhance ICT skills and build capacity in Oman through partnerships with companies such as Microsoft, Oracle, and others.
 - Meet the ICT needs of local and international markets.
- Stimulate the local cybersecurity market**
- Create an active and vibrant cybersecurity industry
 - Project focuses on three key areas of cybersecurity: managed security services; cybercrime analysis; and cybersecurity services
 - of a new cybersecurity company with global standards
 - Separate operational tasks of some governmental institutions
 - Partner with local and international companies for new tech and skills in the local market
- On-the-job training**
- The project will be carried out in

- 2 phases
- Phase 1 will entail a two-year training program will be rendered by local and international companies. Job seekers will acquire basic expertise and skills
 - Phase 2 will entail a one-year program for recruiting competent nationals, aimed at increasing nationalisation rates
- Special incentive programme for ICT sector**
- Providing attractive incentive package: discounts, tax exemptions, e-residence, and ease of recruitment, etc.
 - Determining the programme's management and market access strategy
 - Developing world-class infrastructure: identify a specific location with ample office space, test new technologies, create a high-quality network with

- competitive tariffs
- Develop methodology to calculate ICT sector contribution to GDP**
- Provide standard reference numbers for all government agencies
 - Identify sources of information related to the sector
 - Contribute to project planning
 - Using data in projects that aim to stimulate the market
 - Achieve better sector rating
- Enhance Omanis' employment in the ICT sector**
- Provide more than 9,000 on-the-job training opportunities followed by employment, for job seekers over five years.
 - Programme will train job seekers for specific occupations in ICT
 - There is currently a gap between the jobs required in the local market and the skills that ICT graduates possess.

FUTURE

Youth – the future of the nation comes of age



THE FUTURE of Oman's youth is a crucial element of the National Programme for Enhancing Economic Diversification (Tanfeedh), which was launched in 2016 to pave the way for launching Oman Vision 2040. These plans take on the economy as one of its four main themes: people and society, economy and development, sustainable environment, and governance and institutional performance, and provides the basis of all national programs that will push to realise the vision's objectives. This vital sector has been developed in accordance with the latest global trends and plans, focusing on competitiveness and integration of efforts to enable youth participation through jobs created by initiatives and projects or involvement in entrepreneurship and SMEs. The initiatives following are among the most prominent in this area:

Development of a Sector Skills Unit

This will help ensure the development of National Occupation-

al Standards (NOS) and Labour Market Intelligence Systems that will increase transparency in the sector and ensure that the skills gap is gradually reduced, which will give more opportunities to Omani unemployed youth to develop, through a clear career path. This unit will also create the regulatory framework for the development of vocational education and training, and ensure that quality of training is improved and maintained through quality assurance audits. In addition, it will limit the skills gap between the employment market and industry and create a fully skilled workforce that can transcend the sector towards meeting national priorities.

Enabling Nationals in the Logistics Sector

The implementation of different programmes under the Omanisation initiative, such as Ihbar; SAWAED; research and development and national training initiatives, will create awareness amongst the community, and most importantly in younger generations, of

what logistics is. Its ultimate goal is creating an entrepreneurial and innovative environment that will create job opportunities and increase the demand for more workforce that will need to be developed or upskilled. The initiative needs to be supported for the value it adds in creating the environment for the development of a knowledge based society and economy and assist the sector to boost its efficiency and productivity and bring it closer to Logistics Strategy 2040 (SOLS 2040) targets.

Increasing Private Sector Attractiveness for Omanis

The initiative aims to provide an ideal work environment for the national workforce in the private sector, in order to attract young national skilled workers, by launching a card that includes standards stimulating the corporate work environment, through which corporates that meet the standards receive incentives and facilitations from the ministry and other relevant authorities.



We implore the Almighty to grant him success in leading Oman towards further progress and prosperity.

CONGRATULATIONS TO

His Majesty Sultan Haitham Bin Tarik

on the occasion of the anniversary of his accession to power

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